

A Group Coaching Approach to Authentic Leadership Development

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Declaration

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SECTION A: PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION

A GROUP COACHING APPROACH TO AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: DOES IT WORK? HOW DOES IT WORK? WHAT DOES WORK ACTUALLY MEAN?

PREFACE

The Portfolio presented here is concerned with the subject of Authentic Leadership Development. This subject has become the focus of much attention in the last 10 years by both researchers and practitioners in the leadership and leadership development field. Over the decades there has been a variety of leadership themes and concepts that have garnered similar attention, for example, Transformational & Transactional Leadership, Situational Leadership, Servant Leadership, Contingent Leadership, Ethical Leadership...and now Authentic Leadership. It has probably come to the fore as a result of high profile examples of poor leadership on a global scale. Even before the financial crisis of 2008 there were the examples of Enron and Worldcom and since 2008 there have been the examples of Arthur Andersen and Lehman Brothers (<http://www.accounting-degree.org/scandals>) and more recently Toshiba, Volkswagen and even FIFA (<http://fortune.com/2015/12/27/biggest-corporate-scandals-2015>).

Although over this last decade there has been this considerable interest in the idea of Authentic Leadership, both as a construct and an effective form of leadership practice, what has been notably lacking, particularly in the academic field, are ideas of how to actually develop authentic leaders. Both anecdotal evidence from the practitioners and empirical evidence from the researchers all point towards Authentic Leadership achieving desirable organisational and business benefits (p.14). Yet there is almost a complete absence of any research demonstrating how Authentic Leadership is actually developed. This is the sole purpose of this piece of research, to investigate one particular approach to Authentic Leadership Development (ALD) to see if it works and if so, to try and understand how it works. The approach to ALD that is investigated here is a group-coaching approach and I think it is pertinent to overview here how and why this particular approach came to be chosen for this research.

In a bid to understand the psychology of leadership coaching better the author of this research began a path of enquiry that led first to psychotherapy, then to Existential philosophy and finally back to group therapy. This was mainly through the works and writing of Irvin Yalom (1995) but of course along the way took in the Humanistic work of the likes of Carl Rogers (1980). Yalom is considered the founding father of group-therapy and his opus – *The Theory & Practise of Group*

Psychotherapy, is in its 5th edition and has been used as the standard text for group-therapy students since the 1970's. It was while studying this text, alongside its equally voluminous companion – Existential Psychotherapy, that the idea began to form that this group format approach may be equally powerful in a coaching context. Also, the Existential perspective seemed very relevant to some of the issues and concerns relating to personal authenticity. This led me further into the Existential literature where I indeed did discover that authenticity is core to existentialism and a theme that runs throughout Existential writing and thought. So, it was that the idea began to emerge of running group-coaching sessions for leaders and getting them to reflect upon their lives and their leadership from an existential perspective.

It was also through reading the likes of Spinelli and van Deursen that I began to understand more consciously an idea or philosophy that I had always had through my own coaching practice, but now I knew its name – Phenomenology. These existential psychotherapists had begun to write about how the Phenomenological approach is ideally suited to existential coaching and was perfectly compatible with Roger's person-centred and Humanistic approach. So, I had settled upon the approach that was to be investigated and assessed. It was to be a group-coaching format that would help individual leaders reflect upon and appraise, from an existential perspective, their own lives and leadership. Furthermore, this was to be done in a humanistic-phenomenological manner, that is, to heighten awareness and deepen the understanding each individual has about deeply personal issues relating to their lives and leadership. It was to be less about goals, solution-focussed or action-orientated coaching, as it was (is) a personal belief that these all emerge quite naturally when relevant self-awareness and self-understanding has been achieved. The final format of the coaching was to become 3 days over 3 months with each day titled: Past / Present / Future. A fuller description of the format and process is given in the relevant Methodology section on pages 15 and 16.

SECTION B: RESEARCH THESIS

This then offered a credible form of ALD to test and the hypothesis was simply – *Is group-coaching an effective form of Authentic Leadership Development?* The simplicity of the stated hypothesis however, belied the complexity of the task to be undertaken if I was to answer the question fully and satisfactorily, that is, scientifically. To frame the investigation, I set out to answer three quite straight forward questions relating to the group-coaching ALD hypothesis; *does* group-coaching work? And if so, *how* does it work? And, *what* does work actually mean? In his essay exploring the *what, why* and *how* of Group Analysis, Young (2006) refers to an abundance of anecdotal data attesting to the positive individual impact of Group Analysis but concludes '*there is a lack of clear explanation of*

what 'work' in terms of output or outcome might mean. There is a lack of a robust and theoretical underpinning which precludes us from answering 'how' it works in a consistent way. For the 'how' is predicated upon the 'why' and the 'why' demands a theoretical explanation which is robust, coherent and transparent' (p.478). It was these three fundamental questions that I sought to answer before I could be satisfied that I had a genuine, robust and empirically developed method of Authentic Leadership Development.

These three questions then give the format for this Portfolio and I will address each in turn and illustrate where and how they fit in to the overall research project. First, *does* group-coaching work as a form of Authentic Leadership Development? This is in many respects the easiest of the three questions to answer. There is currently on the market and available to researchers, two scientifically validated Authentic Leadership assessment instruments; the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) and the Authentic Leadership Inventory (ALI). These were administered to all participants prior to their first group-coaching session and then again after their third and final session three months later. Detailed results are reported on page 25.

The second question was far more challenging to address, *how* does group-coaching work? This line of inquiry started with a review of the *Group* literature reported on page 27. This was found to be quite unsatisfactory in that it gave no theory or conceptual insights into what might be happening in these ALD groups. It offered some useful ideas such as; group-cohesion and psychological-safety that were eventually incorporated into the model, but very little beyond that. So, the search led me outside of the fields of group-theory and group-psychology into areas such as Social psychology and Developmental psychology. These were to prove more fruitful in helping me develop a conceptual understanding of *how* these ALD groups might work and the results are presented and discussed on page 49 onwards.

It was my presumption (along with others of an existential persuasion) that authenticity as a leader requires authenticity as a person, that is, Authentic Leadership is predicated on an Authentic Self. As a result, the second part of this investigation into *how* ALD group-coaching works led me to study the literature relating to the concept of *Self*. As this was an existing and conscious presupposition prior to the research I was able to include a relevant self-measure for each of the participants. I chose to include the Self-Concept-Clarity measure and the results of this can be found on page 46. Having followed a line of inquiry that bisected the fields of self-psychology, social-psychology, group-theory and group-therapy, I believe I achieved a satisfactory understanding, or at least a reasonable theoretical proposition, to answer the question as to *how* ALD group-coaching works. The steps in

the process of ALD group-coaching were identified using Grounded Theory and are reported in the Methodology sections on pages 36 and 56.

Grounded Theory was also instrumental in helping me answer the final question - if ALD group-coaching does work, *what* does work actually mean? I had already used the existing scientific construct of Authentic Leadership via the ALQ and the ALI, so in a sense I confirmed that the group-coaching helped develop those constructs in leaders, that is; Relational Transparency, Balanced Information Processing, Self-Awareness & Moral Perspective. However, my aim was to be more specific. Rather than simple over-arching theoretical constructs, I wanted to know what leadership capacities the ALD group-coaching actually achieved/increased/enhanced for the individual participants? Twenty-five interviews were recorded and transcribed to help investigate this question. The transcriptions were then subject to the coding and categorisation laid out by Grounded Theory protocol. The result was a four-component concept of Authentic Leadership (Conscious, Confident, Competent, Congruent), but more importantly this was formed of seven sub-categories; Self-Understanding & Self-Management, Understanding of Others, Flexible & Effective Interactions, Management Mindfulness, Leadership Capacity & Proactivity, Leadership Confidence & Clarity, Strategic Orientation. All defined and discussed in detail from page 56 onwards.

This main research is detailed in Chapters One, Two and Three. The three chapters that follow this are an attempt to introduce additional leadership theory that I considered relevant, albeit in retrospect of the main research. For example, in Chapter Four I introduce a theory of adult development called Leadership Development Levels and overview how and why I think this theory may be relevant to the group-coaching process. In Chapter Five I introduce the Imposter Phenomena (or Syndrome) and suggest how and why I think this too may be positively impacted (reduced) by the group approach to Authentic Leadership Development. Finally, in Chapter Six, after hearing the question from every single AL group and thus concluding it was a legitimate question, I made the decision to tackle the question – was Adolf Hitler an authentic leader? I had already considered that a case study of some description would make an interesting and useful addendum to this exploration of Authentic Leadership and despite the potential controversy, two facts made me decide to pursue the Hitler option. First, there was the repeated questioning by group participants about this leader's authenticity, which indicated it was an issue of genuine concern and/or interest. Second, the sheer volume of work available made it a logistically feasible option. It is of course a case study taken from an historical perspective with only secondary data available and should therefore be read as such.

Aside from these three additional chapters, I believe the three previous, evidenced based chapters allow me to accept the research hypothesis and propose that group-coaching is an effective form of Authentic Leadership Development, through answering the three key research questions; *does* ALD group-coaching work? *How* does it work? And *what* does work actually mean?

SECTION C: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Throughout the years of running these research groups the question often came up from group members as to whether this group coaching would work with an intact team and/or as a stand-alone one day leadership development intervention. Towards the end of the research I had the opportunity to address both of these questions, at least in part. For the Professional Practice case study a one-day ALD event was organised representing an abridged version of the 3-day event. A pilot was undertaken first which served two purposes. First, it was an opportunity to work through the format and get a sense of what needed adjusting to fit it into a coherent one day version of the 'tried and tested' three-day format. Second, the group that happened to be available for this pilot was in fact an intact team. This afforded me the chance to see what happened when I invited a team, as opposed to a group, to participate in the ALD program, albeit a stripped-down version. The conclusion was that the one day event worked, both with a team and in the normal 'open-group' format. However, it appears they worked as just that – an event and not a process and as such offered limited development opportunities in comparison to the full 3-day format. Qualitative results from both sessions are summarised and a reflective narrative of the experience and the learning gained from it and are presented from page 122.

SECTION D: CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

After research into the Authentic Leadership coaching groups began it became apparent that the approach being employed was existentially orientated by its very nature. The literature review therefore represented an opportunity to bring together and take stock of the existing literature on existential coaching. It also addresses the epistemological issue at the very heart of recent research into Authentic Leadership Development. That is the developing debate between the phenomenologically orientated view of authenticity adopted by the field of philosophy and the positivist approach of the scientific community. The review concludes by mapping my ALD approach onto a phenomenological-existential framework and in turn explaining how each of the major existential concerns can be addressed through this particular form of Authentic Leadership Development. The original contribution of this review is to offer a detailed philosophical approach to authentic leadership development that acknowledges the constructivist nature of authenticity. This review is to be found on page 136.

CHAPTER 1:

DOES group-coaching work as a form of Authentic Leadership Development?

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The first question to ask in this journey into the science and philosophy of authentic leadership is simple. Why the need for Authentic Leadership in the 21st Century? It seems each era has its own leadership theory that develops in response to the needs of the time and the interests of both practitioners and researchers, and it appears the leadership theory of our epoch is Authentic Leadership (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014). To get some sense of why this may be, we need only to briefly review some 21st century business governance to date.

The high profile corporate scandals started in 2001 with Enron's joint CEO's taking the corporation to bankruptcy with a shareholder loss of \$74bn. Their accounting firm Arthur Anderson was also found guilty of misrepresentation which led to the loss of 85,000 of their own jobs. A year later the telecoms giant WorldCom inflated company assets leading to 30,000 job losses and an \$180bn loss. The following year saw the Tyco scandal and more recently, in 2008, the financial services firm Lehman Brothers went bankrupt after hiding \$50bn of toxic loans. Once again aided by their auditors Ernst Young, this resulted in the biggest bankruptcy in US history (www.accounting-degree.org).

These, high profile examples of corporate management may well have contributed to the keen interest now being taken in Authentic Leadership by practitioners such as George and Simms (2007) and Goffee and Jones (2005). But it is not just the practitioners whose attention has been caught by the business world leadership failures it is also the academic world. In 2007 Harvard University conducted a national study to assess the confidence Americans had in their leaders. 77 per cent of participants *agreed/strongly agreed* that there was a crisis of confidence in leadership in the US, (Rosenthal, Pittinsky, Purvin & Montoya, 2007). Specifically, respondents indicated they had either 'moderate' or 'no' trust in their business and political leaders. Such concern about business leadership in the US even prompted a group of Harvard MBA staff and students to establish an oath to the ethical leadership of the organisations that they go on to lead. Other global Business School initiatives in responsible leadership have also emerged over the last decade, for example; PRIME – Principles for Responsible Management Education (www.unprme.org) and GRLI – the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (www.grii.org), offering some response to Ghosal's criticism that business schools propagate amoral business models which "*...free their students from any sense of moral responsibility*" (Ghosal, 2005 p.76).

Outside of the business school environment a US poll in 2004 showed only a third of the working population thought their leaders were authentic and less than a quarter of respondents thought their leaders would be capable of self-sacrifice for the good of their organisation. Also, in 2009 the US National Leadership Index showed that nearly two thirds of respondents said they didn't trust what business leaders said and over 80% believed that these leaders only work to benefit themselves and close associates rather than society in general (Rosenthal et al, 2007). This climate of mistrust in leadership has provided the backdrop and impetus for researchers to begin the path of scientific inquiry into a more transparent and ethical approach to leadership known as Authentic Leadership (AL) and Authentic Leadership Development (ALD). Before going on to explore the scientific development of Authentic Leadership in depth, let's first look at the root construct of Authenticity itself.

