

How to Create a Better World



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Personal leadership

How to care for a better world?

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Introduction

The question “How to care for a better world” lives in the many souls of people around the world. We feel and experience the tensions and changes that happen all around the world as we are all part of a world economy, a media world, a sports world, a political world, a world of religion, a world of science. Those who live with this question are also faced with a world of institutions in the political, economical and cultural spheres that deal with these questions and that define and create the conditions in which most of us have to live. These institutions are led by political, economical and cultural leaders who are very much influenced by dominant mostly traditional leadership ideas and ideologies that they apply in the practical life of the communities they lead and the societies that they influence.

We know very well the different religious streams that through their bishops and ayatollah’s and rabbi’s influence the thinking and behaving of millions of people over many centuries. We know the political leaders from left and right wings that dominate the political scene and define the infrastructures that we have to live in. We know the CEO’s that direct the economic life through their companies that serve the millions of clients all around the world.

As an individual we feel often powerless and confronted with the practices of those leaders in their communities that do not correspond to the inner feelings and longings we have ourselves for a better world. Although most of us accept leadership and leaders, however we experience strong reactions in ourselves on the moral level that they show in the way they operate. This is because leaders tend to decide on the destiny of our lives without our actual involvement in the decision-making process.

Leadership history

From a historic point of view we are familiar with the very old tradition of the priests that define the destiny of the community and the community members. Still today this is the case in many countries and societies.

We are familiar with the traditions of kings and queens as the leading aristocracy that had a great influence and say in the local, regional and national communities. The people in the community are serving their interest and they have to nourish the people to a certain extent. Still today there is the traditional aristocracy that is showing itself as the leading elites in the different spheres in society. They work through their capital and through their spectacular biographies on the communities and not the least through their taste of life as described in magazines.

We are familiar with the entrepreneurs that started companies and extended them to world – wide producing communities that distribute their products and services all around the world. We are all consumers and use their products and services.

The well being of people all around the world is for thousands of years depending very much on this connection between leaders and communities, their leading ideas and consequent practices and how this correspond with the inner feelings and strivings of the people involved.

A new impulse for leadership

During the hundreds of years of community development however we have seen an underlying development in the inner world of human beings that has become such an important basis for life quality but that is ignored by the traditional leaders and their leading of communities. That inner quality is the transformation of the human soul from a group soul to an individual soul. In the past we belonged to a fixed community in which our destiny was decided. I had to follow in the footsteps of my ancestors. I was fully part of a bigger soul than my own soul. As in the society there are still institutions that find their foundation in the group soul like small family companies, churches, schools, however the individual soul has already emancipated to a personal soul in which the "I" of the person takes the leadership over the well being of their own life and it might be even the well being of the communities that they are part of and in which they show leadership themselves. That can be the social reality in the family community, in the team in the company, in the network of inspired people developing a theme, in the street community etcetera. As we have seen in the past and still see in the present there is the appearance of the leadership force of the elites of different kind still present, but there is now today a new leadership force starting to work and that is the leadership of the individual over his/her own life and personal community.

The new personal leadership in the social – economical reality

In the personal life today we meet all the economic, political and cultural forces that work in society and we cannot close ourselves off from these influences: we have to deal with them. We have to balance these forces in the personal life and we have to meet and respond to the influence of all those other people of different kind and background we meet in our life and with whom we live and work together. We are challenged to show our own leadership.

All around the world people of different background, nationality, religion, economic role, they live and work together and create their own lives within the existing infrastructures as they have been created over the ages. They are making their own leadership experiences and gain their own insights in what it means to lead.

In this article we will explore some of the new leadership forces that work in society and that define strongly our well-being. We will show here some of the fundamental changes happening in society and leadership that we could use in a more conscious way to move together to a better world. But also we have to say goodbye to some of the dominant leadership ideas and ideologies that have influenced our lives to a great extent and still do.

First of all we will explore the so-called three C's forces: -client, -capital, -community force that are the essential personal leadership forces in today's social – economic realities in our organized life.

