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## Women and Leadership: An Integrative Focus on Equality

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Women and leadership require a timely and crucial dialogue. Never has this conversation been more important. Imagine, if you will, a world without exclusionary barriers. Imagine a world without gender, sexual orientation or racial prejudice where opportunity for advancement, promotion, and income level are based on the innate talents of the people involved. Let yourself see this world, in your mind's eye, and imagine what leadership, leading and following might look like. In such a world, as Kumar (2011) observes "...we are all leaders" (p.1).

## **Introduction**

### ***Overview: We are all leaders***

Leadership is multifaceted, interdisciplinary and complex in both theory and practice (Bennis, 2007; Kellerman, 1984; Nohria and Khurana, 2010). *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Feminist Thought* (2012) in its "Call For Papers" defined a "leader as a person who guides others toward a common goal, showing the way by example and creating an environment in which other team members feel actively involved in the entire process, not a boss, but a person committed to carrying out the mission of the venture." Cashman (2008) defined leadership {as} "...authentic influence that creates value" (p.24). These definitions are gender neutral and connote the idea that a leader is "not a boss, but a person."

New definitions of leadership are needed throughout all levels: self, society, organizations, nations, and the planet. Dr. Ervin Laszlo (2006), renowned scientist, systems thinker, and futurist warns that we are on a precipice in a period of "unprecedented power and ...responsibility" (p.51), that we are heading in the wrong direction ((p. xix) and further suggests (2008) that we are at a crossroads, whereby, we now face the choice to select a new paradigm for transforming leadership or to stay with "business as usual" (p. 9).

Laszlo's work is prophetic. Global and local needs have never been more exigent. The world has become one global entity in terms of leadership. Each human can contribute to shaping a future wherever she or he happens to reside. Across the planet, the world's populations are living amidst daily upheavals in weather patterns, terrorist attacks, country-wide and city-wide violence, global fiscal crises, high unemployment, food deprivation and starvation, and epidemic viral infections. The United States is polarized ideologically about how to solve its domestic problems. Within the United States, rights thought to be secure are in danger such as: reproductive health access and issues; protection against domestic violence; the voting rights act of 1965; legal access and women's combat rights within the military; equitable pay and wage scale transparency; and daily violent reminders of the lack of moderate gun control. Each of these issues has multifaceted economic, political and social systemic repercussions.

What are some needed course corrections? Fritjof Capra (1986) eminent physicist, author, and thinker states that, we are in a "crisis of perception (p.3) and that we need to make a paradigm shift from a patriarchal world view to a more holistic and integrated one, with concomitant shifts in perceptions, values, and culture (1982; 1993; 1996). These shifts will change our ideas, according to the California Institute of Noetic Sciences, about competition, scarcity, and separateness (as cited in Laszlo, 2008, p. 78)

How will these shifts be reflected in scholarship and practice? We need different ways to view leadership that no longer follow prescribed and static approaches. Time-worn assumptions about leadership will need to change and become more inclusive and integrative. These assumptions will hold a different mindset from traditional leadership theories (Burns, 2003; Bennis, 2007; Cashman, 2008; Kanter, 2010, p. 374; Pearson, 2012). However, they may not be the product of new convictions; in fact, they may well integrate ancient leadership practices and traditions (Arrien, 1993; Bordas, 2012; Brown, 2003; Estes, 2010;

Judith, 2006; Lietaer, 2003). The task, according to Kanter, is threefold: deal with “uncertainty, complexity, and identity” (p. 375).

This article explores these shifts and ideas through a brief review of current leadership opportunities for women, through an exploration into more inclusive models, whereby feminine leadership principles are awarded an equal claim to validity with masculine leadership principles, and through a brief summation of contemporary models that integrate equality. The following questions frame the exploration:

- Why is gender equality<sup>1</sup> so important today?
- What is needed to incorporate equality into current leadership practice?
- What do inclusive contemporary leadership models contribute to leadership practice?

## **Women and Leadership**

### ***Leadership Opportunities for Woman: The Questions***

As we enter the second decade of the 21st century, questions of how women are faring in leadership positions are timely. Are women’s leadership opportunities keeping pace with more inclusive ideas? What measures are being used to define women’s leadership successes? Are men and women’s leadership talents and skills equally validated? We confine the following section to a cursory review of the research, available opportunities and current issues regarding women’s leadership within top positions. The issues for women within lower level leadership positions are quite different, equally important and left for further analysis at another time.

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<sup>1</sup> Gender equality includes both masculine and feminine and will be described more fully below.

Current research, reports and literature are paradoxical because they reveal both movement into top leadership positions for women and also inequity and imbalance at top levels depending upon the sector investigated. It is certainly true that women have achieved better acceptance into the workforce and are advancing into more influential positions (nationally) in the United States and (globally) within other countries. It is also true that women are becoming more visible and more vocal within U.S. national politics (Wilson, 2007), where women are serving or have served in key high-level government roles, and are now competing in Presidential elections. Yet it is still unclear how much progress has actually occurred.

