

Title Teaching and Facilitating a Spirit-in-Action Spiritual Leadership Practice

Overview/Abstract (100 words):

Now more than ever the world needs leaders who are able to tap into higher callings and community as they lead self and teams. Leading Spirit-in-Action is about fusing our human and divine natures to awaken the highest good in the world. In this workshop, scholar-practitioners Author1 and Author2 [Authors names removed for submission] come together to offer a model of spiritual leadership, along with an operational process and various reflexive and creative tools for leading Spirit-in-Action. Participants will experience cultivating a dynamic leadership practice, and consider how this may be adapted to their own learning, teaching and facilitation to reshape management education.

Keywords: spiritual leadership, experiential, teaching model and tool

Activity Introduction

In a world of wicked problems, ethical decay, and a barrage of changes and choices, leaders need to tap into a higher calling and seek membership in a loving community as they lead themselves and their teams as they seek creative and innovative ways of solving the intractable problems of today. Some have proposed that spiritual leadership, which at its heart is about drawing on a source of inner strength to love and serve others, is needed in to meet these challenges both in the business community as well as for student development in higher education (Author2, 2009; Author2 & Nisiewicz, 2013).

Leading Spirit-in-Action is a practical approach for application of the spiritual leadership model. Leading Spirit-in-Action is about fusing our human and divine natures to awaken the highest good in the world. In doing so, we creatively embrace calling and community, through presence, practices and (im)possibilities. As we move through the world, learning to listen and act on choice point moments are key. Choice point moments are the crossroads and intersections that speak to us from the heart, which may not always make sense at the head level, but somehow as we listen and act, magic happens. Furthermore, to move powerfully in a world of increasingly complex challenges, responsibilities, and pressures, leaders need to take time and space for reflexivity and being in community. In doing so, they can consider deeply their connection to self, their life's purpose and interconnection within the world.

The spiritual leadership model in conjunction with its methods, tools, and interwoven Spirit-in-Action approach can be adapted and applied across various settings, such as undergraduate, graduate, cross-denominational and traditional classroom courses. The core purpose of this workshop is to illustrate and facilitate a classroom experience for participants to demonstrate how students can explore and confidently show up in the world holistically – physically, spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and socially - to make a positive difference, both personally and collectively.

Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications

Owen (2000) contends that spirit is the most important thing that must be attended to when creating powerful organizations. For Owen the word spirit may be applied in any way that people may choose to think about it: “team spirit, spirit de corps, high spirits, deep spirit, or even the eternal spirit - mother of us all” (p. 7). Likewise, we recognize the power in individuals to make sense of what spirit means for them. For our purposes “spirituality” is concerned with qualities of the human spirit and that intangible reality at the core of personality, the animating life principle or life-breath that which alerts us to look for the deepest dimension of human experience. It is at the heart of the quest for self-transcendence and the attendant feeling of interconnectedness with all things in the universe.

In this workshop we offer both an operational process and tools for leading Spirit-in-Action. These build upon the Spirit-in-Action work of Author1 (Author1, 2005) and the widely researched model of spiritual leadership model by Author2 and colleagues (Author2, 2003, Author2 2008, Author2, Matherly & Ouimet, 2010; Author2 & Nisiewicz 2013; Benefiel, Author2 & Geigle, 2014). Spiritual leadership intrinsically motivates oneself and others by drawing on an inner life or spiritual practice to foster hope/faith in a transcendent vision and nurture values based in altruistic love, which in turn satisfies universal needs for spiritual well-being through calling and membership and, ultimately, positively influence important individual and organizational outcomes, such as personal and organizational commitment and productivity,

life satisfaction, psychological well-being, and joy peace, and serenity independent of one's circumstances.

In addition, our activities are based on strong adult education principles such as experiential (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb 2017), transformative (Dirkx, 2006; Mezirow, 2000; O'Sullivan & Morrell, 2002); reflective (Schön, 1984), and whole-person learning (Yorks & Kasl, 2002). As well as, we draw upon arts-based methods (Knowles & Cole, 2008, Leavy, 2015) and nature-based activities (Plotkin, 2003, Plotkin 2008, Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013).

