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Now, some 2000 years later, Christianity and its institutions in the West face a daunting crisis. Europe has turned mostly secular, leaving the churches empty. In the United States the situation is better, but "the most rapidly growing religious category today is composed of those Americans who say they have no religious affiliation," rising from 8% in 1990 to 15% in 2008 (Kosmin & Keysar, 2009). "While middle-aged and older Americans continue to embrace organized religion, rapidly increasing numbers of young people are rejecting it" (Putnam & Campbell, 2010). Gary Hamel (2009) contends that "the problem with organized religion is that it is too organized," and thus there is a growing sense that to change that trend will require a new type of leadership. In fact, "Religious institutions, like other sorts of organizations, need a management reboot." But how do you develop this new type of leader?

In the world of business and organizations, the buzzword has become "innovation"—and for good reason. Never has the pace of change been so unrelenting and fast, confronting leaders with "make-or-break challenges" (Hamel, 2012, p. 44) that can't be solved by conventional means. At the same time, the world has become an increasingly interconnected world that requires leadership that is relevant, flexible, and creative. Global environmental concerns, economic pressures, rapidly changing technology, and fierce competition in all sec-

how their own prejudices blinded them to the new reality God was creating among them (Matthew 15:14, 23:16; cf. 13:13). Similarly, the creative process calls for an open mind that rejects the voice of habitual judgment, an open heart that rejects the voice of cynicism, and an open will that rejects the voice of fear (Scharmer, 2011).

Moreover, creative leadership is a fundamental shift from traditional leadership theory. Early leadership researchers often looked for a set of traits or key behaviors that set leaders apart (Northouse, 2010). Recognizing the importance of situational factors helped the leadership theoreticians to formulate more sophisticated models to take into account some of the complexity leaders have to deal with. Take for instance, Gary Yukl's Multiple Linkage Model (2010), which takes into account situational variables as well as more immediate (intervening) variables to explain short-term actions as well as long-term actions leaders can take to increase performance. What all these theories have in common is a quest for efficiency and predictability. The problem is that the world has become increasingly unpredictable and complex, a fact which calls for a shift from seeing the world only as it is to an approach that organizes around new ways of thinking along the line of quantum physics and seeing the world as it could be (Heylighen, as cited in Goertzel, 2011). This approach philosophically rejects the three fundamental myths that have driven much of Western civilization: the observer and the observed are separate; rational linear reasoning is best; and no work or project can begin until everything is known (Arthur, 2010).

This new approach also rejects the limited notion that creativity is a scarce characteristic of just a few exceptional people. In contrast, the basic assumption of creative leadership is that everyone has creative capacity and leadership potential (Puccio et al., 2011; cf. Adler, 2011; Kaufman & Sternberg, 2006). Leaders have an important role to create and hold space where the collective capacity and potential of the system can be discovered, released, embraced, and utilized (Scharmer, 2011). Creative leadership produces sustainable, relevant, and transformative results because it is organized around the creative process where complex problems are solved through the integration of convergent and divergent thinking (Osborn, 1963), tacit and explicit knowledge (Collins, 2010), and the balance of power and love (Kahane, 2010). Creative leaders intentionally build a collaborative culture that removes barriers to creativity and allows all within the system to operate from their highest future potential.

The literature sometimes portrays leaders as the key factor to turn situations and organizations around, ignoring the influence of many other factors that have contributed to the positive results. Creative leadership, in contrast, functions as an ecosystem rather than as an ego-system. Creative leadership recognizes the importance of the contribution of a community of action and seeks to benefit all stakeholders within the

5. The institutes' client bases are drawn from a broad array of organizations, including higher education, businesses, non-profit organizations, and/or government agencies.
6. College/university credit can be earned by attending the institutions' classes, workshops, or seminars.

