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## Introduction

Kathryn Goldman Schuyler

There is something deeply nourishing about focusing attention on creating a healthy world. In the face of any human or cultural tendencies to focus on what doesn't work, we can choose to contribute to what does, to planting seeds for the future. Perhaps this is core to health: finding ways to appreciate the current moment while contributing to people and actions that we sense to be toward life, rather than focusing on making do, making money, or doing what we believe to be required of us. Both the “moving towards” and the awareness of connection with the natural world seem essential in appreciating the nature of health. This book is intended to create dialogue about together creating a healthy society — a healthy world. It is grounded in a question we can each ask ourselves: What is my role in creating healthy organizations and a healthy world?

It's refreshing to know that research suggests that most people wish to contribute to the world they live in (see Singer, 2015; Vaillant, 2012). A recent survey of U.S. adults found that 90% of those asked agreed that “It is important for me to leave this world better than I found it,” and 95% agreed that “My efforts are motivated by a desire to help humanity in some way” (see Lee, Poloma, & Post, 2013. Quotes are from personal communication, Lee, July 22, 2015)

I open with a personal story, because our stories are the soil from which we create the new. What becomes a framework, a profession, a book ... starts somewhere much earlier, in the experiences that kindle within us something that we may not even know is there, nor realize how this invisible seed connects

with later actions in life. As I thought about how to describe the sources of this book, I asked myself how I became interested in healthy organizations and started to remember experiences from many years ago.

## “L’Imagination au Pouvoir!”

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My interest in creating healthy organizations in a healthy society is not new: It goes back to my experiences of campus and societal change in the 1960s as a graduate student during the Vietnam War. I was in Paris on a year of Fulbright study when students and workers took to the streets and almost brought the entire country to a halt in dramatic protests typically referred to as *les évènements* (the events). This experience was so vivid that it has colored much of my life since then. It was important on several levels:

Cognitively I learned that we could completely invert what I had always thought to be true about the relationship of hopes and “reality.” I had been taught in the 1950s and early 1960s that one had to look around, see what was possible, and then make a choice among those options. Very reasonable. That was how life worked. Then, in the heady weeks and months leading up to *les évènements*, huge posters appeared throughout Paris, emblazoned on the walls, crying “*L’imagination au pouvoir!*” (Power to the imagination!) I discovered that humans could imagine what might be possible and aim to create it, to make it real. I saw that the power to create the new could come from our visions of what was possible, rather than from slight adaptations of what already existed.

Although this is not what I felt happened during this “mini-revolution” at my institution, l’Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (6ème section — the school of arts and sciences), where I was studying the sociology of knowledge, this experience profoundly impacted my thinking about the nature of change. What could be created no longer depended upon what existed, but upon what could be thought and imagined and sensed as possible. In some ways, this was like discovering that gravity had changed and was no longer as heavy — as though I’d traveled to a new planet, where it worked differently.

Emotionally, I felt a changed relationship to power, both the power of authority and of the past, and also instinctively knew that I could not be and had no desire to be a revolutionary. To

live in the Latin Quarter of Paris in May 1968 was to be in the middle of constant activity, fast-moving crowds uprooting and throwing *pavés* (small cobblestones) and even burning cars, and rows on end of police armed with helmets, large clear plastic shields, and *matraques* (batons). It was a world of self-organizing committees at the university making decisions that evaporated as soon as those making them went to sleep for a few hours, replaced by others who didn't know of the decisions and so made others. It was also a world where the famously unfriendly French were warm, friendly, and inclusive of everyone. Being of Jewish heritage, growing up with a father who was not only an M.D. but also a psychoanalyst in New York City, I'd previously thought that the police were there to help me, but it took no experience at all to realize this was an entirely different world. No one had to tell me to cross the street and stay out of the way. It was obvious. The police were not the friends of students, not then.

At a gut level, I realized that as wild as this was, it was calm compared to a "real" revolution involving mass violence and killing. I saw the physical power of the police and later experienced bureaucratic power, as these "events" transitioned into change committees at the university that met all day, day after day, making a great many small procedural decisions that changed the life of the younger faculty but impacted me as a student not at all. The beautiful sunny June that followed the upheavals of May was spent entirely indoors, in committees that were planning change, but types of change that had little to do with imagination or the dreams of the students and workers in the streets. So I saw raw power and bureaucratic power — and realized that neither was what drew nor enlivened me.

Finally, at a personal level, I realized that I would go home to the United States and figure out where I belonged — how I could be part of the change that I did want to see emerging in the world, but without blood or excessive bureaucracy. Somehow, despite the state of the United States at the time, with the Vietnam War, race riots, and the assassinations of Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. that year, I began to sense that the United States had some kind of potential and possibility that I could not describe or identify, but only feel.