Eagly and Carli (2007) ask: "Is there still a glass ceiling?" (p. 1) and outline seven reasons why this metaphor is misleading (p. 7) and they pose an alternative, "The Labyrinth Metaphor"(pp.5-6) to describe the complexities surrounding women's continued exclusion from high level positions (pp. 1-8). Webster, Beehr and Elacqua (2011) concur that the glass ceiling image has changed conceptually and aver that: "...women are underrepresented in top ranking jobs" (p. 71). Leadership authorities and scholars Kellerman and Rhode (2007) concur and suggest that "...women's opportunities are anything but equal (p. 1). Women are still struggling for equal access to top positions of power and/or denied equal pay within many sectors (Catalyst, 2010; 2012; Cundiff and Stockdale, 2011; Sandberg, 2013; Tarr-Whelan, 2011, pp. 162-164; Webster et al., p. 71). Catalyst studies confirm that leadership opportunities for women are definitely unequal at top level corporate positions.

Gender, racial, and sexual orientation biases, stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination are toxic undercurrents for women and people of color in many of our workplaces and within general society (Basow, 2011; Cundiff and Stockdale, 2011; Ely and Rhode, 2010). Women's exclusion from leadership positions, as Eagly and Carli (2007) explain, is highly complex and multi-disciplinary in scope

(p. ix). The challenges women face when they enter leadership roles, according to Ely and Rhode, is made even more complex within organized systems (p. 379). Ely and Rhode explore and identify several of the challenges, analyze structural and attitudinal barriers as well as concomitant individual, organizational, and societal consequences of these barriers, and also cite a wealth of research studies and data that support challenges outlined in their chapter (pp. 380-385). The outcome of many of these shifting challenges is, according to Eagly and Carli, stereotypes, pay inequities, and biased comparisons of women's leadership skills, which are the direct result of "mental associations about women and men" (pp. 83-89).

A question repeatedly asked is: do women and men lead differently? Some argue quite convincingly and affirmatively (Helgesen, 1995; Helgesen and Johnson, 2010). Others, such as Bolman and Deal (2008), disagree and assert that research disconfirms the argument (p.352). Although many experts agree with Bolman and Deal that leadership does not differ in terms of gender, the issue is much more complicated than the simple question suggests (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Kellerman and Rhode, 2007; Keohane, 2007). The question persists because, as Eagly and Carli enumerate, leadership "styles" may differ between women and men (pp. 119-135). Leadership style differences are then used to compare and evaluate performance on roles, tasks, and interpersonal interaction. One outcome seen in studies is that a different set of metrics is used for judging performance. The result is that women at the top are sometimes evaluated differently from their male counterparts (Ely and Rhode, 2010; Kellerman and Rhode; Tarr-Whelan, 2011). This causes a "double bind" (Catalyst, 2007; Eagly and Carli; Ely and Rhode) in which, for example, as Ely and Rhode show, women are evaluated as incompetent or lacking confidence on one set of scales and then evaluated as brash, pushy, insensitive (or worse) when similar actions or behaviors are measured on another set of scales (pp. 384-388). Eagly and Carli describe how

unconscious stereotypes and biases, based on a conceptual belief in masculine leadership superiority (discussed in the next section) shape evaluative measures, contribute to stereotypes of leadership, as well as create unequal and uneven practices (p. 137). The authors report further that women's "...somewhat less masculine ways of leading have come into greater fashion" (p.119), thereby adding new layers to the already complex labyrinth that women must decipher. Perhaps, then, the question of whether men and women lead differently is incorrect and needs to be rephrased (discussed below).

### ***A Focus on Gender Inequality: Background***

Charlotte Bunch, of Rutgers University's Center for Women's Global Leadership, asks "...why there has been so little attention paid to women leaders over the years?" (as cited in Paludi & Coates, 2011, front page). The conceptual background for this question as well as why barriers and stereotypes about women in leadership continue has deep historical roots. Capra (1982) and Merchant (1990) both trace separately, and within different theoretical perspectives, that these barriers originated from historical emphasis upon male (masculine) dominated leadership models, which emerged from the 16th and 17th century models of the universe, specifically through the discoveries of Rene Descartes and Isaac Newton (Capra, pp. 53-69; Merchant, p. xvi). In different ways, both sets of discoveries generated beliefs that have continued into modern time.

