



World Goodwill

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A regular bulletin highlighting the energy of goodwill in world affairs

THE DIVINE ENTREPRENEUR

SOME WHO ARE STRIVING for a better world may think of business, if not as an outright enemy, at least as something not *spiritual*. But business is the primary means of manipulating the material substance of the planet. Modern business choreographs the complex processes of location, extraction and transformation of matter that create the human world. If in the past this has not always been done wisely, this does not preclude wise action in future. What is needed is for *all* people to revolutionise their attitudes towards matter, to achieve a new, spiritualised materialism. For those in the business world, this may mean a decreased desire to control matter exclusively, and an increased reverence for what it can do for all; for those outside business, an increased respect for the creative energy which business people focus on shaping matter may lead to easier and more fruitful co-operation with them. What all need to recognise is the profound truth that "matter is spirit at its lowest point of manifestation and spirit is matter at its highest." So business is no less spiritual because it works in and with matter, provided the intention is to raise matter up once more towards its spiritual destiny. And this requires right sharing: of matter, of the power to shape it, and of the power to organise the resulting forms. Then business will automatically contribute to the increase of human welfare.

Thinking about business from a spiritual angle can produce some surprises. For example, there is a growing trend to incorporate spirituality into the workplace, through providing times and places for spiritual practice, through team coaching and workshops, and through re-visioning companies' mission and purpose. This is a promising sign, and shows that people are

increasingly demanding that their higher values should influence their work. But this trend should not obscure the fact that the very nature of work itself is spiritual – spirituality is not something that should have to be "tacked on" afterwards.

Perhaps one way of seeing the essential spirituality of business is through reflection on the deep energies of consciousness that prevail in this field. Three in particular stand out. The first is leadership – not a quality that is exclusive to business, but one that is greatly emphasised, because it is thought to be a major driver of success. As a result, some of the most interesting thinking about different styles of leadership can be found in the business media. For example, there is the concept of servant-leadership. Robert Greenleaf, the man who coined the term, described servant-leadership in this way. "The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead."¹ This explicit alignment with service gives a natural avenue for the spirituality of a business to express itself.

The second quality that is particularly important in business is innovation. This encompasses two basic human drives – the drive to understand the universe more deeply; and the drive to create new and better forms. The first of these is expressed through the research and development arm of a business, where science and business meet and interact to produce technology. Here, matter is investigated in order to find new ways of shaping it for productive use. It is an increasingly important part of business in this era of Information & Communications Technology (ICT) and Biotechnology. The drive

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to create improved forms is not just about research, but also includes the sense of beauty, which brings in designers. And, in this era where we spend more time interacting with each other through computers and communication tools, psychologists may also be involved in seeking to improve the design of interfaces between human and machine. An example of a business where the two factors of research and design are both important is Apple.

The embodiment of this spirit of innovation is the entrepreneur, who creates new business ventures with the intention of producing a new or radically improved product or service. They may begin small, requiring a willingness to accept significant financial risks. They have the special capacity, often requiring many different skills, to ground a vision in concrete forms. They are, above all, *enterprising* individuals (enterprise and entrepreneur share the same root, the Old French verb *entreprendre*, meaning "to undertake"). In fact, some have now extended the concept of entrepreneurship beyond its traditional business meaning, talking of "social entrepreneurs"². This means those who are displaying their powers of enterprise in solving difficult challenges in the non-profit sector. They are finding innovative solutions for situations where the state or the community is unable or unwilling to help those in need. Because their primary motive is service to others, they could be regarded as the counterpart of the servant-leader spoken of earlier – the servant-entrepreneur. One of the most famous of these is Muhammad Yunus, the founder of the microcredit institution, the Grameen Bank.