As we continued to refine our criteria, we noticed that some of the most respected institutes had a fairly long history. We wondered how that happened, since creative leadership is really still an emerging idea. It occurred to us that understanding the way the

International Center for Studies in Creativity (Buffalo, New York)

The International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC) had its beginning in the 1950s when advertising executive Alex Osborn believed more creativity and imagination were needed in American education and business. Osborn began writing and speaking on the role of imagination and creativity in both work and play. Osborn enlisted two college professors, Parnes and Noller, to assist him in research on imagination, creativity and problem solving. Findings from this research led to launching the first creativity journal, the *Journal of Creative Behavior,* and later to the founding of the Creative Education Foundation. In 1967, the president of Buffalo State College at University of New York invited Parnes and Noller to begin teaching two courses on creativity. Research later showed how students who enrolled in the creativity courses improved academically, socially, and in leadership ability. The fledgling institute went from two courses to being a bona fide department at Buffalo State College with undergraduate and graduate course offerings. As the years passed, additional faculty and courses were added, and by the close of 20th century the department was offering degrees, both on campus and through distance programs serving an international clientele.

Early in the 21st century, faculty realized creativity training inadvertently included leadership development (Clapham, 1997). ICSC courses included strategies for leading small groups through Creative Problem Solving (CPS) processes and mastery of facilitation techniques and skills. Courses were designed to teach basic change leadership skills and the conceptual relationships between facilitation and change leadership. Faculty taught courses designed to develop students' skills in applying and facilitating advanced creative problem-solving tools that involved diagnostic, visionary, strategic, ideational, evaluative, contextual, and tactical thinking. The cognitive tools were drawn from various fields, such as quality improvement and strategic management, and included decision-making and various problem-solving models.

As ICSC's creative training program became more refined, leader development naturally morphed into the curriculum. The requirements for effective creative processes looked similar to those required for effective leadership; therefore, in 2008 ICSC launched a certificate in leadership and published a creative leadership textbook. Zacko-Smith (2010) believes ICSC came of age when the leadership program was included in creativity training, because this was an open acknowledge-

ment that creativity is core to leadership, and that those who become effective in the creative process have also developed competency in leadership.

Banff Centre (Banff, Alberta, Canada)

The Banff Centre began as a single drama course in 1933 through the work of Senator Cameron and the University of Alberta's Department of Extension, with a grant from the U.S.-based Carnegie Foundation. The course met with instant success, generating additional arts courses. Courses and faculty were added each subsequent semester and the Centre continued to grow and draw more students. Originally those attending the classes were local; however, within the second year of course offerings, students were also coming from around the world. In a short time the Centre became known for its arts programming, drawing both advanced and beginning artists with diverse backgrounds. Faculty began to realize artists and the artistic process had much in common with leadership, and that artists demonstrated significant leadership skills. In 1954 a leadership development program was introduced through arts-based learning, which continued to grow until the 1970s, when arts-based leadership was taught through stand-alone programs in its own center.

The Banff Centre's 65th birthday in 1989 was a milestone celebrated both on the Banff Centre campus and throughout Canada. It was a significant achievement, considering the Centre's humble beginnings. The Banff Centre's role is a specialized Leadership, Arts, and Culture Institution, providing non-partisan programming in the arts and creativity. Advancement efforts have been successful, giving the Centre the ability to grant as much as 70% tuition to qualified students, as well as to collaborate with the Department of Canadian Heritage, enabling Aboriginal participants to attend the Banff Centre's leadership development, mountain culture, and environmental courses (Fabbri, 2008; Hofstetter, 2009).

By the turn of the century, the conference facilities had become a popular destination, offering such programs as the learning vacation program called the Live & Learn Series. Today, along with extensive arts programming, the Centre also offers full certificated leadership development programming for First Nation leaders as well as leaders from all other sectors (Fabbri, 2008; Hofstetter, 2009). By the dawning of the 21st century, the Banff Centre had earned its place as a world leader in creativity, leadership, and the arts, and continues to draw

crowds from a wide range of artists and leaders (Bass & Stiedlmeier, 1999).

From its inception, the Banff Centre has continued to grow, expand, and support the artistic process across sectors in the arts, which includes leadership. The Banff Centre maintains alignment with Cameron's original mission, to bring arts to people from all walks of life so they can access their innate creative capacity and become the people they were intended to be. The Banff Centre has remained true to its core values of honoring the human experience and teaching people from all walks how to access their true creative self (Fabbri, 2008; Hofstetter, 2009).

ture, a leadership development program on the Eckerd campus could have an appeal for leaders around the world. The draw would be further enhanced by Eckerd's location on Florida's Gulf Coast (M. Watson, personal communication, September 14, 2009).