This led to my interest in organizational and societal health. I came out of my life in somewhat revolutionary Paris knowing that people spent most of their lives at work in communities, and that if these were healthy, the people could be nourished by

them, and if they were not, they became deadening, constricting the sense of possibility that can be felt when one is very young, surrounded by love, or in a community or workplace that helps one feel whole.

Those experiences sourced my professional life of research and practice and this book. I believe in studying what you know and care deeply about and encourage students to do the same. When seeking to understand how to create a healthy society or world, behavioral science research, embodiment, and ancient spiritual traditions are all invaluable (see Goldman Schuyler, 2004a, 2004b). Training in somatic (embodied) learning with Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais (1972, 1979) gave me a profound approach to health: the notion that a healthy person is one who lives their avowed *and unavowed* dreams fully. Feldenkrais was renowned globally for working with the body, yet his definition of health focused on action and awareness, not on the physical *per se*. Seeking further deep roots for transformation, I explored how the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan Buddhist master teachers brought traditions of non-Western, disciplined practices for opening awareness about life (Goldman Schuyler, 2004a, 2007). These had been passed down directly from one master teacher to another for hundreds of years, ensuring that no confusing elements were brought in by those who might write about them without having experienced them. While other indigenous wisdom traditions have also been passed down in similar ways, this particular one intrigued me from a leadership perspective, because of the role of the Dalai Lama as a global thought leader (Goldman Schuyler, 2012).

## Our Shared Dream

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This book highlights current ways of thinking and projects to create a healthy world: a place that nourishes humans and all other living beings. The dream of the editorial team is of a place where humans recognize and live in reciprocity with one another and other forms of life, where the human capacity to use tools and our minds to transform our environment not only does not destroy it (as seems a distinct possibility to many), but instead contributes to the flourishing of all humans, excluding none. A home for all nationalities, for women and men, for animals, for the vast varieties of species of plants — without using them up in service of just our dominant species. A home that respects

differences of values and culture without presuming that one's own approach is better or higher than that of others. A home in the full meaning of the word: a place that we think of with love, which gave us birth, and where those we love reside.

We in the editorial team have no illusion or delusion of being complete or providing “the answer” to these important questions. Our intention is to foster conversation within the world of social science on the notion of a healthy society and the role of leadership and healthy organizations in such a world. There did not seem to be any way to have the book fully represent the efforts taking place around the world in service of our goals, as the task would be too vast. Given the vastness of the topic, we chose to present fundamental conceptual themes and perspectives and then shine light on seeds that are being planted by many people around the world, as symbolized by those included in the book.

In the 2014 Building Leadership Bridges volume, *Leading with Spirit, Presence, and Authenticity*, we as an editorial team presented authors from around the world who had focused on developing leaders' inner wisdom (Goldman Schuyler, Baugher, Jironet, & Lid-Falkman, 2014). This book builds on that context: the path from inner development to impact in the world. In this second volume we seek to address, with humility, the omnipresent task of generating a healthy society and world.

As Editor Karin Jironet describes her experience of our work together in creating this book:

We live in different parts of the world, in different time zones and cultures, and with different biographies, educations and professions. Yet, we have a common mindset and close affinity with the leadership field. The medium — online conversations — seems to create a liminal space of sorts; it is not a professional meeting yet not a social meeting but a base for sharing our personal stories within the professional framework.

The team began this undertaking with the same members as for *Leading with Spirit, Presence, and Authenticity*, but life intervened. In creating the last book, we had a relatively easy time, although we had to learn to be at ease stating views in the face of a colleague's strong disagreement. That process established a fundamental trust in ourselves and one another. This time, our work was longer and more challenging, perhaps because of the scope of the topic we chose, or perhaps simply because there is actually increasing turmoil and change in many

people's lives. Somehow we felt how health can silently reverberate in the background, amidst all the chaos, suffering, and noise — things that we too, as individuals, experienced in our lives over the 20 months that we worked together virtually to co-create this book.

Much as Lena Lid-Falkman wished to work with us, she withdrew for personal reasons — and now has a beautiful baby daughter. We miss her endless good will and abundant energy. John Eric Baugher continues to bring his superb editing skills, his broad sociological perspectives, his commitment to social change, and his deep involvement with the role of suffering as a source of transformation. Karin Jironet is our “wise woman”: Her insights about people and interpersonal dynamics combine with her knowledge of philosophy, Jungian psychology, and religion to help us incorporate perspectives that might otherwise be neglected. And Debra DeRuyver, who transitioned into the more expansive role of Communications Director at the International Leadership Association, continues to support us graciously with respect to logistics, good humor, and all the many invisible details involved in getting a book created and complete.