Envisioning a better world

Entrepreneurs and leaders are nothing if not people of vision, and visioning/forecasting is a significant factor in business. This is where cautious oversight by politicians and the public is required, as business people, like all other visionaries, can be "carried away" by their own vision, seeing only their version of the future, and thinking that others who do not see the vision must be persuaded, or even forced, to cooperate. In the case of business this can result in unfair and destructive competition, with the intent to dominate the market, leading to the danger of cartels and monopolies. But where business visioning can be aligned with the wider objectives of society, as is the case with a number of oil companies who are now investing considerable sums in renewable energy research, then there is certainly the potential for a better world for all to emerge.

If the power to innovate and create new forms is the special skill of the entrepreneur, the power to organise and manage already existing forms is the preserve of the manager. This third major quality conditioning business is perhaps the one most readily associated with it. In essence, it involves establishing the correct relationships between money, materials and people in order to fulfil the purpose of the business. It requires

a disciplined, rhythmic approach to both time and space. So it is not surprising that business consultants and writers³ place considerable emphasis on gaining control of one's own time and space, so freeing the manager to manage the projects involving other people, raw materials, customer relations etc. for which they are responsible.

Another part of the manager's remit to organise is to ensure compliance with all international and national laws, industry regulations, and company policies. And while laws are imposed from outside, often regulations are voluntary agreements among companies in the same industry, which brings in the key factors of free will and sacrifice, for compliance might mean sacrificing competitive advantage. Likewise, company policies will enshrine the core values of the business. Humanity's growing understanding of interconnectedness is leading to the recognition that a business with sound values is one which can be sustainable and profitable in the long term. The consultant Frank Dixon, of Innovest Strategic Value Advisors, speaks of the need for Total Corporate Responsibility (TCR). He remarks:

"TCR encourages firms to proactively work with others to achieve system changes that hold them fully responsible. As the most difficult challenge facing management, TCR performance is an excellent indicator of management quality, the primary driver of stock market returns... The TCR model is based on three concepts – Interconnectedness, Actualization and Posterity... Interconnectedness means that business is part of one interconnected system. Recognizing this, firms strive to mitigate all primary and extended negative impacts on society... Actualization means that the primary purpose of business is to help society achieve its highest potential. Over time, this implies that the primary focus of business would shift from maximizing short-term profits to maximizing the well being of society. Ironically, shifting the focus away from profits probably would increase earnings as firms are rewarded for being of greater service to society... Posterity means that the primary obligation of this generation is to preserve and enhance society for future generations. Every other goal should be subordinate to this. In practice, this means priority would be given to the well being of future generations to the greatest extent possible when making business decisions..."⁴

So we can see that the call of service to the wider whole is sounding out for managers too.

As we move through a period of transition, many businesses are showing signs of progress in one or other of these fields. The challenge for the future is to create businesses where leadership, innovation and management are *all* primarily motivated by service, and informed by a deeper understanding of the sacredness of matter. When this process is well underway, then the circulatory flow of goods and services will automatically

move in the direction of a more equitable distribution, and business will more truly reflect the spiritual origin it shares with all other branches of human endeavour.

1. Quote from the web site of the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership, www.greenleaf.org/leadership/servant-leadership/What-is-Servant-Leadership.html. For further information, contact The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership

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2. See for example, ODE magazine online, "Real people building a better world" by David Bornstein at www.odemagazine.com/article.php?aID=3891
3. See for example books such as Stephen Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Fireside, New York, 1989; and David Allen's *Getting Things Done*, Piatkus, London, 2002.

FROM ORGANISATIONS TO LIVING ORGANISMS

One of the growing number of truths on which the Ageless Wisdom teachings and contemporary science concur is that "we live and move and have our being" in a vast sea of moving forces. Although scientific knowledge is limited to a small array of these, many accept that more subtle potencies are also at play and that these are currently shaping a new age by conferring that "life more abundantly" of which the Christ spoke. While this new life is breaking down the old and crystallised patterns of behaviour that are incapable of adapting, it is also stimulating the steady emergence of new forms, better suited to hold the new life impulse and express the growing urge to synthesis that is the outstanding purpose of life evolving through form.