Authenticity

The word itself, *authentēs* or *authento*, translates into variations around the theme of being *self-made* which is reflected in the definition given to it by various western philosophers. Kierkegaard (1946) for example, talked about being the *true-self one was meant to be* and not following the lead of the crowd. Heidegger (1927) of not living immersed in the '*They*' and Sartre (1966) described it as the absence of self-deception. More recently, Brumbaugh (1971) describes authenticity as the ability to make individual choices and to take responsibility for them and Harter (2002) as owning one's own experience of thoughts, emotions and beliefs.

Here one can see the seeds of the definition by Kernis (2003) that paved the way for the recent scholarly work on authenticity and who describes it as '*the unobstructed operation of one's true or core self*' (p.1). Kernis and Goldman (2006) developed the multi-component construct of Authenticity that laid the foundation for the models of Authentic Leadership I come on to discuss later. They propose that authenticity is made up of four related but separate components; *awareness, unbiased processing, behaviour and relational orientation*.

First there is *Awareness* - relating to the self-knowledge of one's own emotions, cognitions, beliefs and motives. Second, is *Unbiased processing* - meaning accuracy and objectivity with regards positive and negative self-relevant information. Next is *Behaviour* - based on the previous two and thus genuinely self-congruent, and finally a *Relational orientation* - characterised by openness, honesty and sincerity in one's relations with others. This framework laid the conceptual foundation for the scientifically developed and validated models of Authentic Leadership that were to come and today many of the current definitions of Authentic Leadership have their roots in this work.

Authentic Leadership

Peus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun and Frey (2012) have described authentic leaders as leaders who are “...guided by sound moral convictions and act in concordance with their deeply held values” (p.332). Similarly, Avolio, Luthans and Walumbwa (2004) describe Authentic Leaders as ‘*individuals who know who they are and what they think and are perceived by others as being aware of their own values, moral perspective, knowledge and strengths*’ (p.4). In terms of what actually constitutes a scientific understanding of Authentic Leadership, it is the work of the latter that has produced the conceptualisation that dominates the field thus far (Avolio & Gardner 2005; Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa 2005; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008; Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck, & Avolio 2010).

Their conceptualisation of Authentic Leadership is a higher-order construct comprising four individual but connected components, building on the work of Kernis and Goldman (2006); *Self-Awareness* (a deep understanding of oneself); *Internalised Moral Perspective* (strong internal standards and values); *Relational Transparency* (presentation of a genuine self); and *Balanced Processing* (objective data analysis & decision making). This definition was then developed further by Walumbwa and Associates (2008) as a four-component, multi-dimensional model of Authentic Leadership that they refined, validated and operationalised into the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) used in the first part of this research and described in more detail in the Methodology section.

Benefits of Authentic Leadership

Although still in relative infancy there is a growing body of evidence illustrating the potential value of Authentic Leadership to groups and organisations in terms of; employee engagement, satisfaction, performance and well-being. For example, Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang and Avey (2009), have found Authentic Leadership positively affects group performance as measured by sales growth. Peus and associates (2012), Rego, Vitoria, Marques and Cunha (2012a; 2012b), Leroy, Palanski and Simons (2012), Peterson, Walumbwa, Avolio and Hannah (2012) and Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey and Okey (2011), have all found that Authentic Leadership increases role performance and team effectiveness. Hmieleski, Cole and Bacon (2012) even found this indirectly extended to overall organisation performance. There is also research supporting the link between Authentic Leadership and work engagement and satisfaction (Hassen & Ahmed, 2011; Jensen & Luthans, 2006; Walumbwa, Hartnell, Ayree, & Christensen, 2011 and Wong & Cummins, 2009). It would seem then that emerging evidence is starting to demonstrate a connection between Authentic Leadership and a broad range of organisational benefits and positive *organisational citizenship behaviours* (Walumbwa et al, 2010).

So why is there a need for a research-based approach to the development of Authentic Leadership? This growing body of research is clearly demonstrating the organisational benefits of Authentic Leadership and its positive relationship to a broad range of vital business factors; organisational climate and commitment, communication and knowledge sharing, job-satisfaction and work engagement, individual and team productivity and even overall company performance (Table.1). Therefore, this growing evidence-base itself underscores the importance of a fuller understanding of how we develop Authentic Leaders and the importance of providing an evidence-based method of Authentic Leadership Development (ALD). This research represents one such attempt.

Table 1: Authentic Leadership outcome research

Authors	Focus of Research
Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang & Avey (2009)	Trust in leadership
Wong & Cummings (2009)	Trust in leadership
Walumbwa, Hartnell & Christensen (2011)	Communication climate and knowledge sharing
Jensen & Luthans (2006)	Follower job-satisfaction and organisational commitment
Giallonardo, Wong & Iwasiw (2010)	Follower citizenship and work engagement
Wong, Laschnger & Cummings (2010)	Follower citizenship and work engagement
Wong & Cummings (2009)	Follower job performance
Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey & Oke (2011b)	Group creativity
Hannah, Walumbwa & Fry (2011)	Team productivity
Toor & Ofori (2009)	Psychological well-being
Hmieleski, Cole & Baron (2011)	Overall company performance

It is estimated the US spend over \$10bn a year on leadership development (O’Leonard, 2010). However, there exists very little conceptual research into the field of leadership development (Avolio & Luthans, 2006; Day, 2009) and even less into Authentic Leadership development specifically (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014). Day (2000) observes that most leadership development research does not actually investigate whether the leader changes in terms of their thinking about leadership, or their style of leadership, as a result of leadership development interventions. Yukl (2009) also criticises the leadership field for a lack of interventions that are actually based on a theory-led process of leadership development, leaving us to wonder just how such a large market has historically grown on such little theoretical or empirical evidence.

Avolio believes this area to be one of the most important frontiers in both the science and practice of leadership. He says that *“There are so many programs out there that profess to develop leadership and so few that have any evidence to support their claims”* (2005, p.xiii) and *‘The way we are currently developing leaders in most organisations is typically accidental, by luck and happenstance’* (2010, p.722).

Due to the demands of globalisation, Avolio believes we are on the precipice of *a war for leadership talent* and urges a closer collaboration between leadership scientists and practitioners to address this. He calls for scientists involved in the field of leadership development to work with leaders to help them become more practitioner-scientists. That is, to understand what constitutes research-driven and evidenced-based practice, allowing them to make more discerning choices when investing in their own leadership development. He says “...*what I believe is the next challenging frontier for both the science and practise of leadership is defining what constitutes genuine leadership development*” (Avolio 2010, p.721). And after undertaking a three-year long assessment of the entire history of academic leadership development research, he concludes that “...*one of the least researched areas in the science of leadership is in fact the science of leadership development*” (p.722) which “...*is at best in its infancy*” (p.737).

Authentic Leadership Development

In contrast to the research into the construct of AL and its benefits, the actual *development* of Authentic Leadership is a pursuit that has been led less by leadership scientists and more by leadership practitioners (Goffee & Jones 2005; George & Simms 2007). While this focus by the business community is welcomed, it does mean there is a danger of Authentic Leadership Development taking the same unscientific route that leadership development has taken generally and which has led the likes of Avolio to comment ‘...*this omission is a huge opportunity for creating and validating what we have called authentic leadership development models and methods*’ and that ‘...*interventions based on well-validated models and methods will provide us with a more authentic basis for developing authentic leaders*’ (p.722). Also, commenting on Authentic Leadership specifically, Gardner, Cogliser, Davis and Dickens (2011) have called for “...*greater attention to the design and implementation of intervention strategies intended to foster the development of authentic leaders*” or “...*we run the risk of underutilizing the considerable promise of the AL construct and the leverage it provides for producing veritable and sustained improvements in individual, group and organizational performance*” (p.23).

It is in the context of such a commentary that I believe the research presented here is both timely and important. It attempts to offer such an ‘*authentic basis for developing authentic leaders*’ through the design, development and evaluation of an empirical supported and evidence-based *model* and *method* of Authentic Leadership Development.

To achieve this ambitious goal, I decided I needed to address each of the three research questions set out in the Preface; *Does the process of AL I am examining work? How does it work?* And, *what does work actually mean?* To answer the first of these questions, *does it work*, I selected the two

validated AL measures available and administered them to all participants *pre* and *post* the group coaching intervention. The details of this first part of the research study are reported below.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Various researchers and writers have commented that Authentic Leadership is not something that can be developed in a training room (Avolio, 2005; Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Sparrowe, 2005), but is more something that occurs as a result of life experience. So, the first challenge of this research was to identify an intervention that would help individuals *learn* about themselves as leaders, more than simply being *taught* directly about leadership. Leadership is ultimately a social phenomenon (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Uhl-Bien, 2006) and so it was hypothesised that it would need to be some form of social experience that would help achieve the deep self-learning required for leaders to lead in a way that is authentically their own. One such vehicle considered as having potential for achieving such insight and self-understanding through a social process, was the format of group-coaching. Coaching (Psychology) has been defined as a way to “...*enhance well-being and performance in personal life and work domains, underpinned by models of coaching grounded in established adult learning or psychological approaches*” (Palmer & Whybrow, 2006, p.8) and group coaching as “*A small group of people meeting together in active participation on several occasions, for the purpose of learning, including developing new capacities and skills*” (Thornton, 2016, p.7).

Procedure

Authentic Leadership Group Coaching - The coaching approach used in this research was a group-coaching format where selected senior leaders came together to form an Authentic Leadership Coaching-Group facilitated by the author. It is worth highlighting here a significant difference between this type of group coaching and other group development formats. There was no common group goal to be attained in these groups and therefore the group did not have to work together in the traditional sense of group-working, i.e. problem solving, decision making or action planning. Also, despite the considerable life and leadership experience represented in each group, participants were asked to refrain from giving each other direct advice or guidance. They were invited to use their experience to help them ask intelligent and pertinent questions and offer considered and thoughtful observations and feedback. It is in this fundamental respect that the leadership coaching groups discussed here differ from a leadership training class or an Action Learning set. The format of the coaching is detailed below. Finally, it is important to note how leaders were recruited for the groups, which is also discussed when addressing the issue of sampling. All potential participants were known to the researcher/group-coach as previous training delegates or individual coachees. In this respect, a working alliance had already been established and their suitability for group-work

could be tentatively assessed. There then followed a more formal discussion where the nature of the ALD group-coaching was discussed in detail so all potential participants were fully able to give their informed consent if they were then invited and agreed to join a group (Appendix 3, p.141).

Day 1 – The Past

After introductions and group contracting each participant is asked to draw an in-depth life line detailing the significant events that they believe formed and informed their lives to date. They are asked to share how they believed these events had shaped their values and beliefs and how these in turn translate into their leadership principles and philosophy. After presenting their story they are then asked questions by each group member in turn who have been given rudimentary tuition in the principles of coaching, i.e. open questions, challenges, observations and feedback being permissible but not advice-giving. The role of the group is to help deepen the individuals thinking about their life and their leadership and how the two are (or are not) related. It seems this deceptively simple exercise in *externalisation and visualisation* itself brings about insights and learning, even before the group coaching gets formally underway. Below are two examples of reactions to this exercise taken from participants' follow-on evaluation interviews:

Table 2: Day One Exercise – Life Narrative

The section below gives two participants accounts of the first group exercise, which is to draw a lifeline/graph on a flip chart representing their life to date, particularly highlighting the highs, lows and important experiences that have shaped the individual and their approach to leadership.

Account 1:

'The most powerful exercise for me was doing the Lifeline. I went off to do it quite easily and I didn't feel particularly phased about what I was going to do. I had a consideration about how I was going to draw it and knew I wanted to draw it as a graph and then started to map it and felt...I wasn't sort of non-comital...but I didn't feel tested in doing what I was doing and I didn't have to think hard about the points I was putting in there because I think I knew where the highs and the lows were. But what was really powerful was coming back and sharing that with the group. Standing in front of everybody and going through it...and by the end of it I felt I'd been through the wringer, from my own perspective. Because articulating it and some of the points were quite...well! I remember admitting that I thought I was nothing more than a chef in a suit, which is something that has kind of always held me back, my belief that I wasn't really equipped to be at the table. Now I use it as a joke whereas before it was a hold-back for me but now I use it for comedy effect if I get something wrong or something. I found that whole exercise really, really enlightening, because whilst you know what's affected

you, when you have to try and articulate the points in your life that were high or low and why they were high or low, it does then make you look at what it has done to you as a person...that's what it made me do. So I had to think about it...I knew that I was lacking in confidence when my job changed here, I knew that, I'd been talking and thinking about that for a while. But I think there was an actual realization of what it had done to me and how it had affected my confidence and that I was actually responsible for my own future destiny and that no one was going to help me with that. Even my previous boss had said that to me. But it was only really talking about it in that environment that I was able to say – I have got to earn this and no-one can take it away and no-one can change it, only me. That changed the way I viewed everything and I came back to work in a much more positive way. So that was really powerful exercise and I carry it around in the back of my car still and I've had more than one comment from people saying they could see a difference in me even after Day 1. It made me think and made me realise that I am the one responsible for making me who I was and I am the one who owns my future destiny. Having to think about my past was critical for me and having to think about where I am now and where I want to be created a chain reaction, it's the catalyst that unlocked everything for me'.