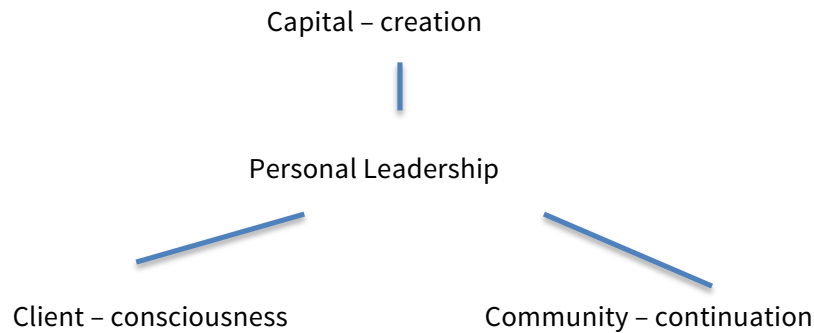
The three C's forces as personal leadership forces

We have to start to see that there are three dominant leadership forces working in society of which we are all part and in which we ourselves play an important role through the decisions we take ourselves.

These forces are:

- Capital – creation
- Client – consciousness
- Community – continuation.

These three forces are connected to the role of leadership in which we all take part today.



As individuals today we participate in and work with these three leadership forces.

We are capital owners that direct our capital to the different entrepreneurial initiatives that create new realities in society. However very often we are not at all aware how our capital is working, as the anonymous pension funds, banks and other institutes that work with our money, destine them without our involvement. Here we can show personal leadership by taking personal responsibility for investigating how your money is used and by taking decisions in redirecting this money to other purposes that you value.

We are clients of almost all types of companies and organizations that form the society today. We buy products and services of all kind and through that we support the producers of those products and services.

We are part of different communities and play a role in them. Family communities, working communities, hobby communities, local communities, religious communities, political communities, we are all part of them.

Lets explore those three leadership forces in society from the perspective of our own leadership.

Capital creation

With capital we create. Capital is the money, tools and capacities we create with. The capital creation is very much connected to impulses we have. Those who want to create need capital to do this. There are the institutes like banks and stock markets that furnish the capital to owners of impulses. In the past this capital was in the hands of the happy few and they could define the future through this capital power. It is not by accident that the revolutions we have seen in society the last hundreds of years had everything to do with this capital ownership. The French revolution, the communist revolution, the labour revolution, the feminist revolution, they all had to do with this ownership of capital and the deciding power of capital ownership on the destiny of people through this capital ownership. Today there are the financial institutes that manage the money streams and that have created a money society in which many of us participate through buying and selling shares of companies, participating in pension funds, using credits of banks to buy houses and cars and other tools to live with. As we have capital in our hands ourselves we have become responsible for what we do with this capital. Are we aware how our capital is working in society? Is it really supporting the good forces or is it in the hands of those that have no real awareness what they do and destroy society and nature and human beings with their decisions. In this sphere of capital we can see the different kinds of money work. We see the buying money work in how we buy products and services as client and consumer. We want also to create in the society and therefore we need loans from banks to finance our initiatives and investments, the loan money. Then there is also the gift money. This is may be the most neglected and unnoticed money stream of which we can be part. It is the money we give away to others for their initiatives. We are mostly not aware of the fact that this creates also on our own side a new opportunity in life,

seeing this from the principle that if it helps another person in its development this also means a new step for me and us all. We can learn to be a conscious part of these three money streams and gain awareness what we do with our money that we earn from our own activities in society.

Client consciousness

We all act as clients in today's society. As a client we are connected to the existence of the many organizations we have today. We make them possible. As a client and a buyer we can gain consciousness of what we support by buying the product or services or advice. In the day-to-day life we make decisions all the time. We not only buy and consume, we also buy and use the tools and services and we invest our money in good advices for things we want to do and undertake. Through our decisions we give the suppliers a possibility to continue.