Amongst these emerging forms, new kinds of organisations are springing to life, spurning the rigid structuralism associated with conglomerates, and sharing instead the hallmarks of living organisms. This biological view endows organisations with a natural, creative evolution that is constantly subject to change with all parts working towards a common purpose, much as in a colony of ants or a beehive. As with natural group organisms, these emerging human groups are becoming more integrated with the environment, adapting to life-sustaining patterns, rather than abusing and polluting nature. Many businesses are now starting to follow these new patterns of organisation, realising that if they are to survive, they need to be socially and environmentally responsive as well as economically viable. Increasingly, they are starting to transcend conventional thinking, with a vision and objective that more fully utilises the qualities and attributes of employees, stakeholders and customers.

From the angle of esoteric psychology, all natural organisms are endowed with an informing consciousness of some kind including the new type of human organisations. They possess an intelligent life force, initially generated by the vision and conditioning purpose of the group's instigators, but sustained and enriched by the dreams and aspirations, the identifications and interactions of their members; in other words, organisations such as these have a group soul. The goal of such groups is not confined to profit-making therefore, but extends holistically to making a positive contribution to their field of expression. This expanded vision of the group brings more meaning to the lives of its members as well as transforming and synthesising relationships that in the past have been stunted by thinking rigidly along capital – management – labour divisions.

Dee Hock, founder and former Chief Executive of VISA, captured the spirit of this change from organisations to living organisms in what he calls Chaordic theory¹. This theory describes the growth of a "self-organising and self-evolving entity, which ends up looking more like a neural network

than a hierarchically organised bureaucracy". Apart from being innovative and very adaptive, such entities tend to be "inclusive, multi-centric and distributive and, ultimately, strongly cohesive due to their unshakable focus on common purpose and core principles." 'Chaordic' describes a dynamic structure modelled on the fundamental organising principles of evolution and nature – a blend of chaos and order that is above all else a way of thinking. Hock says that the speed of information in the world has now become so great that there is a real need for us to change our mindsets in order to change the mindset of businesses. In the last analysis, their reality is based on mental concepts around which people and resources gather in pursuit of a common purpose. Those who commit themselves to this new perception are creative and imaginative, and, in Dee Hock's view, they require no control or command to be effective. He believes that organisations are a dying species unless they adapt to the natural order of things and regenerate characteristics that bring them into harmony with the human spirit and the biosphere.

The Economy of Right Relationships

This contrasts sharply with organisations based solely on a Newtonian, mechanical view of the universe for they tend to function under the law of economy alone, with its narrow focus on the efficient use of time, people and resources. Now though, a new law is coming into play, the spirit of which the mystic, Kahlil Gibran, encapsulated in the words "Work is love made visible". This was a tremendous insight into the emerging law of attraction characterised by highly magnetic creative energies that impulse right relationships in all areas of life including the world of business and commerce. Through it, the law of economy is lifted, retaining its positive aspects and reorienting its focus towards meaningful interactions. This is stimulating the revolution that is steadily unfolding with many of the structured working practices of the past being replaced by more imaginative and engaging activities. "The Play Ethic"² proposed by Pat Kane, for example, provides "free workers" greater scope for intuitional expression in the workplace by allowing them to maximise control of their time, environment and personal commitments. This "soulitarian" is radically different from the work ethic of the past and answers people's need to form more spontaneous, empathetic relationships across all areas of their lives including employment. It promotes the fuller realisation of human potential.

The growth of Open Space technology is another example of this revolution. This involves participant leadership where employees create and manage their own agenda in parallel working sessions around a centrally chosen theme of strategic importance. The result is a greater sense of connectedness and a consequent strengthening of what's already happening in the organisation. 'World cafés' are a similar practice using what

is called 'appreciative inquiry'. This involves creating the right ambience for conversational meetings to explore possibilities for the organisation. Each employee represents an aspect of the whole system's diversity and has the chance to connect in conversation with the collective intelligence of the group. Employees effectively influence the goals through their exchange of ideas.