Account 2:

*'I remember when I looked at my life line and I thought "Oh ****!" I looked at it and thought Wow that's just...it's just...! When you write it down its quite shocking...it did shock me. I've never seen it like that before because I do each bit and just think, well that's done and just move on. I've never seen it joined up as one great big thing. I think it was seeing the enormity of everything that has happened really. I wouldn't have automatically viewed my life like that or perceived it that way, but standing back and looking at the bit of paper with it all on made me appreciate everything that has happened, particularly in the last couple of years, and what I've accomplished really. But it's how you looked at it really isn't it? When you put it all together it's me and it's what's made me. It gave me the understanding of how I got to where I am and it reaffirmed how far I'd come'.*

Day 2 – The Present

Between the first and second day each individual receives a personality profile that gives them an insight into their *Temperament* and how this informs their leadership approach; Tactical, Logistical, Strategic or Diplomatic (see below for overview; Keirse, 1998). They present a synopsis of their reports to the group sharing examples from their leadership practice. Once again, the group coaching is designed to help the individual reflect on their leadership through this particular conceptual lens, raising their awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, blind-spots etc. The phenomenological approach to coaching here is powerful because each leader in turn is afforded the opportunity to explore their personal leadership approach without at any time being judged (at least overtly) on what they do and how they do it, merely invited through the group process, to observe,

reflect and consider more deeply the significance of their personal approach to leadership. It seems this absence of judgement is key to creating the psychological safety necessary for such self-exploration that is discussed in more detail later.

Table 3: Day Two Exercise – Leadership Temperament Profile

The leadership assessments administered on day 2 are based on Keirsey's theory of Leadership Intelligence which is in turn based on his theory of Temperament. In this theory, there are 4 classifications of leaders; Artisans as *Tactical Leaders*; Guardians as *Logistical Leaders*; Rationals as *Strategic Leaders*; Idealists as *Diplomatic Leaders*. A summary of each is given below (Keirsey, 1998, p.295-325).

Artisan Leaders: The *tactical* intelligence of Artisans is the most visible of the four intelligences and can be defined as making smart moves that better one's position. Tactics are the manoeuvres in the field or on the stage where the action is and are very immediate and concrete (e.g. Winston Churchill and Theodore Roosevelt). Artisans are opportunist leaders always on the lookout for what can give the edge and often spotting these things where others can't, this can make them good trouble shooting leaders.

Guardian Leaders: The *logistical* intelligence of the Guardian comes to the fore in their reliable and smart handling of goods and services. Logistics has to do with concrete, down-to-earth, everyday matters of material (e.g. George Washington and George Bush Snr). The soundest basis of leadership for the Guardian is carefully considered administration of what needs to be done and how it is to be done, i.e. schedules, regulations and standard operating procedures. If no such routines or protocols exist they are happy to establish and disseminate them.

Diplomatic Leaders: The *diplomatic* intelligence of the Idealist shows itself in their natural gift for working with people, as both mentors and advocates. However, it is abstract in nature and therefore not that easy to define (e.g. Gandhi and Luther King). Their leadership is quite unlike that of the others in that they are catalyst leaders acting as facilitators, energisers and motivators. They are personal in their relationships and therefore lead in a personal way, striving to bring workers together into cooperative and high morale teams.

Rational Leaders: The *strategic* intelligence of the Rationals is shown in their ability to work with systems, that is, to figure out complex ways and means to accomplish well defined goals. Strategic operations are much more abstract and less observable than concrete tactical or logistical operations. Rational leaders (e.g. Abraham Lincoln and Douglas MacArthur) usually have a vision of

how an organisation should look and how it will fare in the long term, their strength being in strategic planning, looking both far ahead and all around.

Day 3 – The Future

Before day three each person is asked to undertake a self-chosen behavioural task or experiment that they believe will help their growth as a leader based on the discoveries of day one and two. This is often experimenting with the lesser used side of their leadership style or approach. In this context, it is less about trying to develop their weak areas, but more explore and experiment with *the lesser known parts of their whole*. Once again, they are not told they should be doing anything different or better, they are simply coached through their experience by the group to help gain further insight into themselves and their approach to leadership. Finally, they are asked to synthesis everything they have learnt and are asked to consider how they want the future of their leadership to look, what they want to achieve and what legacy they want to build. This isn't a simple action-planning piece, but an invitation to each individual to earnestly contemplate their temporality and finitude as a leader, either overall or in their current position, whichever is appropriate and relevant for their own personal situation.

These groups convened for one day a month over three months and the data presented throughout this report is based on the output of 5 groups run over a 3-year period, with a total of 25 participants. The data comes from two sources. First, a monthly Reflective log completed by each participant within a week of Day 1, 2 and 3 respectively (Appendix.1, p.139). These were unstructured and participants were asked to record their personal experience of each day. The purpose of these Logs was to get a sense of each individual's experience of the process as it was unfolding. How they were responding and reacting to what they were experiencing. These were intentionally unstructured as I didn't want to lead the participants in what they reported and wanted them to focus purely on what they were finding personally significant. Second, there were recorded interviews which took place three months after the final session. These were semi-structured interviews based on the 3 levels of evaluation often used in corporate Learning and Development interventions; 1-Learning, 2-Behaviour Change, 3-Performance Improvement (Kirkpatrick, 1975). It was considered that a 3-month period would be sufficient to eliminate changes subject to natural atrophy after the 'post-program honeymoon-period' and to identify only those that represented genuine and enduring psychological and behavioural change.

Participants

This research used a within-participants repeated measures design, with five groups of 5 or 6 participants run over a three-year period, totalling 25 participants. Purposive sampling (Tongco, 2007) was used in a bid to populate each group with participants who considered themselves both willing and able to work within the intense small group format. Kets de Vries (2005) has discussed the importance of this approach to sampling in group coaching and believes consent is of paramount importance on ethical grounds in group coaching “...particularly where discourses of a personal nature may occur” (Brown & Grant, 2010 p.34). In Authentic Leadership group coaching issues relating to values, principles and life histories are key to the discussion, and therefore personal discourse is core to the process. Because of this, potential participants were interviewed by the researcher prior to joining a group, where the process was detailed to them and they were able to agree to participate or not. The result of this ‘screening process’ was that the groups were populated by willing participants who understood the nature of the work to be done within the process. This enabled the groups to effectively get underway in the shortest of time, which was critical in this time constrained intervention.

The sample population were all senior leaders from within private and public organisations, with sectors represented including; Energy, Finance, Professional Services, IT, Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Care. All of these individuals had worked with the author previously as either a coaching client or a leadership training delegate. This arrangement and process of selection allowed a reasonably thorough assessment of whether or not they might be potentially suitable candidates for the intense nature of the work that the small group coaching entails. Some candidates had had several one-to-one coaching sessions with the author/researcher and others had spent time with them in a group-training program over the course of one or two days. Both conditions afforded the opportunity to make this initial assessment. If they were considered a potential candidate they were then interviewed about how they considered the prospect of joining a group, how comfortable they felt about giving feedback to peers, receiving feedback, talking in the group about personal life events etc. Criteria for inclusion mainly centred on the candidate’s level of leadership experience and personal maturity. Leadership experience was considered important because these group didn’t offer basic management or leadership skills training. So, they weren’t considered appropriate for neophyte managers or leaders who were just laying the foundations in their roles and needing to equip their toolbox with fundamental models, concepts, tools and techniques. Personal maturity was important as it was considered crucial for the effectiveness of the group that each participant should have a level of self-awareness and self-regulation that enabled them to manage the sometimes intensely personal dialogues that they would get involved in. It should be remembered

that these were short-term interventions that needed to be brought to an optimal level of functioning quickly as possible. Therefore, this level of maturity and motivation to explore, constructively, their personal thoughts, feelings, aspirations and motivations, was far more important than for example education or the direct context of their leadership experience. Participant education ranged from having no formal qualifications, through to those with a first degree and in two cases a PhD. They ranged from Principal Consultants, who led in a flat, matrix and project-based fashion, right up to an MD and a CEO of highly technical engineering firms. There were senior managers and Directors from highly technical and regulated sectors such as the NHS and licensed nuclear facilities, to several Service managers from the same Social Care charity (more about in-house versus open-groups in the section on Ethics below). So, it seemed all level and 'type' of manager and leader could benefit from the process if they were sufficiently mature, reflective and motivated enough to participate. All potential participants were given a thorough briefing at the selection interview so they fully understood what was in store so they could give fully informed consent. As noted above, no one should be forced to participate in such discussions and equally they need to be fully briefed and prepared, even if they appear very motivated to participate. The nett result was that all groups were populated by the appropriate calibre or profile of leader and so each group worked extremely effectively and successfully together. Leadership roles held by participants included the following;

- Chief Executive – Energy Co.
- Managing Director – Commercial Engine Manufacturer
- Heads of Profession (i.e. EHSQ, Safety, Quality, Environment, Assurance) – Nuclear Site
- Senior Engineering Manager, Change Manager, Systems Control Manager, Operations Manager – Nuclear Site
- Head of Commercial Services, Head of Infomatics, IT Director, HR Director – NHS Trust
- Area Service Managers (x7) – Social Care Charity
- Area Sales Manager – Healthcare Co.
- Principle Consultants (x2) – Finance and Nuclear Consultancy

N=25: Male-15, Female-10. Age: 37 – 56, average age 46. The research had the requisite BPS Ethics approval, Appendix 2, p.140).

Ethical Considerations

Prior contact, and having worked together previously, was consistently reported by the participants as beneficial when this was checked out with them. It was also considered beneficial by the

researcher. In addition to the points mentioned above, it also allowed a level of rapport and trust to be established between both parties before the groups began. So, previous contact was considered ethically acceptable by the author, both as a researcher and as a practitioner. As group-coach, no information was introduced or pressed for, that had been discussed in any previous contact. Each participant was given the choice and the autonomy to bring in whatever data they considered appropriate and acceptable to them. The group-coach's role was primarily to facilitate the group coaching and not to engage in coaching any one individual and certainly not to discuss anything which had been discussed outside of the group on previous meetings. Only the information that each individual brought to the group, would be discussed by the group. In this respect, the group-coach was prevented from 'contaminating' the discourse and only the positive aspects of the previous contact mentioned above were considered salient, i.e. the trust and rapport that contributed tangibly to the Psychological Safety considered essential for effective group-working of this nature. However, it was also important to be mindful that this existing relationship did exist and that it could have consciously or unconsciously been at play. For example, participants and the group-coach may have been in danger of subtly colluding with each other to ensure a positive result from the experience for the sake of the historic 'relationship'. This seems to have been navigated successfully though, as in the post-program interviews each individual seemed content to give a frank account of their experience including areas they enjoyed least and areas they found less productive than others. Prior to data collection they were briefed to report on everything they considered pertinent – negative as well as positive – as this was an academic piece of investigation and evaluation and so the focus was on objective enquiry and assessment. As far as can be reliably ascertained, this seems to have been achieved.

The nature of the discourse itself was also subject to ethical consideration. Discussions around personal authenticity are by their very nature just that, personal. The ALD group conversation over the three days is structured around the past/present/future of the individual participants. Temporality, and 'being' within it, is considered a key idea in existential philosophy which posits that we are always becoming, and for this reason the past/present/future format was adopted. This then invites participants to consider their past and how events earlier in their lives had informed who they had become as adults and how this in turn influenced their thoughts, ideas and values as a leader. On day two they are invited to reflect on how they operate in the present as a leader, which includes their existing relationships with their work, their role, their organisations and of course the relationships with their significant others therein. Finally, they are invited to ponder their futures. This brings into focus ideas around career trajectory, legacy and ultimately endings. This creates a powerful focus on what is important for the individuals professionally, but it can also prove quite

poignant for individuals personally, depending on the stage of one's career, the view one has of what has been achieved, what is left to achieve and the time left to do it in. These are all conversations that need to be managed with considerable tact and sensitivity. However, experience shows that by this stage in the groups development, a considerable bond and trust has developed within the group that make it's a very safe place for individuals to talk about such things in a safe and contained environment and to be safely held by the group (and the group coach) as they think about and articulate such issues. Many participants seem to relish the opportunity to have such meaningful conversations and genuine contact with a group of, what inevitably become, important and significant others. Many participants even report that such a level of disclosure and depth of conversation is something they have never achieved with anyone before in a professional context.

Something that should also be considered under Ethics is the composition of the group, specifically whether the group is to be an in-house group or an open-group. The first two groups happened to be in-house groups. In the first group, they were all based on the same site and so knew of each other and had worked together to varying degrees over the years. The second group, although from the same organisation, were based nationally and so didn't have any previous knowledge of each other or experience working together. I considered it important to be transparent with every potential participant, throughout the entire recruitment process for these two groups, about who had already been recruited so far into the group, so each individual had full-knowledge and so could give fully-informed consent to participate. This was particularly important for these first two groups because of sharing the same employing organisation. Interestingly, everyone was fine in these two groups. However, the composition of groups three and four did have to be managed accordingly because of an existing relationship between two particular participants. This ended up simply with one individual passing on group three and waiting for group four to be established some months later. An interesting observation was made about each group type. Both of the in-house groups said they found it extremely rewarding working with others from within the same organisation and that they had established strong links with the rest of the group that had become an invaluable source of support on their return to the organisation. The very first group were still meeting regularly together some three years later. The open-groups by contrast, all reported relief that they were working with complete strangers and said this had given them the confidence to open up to the group which in turn, in their view, helped them get the most back from the group. It would appear then that both group types can be equally effective in slightly different ways. The important lesson is to match the right individual to the right group type.