In our research about client - supplier behaviour we discovered that for us as the client there are three dimensions important for doing business with the suppliers. The first dimension is the relation with the supplier and how the supplier cares for the relation. Is the relation cold and business like or is the relation warm and constructive? When I as the client is seen and recognized as a person with a name and an identity, then there is a good chance that I as the client wants to continue doing business with the supplier. The second dimension is the service that is given to the client. Is the supplier really caring for the process with the client, is the client well informed, is the delivery in time, is the aftercare okay? The third dimension is the price/quality balance. Is the price in balance with the quality of the product or service? As a client we are very sensible to these dimensions and we feel quickly if things are okay or not. We can gain an ever growing consciousness of the effects of the products and services we buy on the wider society, the nature and the human being himself. The more we take conscious decisions as clients, the more the suppliers will try to respond to them.

Community continuation

We are part of communities and these communities exist only when we care for them.

Organizations are communities of people that connect in their effort to serve others. It is an open community where its existence is defined by the external connections and interactions. Each time then that there is a new co-worker entering the organization there is the chance of a new future, a continued existence. The way we integrate the new people in the community is what makes the difference in the feeling of well being of the newcomers. Are they seen by the others, can they participate from the start in the activities, can they bring in their ideals, their talents, their drives and impulses, can they start to act as leaders. Connected to this is also the way the older generations in the organization move and develop and lead them-selves. Are these older members of the community stuck and did they loose the motivation to create and contribute or are they fresh and alive and looking forward to new opportunities?

It is the older generation that can be asked to care for their personal steps in the work community and to realize the personal drives in the work. It is the younger generation that needs the opportunities to show themselves, make steps in their career and develop themselves to a higher level of consciousness. The good co-operation between younger and older co-workers is of essential value to the well being of the community.

Shared leadership

We see these three C's as three leadership dimensions of an organization that we all have to care for. That means that we take all three as worthy goals of an organisation and the leadership we all have. If we put one of the three in the front and the other two have to serve this one goal then we see that organizations tend to loose track in time. If for instance all is in the service of creating the

maximum profit possible then the organization will lose its energy on the other two dimensions clients and community members. These three dimensions or forces of leadership belong together. In my experience it is very well possible to strive for realizing these three goals parallel. Serving the client gives us energy, caring for the well – being of the community gives us fulfilment and creating with capital to realize our common impulse gives us sense. We create different values on different soul levels and these three strengthen each other when being realized.

To make these three C's work in a healthy way, we need to connect them to a fourth dimension or force and that is shared leadership.

We have not really developed new views on leadership during the last centuries and for this reason the three C dimensions are very often not really flourishing and being developed as it could be done. As long as we see leadership only in the hands of the top people, it is no surprise that most of our efforts are strengthening the capital profitability. The clients are out of sight and the community is used for creating this result. If the leadership is in the hands of the professionals who are working with the clients, then it might be that we lose control over the costs. If only the well – being of the community is in the centre of our attention, we forget about the clients interest and we disconnect to the top leaders and their primary interests to serve the shareholders.

Let's look then to some new perspectives for leadership.

New perspectives on leadership: horizontal leadership

We are very much used to the fact that there are bosses and co- workers. Bosses lead and co-workers follow. That is the hierarchical-functional perspective we have. We are not used to see leadership in connection to client, capital and community dimension of leadership, the important dimensions of horizontal leadership. The development of the organized life however has created a situation in which all the professionals work rather independent of bosses in their work processes. The bosses/managers are also rather left on their own and top managers are for sure in their own reality and rather disconnected to what happens on professionals and management levels. They all are mostly part of a loose team that meets sometimes and in which the issues are discussed. Only when the professionals are leading their own work processes, when the team leaders are leading the teams, when the department heads co-ordinate with other departments and when the CEO's connect their organization to the changing infrastructural developments and these four roles and people are interconnected with each other, then there is effective leadership in the organization and the three C's can be interconnected and developed in a fruitful way.

Leadership is a process in which the changing and developing happens.

Leadership is a process that connects the steering of CEO's with the steering of managers and the steering of professionals in their dealing with the real common issues. In this process of dialogue and co-operation on the change and development issues it is not only about the 'what' and 'how' questions but it is also about the 'why' question, the sense making question. Is there a common understanding about why we do the things we do and why we want to change and about how we do the things in a different way together, that make the whole thing work in a good way?

