

Transpersonal Leadership Series: *White Paper Seven*

Adult Development:

Its Role in the Leadership Journey

ALISON HILL AND HEATHER KATZ



TRANSPERSONAL LEADERSHIP

Routledge and LeaderShape Global in partnership are pleased to announce a series of quarterly White Papers around the subject of Transpersonal Leadership, culminating in the publication of a book entitled *Leading Beyond the Ego: How to Become a Transpersonal Leader* in March 2018.

So what is Transpersonal Leadership? The concept was first published in a report on tomorrow's leadership, based on a leadership development journey developed by LeaderShape (Knights, 2011). The word "transpersonal" was inspired by the use of the word in "transpersonal psychology" (Bynum, 2010). "Transpersonal" is defined as "extending or going beyond the personal or individual, beyond the usual limits of ego and personality".

The complete definition of a **Transpersonal Leader** is:

They operate beyond the ego while continuing personal development and learning. They are radical, ethical, and authentic while emotionally intelligent and caring.

They are able to:

- *embed authentic, ethical and emotionally intelligent behaviours into the DNA of the organisation*
- *build strong, collaborative relationships, and*
- *create a Performance Enhancing Culture that is Ethical, Caring and Sustainable.*

LeaderShape Global is a UK headquartered organisation with a global culture that operates without borders. It exists to develop people around the world who can lead beyond their ego to be radical, ethical and authentic, ie. Transpersonal Leaders. It provides work-based learning through a faculty of senior executives who are accredited coaches and experienced facilitators, blended with online content and web based tools. www.leadershapeglobal.com



To get involved in developing the conversation around Transpersonal Leadership, join the LinkedIn Group "Transpersonal Leadership – Leading beyond the Ego" at www.linkedin.com/groups/8257117

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Adult Development: Its Role in the Leadership Journey

By Alison Hill and Heather Katz

This is our seventh White Paper, entitled 'Adult Development: Its Role in the Leadership Journey' and written by Alison Hill and Heather Katz.

This insightful paper, which explains how the development of the human adult influences leadership development, follows these six popular White Papers:

- Ethical Leadership: How to Develop Ethical Leaders
- Women, Naturally Better Leaders for the 21st Century
- Sustainable Leadership; Rewire Your Brain for Sustainable Success
- Leading Across Cultures: Developing Leaders for Global Organisations
- Leadership in India: A Need to Keep Pace with India's Growth Story?
- Leadership in China: Harnessing Chinese Wisdom for Global Leadership?

As adults, we should be on a continuous journey of development. The purpose of this White Paper is to explore how our development as a leader is closely connected to our development as an adult. Knowing where we are on our adult development journey will help us understand both our own path towards transpersonal leadership and the development needs of those we lead. This paper provides an opportunity for further insights into others and ourselves.

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Introduction:

If ever our world needed true leaders who can lead in increasingly uncertain, complex and radically changing times, it is now.

Leaders need to manage and lead through enormous complexity, while providing vision and assurance to their employees, stakeholders and shareholders. They need to understand themselves and their impact as well as understand their people, organisations and stakeholders, within both the local and global context.

We are all products of our childhoods, environments, societies and many different cultures and experiences, and even as adults we may still wrestle with issues of trust, self-confidence, empathy, conflict and much more. There is still a widely-held belief that once we are past adolescence we are fully formed as adults. Rather there is the “possibility of life after adolescence” as Kegan & Lahey (2009), so beautifully express in their book *Immunity to Change*.

A compelling body of evidence shows that development continues throughout adulthood. In the 1950’s Erik Erikson (1950) developed an accessible eight-stage psychosocial model illustrating life as a series of lessons and challenges, which help us develop from infancy to late stage adulthood. Many others have built on this, including experts such as Kegan (1982), Cook-Greuter (2000), Laske (2006), Goodman (2002), and more recently Bachkirova (2011), whose model we draw on in this paper.

This process of development has parallels with the “Journey to Leadership Excellence” described in Fig. 1, which shows the main elements of leadership development required to become a Transpersonal Leader.