Finally, and from a personal perspective, something that I found also helped me was my own experience of working in different groups over the years. None of these were therapy groups, but neither were they simply action learning groups for example, and all were designed to facilitate genuine and authentic personal contact between participants. The most recent of which was a Gestalt group that was part of a Certificate program in Relational Organisational Gestalt, run over a period of 18 months, that I undertook in parallel with this research. As well as the relevant skills and insights the program helped me develop, it also enabled me to become part of an intense working group that gave me exposure to, and experience of, being 'inside' a group. I believe, this helped me further develop my own sensitivities to group-dynamics and interactions which I think ultimately made me more effective when facilitating the coaching groups. For example, prior and during the groups I was better able to communicate to the participants how the AL group-coaching process was orientated more towards the processing of information that would emerge rather than any form of predefined task. That it was just as much about the process of the group as it was the information being discussed. And that it was more about contact than action and a genuine dialogue rather than just a discussion. It was interesting to observe just how 'novel' this opportunity for deep genuine personal discussion was, and overall how positively individuals responded to being given the opportunity. A final comment should be made about confidentiality. The nature of these discussions required that all group members explicitly agree upon Chatham House rules – i.e. what is discussed in the group, stays in the group. This, everyone was happy to do.

Design

This study used a Within-Participants design as opposed to a Randomised Control design for many of the reasons noted above. The nature of group work means it is not an effective medium for everyone. This is well known in therapy where it is accepted that some individuals are more suited to individual work than group work (Yalom, 1995). Therefore, this research was not concerned whether it is form of development applicable across a generalised population, but whether it is an effective form of intervention for a participant sample from this population. Although $n=30$ is usually considered an appropriate sample size for t-tests, with this less critical issue of generalisability, the sample size of $n=25$ was considered sufficient. In addition, the assumption of normally distributed difference scores was examined and considered satisfied as the skew and kurtosis levels were estimated at below the maximum allowable value of skew <2.0 and kurtosis <9.0 (Posten, Misra, Sahai, Gore & Garrett, 1987).

Measures

Measures used to ascertain if there was an increase in authentic leadership included both of the scientifically validated AL measures available; the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire ALQ, (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) and the Authentic Leadership Inventory ALI, (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011) detailed below.

ALQ - Authentic Leadership Questionnaire confirmatory factor analysis supports the higher order, multidimensional model of the Authentic Leadership construct that this instrument is based on, comprising; self-awareness, relational transparency, internalised moral perspective and balanced processing. Structural equation modelling has demonstrated the predictive validity of the ALQ measure for important work related attitudes and behaviours, beyond what Ethical Leadership (Brown, 2005) and Transformational Leadership (Bass, 1997) has offered. The 16 item, 5-point scale has internal consistency reliability for each of its scales as follows: Self-awareness .73, Relational transparency .77, Internalised moral perspective .73, Balanced processing .70.

The Authentic Leadership Inventory is a newer measure but based on the same theoretical framework and dimensions of the existing ALQ. The 14 item, 5-point scale has content validity, reliability, factor structure and convergent and discriminant validity and it has greater internal consistency reliabilities than the ALQ with the lowest coefficient alpha being .74 and the highest .85 and it is for this reason that it was included as an additional measure in this study. Both assessment questionnaires (ALQ & ALI) were completed by all participants at the beginning of day 1 and at the end of day 3, three months later.

1.3 **RESULTS**

Authentic Leadership Measures

To test the hypothesis that the pre-coaching and post-coaching Authentic Leadership scores would be different a Paired-Samples t-test was performed to compare the pre and post scores of the two Authentic Leadership instruments used; ALQ pre-coaching ($M=48.20$ and $SD=5.82$) and post-coaching ($M=50.88$ and $SD=5.56$); and ALI pre-coaching ($M=52.76$ and $SD=4.93$) and post-coaching ($M=56.40$ and $SD=4.33$).

Table 4: Pre & Post-Coaching ALQ & ALI Mean and Standard Deviation Scores

	Pre-Coaching	Pre-Coaching	Post-Coaching	Post-Coaching
Authentic Leadership Measure	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
ALQ total score	48.20	5.82	50.88	5.56
ALI total score	52.76	4.93	56.40	4.33

Both sets of scores showed statistical significance and therefore the hypothesis was accepted. In addition, the Cohen *d* effect size was calculated which showed a moderate effect for both. Authentic Leadership Questionnaire: $t(24)=2.83$, $p<.01$, $d=0.57$; Authentic Leadership Inventory: $t(24)=3.84$, $p<.001$, $d=0.77$.

Table 5: ALQ & ALI - Paired Samples T-Test

AL Measures	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>T</i>	<i>Df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
ALQ	2.68	4.72	2.837	24	.009
ALI	3.64	4.73	3.845	24	.001

Authentic Leadership Constructs

In addition, three of the four individual AL constructs also showed significance (Table 6 & 7); Self-Awareness $p<.001$, Moral Perspective $p<.016$ & Relational Transparency $p<.015$. The construct of Balanced Info Processing showed significance of $p<.061$ in the ALI but only of $p<.892$ in the ALQ.

Table 6: Pre & Post-Coaching AL Construct Mean and Standard Deviation Scores

	Pre-Coaching	Pre-Coaching	Post-Coaching	Post-Coaching
Authentic Leadership Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Relational Trans.	15.16	2.27	16.20	2.52
Moral Perspective	12.84	2.11	13.72	1.64
Self-Awareness	10.24	1.94	11.48	1.71

Table 7: AL Constructs - Paired Samples T-Test

AL Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
Rel. Transparency	1.04	1.99	2.61	24	.015
Moral Perspective	0.88	1.69	2.60	24	.016
Self-Awareness	1.24	1.64	3.78	24	.001

1.4 CONCLUSION

Based on these overall results I am able to accept the Hypothesis and tentatively answer the first question in the affirmative – Group-Coaching *is* an effective form of Authentic Leadership Development. Now we move onto Part 2. If group-coaching *does* work as a form of Authentic Leadership Development - *how* does it work? This discussion constitutes by far the greatest part of this thesis and here we start at the very beginning – group theory. What theory *is* there of groups and how might that impact, influence or inform the ALD coaching groups?

CHAPTER 2:

HOW does group-coaching work as a form of Authentic Leadership Development?

2.1 INTRODUCTION

PART 1: A Grounded Theory of Authentic Leadership Development

The aim for the field of group-coaching should be to develop itself as a valid, empirically-based and evidentially-supported coaching methodology (Ellam-Dyson, 2012; Briner, 2012), however as Young (2006) noted about Group-Analysis *'this will be predicated upon the discipline being under-pinned by a robust and empirically verifiable theory'* (p.479). Therefore, the purpose of this section is to review what exists in the scholarly literature that may offer such *a robust and empirically verifiable theory* of group-coaching. In this search however, because there is so little written directly about group-coaching I cast the net wider in an attempt to establish some form of conceptual understanding of group-coaching.

This absence in the current scientific literature leaves us with the exact question Carter (2002) asked about Group Analysis *'where do we look?'* Whitaker (2000) has a suggestion. Describing theory as *'a scheme or system of ideas or statements held as an explanation or account of a group of facts or phenomena'* (p.559), he informs us that often theory building starts from ideas already developed in adjacent field and tested in new fields by a process of back-and-forth observing, testing, modifying and developing. On this basis, I propose looking toward other forms of group-work research to consider what insight these may offer into an understanding of group-coaching.

Its nearest relative, team-coaching shall be discussed and differentiated first and then we consider other allied fields of group-development including; Theory-driven group-coaching, Contextual self-help Groups, T-Groups, Group Analysis and Group Therapy. We will look briefly at the structure, function and efficacy of each of these group formats and consider what they may have to contribute theoretically to an understanding of group-coaching.

Team-coaching

Team-coaching is defined by Thornton (2010) as *'Coaching a team to achieve a common goal, paying attention to both individual performance and to group collaboration and performance.* Although still relatively scant (Brown, 2010), there is more in the literature about team-coaching than there is about group-coaching. For example; (Diedrich, 2001; Kralj, 2001; Hackman & Wageman, 2005; Reich, Ullmann, Van der Loos & Leifer, 2009; Liu, Pirola-Merlo, Yang & Haung, 2009; Ben-Hur et al, 2012;

Rousseau, Aube & Tremblay, 2013; Carr & Peters, 2013). A detailed review of this literature is not included here however, as it almost exclusively focuses on individual team case studies and their related business and organisationally relevant outcomes. They describe the individualistic *what* in terms of their output, and give some practical insight into the process of *how*, but offer almost nothing in theoretical terms of the *how* or the *why* that we seek.

As an example, Diedrich (2001) offers a list of 13 guidelines on executive team coaching such as; engage in process consultation with both team and individual members concurrently. Kralj (2001) gives an in-depth account of a strategy-driven leadership team intervention and details the step-by-step process that enabled an executive team to re-design a new global organisation. Carr and Peters (2013) also report on a Government and Corporate leadership team case study that helped them to develop a model of high performance team coaching. Others focus very specifically on certain types of teams and their narrow applications of team coaching such as team decision-making (Ben-Hur et al, 2012), team-innovation (Rousseau et al, 2013), Product-Development teams (Reich et al, 2009) and Research & Development teams (Liu et al, 2009).

These studies may offer insights into specific interventions, suggest guidelines for what they consider best practice, and in some cases, offer partial theory by way of a proposed explanatory hypothesis, but what they fall short of doing is to offer any form of empirically developed and testable theory. An exception in one aspect is Hackman and Wageman (2005) who propose a new theory primarily based around the timing of team-coaching interventions, but even this is based on existing group process theories including; Team facilitation (Fischer, 1993); Process Consultation (Schein, 1969); Action Learning (Revens, 1980), Behavioural models (Argyris, 1993 & Schwarz, 1994) and Operant Conditioning (Komaki, 1998).

When considering the relative lack of team-coaching literature it may be telling that Wageman, Hackman and Lehman (2004) found that among 268 teams in 88 organisations, team-coaching was ranked last in team activities after; structuring the team and its work, running external interference and then individual coaching. It is also interesting to note that Clutterbuck (2013) informs us that there are currently only three English speaking books on team-coaching. He also offers us various definitions on team-coaching which are summarised below for clarification and serve as our point of departure from team to group-coaching, (p.19):

- *A direct intervention with a team intended to help members make coordinated and task-appropriate use of their collective resources in accomplishing the team's work* – (Hackman & Wageman, 2005).

- *Facilitating problem solving and conflict management, monitoring team performance and coordinating between the team and a more senior management sponsor – (Skiffington & Zeus, 2000)*
- *A process, by which a team coach works with a whole team...in order to help them improve their collective performance....and develop their collective leadership – (Hawkins, 2011)*

The main emphasis in team-coaching is quite rightly focussed on team performance and task achievement, however the rest of this section intends to concentrate on the group coaching format that does not have a mutual group outcome to focus on. It is usually conducted within an environment in which there is no common leadership and no common organisational context. This group format could be thought of as more akin to group therapy in that each individual is there primarily for themselves. The individuals work as a group, serving both themselves and each other, however they are not focussed on a *group deliverable* such as a team goal.

Theory-driven group-coaching

In referring to the group coaching work of Ward (2008) that involves different leaders from different organisations, Brown & Grant (2010) offer a group coaching definition of “...*a single group setting...which is primarily focussed on the development of the individual within the group, while leveraging input from a range of varying peer perspectives and experiences*” (p.32). Although it may have similarities to both group-therapy and team-coaching, group-coaching occupies a unique place between the two.

For example, it has an *explicit* structure and objective unlike group-therapy, but it doesn't have a shared task related output, as does team-coaching. In essence it is a group of like-minded individuals who have convened for the purpose of exploring a particular and personally-relevant subject, in our case Authentic Leadership development. In that example though, one may think of leadership group-coaching not as leadership-training but more as leadership-cynosure (*providing counsel and guidance*).

The type of group-coaching that we are attempting to identify a theoretical base for can be considered more Developmental Coaching than Goal Focussed Coaching, as discussed in Ives (2008). The latter we might argue, is more appropriate for team-coaching and the former more in line with what West and Milan (2001) describe as a psychological space for reflective learning. To help achieve this reflective learning various psychotherapeutic frameworks are sometimes used that allow goals to emerge rather than putting the emphasis on predetermined goals as is often the case in individual coaching. Kets de Vries (2005) for example, describes a Psychodynamic approach to group-coaching

which involves completing various psychometric and 360 instruments and discussing the results within the group. He suggests the group-coaching approach has more power than individual coaching because individuals internalise the group and its related emotions. Suggesting that the negative emotions that come from their approval or disapproval of progress, their hope and optimism for each other's future and their support and acceptance can all be great facilitators of change. He says that the experience of telling one's life story can be a great facilitator of self-insight and understanding. But also, how one chooses to interpret their own life narrative can provide powerful learning for the other group members as they get a sense of themselves in comparison and contrast to others.

In terms of the *how*-process I wish to investigate, it is fair to say that the theory-of-change used in these groups are clearly defined by the Psychodynamic based protocol they incorporate and as such do little to aid us in our search for an overarching theory of group coaching. In a similar approach, Ward (2008) considers the use of short term psychotherapy interventions in group-coaching such as a Solution Focused approach (O'Connell & Palmer, 2007) and Motivational Interviewing (Miller & Rolnick, 2001; Prochaska & DiClemente, 1994). These are also based upon well-researched and developed Cognitive Behavioural models used within individual coaching and counselling but are only now just beginning to be applied to group work such as life-coaching (Green, Oades & Grant, 2006) and well-being (Hultgren, Palmer & O'Riordan, 2013).