Of course, these new rhythms and associations are not appearing in full expression around the globe at once – it is more an emerging tendency: and just as there are a multitude of ways in which organisms interact with their natural surroundings, differences in temperament and culture all form part of this fledgling psychology of attraction between the workplace or organisation, its product and its people. (Don Beck presents an excellent framework for understanding people and cultures at different states of consciousness in his Spiral Dynamic theory of human development³). But what is clear is that form and structure are increasingly being superseded in importance by consciousness, something that is in itself intangible, creative and evolutionary. One of the reasons why consciousness is becoming such a factor is that our perception of time and space is changing radically due to the speed and efficiency of information technology. Time is essentially a state of consciousness, and as we are challenged to process information instantaneously, our highly accelerated minds need to enter a new domain outside of time and space in order to function usefully. This is the realm of the intuition that many are starting to touch now. It enables the mind to direct time and events from a higher frame of reference, and the sense of connectedness that is felt at this level naturally conditions our conduct on the physical plane. In the business world, it guides conduct and responsibility towards the aims of the organisation and its ethics.

Another development that is taking place under the law of attraction is the increasing cooperation between highly competitive companies as the advantages of tackling challenges together and sharing ideas and information is appreciated. While the initial impetus may be essentially to

keep up with the rapid pace of change, we can see cooperative effort beginning to transcend the wholesale competitiveness that is so damaging to the social and natural environment. Whereas the law of economy alone is materialistic and separative in nature, the law of attraction is spiritual and inclusive, spiralling forward to encompass new frontiers of thinking and innovation. It is this law that will increasingly provide solutions when the biotechnology and info-technology century ends the era of mindless labour for subsistence. When work is spread more evenly, there will be time for all to engage in creative enterprise and to add vital life to their work.

As the business routine adapts to these progressive influences, we can expect even more far-reaching changes. Just as biological organisms have their rhythm and cycles, so will the work place. Interludes for quiet reflection and the invocation of ideas will energise and increase creative input. This more ceremonial attitude will allow time for due preparation as well as time for production. Organisations becoming living organisms will have a much deeper understanding of their role in the overall purpose of human existence and its essential creative impulse. Nature is our greatest teacher, and if we engage with it both harmonically and dynamically, we can begin to reverse the previous trends of blind profit making, greedily pursued. We can and must use our knowledge and consciousness to develop and take stewardship of the planet, its life forms and resources. It is as living organisms that we can best realise this deep and redemptive responsibility.

1. For further information, see the Chaordic Commons, 1299 Fourth St., Suite 507 San Rafael, CA 94901 USA. Tel: (415) 457-3670; Fax: (415) 457-3625; Email: frontporch@chaordic.org; Web: www.chaordic.org
2. For further information, see Pat Kane, The Play Ethic, 537 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G12 9DJ, UK. Email: network@theplayethic.com; Web: www.theplayethic.com
3. For further information, see Spiral Dynamics Integral, Dr. Don Beck, PO Box 797, Denton, TX 76202, USA. Tel: +1-940-383-1209; Fax: +1-940-382-4597; Email: info@spiraldynamics.net; Web: www.spiraldynamics.net

GOODWILL IS... the key to doing business that honours the planet.

GLOBALIZATION, TRANSNATIONAL BUSINESSES, AND THE GLOBAL COMPACT

According to the 58th General Assembly Session of the United Nations, integration of the United Nations with the earth's population is being revitalized. Among the 55 resolutions adopted outside the Assembly's Main Committees, there was included the resolution: "Towards global partnerships between the United Nations and all relevant partners; in particular the private sector, to meet the challenges of globalization."¹ This includes the developing of a non-discriminatory trading and financial system in the world.

As globalization has rapidly increased during the last decade, it was observed that transnational corporate structures have by-passed the world's shared social values. This has caused disequilibrium in governance structures insofar as "strict rules and enforcement capacities for economic expansion were not matched by strong rules for social justice."² This condition caused great imbalance between rich and poor countries, as poor countries lacked the necessary governance structures to participate adequately in economic globalization. The United

Nation's Secretary-General, Kofi Annan therefore decided to address this issue.