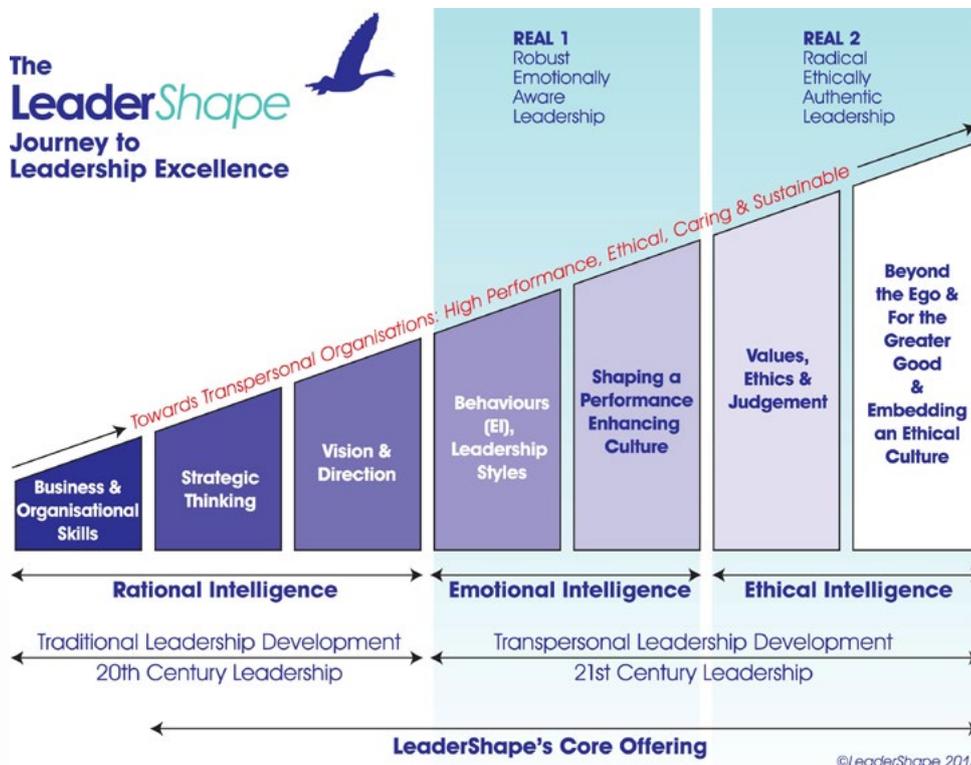
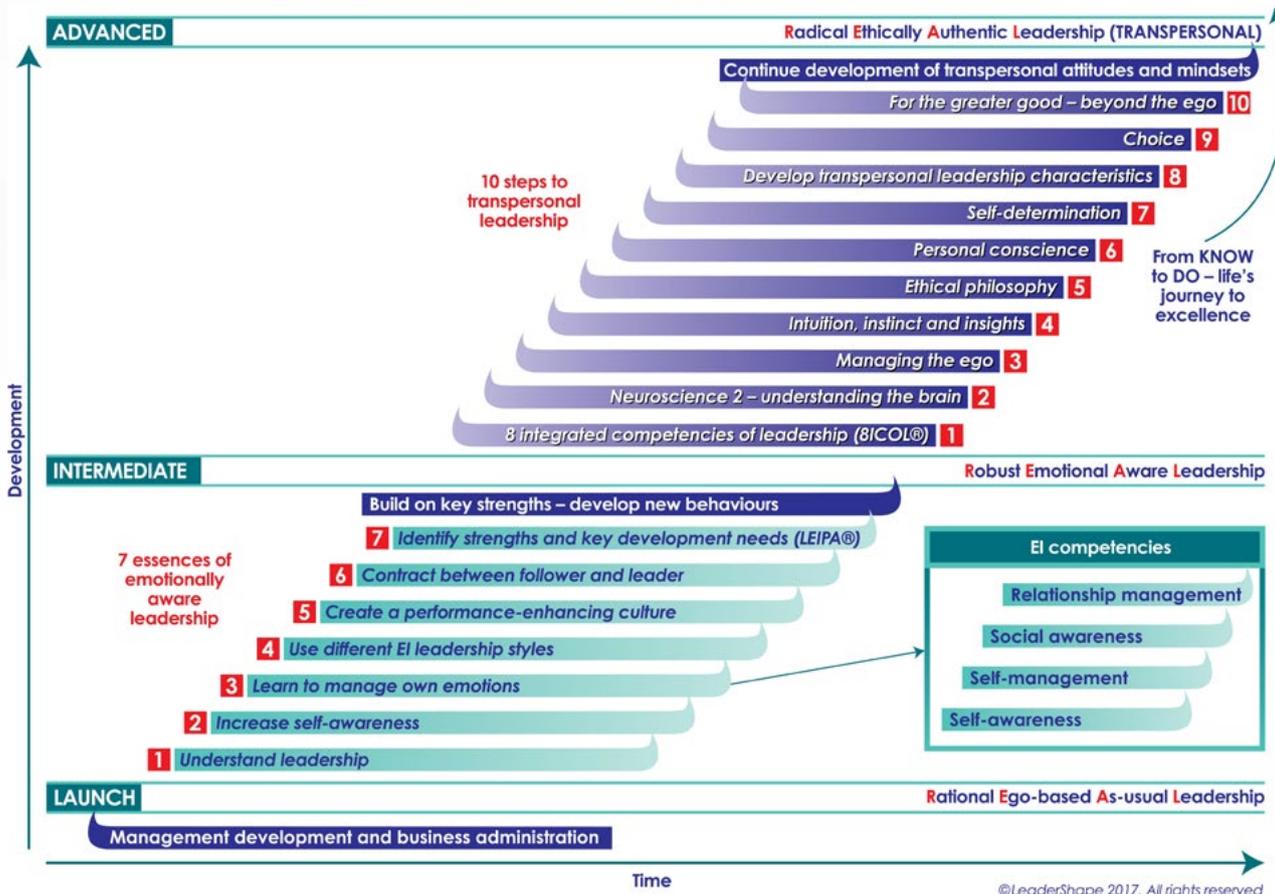


