Leadership From and For The Future – An Emerging Model of Post-Contemporary Leadership

Dr. Thomas Mengel

Professor of Leadership Studies

Renaissance College

UNB

FREDERICTON

"[Given current challenges] it can be easier and more comfortable to look backwards…. To many people, the past that we know is less scary than the future that we don't know…"

(Arnold Schwarzenegger, June 2, 2017, in his response to President Trump's announcement of his decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement)

Agenda

- Introduction: "Muddling through" the abyss???

- Methodology

- Contemporary Approaches

- Emerging Post-Contemporary Paradigms

- Conclusion: Potential Elements of a Model of POst-COntemporary LEADERSHIP

Introduction: "Muddling through" the abyss???

- "The present is under attack" – Abyss of complexity
  - ➢ Integration, diversity, and change – inclusion
  - ➢ Walls, fences, law and order – exclusion

- Potential and existing responses (Scharmer, 2016)
  - ➢ "Paddling backwards"
  - ➢ "Muddling through"
  - ➢ "Moving forward"

- Diversifying adaptive and systems leadership
  - ➢ "connect big drivers of change" across systems
  - ➢ "be the change" – from adaptors to actors

Methodology

- Literature review

  ➢ Explorative (backward snowball search), unstructured, and structured (Patton, 2002; Tranfield et al., 2003)

  ➢ "prospective" - exploratory and scrutinize by quality standards (experimental drilling and excavation)

- Analysis and discussion

  ➢ Content and discourse analysis (Weber, 1990; Neuendorf, 2002; Phillips, Sewell, & Jaynes, 2008)

  ➢ Future studies (Kuusi, Kuhls, & Steinmueller, 2015; Inayatullah, 2013)

Contemporary Approaches

- Early in 21st century … in the wake of significant changes ("New Renaissance" (Goldin & Kutarna, 2016))

ARTS OF LEADERSHIP

Establish and coordinate the relationship between an identity (philosophical arts), a strategic vision (fine arts), organizational tactics (martial arts), and persuasive communication (performing arts) (Grint, 2000).

VALUES-ORIENTED LEADERSHIP

Emphasizes the significance of co-discovering and co-creating values and meaning for leadership and organizations. Focus on holistic and creative thinking in the context of uncertainty. Developing "adaptive capacity", the foundation for "intuitive leaps", and the ability to tolerate and sustain ambiguity (Mengel & Thomas, 2004; Mengel et al., 2009; Thomas & Mengel, 2014).

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP:

A respective volume in the Building Leadership Bridges series has presented an "impressive array" of diverse topics addressed by authors from around the world (Huber & Walker, 2005).

Contemporary Approaches

DISCURSIVE LEADERSHIP:

Offers a constructivist approach to exploring various concepts of discourse (e.g., Foucault) and their potential significance for leadership theory and aiming at helping practitioners to "coconstruct reality" (Fairhurst, 2007).

ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP:

Mobilize people to address difficult challenges that require change through adaptation (Heifetz et al., 2009).

SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP:

Catalyze collective leadership with "commitment for the health of the whole": see the larger system, reflect, and co-create the future (Senge et al., 2015).

Emerging Post-Contemporary Paradigms

- 2015/16 publications: Critical, emerging and converging themes addressing leadership challenges

Critical perspectives :
Pfeffer (2015) discussed failures of recent leadership theory/development claiming that we need to acknowledge the "facts" about leadership practice and develop a more realistic approach to leadership. Based on her historical discourse analysis Wilson (2016) focuses on leadership as socio-political act and the need to move out of disciplinary silos when critically reflecting on leadership.

LEADERSHIP 2050 (International Leadership Association, 2015):

- QUANTUM LEADERSHIP: Consider scientific paradigms resulting from chaos and complexity theories (Piel & Johnson, 2015; Wheatley, 1999,2006).