In an address to the World Economic Forum on January 31, 1999, Kofi Annan introduced the Global Compact. His reason for this was the fragility of globalization, which has yet to materialize its full potential. He challenged business leaders to join an international initiative – the Global Compact – that would bring companies together with UN agencies, labour and civil society to support nine principles in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment. His proposal was instantly acclaimed and "catalyzed the rapid, dynamic formation of a global network of unprecedented potential."² However, it wasn't until July 26, 2000 that the Global Compact was launched as an operational initiative, at UN Headquarters in New York. It has since evolved to a global network involving several hundred companies from all regions of the world, international labour, and global civil society organizations. All of them share the view that leadership, dialogue, learning, and projects are the key to practical solutions.

The Global Compact is a network-based initiative. At its core are the Global Compact Office, the Advisory Council and five UN agencies: the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The Global Compact involves all relevant social actors: governments, who define the principles on which the initiative is based; companies, whose actions it seeks to influence; labour, in whose hands the concrete process of global production takes place; civil society organizations, representing the wider community of stakeholders.

The Global Compact is a voluntary corporate citizenship initiative with two objectives: to mainstream the nine principles in business activities around the world; and to catalyse actions in support of UN goals. Its leading aspiration is to grow sustainable business activities in those places of the world that the UN call 'least developed countries'. To achieve these objectives, the Global Compact offers facilitation and engagement through several mechanisms: policy dialogues; learning (an extensive program); local structures; and projects. The Compact is relevant for chambers of commerce and small businesses.

The Global Compact is not a regulatory instrument – it does not 'police', enforce or measure the behaviour or actions of companies. Rather, it relies upon public accountability, transparency and the enlightened self-interest of companies, labour and civil society to initiate and share substantive action in pursuing the principles upon which the Global Compact is based.

These nine principles, in the areas of human rights, labour and the environment were derived from: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and; the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

The nine principles are: **Human Rights** Businesses should - 1: support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights within their sphere of influence; and 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses; **Labour Standards** Businesses should - 3: uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; 4: support the elimination of all

forms of forced and compulsory labour; 5: support the effective abolition of child labour; and 6: eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; **Environment** Businesses should - 7: support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges; 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

There are numerous benefits to participating in the Global Compact. These include: producing practical solutions to contemporary problems related to globalisation, sustainable development and corporate responsibility in a multi-stakeholder context; rallying around universal principles and responsible corporate citizenship to make the global economy more sustainable and inclusive; leveraging the UN's global reach and convening power with governments, business, civil society and other stakeholders; sharing good practices and learnings; accessing the UN's broad knowledge in development issues and its practical reach worldwide.

There are 65,000 transnational corporations worldwide. To date the number of participants – in all types of businesses – is 1,698, and steadily increasing. They are in many countries of the world. Among the issues taken up at the June 2004 meetings, the corporate leaders discussed how to ensure greater corporate accountability, and added a 10th principle – a pledge to battle corporate corruption.

In New York on May 21, 2004, invited by Pfizer, Hewlett Packard and Novartis USA, representatives of about 30 U.S. and Canadian companies met to address the formation and establishment of a North American Global Compact Network.

Through the continuance of the Global Compact – the direct initiative of the Secretary-General – the power of collective action of shared social values can advance responsible transnational corporate citizenship so that businesses can be part of the solution to the challenges of globalization. The United Nations, the world's only truly global political forum, is the convener and facilitator.

1. *UN Chronicle*, March-May 2004, p. 15.

2. *UN Chronicle*, March-May 2003, pp. 64-67.