Fig. 1

As can be seen from a different and more detailed view of the transpersonal journey model (Fig. 2), most leaders start the journey with '*Rational Ego based As-usual Leadership*', some will develop through '*Robust Emotionally Aware Leadership*' and fewer to '*Radical Ethical Authentic Leadership*'.

REAL Transpersonal leadership development journey to excellence

Fig. 2



John Knights (Wall & Knights, 2013), Chairman of LeaderShape, developed this model. He believes that adult development can be accelerated as part of a behavioural and values-based leadership development programme.

To move towards 'Radical Ethical Authentic Leadership' we need to understand where we are on our own adult development path and continue to develop ourselves as leaders.

From our experience of leading ourselves, and supporting leaders to grow and change, we have some understanding about the qualities that make a great leader. We invite you to think about where you are in your own adult development and what impact this may have on your leadership. We hope to awaken your curiosity and encourage you to consciously take steps towards your own transpersonal leadership development. These steps require courage, insight, awareness, determination, humility, persistence and commitment to identify areas for development and to take action to change and develop.

Why recognising the impact of adult development is important

We are excited and challenged by the concept of adult development and its implications for our practice. Through our work we are playing a small part as catalysts to enable leaders to enhance their personal insight into themselves, their people and organisations. We support, challenge and encourage them to take relevant actions to develop themselves further.

While it is impossible to summarise decades of research on adult development into a few paragraphs, we set out some of the concepts here that inform our argument.

Theories of adult development are based on the notion that 'as people develop they become more aware of and open to a mature understanding of authority and responsibility, and display greater tolerance to ambiguity' (Ives & Cox, 2012).

Kegan's Constructive Developmental Theory (Kegan, 1982) describes adults as being in a continuous state of meaning making; that is, attempting to make sense of the world and their part in it. Kegan views adult development in terms of social maturity together with affective, cognitive, and moral development. He describes three adult developmental stages that follow one after the other over a lifetime (see Fig. 3). These are:

- **The socialised mind:** those (usually younger adults) who base their views of the world on role models and on the opinions of others. Many never go beyond this stage. Bachkirova (2011) in her book *Developmental Coaching* describes this stage as an 'unformed ego'.
- **The self-authoring mind:** those who step back from their social environment to form their own world view. This is usually thought of as the normal adult state, though many never reach this stage. Bachkirova describes this stage as a 'formed ego'.
- **The self-transforming mind:** those who have learned the limits of their own inner systems, can hold contradictions, work with ambiguity, find solutions from adversity and move from the linear to the holistic. Bachkirova describes this stage as a 'reformed ego'.