Using a CBT approach Green et al (2006) detail a rare scientifically controlled approach to group coaching and found significant increases in factors such as personal goal attainment and psychological well-being for their life-coaching groups versus the control groups. Finally, Scamarod and Harden (2006), report on manager coaching-groups run at Texas University by their EAP (Employee Assistance Program) unit who meet regularly to discuss various management topics. In explaining the benefits of this group-coaching approach they highlight the various group factors key in group-therapy that they believe are significant (Yalom, 1995, p.131-132), such as: *Instillation of Hope - giving individuals more confidence to set and reach their goals; Universality - helping participants feel less isolated by discovering how much they have in common with colleagues; Imparting Information - sharing creative ideas and problem-solving strategies; Altruism - experiencing both pride and satisfaction in being able to offer ideas to help fellow group members; Imitative - offering specific examples and success stories.* They believe that running these groups helps the participants excel as leaders, and in turn positively impacting the health and effectiveness of the organisation and the individual employees.

So it would appear that there is a degree of both anecdotal and empirical evidence to suggest group-coaching *works*. However, if we put aside the psychotherapeutic based studies and their specific theories of change, there still remains very little in the literature of a trans-theoretical group-coaching theory that gives offers an insight into *how* it works or *why* it works.

Self- Help Groups

There seems to have been an effort in the past to develop a theoretical base for the group based self-help method of self-development. First, consider a definition offered by Stewart (1990), who says self-help groups '*are usually formed by peers who have come together for mutual assistance in satisfying a common need...and bringing about desired social and/or personal change*' (p.1057). One could argue this sounds remarkably similar to a coaching group. Levy (1976) then offers a more detailed description suggesting that self-help groups satisfy the following conditions, (p.311-312):

Purpose – Its express and primary purpose is to provide help and support for its members in dealing with their problems and in improving their psychological functioning and effectiveness

Origin and Sanction – Its origin and sanction for existence rest with the members of the group themselves, rather than with some external agency

Source of Help – It relies upon its own member's efforts, skills, knowledge and concern as its primary source of help

Composition – It is generally composed of members who share a common core of life experience or problem

Control – Its structure and mode of operation are under the control of members, although they may, in turn, draw upon professional guidance and various theoretical and philosophical frameworks

One could reasonably argue that many of these conditions are met in a typical coaching group. Levy (1976) also developed a typology of groups based upon their purpose and composition as follows, (p.312-313): *Type 1 – This group has as its objectives some form of conduct reorganisation or behavioural control (e.g. Weight Watchers); Type 2 – This group shares a common predicament which entails some form of stress and the aim of the group is the amelioration of stress through mutual support and the sharing of coping strategies (e.g. Single parent groups); Type 3 – These groups are comprised of people whom society have labelled deviant and the aim is to help members maintain or enhance their self-esteem (e.g. Sexual or Ethnic minority groups); Type 4 – These groups are made up of members who share a common goal of personal growth, self-actualization and*

enhanced effectiveness. Again, one could argue that while all of these groups may well involve the use of various coaching strategies, the last Type 4 Group is probably most akin to our working idea of a *Developmental* coaching group.

Katz (1981) refers to self-help research as '*a field that hitherto has lacked theoretical grounding*' (p.135) and that '*a variety of explanatory or classificatory schemes rather than a dominant theoretical approach was employed in the 1950's and 60's*' (p.133). However, in the 90's Stewart (1990) suggests that a plausible, theoretical foundation underlying these types of groups may well lie in Social Learning theory, (Bandura, 1977), particularly the concepts of; *reciprocal determinism, vicarious experience, collective comparison* and *self & collective self-efficacy*, as summarised by Stewart (1990 p.1061): *Reciprocal Determinism – relates to the reciprocal exchanges that occur between group members and the mutuality of the group aims and objectives; Vicarious Experience – includes live and symbolic modelling and the group member's ability to learn by observation and social comparison; Collective Comparison – Group strength laying in the sense of collective efficacy which in turn is rooted in each individual member's sense of self-efficacy.*

Finally, Van der Avort (1985) suggests that at the heart of the self-help group is something he calls *Identification Resonance*. This he states, occurs when members of these groups begin to have personal associations with the central issue under discussion which forms the echo or resonance of mutual identification. This may help explain the *internalization of the group* talked about by Kets de Vries (2005) and *group-cohesion* by Yalom (1995), discussed in more detail later when we look at group-therapy. But next we consider the T-Group phenomena.

T-Groups

The T-Group learning experience was developed by Kurt Lewin (1945) and then the National Training Laboratories in the USA in the 1950's and 60's. It is an unstructured group process that involves no pre-planned activities, agenda or discussion topics. The idea being that, participants discuss only the emotions and behaviours displayed in the group as they happen in a bid to better understand their own personality and behaviour. The learning that takes place within the group is expected to lead to improvements in; self-awareness, sensitivity to others behaviour, interpersonal skills, and social and group skills, (Campbell & Dunnette, 1968). The field seemed to disappear by the early 1970's but not before it had managed to generate a reasonable amount of research data, and comprehensive reviews of the research (Stock, 1964; Buchanan, 1965; House, 1967).

Some of the research includes robust experimental design with the inclusion of control groups and appears to indicate that this form of group work does indeed lead to a degree of behaviour, self-perception and personality change, (Burke & Bennis, 1961; Bunker, 1964; Culbert et al, 1968; House, 1967; Miles, 1965). Indeed Argris (1964) commented that at that time more research had been conducted on T-Groups than on any other form of management development. Research concerning the theoretical underpinnings of the T-Group process however is sparse. Schein & Bennis (1965) mention, that the lack of an explicit learning theory was one of the difficulties of this particular group format, however, one active ingredient they do claim to be crucial to the T-Groups effectiveness is something they call *Psychological Safety*.

Speculating on the group features that may help create this climate of safety they include (p.79): *A group that meets for a relatively long time in an isolated environment; a heterogeneous group that will probably not meet again, thus non-threatening...an attitude that the group is temporary and therefore can be engaged with fully.* One can get a sense of the need for this feeling of safety when considering a T-Group summary by House (1967), *'Many of the T-Group properties deal with complex psychological and sociological variables...designed to induce anxieties and to stimulate interpersonal feedback, introspection and self-awareness'* (p.26). It appears then that the self-help and T-Group literature may offer some interesting theoretical ideas that might be applicable to group-coaching. Next, we consider the fields of Group Analysis and Group Therapy.

Group Analysis

Group Analysis was developed by Foulkes and is a form of group therapy that brings together concepts derived from Psychoanalytic Psychology, Social Psychology, Sociology and Group Dynamics (Foulkes, 1948). It is a form of group therapy that doesn't have one single theoretical underpinning that guides it, but rather draws on an eclectic range of ideas from each of these fields. Carter (2002) suggests it may well be this broad sweep of ideas and the theoretical inclusion of Group Analysis that accounts for a seeming lack of theoretical rigour and coherence. Could this be the same for group-coaching? The similarity of developmental group-coaching and Group Analysis can be seen in Rance (1998), who says *'The group is a process of communal interactive learning rather than teaching, of changing one's self rather than others, and learning about the psychic realities of one's self...'* (p.528-529). So, although there are some intriguing sounding similarities between Group Analysis and some forms of developmental group-coaching, once again we draw a blank with regards strands of potential theoretical significance, very possibly due to the broad church that is Group Analysis. Finally, what of group-therapy?

Group Psychotherapy

Mindful that the overall field of psychotherapy has a century of ideas behind it as a method of individual development and change, here I intend to focus firmly on group-therapy and in particular any overarching group theory that might shed light on the active ingredients present within the group-coaching process. In their paper *Toward a General Theory of Group Therapy*, Cooper & Gustafson (1979) state *'There are a plethora of group therapy approaches...and each approach is based on a partial theory of group behaviour and a partial theory of therapy and change'* (p.967). These approaches can include; Cognitive Behavioural, Psychodynamic, Transactional Analysis, Gestalt etc. and all can be effective agents of change with their own relevant theory and related methodologies. However, I intend not to focus on each in detail as we are trying to understand whether there is a unifying theory, or meta-theory, of group work that transcends the individual methodology of any one particular school.

Nitsun (1996) comments that group-psychotherapy is the least developed therapy in terms of its theoretical base and that the field abounds with *'confusion, ambiguity and conflict'* (p.3). However, one particular group concept, mentioned earlier, that may be of interest is *Group Cohesion*. This idea of Cohesion is one of the more frequently investigated variables in small group process (Dies, 1979), and is also one of Yalom's (1995) curative factors. This allows the discussion of important and meaningful material, which in turn leads to more frequent and intense feedback from fellow group members. In closing the loop, Stockton and Teed (1998) say that it is this exact form of self-disclosure and feedback that creates the group cohesion in the first place.

There are a host of well-developed specific Psychotherapeutic change processes, but this review aims to identify an overarching theory of group-coaching that might transcend partisan schools of psychology, such as Psychodynamic or Cognitive Behavioural theory and to some extent this was achieved. For example, there are the therapeutic conditions identified by Yalom (1995) as significant facilitators of change, such as; Hope, Universality, and Altruism. There are elements of Bandura's (1977) Social Learning theory, such as; Reciprocal Determinism, Vicarious Experience and Collective Comparison. There are also theories that relate to the idea of group-cohesion, such as Van der Avort's (1985) Identity Resonance, Kets de Vries (2005) Internalisation of Group, Yalom's (1995) Cohesion and Ezquerro's (2010) Coherency. Finally, there is the concept of Psychological Safety offered by Schein & Bennis (1965). All of these theories offer us *partial answers* to the; *what, how and why* of group-coaching that we set out to investigate, and they may well be helpful for practitioners in designing group-coaching programs. However, they fall short of a full theory of

group-coaching, or as Whitaker (2000) describes a coherent and integrated '*...system of ideas...held as an explanation...of facts or phenomena*'. So, there would appear sufficient empirical evidence to suggest group-coaching *might work* as an authentic leadership intervention, including what has already been presented in Part 1. But pertinent to this research, is also *how* it might work as a way to develop authentic leaders? This is considered next.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

Epistemological Reflexivity

The epistemological stance of both this researcher and hence this research, has proved a challenging issue to grapple with. The objective of the research was to produce an ‘evidence-based approach to Authentic Leadership Development’, which seems to exist nowhere else in the literature. This seemed a noble goal, for the coaching profession, the practice of leadership development and the field of leadership more broadly. However, tackling the idea of authenticity in a scientific leadership study, turned out to be inherently paradoxical. I wanted to investigate scientifically, something that is by definition, deeply humanistic and existential in nature. This issue hasn’t prevented other scholars tackling the issue (Avolio et al, 2004; 2005; 2006) but their efforts have come under considerable criticism of late for being too positivistic in approach, resulting in what essentially has become an Authentic Leadership competency framework, operationalised in their instrument the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (Walumbwa et al, 2008). (See both the Limitations section at the end of this Thesis and the Critical Literature Review for a fuller explanation and discussion of this issue). The research presented here even started with testing for any statistically significant changes in ALQ scores, before and after leaders had participated in the ALD coaching program.

So, the objective of this research was to explore and examine a specific approach to the development of authentic leadership as opposed to a model of Authentic Leadership itself. This allowed for the development of an inherently humanistic and existential approach to individual self-determination/realisation/actualisation rather than the development of individuals towards an existing behavioural framework or conceptual model of Authentic Leadership. This then provided the epistemological paradox. How could one scientifically investigate, from a positivist and realist perspective something that is, in essence, a phenomenological and socially-constructed experience?

To answer this epistemological dilemma, and to answer the question ‘*how do we know*’ I had to have absolute clarity on ‘*what I wanted to know*’ (Willig, 2008). The answer to this question was arrived at almost by a process of elimination. I decided, for the purpose of this research, that I wasn’t going to focus on individual’s experience of what Authentic Leadership meant to them, or how it was socially constructed. Neither was I going to focus on the individual’s experience of being an Authentic Leader and what that meant or felt like to them. What I was ultimately interested in was the social and psychological principles involved in developing these individuals into Authentic Leaders. This I concluded was more towards the positivistic end of the realist-relativist continuum. Although it remains highly-debated whether truth exists in the world without some form of phenomenological evaluation or interpretation, I believed there would be some factors ‘out there’ and at play that

could be captured and illustrated by participants experience. And if these experiences were abstracted out to a sufficient degree, they at least had the potential to offer some broad characteristics or features of the dynamics 'at play'.

So, in that respect this research partially fits within a positivist epistemology, in that the research attempts to produce knowledge that is as objective as possible. However, it also recognises that it is not without considerable involvement of the researcher and therefore findings cannot be without some interpretation and subjectivity. For example, the researcher recruited the sample of participants, designed the intervention, acted as group coach and evaluated the results derived from it. Kirk and Miller (1986) say '*the external world itself determines absolutely the one and only correct view that can be taken of it, independent of the process or circumstance of the viewing*' (p4). Clearly, this research was not quite as cut and dry as that. For this research, I hypothesised that a group-coaching approach might be effective and I designed what this was to look like. I purposely designed a Humanistic (group-therapy type) approach that encouraged individuals to focus on and discuss issues that were fundamentally existential in nature. I decided that at the heart of the process would be coaching type questions, challenge and feedback, and effectively outlawed direct suggestions and advice-giving. This was the operationalising of my intent to make the experience as close to a self-actualisation process as possible. All of these illustrate just how invested the researcher is in the research itself.