This session contributes to effective teaching and learning in the field of management because it provides a process model for leading Spirit-in-Action rooted in a spiritual leadership. This is an innovative approach to reshaping management education to ensure students have a solid sense of self and how they can contribute in the world with a personal spiritual foundation. Furthermore a diagnostic, self-assessment tool, which incorporates a blend of quantitative and qualitative measurements, is easily utilized in the classroom for implementation both by educators and students.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the Spiritual Leadership Model and Leading Spirit-in-Action framework as a way to measure personal growth.
- Experience Spirit-in-Action activities centering around cultivating a foundational Spirit-in-Action/Inner Life leadership practice
- Explore personally and collectively how these tools may be adapted into participants' specific classrooms and contexts.

Exercise Overview

We will begin with a welcome and introduction and then proceed to give the Spiritual Leadership model and Leading Spirit-in-Action framework overview. Participants will then be given a short survey to complete and an overview of the nature-based meditation activity. They will explore out in nature (unless logistically unable, see below for our back up plan *). We will close the session with a whole group dialogue and an invitation for participants to consider how they will get into action with this model and tools. A bibliography handout will be available around theory and practices.

In summary, the activity flow is as follows:

- Overview. A PowerPoint presentation will be given on the Spiritual Leadership model and Leading Spirit-in-Action framework.
- Survey. The Personal Spiritual Leadership/ Leading Spirit-in-Action Survey will be completed. Participants take survey and reflect on the question: Where am I in my life in regards to my own spiritual journey. What are one or two choice points I am facing?
- Nature-based Meditation Activity. Participants will be guided through a nature-based meditation activity, in which they will consider the core inquiry question: *What supports do I need for cultivating a Spirit-In-Action/Inner Life leadership practice?*
We will lead them in a silent walking meditation to an outside area and offer the core question to explore while in nature. They can either choose to wander freely and see what arises or more consciously interview Nature. The instructions for interviewing nature are as follows: Go out and interview nature by asking What can nature teach me about this

spiritual journey I am on? And/or the Spirit-In-Action leadership practice I need to cultivate?

*Note: Our back up plan if the campus does not have an appropriate nature-based place is to do a living meditation within the classroom with a fly over forest video and meditation music.

- Debrief & dialogue. As facilitator we will address both Content & Process of the activity. We will engage in critical questioning and link to the session's learning outcomes.

Critical Questioning/Sharing Overall:

- What did we do?
- What is inside it for you, either practically or symbolically?
- How does this link theory & practice for you?
- How might you apply what happened today?

More Specifically:

- What can we learn from nature/living meditation about spiritual leadership?
- What might ideally Spirit-in-Action look like for you? What is calling you? What does a loving community look like that that will help sustain you as you pursue this calling?
- Opportunities & Challenges you may face?
- What supports would we need to implement these lessons?
- What did you do? What were choice points for you? Why did you choose to do the activities that you did? (Follow up with discernment links).
- What one thing are you going to apply as a result of today's workshop?

Logistics: Projector for PowerPoint, Classroom space in quiet area, and if possible located close to a park or garden on campus nature space. This workshop can be done with small or large groups.

Session Description: Activity/Exercise

Overview of 90 minute workshop

Welcome & intro	(5 mins)
Spiritual Leadership model overview/ Leading Spirit-in-Action framework given	(15 mins)
Participants complete Survey	(15 mins)
Overview Nature-based Mediation Activity given	(5 mins)
Participants engage in nature-based meditation	(15 mins)
Participants engage in Debrief & Dialogue	(25 mins)
Closure & Participants identify takeaways/call to action	(10 mins)

Teaching and facilitating a Spirit-in-Action Spiritual Leadership Practice involves offering a model and tools to facilitate reflective practices such that participants can consider how to reflectively reinvent self and education practices. As well this session invites participants to consider how spiritual leadership practices may reshape management education.

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