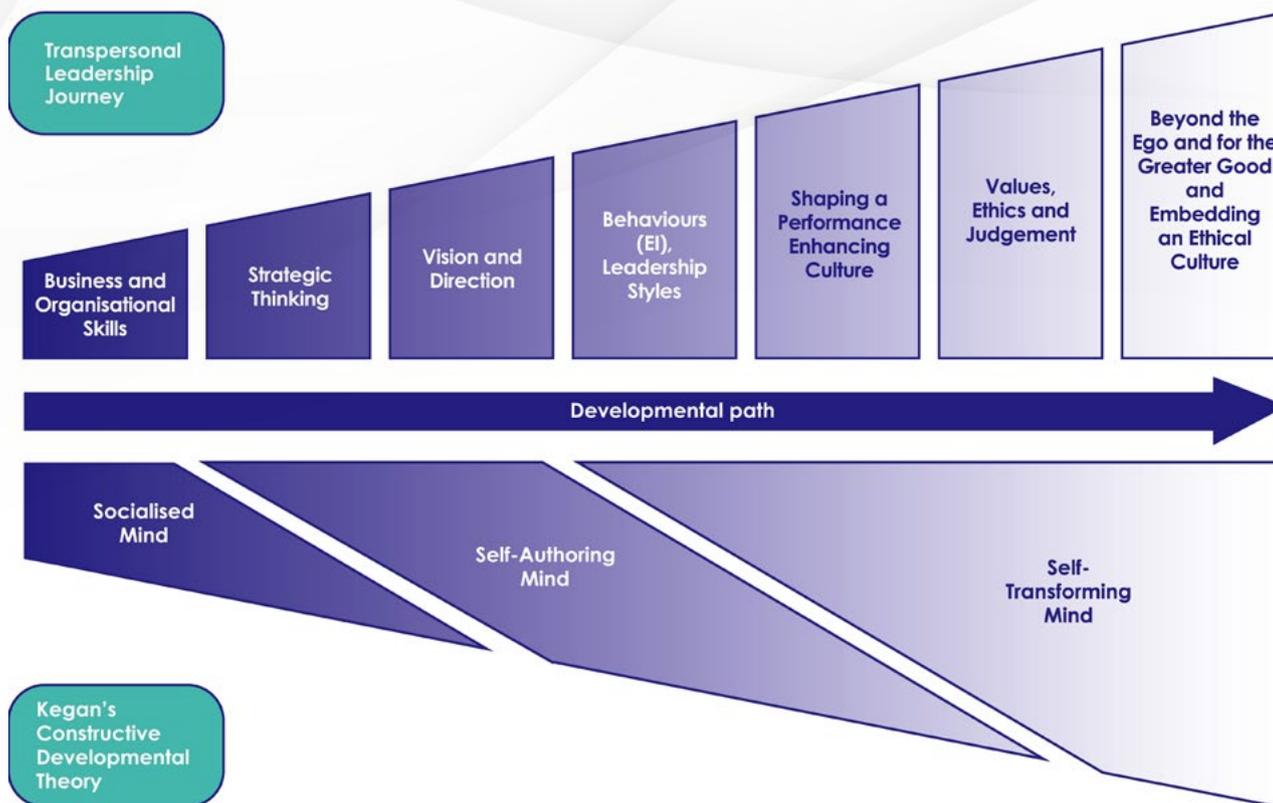
This simple three-stage model creates a narrow classification that hides a multiplicity of personal qualities. Kegan defined these stages through years of research, using a "Subject-Object" survey on thousands of participants, with consistent and replicable results.

He describes the journey through these stages as movement from Subject to Object. Subject is about self and being inward looking, whereas Object is about others and the external environment. Things experienced as Subject are unquestioned and felt as part of the self, whereas things experienced as Object can be examined objectively, questioned and possibly changed. When we move away from Subject towards Object we can reflect on what we previously have taken for granted and thereby gain different perspectives.

We believe leaders can move more easily through the 'REAL' developmental journey (Fig. 2) towards becoming transpersonal leaders when they understand where they and others are in their

The Relationship Between Leadership Development and Adult Development

Fig. 3



adult development. Fig.3. shows how the Transpersonal Leadership journey can be underpinned by Kegan’s Constructive Developmental Theory, offering a leadership development path.

This three-stage approach has helped us think about the links between stages of adult development, and the approaches leaders and their coaches might take to make the leader’s journey towards transpersonal leadership. In the next section, we suggest some approaches towards that development.

Emotional intelligence and adult development

Our experience with effective leaders is that they are often further along their adult development path than others. Here we will explore the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and adult development.