- MURMURATION LEADERSHIP: Humanizing the workplace and focus on "we-leadership" (future scenarios developed with strategic foresight). Focus on people in evolving and temporary organizations. Developed as one of four scenarios (Suderman & Foster, 2015)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Starling_murmuration.jpg
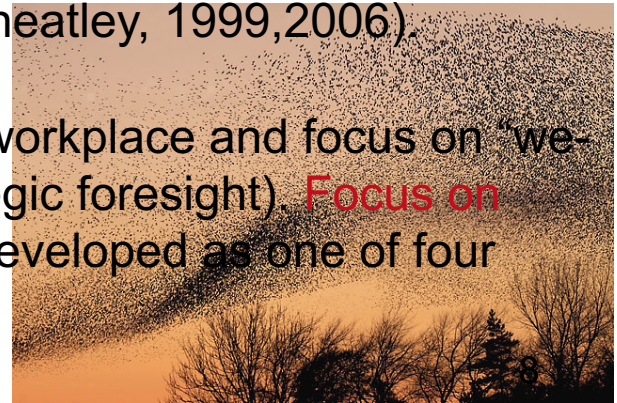
Emerging Post-Contemporary Paradigms

Theory U:

By embarking on a journey of connecting our current self with our future emerging self we need to overcome – with an open mind, open heart, and open will – the existing chasm / abyss (Scharmer, 2016)
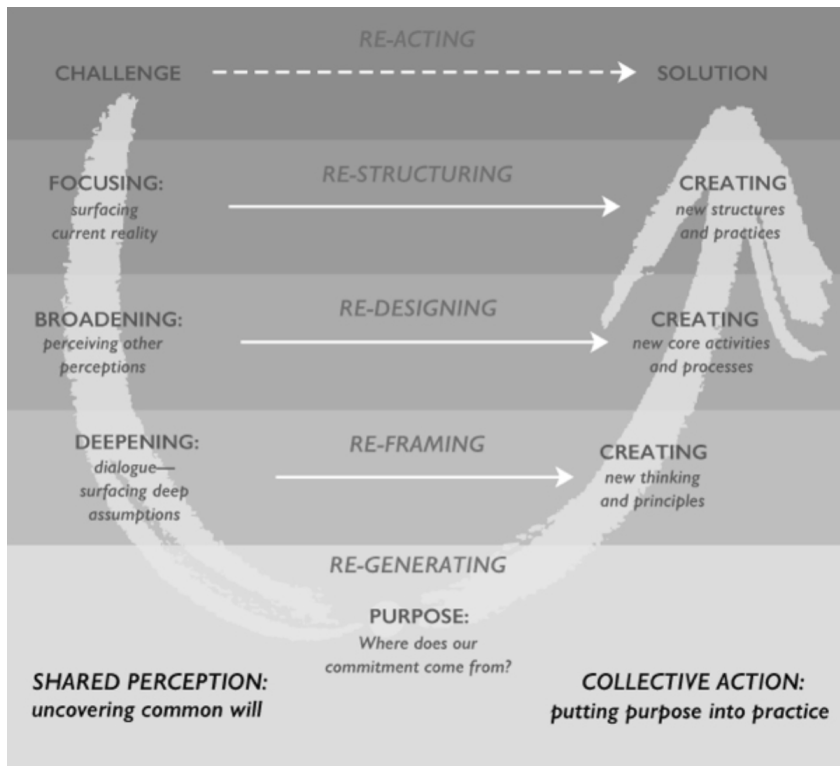

FIGURE 2.2: FIVE LEVELS OF CHANGE

Indigenous perspectives on leadership:

Recent contributions by indigenous leadership scholars can meaningfully enhance our limited western perspective on leadership theory and practice (Voyageur, Brearley, & Calliou, 2015).

Emerging Post-Contemporary Paradigms

HOMO DEUS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FUTURE:

We are invited to "think in far more imaginative ways about our future" and let go of our conditioning by the past. We need to develop responses to challenges resulting from upgrading homo sapiens to "homo deus" through "biological engineering, cyborg engineering, and engineering of non-organic beings" (Harari, 2016).

THE AGE OF DISCOVERY: NAVIGATING THE RISKS AND REWARDS OF OUR NEW RENAISSANCE:

"The present age is a contest: between good and bad consequences of global entanglement and human development…. [The outcome] depends on what we all do to promote the possibilities and dampen the dangers". We need to support the eruption of genius by overcoming bias and embracing diversity; establishing bold patronage; daring to fail; and by passionately building new crossroads. We need to overcome popular discontent as demonstrated in extremism, protectionism, and xenophobia by mapping new connections; stoking virtue; thinking 'and' not 'or'; going first; and by loving art [– to reconnect with values and the bigger picture]" (Goldin & Kutarna, 2016).