Also, I believe each individual's experience of the group-coaching and how it changed them back at the workplace is fundamentally unique – a perspective which could be considered extreme relativism. However, I also believed there would be some similarities and consistencies between what they experienced in the group and how they changed after the group. Therefore, this research can be said to be based around the critical-realist part of the continuum. A glass can be half full and half empty at the same time. It can represent a still life subject for an artist or much needed hydration for an athlete. It can add to cooking, water a plant or help wash your hands. *Observation and description are necessarily selective* (Willig 2008, p3). The question is about just how far we can approach objective knowledge in the world. The fact that the vessel contains water in 50% of its capacity and air in the other 50% is a reasonably objective truth – whatever your socially constructed or phenomenological experience of that may be.

So, accepting the focus of this research represents only one perspective, the task was to establish what research methods and methodology would be appropriate from this standpoint. Firstly, it had to be an empirical investigation. That is, it would be based on systematic collection and classification of observation in the belief that theory follows observation, and that the former is constructed to

make sense of the latter (Willig 2008, p3). So, the aim was to listen to what participants had to say about their ALD experience, and to then identify categories within their reports and even to attempt to establish links between these categories. This goal was achieved with the use of Grounded Theory (GT), but it did come with its own constraints and limitations. In terms of this study, the phenomenological and constructivist perspectives of Authentic Leadership and Authentic Leadership Development still remain unreported, as the purpose of using GT was to establish higher-order and abstracted social and psychological principles. For example, we know that psychological safety and group cohesion are identified as being core group conditions to allow the leaders to fully participate in the group-coaching. But we've lost a deep and rich account of what these conditions actually mean and how they are experienced by each individual. We have the properties that through the GT process have been the building blocks towards these categories, but even they were abstracted out to a sufficient degree, so as to lose their personal individual meaning, i.e. Normalising, Feeling Safe, Emotional Support etc. The same also applies to the output of this ALD process. It has been possible to establish several core categories of subsequent learning and behaviour change following the coaching but these have to some degree been rendered meaningless by their 'abstractness'. For example, Leadership Capacity & Proactivity or Leadership Confidence & Clarity. These identified outcomes tell us that the leader will return to the workplace feeling more resilient and confident, with a greater sense of control and direction. But it doesn't tell us, what that actually looks like, or what it will mean for them personally, or for their organisation. But identifying and classifying these macro-structures still serve a purpose. If we can confidently say that the program increases a leader's confidence and resilience, this is still important data for both the leader and their organisation, even if it doesn't spell out in minutia what this actually feels like to the leader or how it will manifest itself within their role.

Therefore, for the purpose of this research, these limitations were deemed acceptable and established the epistemological position of it, and its researcher, as more-or-less critical realist, in that it '...combines the realist ambition to gain a better understanding of what is 'really' going on in the world with the acknowledgement that the data the researcher gathers may not provide direct access to this reality' (Willig 2008 p13).

Grounded Theory

Based on all of the above, it was decided that best research methodology to employ would be Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). There were two main reasons for this. The first was that there is no extant theory on Authentic Leadership Development, and the second was that the purpose of this research was to build a new theory; a theory of how you develop authentic leaders

and a theory of what the benefits of doing so are. Grounded Theory emerged as a reaction against the dominance of the main hypothetico-deductive approach to theory testing that was designed to test existing theory, even applying these theories to new data, but left little room for the development of new knowledge and for new theories to emerge. In addition, GT was designed to minimise the imposition of the researchers own pre-existing categories of meaning onto the data generated, but to allow the data to speak for itself. As there was no existing theory of ALD the GT approach was considered the most appropriate methodology, and more specifically it was the original GT method of Glaser and Strauss (1967) that was deemed the most appropriate, for two reasons. First, although still a qualitative method of research, this original method of GT rests more on a positivist epistemology which was in keeping with the aims and objectives of this research study as discussed above. The assumption being that social and psychological relationships exist in the world and can be captured and categorised through the systematic investigation of data, and that through the systematic coding and categorising of this data causal relationships between the data might even be identified. Second, because there is currently very little evidence in the literature about either group-coaching or any other empirical methods of Authentic Leadership Development, the aim of this research was to bring the two together and to try and understand both the process and the outcome of this group-coaching approach to ALD, through a completely new lens and to let the data speak entirely for its self. The later developments of GT such as that of Strauss and Corbin (1990) were therefore considered too prescriptive, including as they do specific coding protocols that guide the researcher to look for particular patterns in the data. This would also seem to add a deductive element to the data analysis, hindering the inductive process that lets the theory emerge more naturally from the data. An example of this might be the fact that nothing in this research data pointed towards any category relating to ethical or moral leadership. In the exiting literature, almost all of the different conceptions of Authentic Leadership have some variation of this. However, nothing in the data generated by this research indicated this was an issue or topic relevant to participants. This was also the reason why Strauss and Glaser's approach was preferred over the constructivist version of GT proposed by Chamaz (1990) which emphasises, less an emergent theory, and more of a researcher constructed theory. As noted above, the involvement of the researcher throughout the process cannot be denied, but at the same time the aim was to minimise this as much as possible, which again favoured the more realist approach of Strauss and Glaser.

This is also why the quantitative part 1 of this thesis sits somewhat independent of the qualitative part 2 and 3. Part one used the ALQ/ALI as the only available measures of Authentic Leadership to see if the group-coaching approach worked according to available measures, but the more important aim in part 2 and 3 was to build our own theory of how to develop authentic leaders.

Procedure

At the heart of the Grounded Theory method of theory generation is a process known as the ‘constant comparative method’, which requires the researcher to continuously check and adjust categories as they emerge from the data (Madill, 2000). The data is not collected and THEN analysed, instead there is a constant flip-flopping between data collection and analysis throughout the whole process, through Theoretical Sampling, until Theoretical Saturation is reached and a complete theory has emerged. This protocol formed the core of this research as the following overview hopefully demonstrates.

Data Source 1:

Reflective Logs per participant for Days 1, 2 and 3 (75 in total). These were analysed as they were generated by the participants to capture the process as it unfolded. These were themed and coded and constantly compared in two ways. First, the data that was being generated from participant one in group 1 for example, was compared with data being generated by participant two in group 1, then participant three, four, five and six. Second, the codes and categories that were becoming emergent were then compared with the data emerging from the Logs of group 2 participants, and then group 3. By the time the data from group 3 had been analysed (x 17 participants = 51 logs. Over approx. 24 months) theoretical saturation had been reached. Below are examples of the coding procedure undertaken with the aid of the MAXQDA data management software.

Document	Code	Begin	End	Weight score	Segment	Author	Creation d
LogstZoe	Self Reappraisal & Realignment	9	9	0	I hope to gain some useful insight into quite a few areas from professional perspective on the course, including how to channel some of the negative energy I can sometimes experience when at work, especially managing change or crisis mgt eg taking things personally and this clouding judgement on decision making at times, having confidence to "let some things run their course" even if they fail!	Tony Fusco	25042014 16:46
LogstZoe	Self-Reflection & Exploration	5	6	0	he timeline we then plotted was challenging - I wasn't sure at first what to include and what not to include, I felt nervous about sharing personal experiences, but only from the perspective of not always knowing myself, how they affected my professional life if they did at all, so were they relevant? Clearly its all relevant to me but was it the kind of info that would help shape my thinking on the course?	Tony Fusco	25042014 16:33
LogstZoe	Self-Reflection & Exploration Self-Exploration	8	8	0	look forward very much to the next session as a way of thinking a bit deeper about some of the past professional and personal experiences and linking this to how it informs the way I lead now in the present.	Tony Fusco	25042014 16:43
LogstZoe	Self-Reflection & Exploration thinking deeper	8	8	0	thinking a bit deeper	Tony Fusco	26042014 11:20
LogstZoe	Self-Reflection & Exploration Unexpected self-learning	6	6	0	Felt pleased with the outcome of this session, it taught me a lot and the timeline itself told a story of two halves that I hadn't quite expected	Tony Fusco	25042014 16:40
LogstZoe	Self-Reflection & Exploration Expanding-Awareness	4	4	0	he session on looking at different leaders was very interesting as made me see just how differently people view others leadership skills and qualities and peoples perceptions of success, how people's political and philosophical views guide their thinking, especially on the leadership qualities of others.	Tony Fusco	25042014 16:34
LogstZoe	Group Cohesion & Psychological Safety	3	4	0	I felt that the participants worked well together and we soon felt happy sharing our thoughts and views which helped the day flow well from an early point.	Tony Fusco	25042014 16:26
LogstZoe	Group Cohesion & Psychological Safety	4	4	0	he session on looking at different leaders was very interesting as made me see just how differently people view others leadership skills and qualities and peoples perceptions of success, how people's political and philosophical views guide their thinking, especially on the leadership qualities of others.	Tony Fusco	19092014 10:56
LogstZoe	Group Cohesion & Psychological Safety	5	6	0	he timeline we then plotted was challenging - I wasn't sure at first what to include and what not to include, I felt nervous about sharing personal experiences, but only from the perspective of not always knowing myself, how they affected my professional life if they did at all, so were they relevant? Clearly its all relevant to me but was it the kind of info that would help shape my thinking on the course?	Tony Fusco	19092014 10:56
LogstZoe	Group Cohesion & Psychological Safety	6	6	0	Felt pleased with the outcome of this session, it taught me a lot and the timeline itself told a story of two halves that I hadn't quite expected	Tony Fusco	19092014 10:56

Examples of coding process using MAXQDA data management software

C:\Users\Tony Fusco\Documents\MAXQDA11\Backup\DPsychLogs_20140618-191746.mx12 - MAXQDA 12 Reader (Release 12.3.0)

Project View Documents Codes Variables Analysis Mixed methods Visual tools Reports Help

Document Browser: Zoe 1

Documents 93

- Group 3
 - Viv 3
 - Trish 3
 - Toby 3
 - Shonagh 3
 - Mike 3
 - Jerry 3
 - Howard 3
 - Eddie 3
 - Dawne 3
 - Alan 3

Code System 93

- Growth
 - Thinking abo...
 - Asking who ...
 - Search for id...
 - Search for m...
 - Searching fo...
 - new found s...
- Cognition
 - Enlightening
 - Really useful
 - Thought pro...

Group working

Expanding-Awareness

Hard Self disclosure

Self-Reflection & Expl

Unexpected self-learn

- Authentic Leadership Coaching - Workshop 1
- It was enjoyable and challenging in equal measure.
- I felt that the participants worked well together and we soon felt happy sharing our thoughts and views which helped the day flow well from an early point.
- The session on looking at different leaders was very interesting as made me see just how differently people view others leadership skills and qualities and peoples perceptions of success, how people's political and philosophical views guide their thinking, especially on the leadership qualities of others.
- The timeline we then plotted was challenging – I wasn't sure at first what to include and what not to include, I felt nervous about sharing personal experiences, but only from the perspective of not always knowing myself, how they affected my professional life if they did at all, so were they relevant? Clearly its all relevant to me but was it the kind of info that would help shape my thinking on the course?
- I felt pleased with the outcome of this session, it taught me a lot and the timeline itself told a story of two halves that I hadn't quite expected.
- It would have been good to have a bit more time to discuss some of the detail. I would have enjoyed more time to be challenged by others on the interpretation of some of my thinking, but it was also quite full on going through everyone's story!

Simple Coding Query (OR combination of codes)

C:\Users\Tony Fusco\Documents\MAXQDA11\Backup\DPsychLogs_20140618-191746.mx12 - MAXQDA 12 Reader (Release 12.3.0)

Project View Documents Codes Variables Analysis Mixed methods Visual tools Reports Help

Document Browser: Zoe 1

Documents 93

- Trish 3
- Toby 3
- Shonagh 3
- Mike 3
- Jerry 3
- Howard 3
- Eddie 3
- Dawne 3
- Alan 3
- Group 2
- Group 1
 - Zoe 1

Code System 93

- Expanding-A...
- Group working
- Hard Self dis...
- Understandi...
- positive exp...
- Positive antic...
- Emotional S...
- Witnessing ...
- Feeling Safe
- Normalising
- Being Witnes...
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- felt nervous about sharing personal experiences, but only from the perspective of not always knowing myself, how they affected my professional life if they did at all, so were they relevant? Clearly its all relevant to me but was it the kind of info that would help shape my thinking on the course?
- I felt pleased with the outcome of this session, it taught me a lot and the timeline itself told a story of two halves that I hadn't quite expected.
- It would have been good to have a bit more time to discuss some of the detail. I would have enjoyed more time to be challenged by others on the interpretation of some of my thinking, but it was also quite full on going through everyone's story!
- I look forward very much to the next session as a way of thinking a bit deeper about some of the past professional and personal experiences and linking this to how it informs the way I lead now in the present.
- I hope to gain some useful insight into quite a few areas from professional perspective on the course, including how to channel some of the negative energy I can sometimes experience when at work, especially managing change or crisis mgt eg taking things personally and this clouding judgement on decision making at times, having confidence to "let some things run their course" even if they fail!
- Saying that, I am also just looking forward to it and have no set agenda and I do feel that the process and group coaching method will work well for me.