Very often in re-organisations, leaders change structures and processes, thinking that personal and organisational development occurs through so-called “hard skills” training, such as project management or strategic planning. While these are important, our experience shows

that overriding issues are primarily related to dysfunctional relationship management. This is highlighted in two previous White Papers by LeaderShape faculty Sue Coyne and Jenny Plaister-Ten (Coyne, 2016 and Plaister-Ten, 2017), where they each relate the importance and impact of emotionally intelligent relationship management to increased organisational success and sustainability.

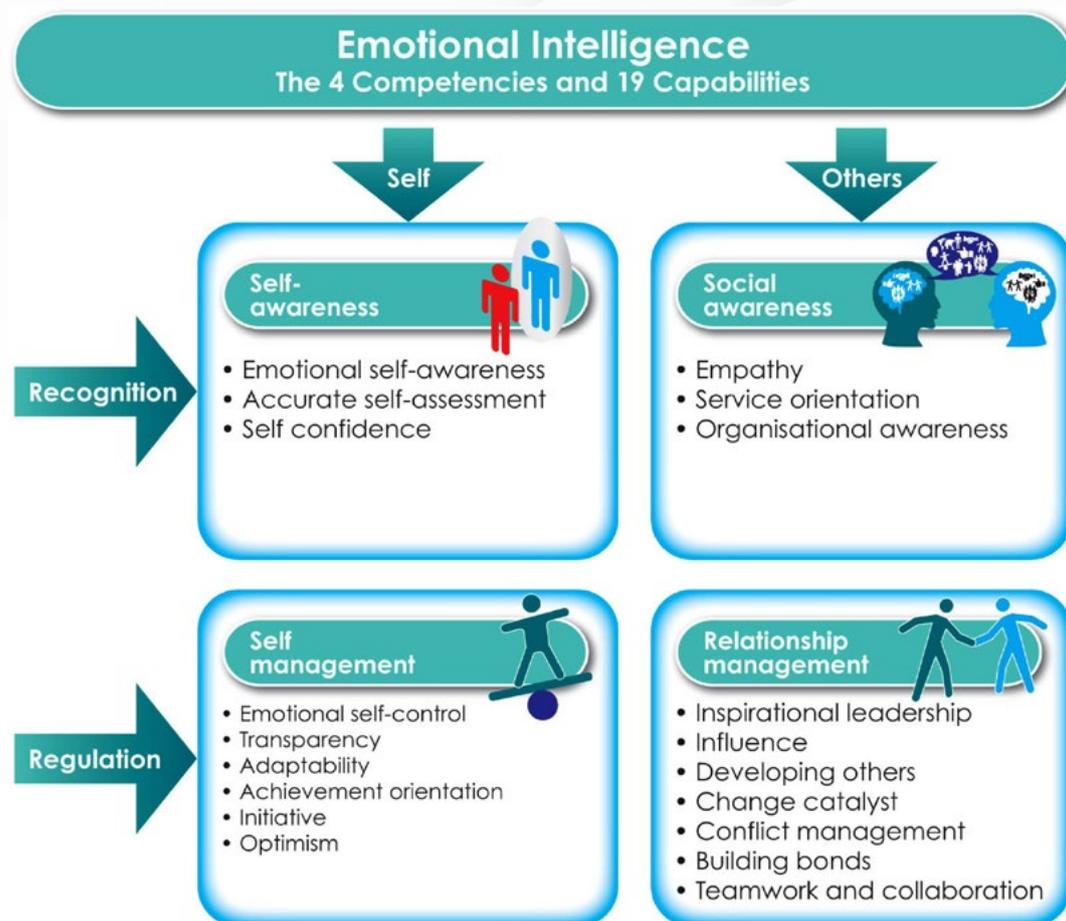


Fig. 4

Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee in their ground-breaking book on emotionally intelligent leadership (Goleman et al, 2002), highlight the concept of EI in leadership. Leaders need to practice high levels of awareness of self and others through self-awareness, self-management and relationship management (Fig.4.). Goleman links these EI competencies to his six styles of leadership. John Knights has further developed this concept in the forthcoming book, *Leading Beyond the Ego* (Knights et al, 2018). This is summarized in Table 1 where leadership styles are ordered by their degree of impact on an organisation. The most used and least effective are commanding and pacesetter leadership styles. The least used, yet second most effective is the coaching style of leadership.

While the topic requires further research, Michael Shiner (2015), supervised by Kegan et al, suggests that there is a link between EI and adult development: a claim that we develop in this White Paper.