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Emerging Post-Contemporary Paradigms

THE TIME COMPLEX - POSTCONTEMPORARY:

The present is perforated and the "time complex" has been disturbed by atavisms and anachronisms; past and future merge eliminating the present (as space and time of resistance) and resulting in a new, modal, interconnected interpretation of time. We live in a "speculative time structure" where "future happens before the present" and the "postcontemporary" conceptualizes transformative, speculative, poetic actions and pragmatics towards an "open future" instead of an "automated future" (Avanessian & Malik, 2016; photo: p. 65).

past and future equally important in the organization of the system
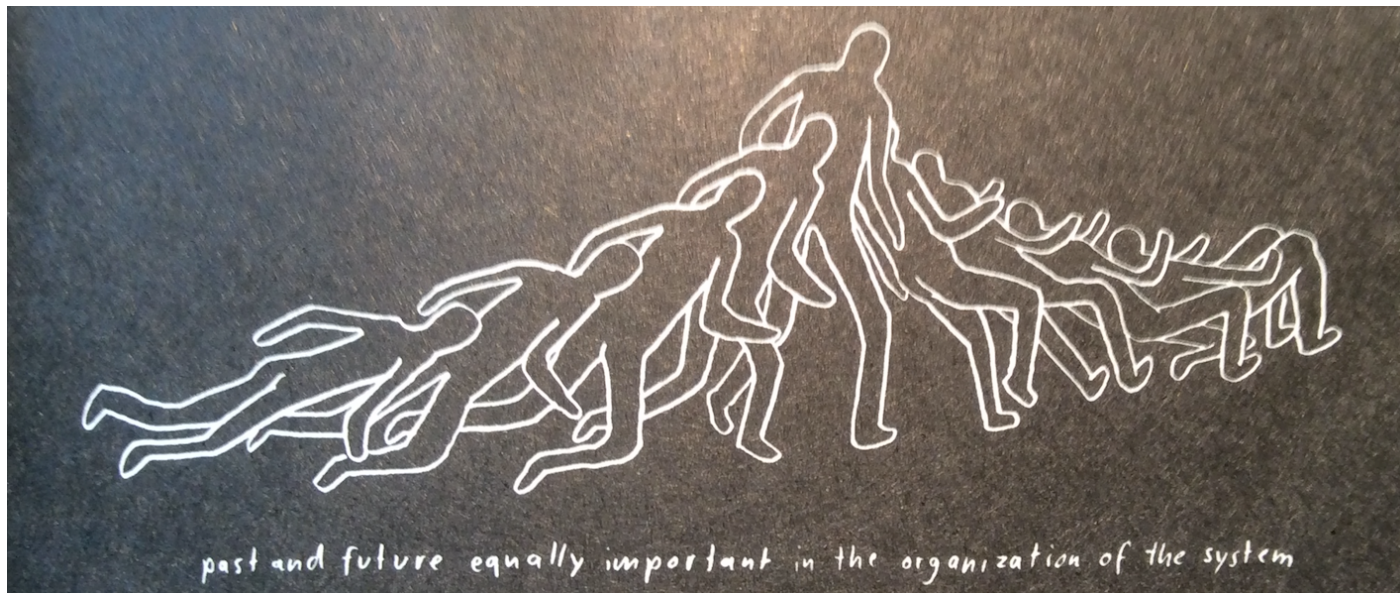
Emerging Post-Contemporary Paradigms

Visionary Leadership in a Turbulent World: Thriving in the New VUCA Context

- Mindset
  - Ethical leadership: Universal ethics
  - Resilience: meaning-making
  - Flow-based leadership: better decision-making
- Skillset: Change management, innovation, and collaboration
- Knowledge-set: Systems thinking, systems coaching, and cultural intelligence

VUCA
VOLATILITY | UNCERTAINTY | COMPLEXITY | AMBIGUITY

(Elkington, van der Steege, Glick-Smith, & Green, 2017)