Prior to these discoveries, ideas of the universe and concomitant leadership models were, as Judith (2006) and Merchant (1990) suggest, inclusive of the feminine principle<sup>2</sup> and balanced; the earth was considered a "living female" (Merchant, p. xvi), the "Great Mother" and the central caregiver (Judith, p. 67). In this worldview, men and women held equally valid if different roles within the

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<sup>2</sup> The feminine principle will be defined and explained in pages 9-12 below.

culture and society; women as well as men were honored as leaders. Concomitantly, the belief among early philosophers, as traced by Wilber (2000), was that there existed a “great nest of being” a nonlinear, interlocking spiral that connected body, mind, and spirit (p.6),

This mindset changed to a mechanistic model, whereby the earth, the living archetype of mother was no longer honored and valued. Merchant (1990) elaborates how the mechanistic world view came into prominence, how nature was seen as passive, not organic, and was “...to be dominated and controlled by human beings” (p. xvi). Capra (1982) traces how Cartesian ideas changed the prevailing concepts that mind, body and spirit were interconnected into the belief that the rational mind was superior to the body and the spirit. He argues further that the Scientific Revolution created a worldview in which men were in charge and were considered superior to women (p.40). This worldview predicated upon analysis, rationality, and the superiority of the scientific method (pp. 56-62) was now seen, according to Wheatley (2006), as a world of stability, constancy, and certainty. The earth operated as a clockwork machine, which could be controlled. Cartesian and Newtonian notions of the universe overshadowed the Western approach for the next three hundred years (pp. 28 -29).

Reductionist and masculine dominant leadership models still predominate in many sectors. Wheatley (2006) demonstrates that such assumptions did not change and/or keep pace with the emergence of new scientific discoveries in the modern era (pp. 27-47). The image of a fixed world view was maintained even as twentieth century physicists made discoveries that questioned these assumptions. Ideas concerning masculine superiority still underpin many of the current ideas about leadership. Capra (1982) suggests that this “...one-sided evolution” is “...bordering on insanity” (p. 42). Wheatley calls it “Newtonian despair” when she describes a conversation with a colleague about a change project that was stalled by reliance upon answers from one paradigm (p. 47).



Thus, historical ideas and models of leadership were seen as static and controllable. Even as quantum physics described a world of change, probabilities, interrelationships, and interconnections at subatomic levels, the ability to question and adapt to the new and emerging paradigms diminished. As Eagly and Carli (2007) suggest, historical assumptions about leadership became fixed and unchanging and shaped our ideas well into the present (p. 137). Ideas of certainty, stability, command and control and the superiority of masculine over feminine dominated leadership practice. The outcome for leadership principles and practice was the development of an “either/or” perspective, which maintained the reductionist idea that one principle (masculine) was better than another (feminine), rather than seeing them as complementary aspects that exist within each of us as people and as leaders.

### ***A Focus on Equality***

Women matter in life and in leadership. Lietaer (2003) asks: “What would be different in a society in which the feminine approach to leadership is honored?” (p.6). One fact is plain and simple: we need the feminine voice as well as the masculine voice in all activities. How then, do we bring the feminine approach into leadership? First, leadership theory and practice requires an integrative or inclusive framework to reverse mechanistic thinking and approaches from the past. Secondly, as Davis suggests, we require more “inclusive mindsets” and a different way of framing leadership principles (personal communication, March 8, 2013). Brown (2003) suggests that “we create the conditions to invite the feminine leadership dimension into ourselves, our organizations and our leadership” (p. 49). However, these conditions already exist within each of us (as shown below) before emphasis on the masculine principles subdued them.

Tarr-Whelan (2011) offers an alternative model through which to invite the feminine voice back into the conversation. Given the lack of opportunities for

women in leadership described above, Tarr-Whelan suggests we improve gender equality and inclusion, through a 30% solution. This is an advocacy model meant to balance leadership by having this percentage or more of women on boards and in positions of top power. She makes compelling arguments for this solution, and shows “The global roll call of progress includes Norway, France, Spain, South Africa, Australia, Finland, Germany, and the UK but not the United States” (p. xiii). Tarr-Whelan gives practical step by step guidelines and practices to improve the situation in the United States and tested tools and action steps to help women advance.

Another way to frame the idea of equality and an inclusive mindset is through the lens of wholeness and integration. Lemkow (1990) states that “...oneness and unity-in-multiplicity” symbolizes the interconnections within wholeness (p. xxii). Capra (1982) defines holistic from the Greek word... “holos (‘whole’) [as]...an understanding of reality in terms of integrated wholes...” (p. 38)). Thought leaders, scientists, and living system proponents (Bohm, 1980; Bortoft, 1996; Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski and Flowers, 2004a; Senge, et al., 2004b; Wheatley, 2006) provide additional support for the idea that parts and wholes are organically interconnected. Senge (et al., 2004 b) suggest that parts and wholes are interactive and provide alternative ways to see and describe the world; a way that differentiates living systems from the fragmentation of the past and from machine metaphors (p.5). This way of seeing the world is integrative, holistic, and inclusive. When framed in this way, inclusive leadership ideas consist of both masculine and feminine principles, which contribute equally and differently to the whole. When one principle is privileged over the other, both aspects become unbalanced and out-of-alignment; inequality, unequal opportunities, inequities in advancement, and income result.

