

Spiritual Intelligence

doing it, just for the hell of it ©

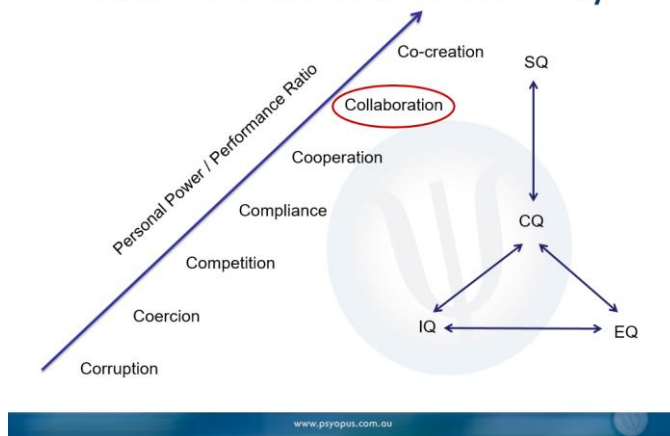
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Can we talk about spirituality?

This final paper may not be for everyone, indeed for those who are physicalists or radical materialists, this brief paper will either make you angry, incredulous or both. Best then, not to read on, but for those interested in spirituality or meta-physics it may interest you.

In my metamodel, I present four aspects of intelligence including IQ – EQ – CQ and SQ (Spiritual Intelligence) that influence each other in interdependent ways. I often skim over the SQ particularly in secular organisations since both the language and propositions can be inappropriate – but occasionally I am asked “So Dr Preston what about spiritual intelligence?”

What is collaborative maturity?



I often speak psychologically by using Csikszentmihályi's work on *flow* which examines the notion of absorption, mastery and immersion in the present moment. I speak to it and move on, but in all honesty, I don't think it goes far enough – this is because the language is still framed in “functionalist” terms of mastery and skill. I think modern psychology and indeed certain forms of philosophy can only take us so far. What has far more explanatory power is poetry, art, myth and indeed theology. It seems that in our present time (the secular age), psychology and

philosophy cannot jump over what I call “the metaphysical brick wall” and to stay firmly in what Charles Taylor calls “the imminent frame” of the here and now explained in functional physicalist terms without ultimate ends (and I will be coming back to ultimate ends, ultimately at the end of this brief paper).

You see, the problem is that spiritual intelligence is tied up altogether in a completely different intentionality than the other forms of intelligence spoken throughout the series of papers on collaborative maturity. Spiritual intelligence speaks of an act of co-creation and not collaboration and so our little meta-model has to be updated.

From pathology to power to performance to participation

My previous model spoke mainly of the difference between the exercise of personal power or the desire to perform towards a collective solution. The ratio of a person's intentionality between these two poles determines their level of collaborative maturity – however this is not the end of a person's development in maturity. As one starts to confront the false self and die to needs of safety and security, affection and esteem, and power and control, one's intention changes radically towards acts of co-creation. Now please do not get me wrong here, co-creation is not being creative with others, that to my mind is still collaboration since the intention is still towards mastery, skill or other functional utilitarian ends. Working creatively together in our secular age is still co-opted in the language of goals, outcomes and other “indicators of success”. The intention of this work is still directed to an ultimate functional end and so is still concerned with mastery or performance; but co-creation is entirely different.

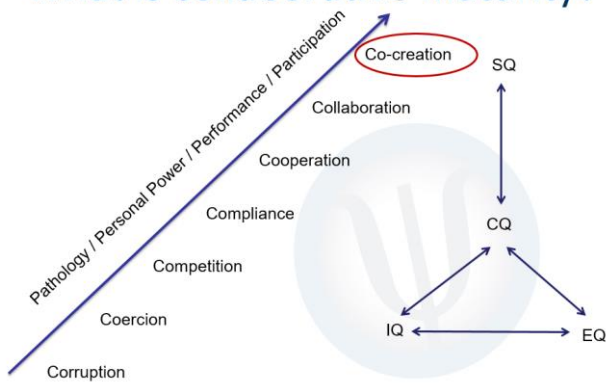
Co-creation – just for the hell of it

We live in very utilitarian times, in fact the philosophy of our age could be described as particularly utilitarian. In terms of Aristotle's thought, it is mainly concerned with original and efficient causes of things. Our technological age is obsessed with the origin of things (eg “root cause analysis”) and the efficient cause of things (eg what is it made of and how can we manipulate it?). However, our age

is largely silent on Aristotle’s notion of “final cause” or teleos – that is, where is it all ultimately going? This may be because we live in an age where the ultimate end of things lead us too much into meta-physical questions that interrupt our ability to understand and manipulate matter to *our own* ends.

So often when people speak of co-creation they are still talking in terms of function, achievement and outcomes, a teleos that leads to mastery of performance. For example, learning how to play guitar as a form of “therapy” speaks of this form of functionalism and not learning to play guitar for its own sake. I am arguing that co-creation is not an act of performance but participation – but for what end and for whom you may ask?

What is collaborative maturity?



The classical notion of God or the transcendent of which most traditions speak of is *autotelic*. Terry Eagleton quite correctly and cheekily describes God as autotelic and that God neither needs no justification or ultimate end since God is an end in himself or autotelic – that is, there is no instrumental utilitarian end to God – he creates not for any other end but for the sheer joy of creation itself. God in this sense is both “good for nothing and good for everything”. Transcendence whatever this might mean in different spiritualities appears to occur when individuals encounter this metaphysical fact. That is, one moves from performance in a collaborative manner, to participation. What work looks like in this form speaks more of play that is not directed to any end but simply for the sheer joy of it – or in other words “just for the hell of it”. Performance in a collaborative sense still has an act of personal will in it, while higher levels of spiritual intelligence are not

an idea but an encounter with the divine and a willingness to participate in this reality. Encounter with the divine leads to self-transcendence where the most endearing sense is joy and bliss. So, in simple terms, co-creation has no end since it is not directed towards an end, it is self-referential or *autotelic*. The ultimate form of leadership is service, since all of creation is served out of the sheer joy of its existence. Certainly, the Franciscan theologian Ilia Delio and mystics like Teilhard De Chardin, speak of this and such theological arguments are expressed in some form or another in practically every spiritual tradition up and down the ages.

From transaction to transformation to transcendence

So, what is the end of collaboratively mature leadership? Essentially to realise that in the end there is no end but simply service, and joy in participating in co-creation. Co-creation is not directed to an end but to the act of whole-making, the true meaning of the term *catholic*. Whole-makers attempt to make sense of the world by participating in the world beyond the self-limiting needs of our desires for safety and security, affection and esteem, and power and control. The gift of co-creation is to participate in a reality that is larger than our own self ends.

As we mature as persons, our intention changes *whole heartedly* – in essence we move from the attention of *mindfulness* to the intention of *heartfulness*. This is the gift that is waiting for all who choose, but the price is to move from ever increasing levels of relationship from transactional modes of the *quid pro quo*, to transformational modes of moving from our own selfish programs for happiness, to finally transcendence of our own desires towards play, joy and bliss. To participate in co-creation is for its own sake without outcomes or “key performance indicators”, but to be whole-makers and participants with ultimate reality.

Delio, I. (2014) *Unbearable Wholeness of Being: God Evolution and the Power of Love*, Orbis Books

Terry Eagleton, “Why Is God for Christians Good for Nothing?,” lecture, 2013-2014 Bannan Institute: What Good Is God? series, October 7, 2013, Santa Clara University

Taylor, C. (2007) *A Secular Age*. Harvard University Press.