Conclusion: Potential Elements of a Model of POst-COntemporary LEADERSHIP
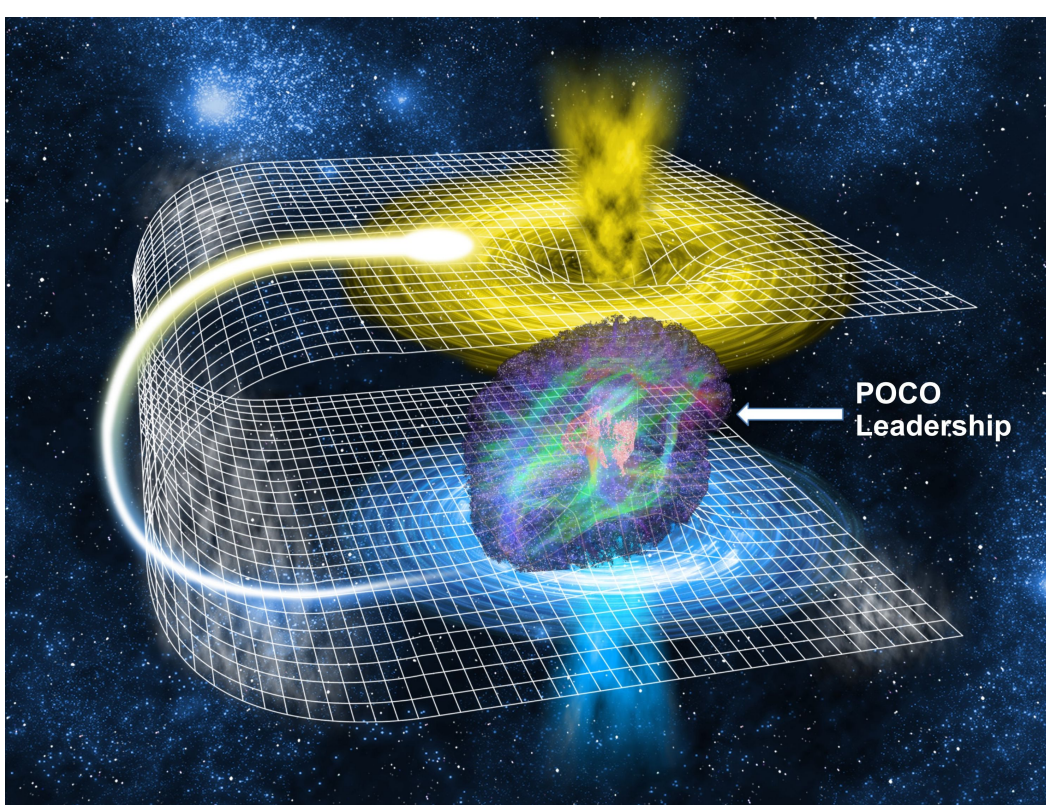

POCO Leadership

Photo credits to: Shutterstock.com (wormhole_25016035; licensed download) and Ivan Dimkovic (https://i.ytimg.com/vi/PM_gTOm9fgk/maxresdefault.jpg; "fair use")

Complex and highly adaptive system floating in the multi-dimensional time-space (dis-) continuum of co-existing values, states, and modes:

- local – global – trans spatial
- Intra – inter – trans personal – trans human
- past (future) – present (past) (future) – future (past)
- claim – enable – sustain – disclaim
- disruptive – poetic – co creative – synthetic – integrative
- dynamic – fluid – elastic – plastic
- emergence – design – change
- structure – process – influence – relationship – system(s)

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Conclusion: Potential Elements of a Model of POst-COntemporary LEADERSHIP

Examples of PoCo Followership and Leadership attitudes, skills, and behaviours:

- local – global – trans spatial: Imagine the future, think globally, and act locally
- Intra – inter – trans personal – trans human: Empathize with and consider on all levels; shared decision-making/problem-solving/leadership across human/non-human systems
- past (future) – present (past) (future) – future (past): Imagine and consider non-linear developments
- claim – enable – sustain – disclaim: leadership as choreographic artistry
- disruptive – poetic – co creative – synthetic – integrative: open minds by disrupting the "traditional" while creating and integrating the unexpected
- dynamic – fluid – elastic – plastic: move, shake, and shape

https://www.faithandleadership.com/nathan-kirkpatrick-trapeze-artists-fly-through-air-holding-trust

- emergence – design – change: listen and respond; dance the dance of followership
- structure – process – influence – relationship – system(s): multi-level and multi-dimensional follower- and leadership

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