Armacost organized a taskforce to explore viable opportunities and partnerships for such a venture, which ultimately resulted in the development of three businesses on Eckerd College's campus that are still in operation today: the English Language Institute for international students seeking acceptance into American universities; an Elderhostel senior citizen enrichment program; and LDI, a center for the development of leaders (M. Watson, personal communication, September 14, 2009).

While the taskforce worked, Armacost learned that the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) in Greensboro, North Carolina, was looking to expand their leadership development program by creating several network affiliates. Thinking this to be just the opportunity Eckerd needed, Armacost contacted CCL to learn if Eckerd could qualify as one of the network affiliate sites. After undergoing a stringent application and approval process, and meeting CCL's rigorous criteria, Eckerd College was granted affiliate status in 1979. The college officially began its leadership program in 1980, offering CCL's flagship program, the Leadership Development Program. Today, over 5,000 leaders internationally have enrolled in and attended LDI's leadership courses (P. Hammerschmidt, personal communication, September 14, 2009).

Accidentally Creative?

founder was noted for his humanitarian and civic efforts. Thus empathy became embedded in each institution as a first step towards innovation and a reason for the discovery of relevant solutions.

None of the founders set out to introduce a new leadership or creativity model. What they were concerned about was more simple and profound. It can be summed up in two questions: "Who am I? and What is my work?" In order to help people clarify these questions, they often have to strip away faulty mental models that hinder creativity. Ultimately they strive to reconnect people with their authentic self. How do they do this? At LDI, I (Karen) observed simulation activities that included individual reflection and group debriefing directed at identifying personal strengths and effectiveness. At ICSC, participants are taught how to become aware of their automatic responses by participating in creative-problem-solving groups. The BC uses an arts-based learning model in which each participant engages in artistic experiences followed by reflection. In all three sites, faculty stressed the importance of teaching individuals how to access personal creative capacity through the discovery of the authentic self.

Pervasive Core Beliefs

Several core beliefs appeared to be omnipresent and remarkably similar in all three centers: (1) everyone has creative capacity and leadership potential; (2) creative leadership is a life-long journey that begins with a personal choice; (3) creative leadership operates from a living system approach; and (4) creative leaders lead from the emerging future.

Everyone Has Creative and Leadership Capacity

Creative capacity and leadership potential are found in all humans and are not limited to exceptional persons. This assumption is powerful because it gives permission to all people to embrace and develop their innate creative capacity and leadership skills. It also hints at each person's responsibility to take a hold of this gift and grow it. For this reason, all three programs were designed to bring awareness to personal ability and to teach specific ways to develop creativity and leadership skills. There was agreement that creativity and leadership skills can be developed only through individual choice and intentionality. Without decided effort, innate capacities remain benign. Simulation and improvisation, coupled with personal reflection and group debriefing, served as conduits for illuminating alignment to the authentic self. In

the end, each program expected that participants would begin to answer the two questions “Who am I?” and “What is my work?”

Learning was not restricted to actual time on campus. Each site began with pre-program assignments, assessments, and pre-reading. The submitted assignments provided faculty and staff with specific information to customize the program. The onsite program often used interactive learning activities, reflection, feedback, and the hands-on use of creativity models. Post-program support consisted of online chatting, working with learning partners, counseling, conversations, and global classrooms. Faculty believed that customization creates incentive to fully engage in the program. Without individualized programming, participants would miss the opportunities to apply learning from personal feedback and to give meaning to their subjective experience by remaining on a more sterile objective level (P. Hammerschmidt, per-

help students understand their personal growth, areas of strength, and areas to develop. BC uses art experiences to help participants identify and understand where they are in their growth journey as a leader. By understanding their own development in relation to a continuum of leadership experience, individuals are led to seek and accept support. Thus BC guides participants through artful encounters that are followed by outdoor reflection and indoor debriefing sessions with faculty, coaches, or peers, or individually; these allow participants to begin to understand their personal journey of growth.