It must be noted that the integration of a more inclusive mindset, whereby both masculine and feminine principles are viewed equally, does not replace

discoveries made by either Cartesian or Newtonian thinking and/or reliance upon the scientific method of inquiry. However, in order to enlarge our world views to meet current realities, as Bohm (1980) explains, expanded insights and broader horizons beyond the Newtonian “form of insight” (p.5) have proven valid for contemporary thought. Wilber (2000; 2007) suggests that reductionist thinking be incorporated into an integral and all inclusive framework. Might this not be translated to include expansion and/or reinstatement of the feminine principle into our ideas, worldview and leadership constructs?

### ***The Feminine Principle’s Contribution to Leadership***

Women’s voices make a difference to a given situation. It is the interaction between feminine and masculine principles, rather than gender, which shapes leadership. The idea that women process information differently is not new (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule, 1986; Frenier, 2011; Helgesen and Johnson, 2010; Wilber, 2000; 2005; 2007). Helgesen and Johnson suggest, that women contribute through vision and describe how women literally see and notice what is going on around them. The authors call this ‘Broad Spectrum Notice’ (pp. xiii) and assert that women’s abilities are often unvalued and undermined. They suggest that the “broad spectrum way of seeing” is equally as important as the “more narrow focus on the task at hand” which is usually associated with masculine ways of seeing (pp. 25-26).

Whatever the gender, the crucial element is to identify the many ways a situation is viewed and interpreted, not specifically who is doing the seeing (Bolman and Deal, 2008). “Broad spectrum seeing,” what Frenier (2011) calls “diffuse awareness” (pp. 15-31) facilitates a way of seeing that can integrate both the part and the whole and antidotes, what Helgesen and Johnson (2010), call “one-sided vision” such as occurred in the 2008 financial crisis (pp. 25-38). They suggest that how women process information matters and that “broad-spectrum

noticing” deserves the same credence as other more commonly accepted definitions of visionary leadership. Frenier, a businesswoman and practitioner who, based upon personal search, actual business experience, research into Jungian Psychology, and an analysis of what she believes should be part of our economic life, categorizes four aspects that women contribute to leadership: including “diffuse awareness” (pp. 15-31) and “deep community” (pp. 23 -77). Thus, women have certain styles, talents and ways of leading that are important and bring unique perspectives to the leadership context. This does not mean that they are better leaders or worse leaders; it means that they are able to contribute different perspectives to complex situations, events and issues.

### **Inclusive Principles of Leadership**

#### ***Inclusive Mindsets, Leadership and Ancient Principles***

As one illustration of how to adopt an inclusive mindset to leadership principles, this section will look at the ancient Taoist principles, specifically the ideas intrinsic to yin and yang. The yin-yang symbol,<sup>3</sup> according to the Encyclopaedia, Britannica (2013), “...suggests the two opposite principles or forces that make up all the aspects of life.” The idea that opposites make up the whole are fundamental to Taoist thought where, as Cooper (1981) explains, ideas are based on natural forces, nature and energy rather than religion (p. 13). For example, the yin aspect is most often associated with the female, and the yang aspect is most often associated with the male. However, according to Cooper, “It is a mistake to translate the opposites into ‘male’ and ‘female’—the terms are too heavily loaded



<sup>3</sup>

(Encyclopaedia, Britannica, Inc. 2013).

in the West; it is better to look on them as the passive and active, receptive and creative forces in Nature..." (p.14). The two forces exist together; within each yin (black space) there is a small white yang component and within each yang (white space), there is a small dark yin component. In Taoist terms, you cannot have one without the other.

Unless Taoist Philosophy is understood, and the yin-yang connection is interpreted correctly, it seems that they are separate principles. Taoist thought outlines the continuous change between the two forces in which there is constant interactive, cyclical oscillation and ever changing motion; one is not considered better than the other. It is the interactive aspects that create reality within an interconnected cosmos. The yin-yang symbol encapsulates the ideas that opposites are not necessarily opposing principles. When we view the idea of yin-yang as both symbol and representation of reality, we derive a composite picture of what we call masculine and feminine principles, which are complementary, not separate ideas. Western ideas separated them, which left one principle privileged and the other undervalued. Yet, humans have both aspects within them. When we segregate parts of ourselves, we become unbalanced and develop many of the pathologies, dysfunctions, personal and systemic illnesses evident today. It is timely to integrate the "inner" male and female aspects in order to find harmony in life and work (Wilber, 2005). These principles or qualities are part of the human psyche, they are meant to be integrated, to be "both-and"<sup>4</sup> rather than "either-or." Both feminine and masculine aspects, as Judith (2006) notes, must be

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<sup>4</sup> The philosophical and scientific origin of "either-or" and "both-and" principles are well beyond the scope of this article. For our purposes, we accept the way Frenier (2011) framed "**both-and**" (pp.23-24). However, Frenier does not cite any original source for origin of the concept and is vague about its contemporary usage when she writes: "Some people have used the phrase 'both-and' to distinguish a mind-set that validates different kinds of information, as opposed to what they perceive as the dominant 'either-or' mentality..." (p. 24).

present in order to move through correct developmental and evolutionary stages (p. 253). It is also important, as Brown (2003) warns, not to confuse “feminine” and “both-and” principles with “female gender” as these terms have different meanings (p.49).