Our question: "How to create a better world", is very much a question of leadership and community and how this is living in the soul of people. We have created a very complex, differentiated, multi cultural, organized society, where leaders take important decisions that work out in societal context, where managers run the operational businesses and where the professionals do the jobs. It can damage nature, the well - being of people, the morality of people, the financial security. Many disasters are the effects of decisions that are taken at the management tables without the professional people involved are aware of this or want to see this. The leadership of us all has to learn to see the effects of its decisions and the workings it has on

concrete human beings and other beings in our world. We need the horizontal perspective to see, experience and to be able to handle this moral leadership responsibility we all have.

From vertical to horizontal leadership

As the world and the world community has been used to be lead by leaders that have hierarchical power and worked and work over vertical community structures to reach the goals they have set them selves, now we live more and more in a world where there are many different leaders in different positions in different processes in the economic, political and cultural infrastructures we have created over ages that work in a horizontal way together.

In the vertical structures we see the growing tendency of top leaders to do everything that is in their reach to stay in control. There are many inspectors, control instances, auditors that stimulate and support this and that try to keep the grip on the many control systems that have been created by the specialists for the top leaders. This is an ever-growing system control pressure on all the professionals and managers. They are ever more busy to satisfy the system control of the top more then the client interests.

The horizontal space is a different space then the vertical space. The horizontal space is created between people that open this space between them in the situation. Here is the actual functioning and performance of the organization created and here we create the real values in the work processes that we are busy with together.

In the vertical structures works the power of hierarchy and the striving for a functional operational output. In the horizontal space there works the dialogue and the meeting between each other. The ultimate improvement of our well - being can be reached when we all learn to participate not only in the vertical functional operational power structure but also in the horizontal leadership dialogue. That dialogue is not what happens in the discussions between bosses and workers in the vertical structure, but it is the dialogue between people that all lead their processes and can meet as leaders in a horizontal way.

We have experimented in many different situations with this leadership dialogue between people that have different functions in the hierarchy of an organization. In the leadership dialogue one can experience that immediately we have the real issues on the table, we listen and hear the different stories about them, we come very quickly to a common judgement building and common decisions on which we all can act in our work processes and work situations. Also here we can reflect on the moral dimensions of the work we do, the effects it has on others, on nature, on the community. That is not really possible in the strict vertical operational system driven realities of the work and private life.

Let us exercise these leadership dialogues at home, in the companies, in the free time activities. Let us do this with the young people so that they get used to this and can participate in this. This ability of self - leadership and common leadership is potentially there in all of us. We can wake up this quality of life in all of us and when we get a bit more used to this leadership dialogue on the real issues that bother us, then there will be a lasting effect on how we deal in a moral conscious way with the issues in the practical life situations in the economic, political and cultural contexts we are living in.

What do we have to give up?

To enable us to come to this better state of being we have to give up something and we have to accept another thing.

We have to give up our strong believes and ideologies about how to create an ideal world. These believes and ideologies that we have seen working over the many centuries of humanity have basically a common ground and that is that we want to break of the human being as he/she is and

build up again a better ideal human being. These beliefs and ideologies create the situation that a person has to respond to the ideal of another person and in that sense has to give up his own beliefs and ideologies. This is very much the core issue of the closed community in which all have to respond to common basic rules and practices that are defined by the leaders. We have seen the many disasters that were and are created by these beliefs and ideologies and their contrast to the underlying development of becoming individual beings over the many centuries of soul development. We have to start to create dialogical realities in which the differences we have in ideas and practices meet each other and create new perspectives for those who are part of the process. This requires leadership that can deal with differences and that does not strive for the ideal state and the ideal human being. We have to accept that societies are based on individual beings, human beings, that have specific personalities, that have mixed ideas and practices that do not respond any more to closed beliefs and ideologies. We have to accept that the social – economic, political and cultural realities today that we are part of define the well – being of people as souls, as they are participating in this co-creation of capital, client and community forces. Finally: in the practice of life the original inhabitants do not longer own the country, the original pioneers do not own the companies, the elite does not own the cultural institutes, and its priests do not own the religions. The leadership of us all is needed to deal with these new realities in a world society that is a mixture of all that humanity was able to realize.

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