## The Design of This Book

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*Creative Social Change: Leadership for a Healthy World* is composed of three parts:

- (1) **The Ground: Foundations from Thought Leaders** provides the rich thinking of key social science contributors to our growing understanding of how to create organizational and societal health,
- (2) **Air and Water: What Flows Lives** offers nourishment from contributors who enrich our thinking about what it is to be a cultivator of health as a leader,
- (3) **Seeds and Plants: Local Case Studies** includes case studies about bringing such ideas to life in various parts of the world, on many continents.

The **ground** is set primarily by the thinking of eminent social scientists who have been addressing leadership and health over the last several decades: Robert E. Quinn, Otto Scharmer, Ed Schein, Peter Senge, and Margaret Wheatley. Each of these

scholars and consultants has made major contributions to thought and action in the area of systemic and transformational change. We chose them because of their interconnections and the breadth of what they bring, as foundational action-oriented organizational scholar-practitioners.

In addition, we sought contributions that address key topics in this vast global process, which we consider to be **air and water** or nutrients. Riane Eisler, distinguished award-winning author and activist for partnership in society since the 1980s, brings her powerful distinction between partnership and domination as an underlying framework of societies throughout human history. She alludes to the importance of measuring the components of a healthy society and leadership that is conducive to it, which is further discussed by leadership scholar Samuel G. Wilson in his chapter on developing indicators of societal health, with a focus particularly on leadership for the greater good, for which he developed and beta-tested an indicator in Australia. Sociologist Baugher, neuropsychiatrist Walter Osika, and MD and founder of The Natural Step Karl Henrik Robert enable us to look at the science behind *sustainability* in the context of the shift in moral needed for any significant change to take place. Psychoanalyst, theologian, and executive guide Karin Jironet reflects on how a personal leadership ethos forms the basis for the United Nation's work for a healthy world. In the final chapter of this section, Charles J. Palus, Steadman Harrison III, and Joshua J. Prasad of the Center for Creative Leadership explore the theoretical foundations of their leadership development work and how this has been used in Africa, which facilitates a transition in the book from thought to case studies of action.

The third part consists of a selection of case studies that we think of as **seeds or young plants**: efforts to take steps toward wholeness in different communities, cultures, and parts of the world. We are delighted that this selection brings in experiences from many parts of the world of attempting to bring about healthier organizations and communities. Patricia A. Wilson, professor of international development, public participation, and conflict resolution, describes action research in peri-urban Mexico that led not only to community change but also to the development of new university programs. Researcher Carolina Bown recounts the unique ways that indigenous women are developing as leaders in Ecuador, based on a study she conducted over a three-year period in a number of Andean communities, drawing upon local *Kichwa* concepts about life. Consultant Jane

McCann had been observing public chief executives in New Zealand for decades and was inspired by the call for this book to write about her observations and the implications. Barbara Rose Shuler, a music journalist with extensive involvement in the Carmel California Bach Festival, explores how this festival, designed 80 years ago to nourish its community, has built on this foundation over the many decades and how its current leader is initiating projects that honor the broadest community bases for the arts, creating a reciprocal benefit between the community and the arts. Max Klau and Jill Hufnagel, both of whom are deeply trained in Ron Heifetz's adaptive leadership approach, analyze how it has been used in the very diverse settings of the state of Kansas (the United States) and Bangladesh. Finally, Éliane Ubalijoro, Bagwiza Jacqueline Uwizeyimana, and Marilyn Verghis bring their experiences about how women in Rwanda have, through their leadership, been healing the deep wounds of the horrific genocide that took place there in 1994. In their case studies, these contributors touch on themes that are core issues for leadership and organizational studies: the role of women, the importance of sustainability, the complexity of leadership development, the importance of cultural competence, and the interdependent nature of practice-based learning and scholarly research in expanding our collective wisdom.

We believe that art and creativity are essential components for addressing global problems and opening people to new perspectives. As such, each part of the book opens with an original piece of art created by Susan Amber Gordon to express that part's theme. We hope you will give time to thoughtfully consider each piece, moving beyond words into the image-making regions of your mind before and after reading each part. Finally, in selecting contributors and topics, we as editors knew we could never be comprehensive; we hope we are raising core questions with enough varied voices to catalyze both dialogue and action. May the work of all our contributors help build a body of knowledge across disciplines, in different cultures, and over time about what works in nourishing a healthy world.

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