***A focus on “Both-and” rather than “Either-or”***

There are patterns within history that support the idea of evolving, interactive “both-and” masculine and feminine leadership cycles. Judith (2006) suggests that four archetypal patterns can be identified through specific historical eras and that cyclical fluctuations can be traced through time (p. 281). Judith names the four patterns: “static feminine” “dynamic masculine” “static masculine” and “dynamic feminine,” and charts the primary archetypal pattern, underlying principles, values, accomplishments and challenges within each pattern (p.279). Furthermore, each pattern denotes a specific historical era (p.279). While ideally men and women will learn to better integrate both principles in dynamic interaction within themselves, we have seen that throughout history, that one archetypal pattern will dominate. This has, as Judith shows, both positive and negative outcomes (p.281).

How can we reverse “either-or” thinking? According to Capra (1982), “reductionism and holism, analysis and synthesis, are complementary approaches (pp. 267-268). Proper balance is the key. The Taoist balance is the harmony within the opposites (Cooper, 1981). Owen (1999) in describing “the yin and yang of leadership” agrees and says “...much of the rest of the world looks at the same information and concludes both/and” (p. 47). Western society as discussed in previous sections, over emphasized the masculine and under emphasized the feminine, which, as Capra suggests, privileged the rational over the intuitive (p. 42).

What does leadership look like within a connected “both-and” inclusive and integrative perspective, which speaks to equality in life and leadership? Owen

(1999) calls “both-and” the “range of opportunity” within which leadership operates. He writes further that if the world is seen in only masculine or feminine terms, imbalance occurs (p. 47). We need both aspects in the leadership field. Brown (2003) has paired 27 dimensions that incorporate “both-and” aspects of leadership. Examples of these 27 dimensions include the following: “listening and talking; nurturing and challenging; empathy and objectivity; exploring and judging; accepting and insisting” (p. 52). When any of these dimensions are connected and conjoined, the meaning changes from “either-or” to “both-and.” Opposites become collaborative rather than competitive. Lietaer (2003) conveys a picture of “yin coherence” and “yang coherence” at the intersection within the yin and yang (p. 8). The next section will address how and where leaders, both men and women, can find available learning materials to help them practice “both-and” leadership concepts.

### **Discovering “Both-and” in Leadership Practices**

#### ***Contemporary Models: An Overview***

We will look at examples of contemporary inclusive “both-and” leadership models to see how they contribute to leadership thought and practice. This will be accomplished through a quick scan methodology, rather than an in-depth analysis, because none of the models offered for review can be fully described within a short article; they must be studied and practiced. The sample models presented below provide actual ways to understand, to implement and to integrate equality into leadership practice.

Masterful leadership in our lexicon means balanced and integrative. It includes the symmetry of “both-and” principles, whereby both feminine and masculine leadership qualities are equally accepted, respected, honored and practiced. In the following sections, we describe three general categories that focus on integrative

and inclusive models: balanced leaders in action; integrative whole person approaches, and one contemporary model with inclusive “both-and” properties.

### ***Balanced Leaders in Action***

In this section, balance connotes the idea of an integrative whole, of leaders who are aligned within their being, who know themselves, and who are authentic and honest about their talents, skills and shortcomings (Barsh and Cranston, 2009; Roberts, 2007). Two examples are presented in this section, which represent two unique and innovative approaches.

One noteworthy example is found in Senge’s (2006) groundbreaking work. Senge’s model is inclusive and equally applicable to both men and women even though he does not specifically address this idea. First introduced in 1990, the work synthesized a wealth of material about learning in organizations from several disciplines. It integrated and linked organizational learning and leadership development through practice of five separate systems, which Senge called disciplines: Systems Thinking; Personal Mastery; Mental Models; Building Shared Vision; and Team Learning (pp. 5-26). Leaders may practice each of the five disciplines separately or in combination. Once begun, this set of practices has personal and systemic value for all leaders as they become more aware of the processes involved in learning how to lead well as opposed to simply occupying a role or position. Senge’s ideas became a gold standard for leadership, change, learning, and practice, as individuals, groups in national as well as global systems began to work with the concepts. Senge’s leadership in the area has also fostered world-wide learning networks, conferences and publications.