Simple Coding Query (OR combination of codes)

Coded segments

All codes 93 coded segments from 15 documents and 1 document groups

aying that, I am also just looking forward to it and have no set agenda and I do feel that the process and group coaching method will work well for me.

Comment	Document group	Document name	Code	Begin	End	Weight score	Preview	Area	Coverage %	Author
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Group working	3	4		0 I felt that the parti...	156	6.43	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Self-Reflection & ...	5	6		0 he timeline we th...	411	16.93	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Self-Reflection & ...	4	4		0 he session on loo...	305	12.56	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Self-Reflection & ...	6	6		0 felt pleased with ...	147	6.05	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Self-Reflection & ...	8	8		0 look forward very...	208	8.57	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Self Reappraisal ...	9	9		0 I hope to gain so...	397	16.35	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Group working Po...	10	10		0 aying that, I am al...	151	6.22	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Self-Reflection & ...	8	8		0 thinking a bit dee...	21	0.86	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Zoe 1	Group working Po...	8	8		0 I look forward ver...	45	1.85	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Viv 1	Group working	4	5		0 What a great gro...	113	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Viv 1	Self-Reflection & ...	3	4		0 think I tend to be...	286	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Viv 1	Self-Reflection & ...	5	6		0 Confused as well ...	105	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Viv 1	Self-Reflection & ...	6	6		0 I've always admir...	298	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Viv 1	Self-Reflection & ...	7	7		0 Potentially then ye...	182	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Viv 1	Group working E...	8	8		0 What was really L...	168	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Viv 1	Group working Po...	9	9		0 Looking forward t...	123	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Toby 1	Group working	4	4		0 when listening to ...	63	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Toby 1	Group working	5	6		0 This demonstrate...	79	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Toby 1	Group working Wo...	6	6		0 I found it quite enl...	390	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Toby 1	Group working Un...	7	8		0 I noted how differ...	205	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Toby 1	Group working po...	9	9		0 positive experience	19	0.00	Tony Fu
	Group 1	Shonagh 1	Group working WL...	4	5		0 I found their stori...	50	3.09	Tony Fu

Data Source 2:

Recorded semi-structured interviews taken 3 months after coaching program completion.

15 interviews in total were conducted and these were analysed at the conclusion of each group as the overall research program progressed. Again, data from these interviews were themed and coded and constantly compared to the categories emerging from subsequent interview transcripts. And again, it took only the first three groups (out of five) to reach theoretical saturation. Interview data was still obtained and analysed for all participants to continue the constant comparison but no new data was found to emerge from group 4 or 5 (See example below).

Coded_segments [Compatibility Mode] - Excel

Document	Code	Begin	End	Weight score	Segment	Author	Creation date
1	Interview Transcriptions	Greater Strategic Orientation	110	110	0 I think how I manage my staff now is better in that I'm much more concrete, much more bounded. Which means I have a lot more time to do other things and I'm not so preoccupied. So now I do more of the corporate stuff that I avoided a bit. And making sure all the boxes I need to have ticked, are ticked and things that need to be done are done.	Tony Fusco	19/06/2014 11:56:00
2	Interview Transcriptions	Greater Strategic Orientation	111	111	0 We've just had an audit and I did things that were actually quite alien to me. Normally I would talk a lot and point a lot and not really write a lot down, but I was up at the flip chart and making sure we were writing things down, creating an action log and devising a task & responsibility matrix. That is definitely a change in the way I've worked in the past.	Tony Fusco	19/06/2014 11:56:00
3	Interview Transcriptions	Greater Strategic Orientation	112	112	0 So people understood my vision and were basically given a step plan to get from point A to point B and that has massively worked. And because my managers are now more clear on what they're going we've been offered more work and we are more clear on what we can and can't take on. In playing to everyone's strengths I think it's definitely had a massive impact. The area growth is sustainable now it's not the massive, erratic growth as in the past where we grew very, very quickly and then we lost it very, very quickly, with me trying to make everyone keep up. Now we're back up but it's been steady and it's been more considered.	Tony Fusco	19/06/2014 11:56:00
4	Interview Transcriptions	Greater Strategic Orientation	113	113	0 I even recently attended a meeting to present a finance request where instead of just delivering a rip roaring speech I actually presented the business case which I wouldn't have done before the course.	Tony Fusco	19/06/2014 11:56:00
5	Interview Transcriptions	Greater Strategic Orientation	114	114	0 The other bit was obviously the Strategy bit wasn't it and that fact that I don't do Strategy and then I did do Strategy and I've used that Strategy I don't know how many times now.	Tony Fusco	19/06/2014 11:56:00
6	Interview Transcriptions	Greater Strategic Orientation	115	115	0 One of the things I did last week was to get the observation program because it's just floundering where it is basically offered and said it fits in too close with what we're doing to put it elsewhere, so can I take that program and do something with it. We had a meeting the other day and one of the jobs I did was to do an outline plan of the things we need to do. Again it was a reasonably short term plan but at least it was a plan. Again I'm not sure I would have done in the past, but it's recognizing that I need that just to give it that visibility and structure so that it's everybody and not just me. I might have it in my head or scribbled in my notebook or whatever but at least it's now visible to everybody what it is we're trying to do, it's a start of how we can develop that into a detailed strategy as well.	Tony Fusco	19/06/2014 11:56:00
7	Interview Transcriptions	Greater Strategic Orientation	116	116	0 All of this frees me up to do the strategic stuff. Spending time doing the looking-up stuff rather than the organising-down stuff.	Tony Fusco	19/06/2014 11:56:00
8	Interview Transcriptions	Greater Strategic Orientation	117	117	0 ...	Tony Fusco	19/06/2014 11:56:00

As is inevitably the case in Grounded Theory, the constant comparison method generated many code variations before the final categories were decided upon. Examples of some of these initial codes that weren't included in the final category descriptions, but were instrumental stepping-stones in the final generation of category properties, are captured in the MAXQDA data-sets and included such items as: Positive Self-Management, Leadership Reflection, Existential Reflection, Thinking Deeper, Hard Self-disclosure etc. It should be noted however, that where data was clearly and consistently pointing towards an existing concept or idea this was included to help with theoretical coding, for example the ideas of Group Cohesion (Yalom, 1995) and Psychological Safety (Schein, 1993). This is a technique endorsed by Glaser (2005) at the advanced coding stage as it can add explanatory power and assist in theoretical integration (Birks & Mills, 2011).

Theoretical Sampling

As theoretical saturation appeared to have been reached after three groups, the remaining two groups were used for the purpose of theoretical sampling. After these groups had completed their coaching program, completed their logs and undertaken their interviews, they were then reconvened. On these occasions, they were presented with the tentative findings, including the codes and categories of the process, taken from the reflective logs and the outcome of the program, taken from the recorded interviews. These were discussed in the group and then pair work 'co-coaching' exercises were run to tease out any differences or variations to the categories already developed. Both of these groups provided no additional data that could not already be accounted for by the five-main group-process categories, or the seven-main group-output categories. It appeared then that the conceptual elements of the categories were sound and in turn these conceptual elements of the overall theory were sound. As was the sequential ordering of the categories in terms of; conditions, causes and consequences. It was therefore concluded that theoretical saturation had been achieved and an initial theory of ALD group-coaching had been satisfactorily developed. It should of course be remembered that any theory is only a momentary product (Hayes, 1997), a snap-shot frozen in time and available for constant development and refining. For example, if time and resource allowed there could be many further opportunities to theoretically sample and potentially develop the theory further. For example, we could go into the leader's organisation to conduct interviews with their staff and colleagues to discover what differences had been noticed. This might generate further properties of the seven outcomes, as witnessed by others as opposed to self-report, and these could potentially add further richness and density to the theoretical codes and categories. We could even attempt some form of ROI evaluation of each – arguably a gold-standard in leadership development from a business' point of view.

2.3 RESULTS

Figure 2 illustrates the conceptual model that emerged from this research. The model is split into two sections, (Part 1) *the Process* and (Part 2) *the Outcome*. Data analysis from each will be looked at in turn as it came from different sources; Reflective Logs and follow-on recorded interviews (Appendix 1, page 153).

Grounded Theory Part 1: The Process of Change

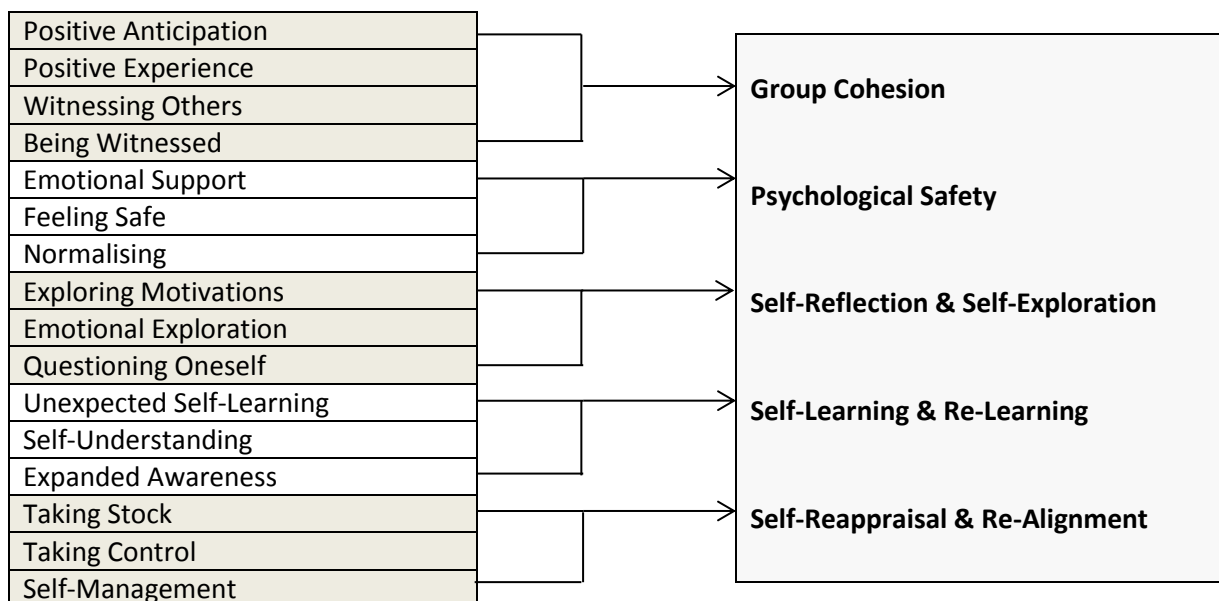
The Reflective Logs were analysed as soon as they were received a week after each session. As already mentioned, instructions for these were kept unstructured so as not to lead the participants reporting in any particular direction, i.e. they were asked simply to report on any personal insights or observations they made during the session.

MEMO 1: Initial Thoughts and Reactions

Initial themes emerging from the first reflective logs suggest the sessions definitely stimulate thinking, curiosity and reflection and there appears a definite benefit from the normalising process. The curiosity seems to relate to others as well as self, words here include; enlightening and revealing. Curiosity also about how their histories can relate to their leadership and its development. There also seems an increased awareness of how negative thoughts are present, ones that relate to a lack of self-confidence, efficiency, acknowledgement and being self-critical. And having ambivalence about own emotions, motivations and futures. The session also seems to engender feelings of optimism, expectation, hope and anticipation about resolution of these negative aspects and an improved, resolved and increased sense of self-esteem, efficacy, skill, clarity and motivation. It prompts reflection and taking stock of life, career goals and priorities. It possibly prompts a move from reflection to action. There seems to be a significant process of normalising. If there seems a realisation of how common the various personal crucibles may be, its then more a question of how each individual's learning differs, even from similar experiences. It seems to help through the process of – witnessing other's crucibles – which helps gain a perspective on their own – which in turn helps recognise the importance of learning from these – which possibly enables them to orientate positively towards the future. There are reflections about identity, self and others. Something about the process engenders a positive future orientation and anticipation. Particularly relating to self-understanding, Normalising. Witnessing own and others life narrative. Gaining understanding of and perspective on own life and leadership. Creating a positive future orientation.

As each line was coded it became apparent these real-time logs were producing an on-going narrative of how the group-work was evolving for the participants, what the key factors were for them and how they were reacting to them. For example, it became apparent very early on that the social structure of the group was a positive thing as illustrated by emerging codes such as; *positive anticipation* and the *witnessing of self and others*. These were in-turn abstracted into a category of - Group Cohesion (Fig.1). This cohesion in turn led to a feeling of personal security that enabled participants to actively engage in the process, as demonstrated by the emergent codes of *emotional support* and *normalising*, which contributed to a second process category of - Psychological Safety. These conditions then allowed participants to undertake the self-exploration and learning that was key to the group-coaching and illustrated by such codes as; *exploring motivations*, *emotional exploration*, *unexpected self-learning*, *expanding awareness*, *taking stock*, *taking control*. These codes then became the three categories of; Self-Reflection & Self-Exploration; Self-Learning & Re-Learning; Self-Reappraisal & Realignment (Fig.1).