Six Leadership Styles and their Key EI Competencies	Impact on Organisation
VISIONARY – Leads people towards a shared vision	
Inspirational Leadership (Relationship Management) Self-Confidence (Self-Awareness) Change Catalyst (Relationship Management) Transparency (Self-Management)	Most Strongly Positive +++
COACHING – Enables leaders to build capability in individuals	
Developing Others (Relationship Management) Empathy (Social Awareness) Emotional Self-Awareness (Self-Awareness)	Strongly Positive ++
AFFILIATIVE – Provides cohesiveness and harmony to a team, group or organisation	
Empathy (Self-Awareness) Conflict Management (Relationship Management) Building Bonds (Relationship Management)	Positive +
DEMOCRATIC – Builds engagement, commitment and buy-in	
Self-Confidence (Self-Awareness) Transparency (Self-Management) Inspirational Leadership (Relationship Management) Change Catalyst (Relationship Management)	Positive +
PACESETTING – Sets high standards by expecting followers to “do as I do”	
Achievement Orientation (Self-Management) Initiative (Self-Management) Negative effect if missing: Emotional Self-Awareness (Self-Awareness) Emotional Self-Control (Self-Management) Empathy (Social Awareness) Teamwork & Collaboration (Relationship Management)	Often Negative –
COMMANDING – Demands immediate compliance to leader’s agenda and decisions	
Achievement (Self-Management) Initiative (Self-Management) Influence (Relationship Management) Negative effect if missing: Emotional Self-Awareness (Self-Awareness) Emotional Self-Control (Self-Management) Empathy (Social Awareness)	Usually Highly Negative --

Table 1 – adapted and developed from Goleman et al, 2002

Developing ourselves as leaders

What is out there to enable us to enhance our leadership capabilities and develop our people and organisations further?

Coaches, talent development managers, and those with a background in human resources use many different approaches and techniques to help their clients develop. These include coaching, team facilitation, 360° feedback, psychometric testing, culture surveys, action learning sets and more.

In our experience the most radical changes come about through an integrated, multifaceted, multimodal approach involving the whole executive team, board and senior and mid-range leaders. This approach creates an essential understanding and awareness of the culture and values of the organisation, which facilitates development of individuals, teams and the organisation. In this section, we describe approaches that have had real success.

We have seen transformational change come from programmes that combine a blend of online work-based learning courses, company culture surveys, face-to-face master classes on EI, leadership styles and other inputs. These can be supported through a blend of individual and team coaching, mentoring, action learning sets, peer group support and more.

The following case study below describes such a transformative approach.

Case Study 1: An organisation-wide multimodal approach

The CEO of a large publicly funded organisation invited LeaderShape to undertake a one-year programme to develop, retain and prepare senior leaders for higher office.

The organisation provides specialist advice to the public, provided by a highly qualified cadre of professional staff. It had undergone a rapid period of growth over four years. There was significant turmoil at the top with three successive CEOs in post during the programme, with resulting confusion over the organisation's vision and strategic direction. Because of the rapid growth, the established culture had been diluted. The organisation was made up of three 'tribes': the professionals, the case workers, and the administrative staff. The professional staff regarded themselves as sapiential leaders, many using a commanding style of leadership.

Twelve people participated in the LeaderShape programme, organised into two multidisciplinary groups of six. LeaderShape ran a fully blended programme including team coaching and action learning. All participants had diagnostic interviews and all completed Myers Briggs, MBTI step 2 self-assessments. There were monthly masterclasses and before each masterclass, participants had taken part in online learning modules, which aimed to increase their knowledge. The masterclasses embedded, extended, and contextualised the learning through challenge and stretch, using a variety of interventions, with a major focus on the coaching style of leadership. Everyone did a 360° assessment with feedback (see

section on LEIPA® later in this paper), with individual reports being collated into a team assessment. At the end of each masterclass the facilitator asked for actions and takeaways.

Several people had that “Aha!” moment when they realised that their style of leadership did not bring out the best in the performance of their teams. Everyone made a shift from a commanding to a less directive, more coaching, style. Several saw the improvement in performance that resulted from a simple shift in leadership style. Within each group there was increased team work, more equality between members, and greater comfort in challenge. The facilitator observed that most moved along the ‘REAL’ journey (see Fig. 2).

The programme was fully evaluated looking at changes in behaviours and a return on investment assessment, with participants being asked to estimate the saving resulting from the improvements resulting from the programme. One participant alone estimated saving a staggering £900k in staff costs after just one year.