Creative Leadership Is Organized Around a Living System Approach

Each program approached creative leadership as part of a living system, similar to the way nature is an interconnected living system in which each part is connected and inseparable from other parts, serving one another, even if the connections are not always obvious. While the programs did not specifically refer to themselves as "living systems," all three programs offered a leadership discipline that heightened the ability of seeing how leaders are part of the whole for the benefit of all within the system. Some have called this approach an eco-system approach to leadership (Scharmer, 2009).

To help participants function within an ecosystem approach, they were given opportunities to create and maintain a collaborated space. They were given permission to engage in activities, and then held responsible to do so. Each site offered learning experiences that provided participants with varying vantage points. Members of the group took turns learning, following, or supporting collaborative groups as well as non-collaborative groups. Every participant got a chance to see first-

group could be at a 10. This was a powerful, effective activity.

Faculty report that this activity is typically highly engaging, enlightening, and bonding. Those participants who persevere are successful in creating a highly engaged team. The principle taught through this and similar activities is that "people care about what they helped create and they are responsible when they care." When people experience the positive strength of a collaborative space where the engagement of each person is vital to sustaining that space, they realize that their own caring for their own engagement and the engagement of their group members contributes to the whole.

Creative Leaders Lead from the Emerging Future

All three leadership development programs taught that effective leaders lead from an emerging future instead of the predictive past. Such an approach requires a leader to be mindful and open to what is emerging (P. Hammerschmidt, personal communication, September 14, 2009; M. Jones, personal communication, November 23, 2009; G. Puccio, person-

ideation sessions followed the empathy-gathering phase. Participants were required to listen to the ideas of others and rapidly prototype ideas to obtain feedback. Prototypes were tweaked as feedback was received. Everyone was asked to “fail fast and cheap” to learn as much as possible about the prototype.

they reflected on their thoughts and actions while creating the animal. As participants shared their thoughts and feelings about what they had learned, the group was invited to give feedback and offer other perspectives. The group then discussed how the experience illuminated both weaknesses and strengths in their own leadership approach. In the process, the group also discussed and practiced the "yes and" theory. "Yes and" is agreeing with what has been said and offering new information. It is a dynamic way of creating high engagement and trust, allowing members of a group to become honest and able to deal with the truth. In this way "yes and" creates highly effective and relevant environments and group dynamics.

These art experiences are followed by deep reflection and debriefing. Each participant charts personal progress. The purpose of an arts-based learning model is to raise awareness of personal leadership barriers, fears, judgments, and cynicism. Following each art experience, the group would engage in simulation learning in which they were asked to apply personal learning.

Teaching the Creativity Models

Sternberg's findings (2007) suggest that those leaders and teams who become competent in managing creativity models raise the quality of problem solving and innovation within their organizations. Each of the three programs taught that creative models enhance leadership rather than drive or dictate leadership or the creative process. Creativity models create a framework or space where participants understand and visualize the creative process. For this reason participants were given opportunities to experience how creative models work. These models emphasized the importance of creating a space for the group to obtain feedback and then go back and revise the prototype. When properly managed, creativity models raise the quality of the innovation or solutions.

Faculty agreed that dozens of creativity models exist, many of which are highly effective. A creativity model's effectiveness rests on the level of the leader's personal presence, awareness, and mindfulness, and that leader's ability to maintain a balance between tacit and explicit knowledge (M. Fox, personal communication, November 4, 2009; N. Nissley, personal communication, November 3, 2009; M. Watson, personal communication, September 14, 2009).

While creative models are presented in steps, the creative process itself is non-linear and non-sequential and is tied less to mechanics and more to human dynamics. Ultimately, even the best creativity model

cannot trump the human element (N. Nissley, personal communication, November 23, 2009; G. Puccio, personal communication, November 4, 2009; M. Watson, personal communication, September 15, 2009).

Intentionally Created Culture

The goal of each site was to create a culture that would translate into a space that supports the creative process. Perhaps the cultures at each of the sites could best be compared to the way friendship works; it cannot be mandated, only entered into as a shared experience. Creating a culture starts with faculty intentionally removing barriers to creativity in the physical space, in group work, and during social times. The presentation of food and materials, the arrangement of chairs and tables, the

they needed to become engaged. The necessary arrangements were made and faculty reported increased participation in almost every situation. Other cultural aspects were introduced by faculty that allowed each member of the group to lead, provide feedback, and be listened to. Faculty at LDI asked participants to provide feedback to fellow participants after specific simulation activities and encouraged those receiving the feedback to view all feedback as a gift; BC participants were asked to find meaning in one another's art; and ICSC taught participants to embrace mistakes. Faculty and staff reported that participant engagement was not hard to get or maintain due to the highly interactive nature of the programs.