In another example, Barsh and Cranston (2009) have coined the term “Centered Leadership,” which originates from the proprietary research of the McKinsey Leadership Project. This model is equally applicable for both men and women. It is based on five years of actual research, which is still ongoing, and describes a



five dimensional integrative, circular, interactive and reinforcing model that anyone can practice. The dimensions of the model are: “Meaning, Framing, Connecting, Engaging, and Energizing” (p. 12). Each chapter addresses a dimension of the model, plus subparts within the model, and narrates how specific women leaders, 25 in total, from different sectors and different countries, exemplify and succeed within the five dimensions. Centered leadership provides an excellent example of how the feminine principle can be researched and applied to leadership practice.

### ***Integrative Whole Person Approaches***

Whole person approaches to leadership have many contemporary exemplars, which integrate ideas about equality and “both-and” mindsets within leadership practice.. One contemporary feature applicable to every leader of either gender is a need for personal inner work. Cashman (2008) provides a useful way to do deeply reflective work. His model, presented within a workbook format, takes the reader into seven areas for practice: Personal Mastery; Purpose Mastery; Interpersonal Mastery; Change Mastery; Resilience Mastery; Being Mastery; and Action Mastery (p.32). Mastering the seven practices is useful for both personal and professional development. When practiced in whole or part, the seven areas facilitate development of an array of competencies in leading authentically with balance and awareness.

Integrating whole person (body/mind/spirit) practices into leadership is now acceptable and valued (Bryner and Markova, 1996; Chatterjee, 1999; Wilber, Patten, Leonard and Morelli, 2008). Within this context, NeuroLeadership is, according to Ringleb and Rock (2009) a “...fast-growing field...in the multidisciplinary fields of leadership inquiry” (pp. 1-7). Neuroleadership, according to Siegal and McCall (2009) connects “...mind, brain, and relationships...” (p. 24) and is, by its very nature, representative of inclusive,

integrative, “both-and” practices. For example, according to Siegel and McCall, interpersonal neurobiology (IPNB) has refocused the study of leadership in its ability to combine “...scientific rigor with an appreciation for subjective ways of knowing...” (p. 23). Scientific rigor is most closely associated with the masculine principle and subjective ways of knowing are aligned with the feminine principle. Most importantly, neural integration has a set of tools and personal practices (McGonigal, 2012; Siegel, 2010) and is a discipline to watch as the connections to whole person research and leadership development becomes more apparent.

### ***Inclusive Leadership Models***

Fusion Leadership, a model created jointly by Daft and Lengel (2000), is intrinsically balanced in regard to gender equality. While it does not specifically address masculine and feminine principles, it is implicit in the model itself (p. 27). It was not written expressly for women in leadership roles, yet identifies many innovative and applicable ideas, which are inclusive and connote equality. The main premise of the model argues for “fusion” between the leadership paradigms Fission and fusion are considered metaphors for specific management styles. Fission is most generally associated with scientific management principles. Fusion, as the authors show, combines the subtle forces of: “...mindfulness, vision, heart, communication, courage and integrity” (p. 25). The authors diagram the systemic interactions between the forces, the individuals within organizations and the organization in its environment (p.25). The Fusion Model provides ways to release positive energy within leaders and within systems

Both fusion and fission approaches are needed, depending upon the mission, task, event and/or issue. Daft and Lengel meld “both-and” principles in every chapter, which begins with an appropriate parable and ends with a set of questions called “personal remembering.” The authors describe the need for individuals

and organizations to “break with the past” (pp. 29-44) so that the subtle forces can influence a system.

The Fusion Leadership model provides a good example of how to move from “I” to “We,” or to move from top-down leadership to system-wide participation in a change process. The authors show that a cross section or microcosm of engaged and active participants can facilitate fusion. They cite and review three specific examples of tested fusion events. These fusion events, popular within current change programs, are: Dialogue; Future Search; and Whole Scale Change (pp. 213-250). The importance of whole system change efforts in theory and also practice is worthy of much more attention than we can provide here (Block, 1993; Block, 2008; Bordas, 2012).

#### ***“Both-and” Inclusive Models: A Summary***

Questions often arise about where to find useful tools to practice inclusive leadership skills. The preceding sections have suggested several unique methods and ways for any leader to begin. The particular examples were chosen for saliency, attraction, and interest in specific ideas developed within each example. Many have been pilot-tested and practiced first hand by this author (Senge, 2006; Cashman, 2008; Daft and Lengel, 2000). Barsh and Cranston (2009), as stated above, is an attractive example of how the feminine principle may be researched and the results may be practically applied to successful leadership. Finally, mind/body and whole brain neuroscience research is changing leadership studies, leadership development and will ultimately change our understanding of leadership practice. This will support the need for “both-and” thinking within the field.