As well as team and organisation-wide interventions, when working with individuals we often witness change through individual coaching, particularly when associated with psychometric testing and various types of 360° feedback.

Our experience shows that self-assessed psychometrics are valuable in raising self-awareness. However, unless psychometric testing is combined with 360° feedback and ongoing coaching it doesn't usually lead towards significant sustained behavioural change.

We further think that for the development of the other EI competencies of self-management, social awareness and relationship management, 360° feedback increases insights into competencies that need development (see Table 1). The two purposes of 360° feedback are improving performance and supporting personal development (Fletcher, 2004). Feedback aims “to strengthen people's motivation to change” (McDowall, 2008) and allows a leader to learn how others see them, which gives them much greater insights.

There are many tools on the market, which give understanding and some personal insight. As coaches our experience is with LEIPA® (LeaderShape, 2017) and is described below.

LEIPA® (Leadership and Emotional Intelligence Performance Accelerator)

LEIPA® is a development tool that engages raters in the leader's ongoing development process.

It is a diagnostic development tool, the aim of which is to increase individual performance by enhancing self-awareness and appreciation of how we are experienced by others. It identifies granular interpersonal skills and behaviours that individuals and teams require to move towards excellence.

LEIPA® is different from many other 360° measurement tools because it compares observed behaviour of an individual's emotional intelligence with the desired level of behaviour. Individuals who complete a LEIPA® receive a totally bespoke coaching debrief, where the

individual decides on and chooses the behaviours they will change and the actions they will take. The candidate's chosen raters are then invited by the individual to support their process.

The strength of LEIPA® lies in its links with EI and leadership styles and works most successfully when it is part of an overall development programme.

We invite you to download a free app "LeaderShaper" (for Android; for iPhone), from which you can complete a self-assessment version of LEIPA®.

Developing our people

In this section, we suggest how leaders can more effectively support their staff depending on their level of adult development. The primary ways that a leader directly supports staff in their development is through modelling appropriate behaviours and giving feedback directly or using 360° feedback tools. We explore how leaders can give feedback, in particular 360° feedback, using a coaching style of leadership (see Table 1). Other tools, such as psychometric self-assessments, can help with self-awareness, but feedback gives people insight into how they are perceived by others and is, therefore, uniquely important. Bachkirova (2011) also proposes that coaching involving feedback requires different approaches at different developmental stages.

Feedback for people with a socialised mind (or unformed ego)

Kegan & Lahey (2009) state that the "socialized mind [. . .] strongly influences how information is *received and attended to*" (their italics). They suggest that the socialised mind is highly sensitive to the message and over-interprets it, creating other meanings well beyond that which the message was meant to convey. People with a socialised mind have an internalised view of how they are perceived because it is influenced by views of others.

Case Study 2: the socialised mind (see Fig. 3)

OV is a middle manager in a non-governmental organisation. She requested 360° feedback, and since the organisation did not have a 360° process, she and her coach agreed to develop some questions that she felt were relevant to her role. Her coach collated anonymous feedback.

Even though she asked for the intervention she could not cope with the impact of the feedback. She was still very much in 'subject' mode and was unable to take an 'object' learning view about herself. During the debrief she was more concerned with who made specific comments and was troubled by the more negative observations.

Her response seems to parallel the message from peers and manager that she was not willing to engage with the rest of the organisation and unable to reflect on feedback. Despite encouragement she chose not to explore the implications of these observations for her own development needs.

On reflection, the coach realised that she was at the level of the 'socialised' mind and was not ready for 360° feedback, as it appeared to reinforce some of her own subjective thinking. She was unable to take an objective view and was at the 'Rational Ego-based As-usual Leadership' level. The coach needed to use a different approach relevant to her adult development level.

360° feedback may not be useful for people with socialised minds (or unformed egos). Maxwell (2016) summarises other approaches that might be relevant, such as immediacy (Brockbank & McGill, 2006), feedforward (McDowall et al, 2014), and self-feedback (Whitmore, 2009), all of which may help the client explore self-perceptions and feelings in a less threatening way than 360° feedback.

Bachkirova (2011) describes the complexity of coaching someone with an unformed ego, as the relationship could be seen as that of a 'good parent' providing a nurturing relationship. If feedback is not managed with skill and care, the staff member may become dependent, or may retreat into themselves, with the potential for harm.