The leader's role in developing a creative learning space has already

when unidentified, result in behaviors, attitudes, and actions that destroy creative culture or collaborated space and bring about negative unintended consequences. Artifacts such as a gong, bell, or other musical instruments were sounded if someone felt that the creative culture was being compromised. Usually such "whistle blowing" resulted in laughter.

Faculty reports were similar in that participants arrived eager to engage in the programs; however, as participants took turns leading, offering feedback, and working through problem solving, most realized they lacked skills in the art of collaboration and were not used to the level of open feedback. By mid-session, however, faculty reported that students independently began to realize how the program opens the way for new levels of awareness, personal understanding, and knowledge of how creative leadership actually works. Somewhere mid-stream in the program, there were conscious shifts of understanding, awareness, and state of presence. For both faculty and students to discover this type of knowing and knowledge, each must trust their own senses, experiences, and insights, all without knowing where that journey will lead. Each had to intentionally choose not to judge (called "refraining from judging" by LDI; identified as "suspending judgment" by ICSC; called "downloading by BC"). A process each site labeled as a block to creativity was when participants bring past expectations, beliefs, and attitudes to a present situation and prevent new insights, learning, or process from emerging.

Shared Language

Shared language was considered vital to each institute and the culture. A shared language defines elusive qualities that exist within a culture and make it possible for that culture to be articulated and understood. A shared lexicon provides the way for something to be asked for, thought about, or disagreed with by name. Such a language makes both the tangible and intangible aspects of the culture understandable and emphasizes what is important.

Each site drew upon different words of their shared language. LDI used such words as feedback loops, conflict competent, assessment-challenge-support, transparency, and awareness. ICSC used words such as divergent thinking, convergent thinking, MQ30, brainstorming, pluses-potentials-concerns, and creative process. BC used such words as artistic process, design thinking, authenticity, creativity, presence, mindfulness, and organic thinking. Each word or phrase carried different meanings or no meaning to participants until the faculty clarified

what that word or phrase meant in that program. Faculty from each site believed that participants needed education and experience in the institute's shared language, because without developing competency in a shared language participants would not fully grasp what was core to the creative process.

For example, LDI's term "conflict competent" refers to an individual who is skilled at managing conflict. "Feedback competent" refers to a leader or team who has developed the skills to both give and/or take feedback from any sector of the system at any point in time. ICSC's term "MQ=30" means "mistake quotient=30," which is the fun and easygoing manner in which the faculty embraces mistakes. Everyone at ICSC is granted 30 mistakes daily. If more are needed, one only needs to ask. Those not knowing the meaning of MQ30 might be put off or confused by the light way mistakes are referred to and handled. BC uses the term "artistic process" as a way leaders can learn to lead. A person unfamiliar with this meaning may feel intimated when being told they are going to engage in the artistic process.

Each site was intentional about introducing the participants to shared language right from the start of the program. All three sites had

and used directed follow-up reflection times for participants to use language such as “presence,” “mindfulness,” and “authentic” to process how each had related to the artistic or outdoor experience they had just encountered. All three sites used these processes in shared language to drive home their main point, which is that everyone can fully embrace creative leadership and be more intentional at becoming a creative leader through shared language.

Faculty explained that in many cultures/environments/systems the specific aspects of the creative process call for vulnerability, flexibility, or openness. A shared language can serve to normalize those aspects that are considered too risky. For example, LDI faculty explained that feedback loops or suspending judgment are not tolerated in some cultures, systems, or environments because leaders do not know how to manage such communication; however, having a shared language provides a way

In short, each of the sites was a living example of their own creative leadership pedagogy. The result was a faculty and staff who viewed themselves as part of a strong team, involved with an effective program, and making a significant difference with the participants they were teaching.

All three directors shared that participant evaluations were overwhelmingly positive and that most included positive comments about the level of faculty engagement. Directors believed that highly engaged faculty was a significant strength of their program (N. Nissley, personal communication, November 2009; G. Puccio, personal communication, November 2009; M. Watson, personal communication, September 16, 2009).