***“Both-and” Inclusive Models: Summary of Underlying Assumptions***

Contemporary leadership models with “both-and” integrative and inclusive principles exist; they have certain implicit assumptions within them. While the following list is incomplete, it summarizes the major ideas, which informed the concepts developed throughout this article.

- All human beings have both yin and yang aspects within them
- Gender equality implies the existence of balance between feminine/yin and masculine/yang principles, which are complementary not opposing principles
- Within an inclusive gender framework, male and female principles are balanced, interactive and interrelated
- Equality in leadership embraces a “both-and” rather than an either/or mindset for leading, leadership and following
- “Both-and” leadership models integrate whole person alignment of body/mind/spirit
- “Both-and” leadership models value both rational and also intuitive processes
- Potential leaders will need to conduct inner personal and professional development work
- Mindful reflective practices have proven to be important for effective action
- Masterful leadership requires practice through integrative whole person balanced approaches
- Interpersonal neurobiology or IPNB research is focused upon whole brain plasticity, which supports “both-and” complementary ideas for equality and diversity in leadership

These assumptions structure the ideas developed here and are needed: to support gender equality; to insert “both-and” principles into leadership theory; and to balance the unequal practices that currently exist for women in top positions.

### **The Challenges Ahead**

#### ***Leading Successfully***

This section addresses the “how” to successfully practice “both-and” leadership. “Both-and” offers a possibility for leading from a balanced position, has high potential to garner the best that every individual has to offer, and prescribes the means to have all voices, all perspectives listened to and be heard. Balanced options support better informed choices within any given situation. Heifetz (2007) warns that it is important to take care that we do not go to the other extreme and ignore the masculine. We need both or we get caught between “conflicting paradigms” (pp. 312-314). He suggests that men and women need to learn from each other, and “...have much to teach one another...” (pp. 321-322), which is an elegantly simple example of “both-and” thinking.

Sheryl Sandberg, the chief operating officer at *Facebook*, tells a wonderful story in *Lean In* (2013) that elucidates how to learn from each other. As she began to negotiate a compensation package with Mark Zuckerberg, Founder and CEO of Facebook, Sandberg received an opening salary offer from Zuckerberg, which she planned to accept. At this point, both her husband and brother-in-law stepped into the process to tell her that she had to give a counter offer because “...no man at my level would consider taking the first offer” (pp.46-47). She went back to Zuckerberg with a counter offer and profitably concluded the negotiation. Sandberg was coached by her husband and brother-in-law while she went through the process. How can other women steer successfully through organized systems? How do they learn the informal, unofficial, sometimes invisible rules of conduct?

Integrative models that reinforce equality at the larger system levels will help. First, a variety of approaches to integrate equality into systems will be essential; it cannot be accomplished with one model or within one paradigm. The good news is that we have available teaching models and tools to help balance our masculine and feminine aspects. Ideas and models reviewed above suggest many practices that are useful for helping women and men lead successfully and for reinforcing equality. Second, we need to practice an approach over time, by ourselves, with our teams, and within the larger system to become proficient in it. Third, we need to live by the practice in any leadership positions we occupy.

Fourth, leaders need to develop personal and interpersonal skills. For example, skill in active listening is critical and primary; leaders need to listen well, and to value diverse viewpoints. Leaders, who know how to communicate authentically, effectively, interpersonally, and professionally are better able to interpret situations, to make sense of the situation and to make good decisions (Bolman and Deal, 2008) and to avoid the “double binds” that women face. Sandberg (2013) suggests that women must “seek and speak their truth” (pp. 77-91). Helgesen and Johnson (2011) suggest that “we create the conditions” (p.106) to support the female vision, including: “value diverse ways of knowing; encourage mindfulness; support webs of inclusion; and respect the power of empathy” (pp.106-116). The potential to lead successfully can be helped by these suggestions.

### ***Summation of Challenging Issues***

We have asked many questions, perhaps, more than we can possibly answer within this brief exploration. Leadership is multifaceted, interdisciplinary and highly complex. Women’s advancement within and exclusion from leadership positions is complex. Several ideas are pertinent in the dialogue about existing challenges:

- We are all potential leaders
- We may be headed in the wrong direction, as Laszlo pointed out
- We need to unite the masculine and feminine aspects and qualities within ourselves, our organizations, our communities and ultimately our planet
- We need to continually question assumptions about leadership, leading, and following
- We need to replace exclusionary ideas with inclusive mindsets that welcome all voices and perspectives
- We need to shift perceptions and values to transform existing leadership concepts, models, opportunities and challenges
- Women's ways of leading need to be better understood for their "value added" within all sectors, not just those usually associated with women's careers

There are distinct sets of challenges that need to be addressed:

- Women and leadership cannot be isolated or separated from a general dialogue around leadership
- Women must be equally included in the conversations about positions of influence, pay scales and reward structures and in actual decision-making bodies. Difference does, said Rhode (2003), "make a difference" (p.5).
- We must find ways to resolve existing inequities, barriers, and challenges faced by women and other minorities who wish to enter the leadership field at higher level positions. This will include actually replacing past unequal practices, giving women access to equal rights in opportunity, advancement and pay, and acknowledging the value that the feminine principle adds to leadership