The client in Case Study 2 was in denial about her 360° feedback. Our experience shows that similar individuals are more likely to accept 360° feedback when they first learn about EI, leadership styles, and how EI Leadership impacts culture (see Case Study 1). This can then enable them to move towards a self-authoring mind.

Feedback for people with a self-authoring mind (or formed ego)

Kegan and Lahey (2009) consider that the self-authoring mind filters received messages, giving priority to the information it has sought. Other information that is not asked for does not get through the filter.

Case Study 3: The self-authoring mind (see Fig. 3)

JK had recently moved into a director role. She had come from an operational role and needed to develop her leadership skills, and become more strategic. She was worried that she was not bringing her authentic self to the job and asked for 360° feedback. The coach used the LEIPA® tool – see box entitled "LEIPA® (Leadership and Emotional Intelligence Performance Accelerator)" – to give her feedback.

She drew valuable messages from the LEIPA® feedback, which affirmed her leadership competencies and capabilities. This increased her confidence to take on the leader's mantle, and develop her own authentic style. She created a SMART action plan, which she shared with her raters, to engage their support in her development. Her raters identified three EI capabilities that required development. These were, empathy, building bonds and influence. She identified some key actions: listen more than speak; enable people to reach their own conclusions; and make more time to connect in person rather than by email.

The coach reflected that this was an appropriate intervention for this client as she was in the self-authoring mind stage of her adult development, and could be objective. She welcomed feedback and was resilient and committed to taking action.

Often 360° feedback is better suited for people at this stage of their development (Bachkirova 2011). People will be receptive to external views of themselves, and will be more ready to accept and learn from the feedback.

Many formal rating tools, like LEIPA®, have a 'self' and 'other' rating (Heidemeier & Moser, 2009), which provides people with unique insights into how they perceive themselves compared to how others see them. This exposes hidden strengths and blind spots, and gives the person an opportunity to explore these differences in perception.

People with a self-authoring mind (formed ego) are confident of their own views of themselves and they will get rich material from the feedback to support their ongoing development.

Case Study: a self-reflection from Heather Katz (co-author)

"About ten years ago, in the first few minutes of my bespoke LEIPA® feedback session, I needed to go no further than the first summary page to get the most benefit for myself. LEIPA®'s first page feedback summarises self and raters, rating the difference between Actual and Desired behaviours. I had totally underrated myself compared to my raters. The page was red with differences in perception. These are described as hidden strengths in LEIPA®. My immediate feeling was surprise and then determination to cease underrating and undermining myself and become more realistic about my actual strengths. The other aspects of the raters' feedback showed areas for development in certain emotional intelligence competencies. This enabled me to then decide and agree on which SMART actions to take. Over time, working on these has enabled me to become a more effective leader and coach. LEIPA®, because of its specificity, proved to be a significant milestone in my adult development and my journey along the 'REAL' path."

Feedback for people with a self-transforming mind (or reformed ego)

People with a self-transforming mind, who have 360° feedback, are usually undertaking it to develop themselves further in their leadership role. It is also possible that the feedback will be done as part of team as well as individual development.

360° feedback for executives with self-transforming minds needs to be tailored and made relevant, to address those aspects that feed their curiosity about themselves. They will want to make meaning of the feedback and their curiosity is more likely to improve the quality of their perception (Bachkirova, 2011). The leader, using a coaching style of leadership (see Table 1), can play an important role here in helping someone with a self-transforming mind to identify where there are discrepancies in the feedback and to explore its meaning. They are ready and able to look at themselves from the many perspectives that a 360° tool might reveal and will also explore their emotions more objectively.

Concluding Self-Reflection

In the process of writing this paper we realised we wanted to give more thought to where we are in our own adult development and how we got here. As we reflect on our continued learning and development we notice that we shift between self-authoring and self-transforming minds.

We found this both challenging and humbling. We recognise how complex the adult development journey is and how easy it is to slide backwards to an earlier stage of development, particularly when stressed.

As the title of this White Paper indicates, we hope we have encouraged and inspired you to think about where you are on your adult development path, and what impact this may have on your people, your organisation, and your journey towards transpersonal leadership.

We hope we have captured your attention, encouraged you to read and think further around this subject, and stimulated you to be bold enough to engage in a more developmental approach to your own learning and that of your team and organisation.

Our greatest challenge is to notice what's happening, manage our state, and choose to act as **R**adical, **E**thical, **A**uthentic **L**eaders.

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