Developing Creative Christian Leaders

So what does all this mean to Christian leaders? First, leaders might have to confront their own readiness to buy into the necessity for innovation in their organizations. If they work in the church, a good starting point might be Gary Hamel's recent talk to the 7000 church leaders at the Willow Creek Leadership Summit. After the summit Hamel (2009) highlighted some of his main points in his *Wall Street Journal* blog:

1. Churches are losing ground in attracting and keeping new believers. Since 1990, the number of Americans who claim no religious affiliation has nearly doubled, and the number of people who describe themselves as atheist or agnostic has quadrupled—this according to the 2009 American Religious Identification Survey (Meacham, 2009).
2. The same survey reveals that two-thirds of Americans believe religion's influence is waning in our society, and just 19 percent say it's growing. And the proportion of Americans who think religion "can answer all or most of today's problems" is now at an historic low of 48 percent (Meacham, 2009).

Christian leaders today face the same problems as many corporations who have lost their relevance “when the rate of internal change lags the pace of external change” (Hamel, 2009). When churches no longer are able to hold their own youth beyond the time of mandatory attendance or attract new members, what is really needed may be nothing less than creative leaders who are willing to set their churches and organizations on a new path. But how does one become a leader like that?

The findings of this study suggest several things that should be viewed in a hopeful light. First, leaders may have to get rid of the widely-held assumption that creative leadership is a special hereditary gift. Instead, leaders need to embrace creativity as an important leadership asset at this time of earth’s history that can be learned and taught. Our study shows that there is no one way to learn creativity, but it needs to be an intentional pursuit.

Second, many of the core concepts of the DNA of creative leadership are not unfamiliar to Christians, because they have serious scriptural underpinnings. But these concepts need to be reconfigured into a new way of approaching leadership:

1. The idea of the blind spot that needs to be confronted to create an openness to creativity and change is akin to the Christian concept of metanoia or conversion.
2. The notion that creative leadership starts with authenticity,

"just-in-time" approach with ongoing coaching. Once selected into the inner circle of followers, they lived with Him and observed His life while experiencing His ministry to others firsthand. They had access to Him without barriers, even though they did not always understand the full importance of their actions. Despite their shortcomings, Jesus created a learning space that allowed them to grow in anticipation of fuller insight and deeper commitment (e.g., Matthew 20:20-28).

Thus Jesus' leadership development approach was built on a universally replicable pattern of discipleship, resulting in an "unsurpassed record in transformation for those who come under its instruction" (Wolf, 2010, p. 12; cf. Schmidt, 2001; Stark, 2001, 2008). While its foundational values of justice, mercy, and integrity (Micah 6:8; Matthew 23:23; 1 Corinthians 13:13) provided new believers with a new identity (Ephesians 4:22-24) and the movement with a strong spiritual DNA, the way its message was lived out as a "life of love" (Ephesians 5:1) and shared with others was dependent on the circumstances and was up to the creativity of its members (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). Open to all social strata (cf. Ephesians 6:5-9) but imbued with a unique identity that was termed "Christian" by watchers of the movement (Acts 11:26), it spread around the Mediterranean Sea and beyond during a time of great political and religious ferment and found its way into the most powerful families of the Roman Empire during the first generation of Christians (Philippians 4:22).

Christian institutions of higher learning have struggled to figure out how to preserve the spontaneous and viral quality of the Christian life that resulted in multiplying members and leaders. Their focus on preserving the integrity of Christian theology and Biblical truth is without question a great accomplishment. But Christian leaders are faced with increasingly complex social contexts for which their training is not preparing them. While Christian leadership programs are multiplying, we have to ask if they are simply trying to shore up Christian institutions doomed by the inevitable organizational life cycle (Moberg, 1984) or if they are truly developing creative leaders able to face the basic questions people around the globe are asking. Already the 21st century has seen a great deal of surprising social ferment that indicates that the longing of the human spirit for freedom and dignity is still alive and well. Thus, how we develop creative Christian leaders is one of the most urgent questions that needs to be asked if we are to rise to the challenge to lead with integrity in this context of mind-boggling change.

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