- We need academic scholarship that looks at the “both-and” model from an interdisciplinary perspective and that links the ideas through seemingly disparate disciplines
- We need new ways to link academic scholarship and leadership, practice. Academic scholarship needs to be more tightly connected to practice
- Within leadership practice, conceptually balanced approaches are needed that will incorporate the skills, talents and potentials of each person. The process by which we do this will become one predictor of how successfully we change directions and respond to personal and global challenges
- It is important to look beyond individual sectors, to advance inclusive ideas across sectors, disciplines and across disciplinary principles that embrace equality
- A shift to a more inclusive mindset will require mastery of a set of “both-and” skills that are equally transferrable to men and women
- We need to demonstrate and to value the unique leadership talents, styles, and skills that women bring to the table. Success-oriented metrics that include equality in measurement are needed (including but not limited to the business sector) and that do not evaluate men and women differently on the same scales

Where do we go from here? We live in a world of change, probability, uncertainty and interconnected activity. Therefore, old ways of doing work no longer suffice. It is vital to integrate masculine and feminine principles into our systems and to hold “both-and” ideas in regard to leadership. “Both-and” thinking requires new conceptualizing, which can be challenging at best and anathema at worst to the way westerners are taught to think. Additionally, integrated whole



system policies, procedures and decisions are needed in order to avoid fragmented outcomes.

Everyone on the planet has a purpose and a capacity for leadership within that purpose. Each person has something to contribute to the betterment of the whole. Unlike previous generations of leaders, this generation operates within parameters of constant uncertainty and complexity. “Both-and” principles and perspectives will be needed to meet future challenges. Why try to privilege the “one way only” paradigm to meet them? On the other hand, is a 30% solution truly the answer? What other ideas are available to help? How can we create our common human destiny? The challenges, just described, are big ones; we need everyone’s input to meet them. It makes sense to adopt “both-and” leadership principles within our households, organizations and communities.

### **Conclusions**

For many of us, leadership is a sacred calling (Gardiner (1998; Kumar, 2011) as well as a role or position to be occupied. Within a sacred leadership environment, I can clearly imagine a world without barriers and a world without gender, sexual orientation or racial prejudice. I can clearly see equal opportunity for advancement, promotion, and income scales that are based on the innate talents of the people involved. However, transformative change can be hard. It takes time; mistakes and missed opportunities occur; it is important to be gentle with oneself and others on the journey. It is both challenging and habit-breaking to alter perceptions, biases, mental models, and assumptions. It takes energy on many levels. It is equally important that we remain vigilant to our own reactions and inner conflicts. That is why personal inner work and professional development are so important to a leader’s growth.

The integration of the feminine with the masculine principles is inherent in Taoist philosophy, which is over 5000 years old. It is not a new idea; rather it is an exploration of ancient ground and territory. It is a reminder that we do not need to define ourselves as “either-or.” How do we support women and men in finding authentic leadership voices to lead from purpose and personal mastery? This will be neither masculine nor feminine, but both. It will be based on “both-and” qualities, which can incorporate many ideas for 21st century leadership.

The planet is one interrelated whole system. Each and every person, organization, group, and community is an integral part of this system. How well we begin to build capacities that include the “whole” is critical to wellbeing. Leadership is important; learning to lead and/or increasing our capacity to lead is a priority. Men and women “together” combine both fission and fusion forces that can integrate, balance, and align our leadership capacities. Obtaining these goals will require us to talk together in new ways. Dialogue, Future Search, and Whole Scale Change methods are three excellent ways to begin to talk; there are others as well.

Sandberg (2013) says that we must “work together toward equality” (pp.159 – 179). What can help men and women practice this task? How do we move out of a reductionist worldview, that states “either-or,” not “both-and?” How do we let go of the competitive qualities inherent within most of our institutionalized lives and disciplines – especially where the metrics for success are based on judgment? This article offers a pathway to change direction. It is certainly worth a try.

In summary, the opening questions, which framed our exploration, may now be revisited:

- Gender equality matters and is important for a sustainable future
- Feminine leadership principles must be awarded equal claim to validity with masculine leadership principles

- “Both-and” rather than “either-or” thinking is needed for gender equality to be integrated into current leadership practice
- Contemporary leadership models contribute to leadership practice and provide specific tools, theories and practice to help facilitate equality

The future has not happened. We have a modicum of time and opportunity to change direction. We are leaders and yet we are also humans, who share a space together on the planet. Kumar writes (2011) that “Leadership is an inner calling to lead ourselves and the world...We can all be leaders. All we have to do is wake up, stand up, live and act (p. 1).

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