Other material draws on the Global Compact web site at www.unglobalcompact.org

TRANSITION ACTIVITIES

The 2nd Annual Edinburgh Festival of Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace, Edinburgh, Scotland, 24 February – 6 March 2005, will bring together artists, scholars, grassroots spiritual activists, and speakers from the Sufi, Druze, Bahá'í, Ismaili, Zoroastrian and other lesser known spiritual traditions, in addition to representatives of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It is jointly organized by the Edinburgh International Centre for World Spiritualities, EICWS, and the Edinburgh Institute for Advanced Learning, EIAL, with the support of many other organisations.

The Festival positively affirms the diversity contained within the religious and spiritual traditions of the Middle East, as well as those in Scotland, and takes no fixed position on any political, ethical or cultural question. The intention is to create a forum in which participants can listen to one another more deeply

and learn with a more open mind and heart. The emphasis of the Festival is on spirituality, and on spiritual approaches to peace, and will bring together at least three different kinds of presentations. First, those attending will learn from each other about their shared traditions, and secondly will hear from those who have been active in peacemaking on a spiritual basis on the ground in the Middle East. Thirdly, participants are invited to share in musical and devotional spiritual practice presentations, in order to gain an experiential view of the traditions discussed. Festival events outside Edinburgh will be considered, as will proposals for Festival events that fit within the Festival ethos. All events in the Festival are either organised by the Festival coordinators, or in close collaboration with them. Volunteers who would like to help with the festival should contact the Joint Festival Coordinator: Neill Walker, Email: njwalk3300@hotmail.com, ; Tel: +44-(0)131-331-4469.

HELPING TO BUILD RIGHT HUMAN RELATIONS

World Goodwill is an international movement helping to mobilise the energy of goodwill and to build right human relations. It was established in 1932 as a service activity of the Lucis Trust. The Lucis Trust is a registered educational charity in Great Britain. In the USA it is a non-profit tax-exempt educational corporation, and in Switzerland it is registered as a non-profit association. WORLD GOODWILL is recognised by the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organisation and is represented at regular briefing sessions at UN Headquarters. The Lucis Trust is on the Roster of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

The World Goodwill Newsletter is published four times a year. Multiple copies for distribution are available on request. The newsletter is also available in: Danish, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Swedish.

www.worldgoodwill.org is the address for World Goodwill on the Internet. The newsletter is available on this site.

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Youth Action Nepal (YOAC-Nepal) is a non-profit youth organisation providing a platform to help the development of Nepalese young people in order that they may bring positive change to their communities, as well as engaging them in the nation building process. The Mission of YOAC is to encourage young people: to be involved in all types of community and personal development programmes; to realise their responsibility to be a voice for human rights and good governance; to work for the development of Information Communication Technologies; to acquire skills and knowledge, thereby empowering them; to volunteer their time to make positive contributions to society; to network with like minded organisations. Finally, YOAC would like to develop as a national youth leadership-training institute. Young people in Nepal are in crisis due to the ongoing armed conflict and political instability, and in order to assure them that a better future exists, YOAC has planned a number of activities, which are intended to help them become more responsible citizens. These activities include: a Youth Development Resource Centre in Kathmandu, which will work to provide a variety of youth related information and statistics on, for example, youth

in armed conflict, juvenile justice, success stories of youth-led projects, national youth development policies and related topics, which will be useful for researchers, students, social scientists and others; a Youth Leadership Development Training Programme, which will educate participants on social and human rights issues and leadership skills; the continued development of a website (see below) about all aspects of life in Nepal, such as its natural beauty, current political and human rights situation, topical articles, resources for youth skill development; lectures, discussion and workshops among college and high school students, on issues such as human rights, good governance, social action, skill development, philosophy and education; lobby, advocacy and campaign for youth rights, human rights and peace building; support, such as the provision of educational materials and medicines, for conflict affected children and young people; voluntary action, for example, health camps, construction works, clothing distribution, and help for flood victims. Further information and contact details from YOAC- Nepal, G.P.O. box 9776, Kathmandu, Nepal. Website: www.youthaction.org.np Email: info@youthaction.org.np