Figure 1: Process of Change - Codes and Categories



MEMO 2: Group Make-Up

It has become quickly apparent that the make-up of the group is key. My sense was that the groups should be made up of individuals who will increase the likelihood of mutual trust and co-operation. Mindful that this is a time-limited intervention an effort should be made to get the group operating as quickly and efficiently as possible. After analysing the first groups Reflective Logs this hunch seems to have paid off. Many comments relate to how individuals within the group feel comfortable with each other and that has had a direct bearing on how much they are willing to divulge in the

group...which in turn seems to be directly correlated with how much they get out of the group process. Many comments relate to how comfortable they seem to be with each other and several of the participants comment, that had the group been of a different composition they probably wouldn't have been as ready to open-up in the session. Interestingly, if the first person to take their turn in the 'hot-seat' is particularly open about the personal side of their life this seems to set the tone for the rest. One individual actually commented that after he had listened to the first couple of 'presentations' he re-wrote in his head what he was going to share with the group, making it far more personable. He followed this with comments indicating he found this made the whole session for him much more engaging and worthwhile. The group therapy literature talks about how important it is that individuals feel 'comfortable' within their groups so they can open-up and 'work on' their issues. Though participants are not required to be quite so vulnerable in these sessions they nonetheless have to communicate at a level not common in their day-to-day interactions at work. This combined with the fact that these are time-limited interventions means that this concept of personal and group safety is key for 'accelerating' the group process to ensure useful work is achieved within just three meetings.

The Process of Change

The active process involved in change within the group-coaching process appears to be split into two categories of; *Group Conditions* and *Group Process*. Group Conditions in turn consist of two sub-categories; *Group Cohesion* and *Psychological Safety*, as illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Group Conditions

Group Cohesion:

[Properties]: *Positive Anticipation, Positive Experience, Being Witnessed, Witnessing Others.*

Group Cohesion seemed to be the bedrock upon which all further individual and group work was to take place. This has already been recognised as an important component of successful group-

psychotherapy (Yalom, 1995; Burlingame, Fuhriman & Johnson 2001; Drescher, Burlingame & Fuhriman, 2012). It seems likely that this condition was successfully and consistently fostered by the use of *purposive sampling*. In complete contrast to Randomised Sampling, this approach selects participants on certain inclusion criteria explained in the Procedure section above. What might be considered as an inherent bias in this method of subject selection actually contributes to its efficiency (Tongco, 2007) with the result that each group gelled very quickly, which was imperative in this time limited intervention. Most important of all, this sense of cohesion facilitated the next key step in the overall process and the next category of Psychological Safety.

In-vivo examples:

(P) Participant 3: (RL) Reflective Log 1: (L) Line 6 – ‘The easy-going format generated good team spirit from the outset. The highly participative sessions worked well and enabled people to "bed in" to the event’

P2:RL2:L9 – ‘Yet again, the group session was incredibly supportive, enlightening and very encouraging. This, in itself, is one of the tremendous features of the programme’

P11:RL3:L2 – ‘Great to meet, gain understanding of, build a level of trust and achieve a degree of camaraderie within the group’

Psychological Safety:

[Properties]: *Emotional Support, Feeling Safe, Normalising.*

If cohesion is the group’s bedrock then psychological safety is the individuals’. Again, this phenomenon is already accepted as an important factor within group-therapy (Rogers, 1951), but we are now also coming to understand its potential importance in group-coaching as well (Fusco, O’Riordan & Palmer, 2014). From the examples below we get a sense of what this actually means to participants.

In-vivo examples:

P9:RL1:L5 – ‘Felt "safe" in divulging my life story. I soon realised we were all in the same boat and quickly felt comfortable and easily able to be open’

P17:RL1:L8 – ‘I felt that the participants worked well together and we soon felt happy sharing our thoughts and views’

P4:RL3:L1 – ‘I think the group itself gelled very well and therefore it gives, for me, a comfortable environment to be honest and explore’

The Group Process

Strictly speaking, the group process is the sum of the participant's individual process, so it is abstracted out and talked of as an overarching group-process. These three properties of the group-process are all interlinked and appear to represent a hierarchical process as described below and outlined in Figure 3.

MEMO 3: Group Working

Reactions to the group-work appear quite incredible. It's as if this is the first time many of these leaders have sat down and had an earnest conversation about themselves, their careers and their lives and how each of these are interrelated. From the moment they present their life-lines light bulbs seem to come on. It's as if, and indeed many say as much, that it's the first time they have seriously reflected on themselves and their lives. And to do so in such a 'public manner' seems to have quite profound effects. From looking at their own life-lines to fielding a broad range of questions from the group about their histories, personal and professional, is taking people to places in their minds, by their own admission, they simply haven't visited before. People seemed drained and somewhat 'distant' at the end of the sessions. It's clear they have all given each other a lot to think about. The Reflective Logs confirm that deep learning does indeed occur...beginning for many with the long drive home as they grapple with and begin to process all of the 'new data' that has emerged for them. Emerged is quite a key idea or concept as well. The group interaction is structured (managed, facilitated) such that each person and the group as a whole 'coach' the person in the hot-seat. This means no advice-giving, however well intended, is permitted. There is a working assumption (of my own) that most people's workplaces have ample opportunity for this 'push' kind of learning; advice, guidance, suggestions, actions, solutions, options etc right down to straightforward instructions and commands. The coaching-group is intended to become an environment (holding environment?) in which individuals can take a break from this traditional push learning and engage in more self-generated learning. That is, the group help 'pull' learning from each individual through their questions, observation, feedback...and more questions. They help each other access a deeper level of thinking but crucially, leave them to decide a/ what that learning is, and b/ what they want to do with that learning. On the one hand this is proving novel and therefore uncomfortable for most whilst at the same time – enlightening and liberating. Real internal learning occurs almost from the word go, an interesting question will be to see if that translates into external change, and if so – what and when?

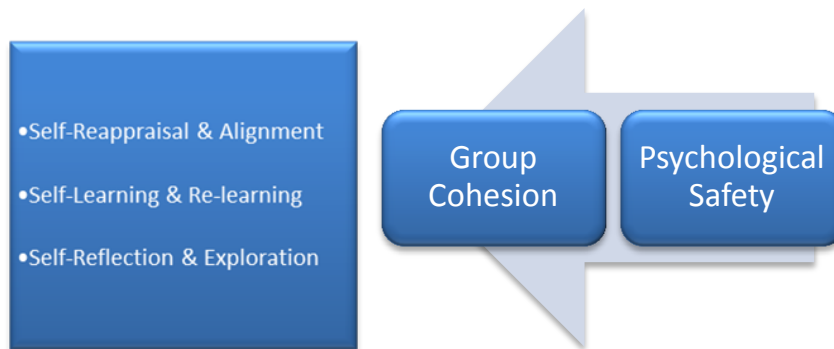


Figure 3: Group Process & Group Conditions

Self-Reflection & Self-Exploration:

[Properties]: *Questioning oneself, Exploring Motivation, Emotional Exploration.*

The first stage of the group-process is that it facilitates an individual's introspection. If group-cohesion and psychological safety have been successfully established it appears the individuals are then prepared, willing and able, to undertake deep reflective thinking. This is best illustrated by some in-vivo data:

In-vivo examples:

P8:RL3:L10 – 'On reflection I find myself asking the question 'Who am I?' This is drawing upon my new found self-awareness and looking inwards and searching for values, meaning and self-identity'

P22:RL2:L9 – 'I look forward very much to the next session as a way of thinking a bit deeper about some of my past professional and personal experiences'

P19:RL1:L6 – 'Had a strong but very positive sense of being in uncharted territory'

Self-Learning & Re-Learning:

[Properties]: *Self-Understanding, Unexpected Self-learning, Expanding Awareness.*

Following reflection & exploration come varying degrees of furthered self-insight and learning. This can take many forms including intra-personal learning, both cognitive and emotional, and inter-personal learning, both behavioural and relational. Some of these insights appear genuinely new to an individual and some appear as if they are being re-learnt having been once forgotten or otherwise put from everyday conscious thought. Again, we get an insight into this learning from in-vivo data:

In-vivo examples:

P5:RL2:L11 – ‘A strange but clear realisation that either, I’ve changed or been trying to fit into a style that perhaps wasn’t really me. Very enlightening to realise how comfortable your own authentic style can be. Feels a bit like re-learning a language you once knew’

P14:RL1:L1 – ‘After the first day I had a long think about me as a person not just as a manager. However, it did make me realise that how I am as a manager is very much also mirrored in how I am as a person’

Self-Reappraisal & Realignment:

[Properties]: *Self-Management, Taking Stock, Taking Control.*

The final group-process and one that seems predicated upon the previous two is a significant internal shift that seems to represent a ‘self-recalibration’. This takes place first internally as an adjustment to how individuals see the world and themselves within it, which is then invariably followed by external and overt changes. These cover a broad spectrum of behavioural and relational changes but they represent a natural change based upon the reflection and learning that has taken place prior to this stage. So, what individuals appear to achieve is significant and enduring psychological, emotional and behavioural development that remains long after the group-intervention has concluded.

In-vivo examples:

P20:RL2:L8 – ‘Being part of this Group is proving to be very inspiring and motivating. It’s influencing the way I approach, not just leadership but many aspects of my life’

P10:RL2:L13 – ‘The process of investigating my own values, personality traits and temperament, and then directly linking these to a personal reference for authentic behaviour, has had a deeply motivating influence on me’

P6:RL3:L7 – ‘It encourages you to focus on your own authenticity and gives you courage and confidence to think and do things in your own way. It’s having a profound and constant effect on my everyday thoughts and approach to life’

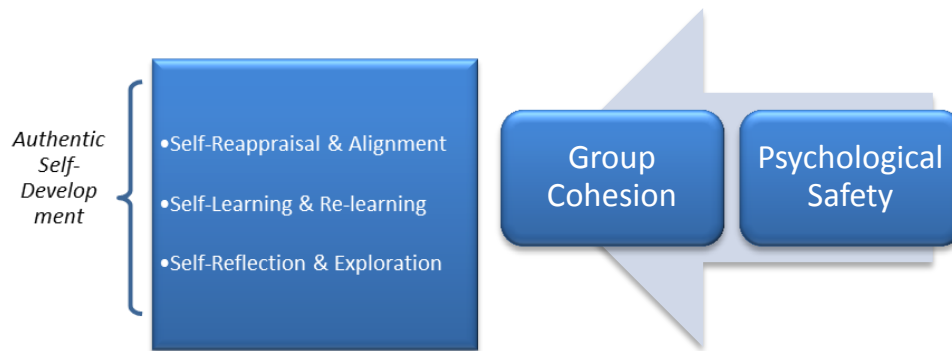


Figure 4: Authentic Self Development

Authentic Self-Development

This research seems to demonstrate that authentic self-development is either a necessary precursor or an integral element of Authentic Leadership Development. This would seem to make sense as to be *true to oneself* in the pursuit of leadership, would of course mean having a genuine understanding of that true self. The road to such understanding can take many forms but the group-coaching described here seems to be one particularly effective approach. Possibly because the self is sometimes considered something we find reflected back to us from others or that we find in comparison and contrast to others. This is something explored in greater depth in the Discussion section at the end of this chapter, but as a precursor to this I would like to consider the relationship between authenticity and the self-concept in more detail.

2.4 INTRODUCTION

PART 2: Working with the Self-Concept in Authentic Leadership Group Coaching

Early ideas of authenticity can be traced back to the individualistic philosophy of Descartes (1630) and Locke (1700) who demanded that each person think rationally and self-responsibly and to put self-will before social-responsibility. Herder (1766) suggested the idea that each of us has an original way of being human and that there is a particular way of being human that is *my own way*. I am called upon to live my life in just this way and not in a way that is as an imitation of someone else, giving weight to Hamlet's admonition, 'to thine own self be true' (Shakespeare, 1904). Charles Taylor warns in *The Malaise of Modernity*, – 'If I am not, I miss the point of my life, I miss what being human is for me' (1991, p. 29). However, to fully confront this question I have to confront myself and answer the question that my own existence puts to me. I have to discover and define myself, articulate my *Self* and realise the potential that is uniquely and genuinely my own. This is the modern idea of authenticity, but the modern achievement of authenticity is not always easy and arguably seems to get only harder. Why should this be?

In *The Saturated Self*, Kenneth Gergen (1991) talks about what he terms the forces of *social-saturation* and how these are fragmenting the modern day concept of self. He refers to the emerging *technologies* that saturate us with the images and voices of humankind that we take into ourselves and that potentially offer a multiplicity of unrelated, incoherent versions of our selves. He says this makes the very concept of a modern authentic-self recede from view as '*the fully saturated self becomes no self at all*' (p.7). It gives us pause for thought to consider he wrote this just as the wired world was emerging and the whole concept of social media was yet to be unleashed. But even then Gergen talked of profound social change and our emersion into a wider world that will expose us more and more to the life-styles and world-views of others, and that this would eventually contribute to '*...the contemporary erasure of the individual self*' (p.49).

Yet at the same time, paradoxically, this social saturation also infuses us with possible alternate identities and an increased *populating of the self* that creates '*...the vertigo of unlimited multiplicity*' (p.49), and what Gergen calls a *Multiphrenic* condition. One can get the sense that when this barrage of disparate voices and images are added to one's own being, it can make the clear understanding and articulation of one's own identity and sense of self, an increasingly complex task. '*As social saturation adds incrementally to the population of self, each impulse toward well-formed identity is cast into increasing doubt; each is found absurd, shallow, or flawed by the on-looking audience of the interior*' (p.73). Taylor concludes that the relatively confident and coherent Self of old, recedes from view, somewhat eroded by the barrage of loud and constantly competing potential new selves.

It is against this postmodern backdrop that we talk of authenticity and get some scale of the challenge for both authentic leadership and authentic leadership *development*. From this perspective, we are not considering simply the issue of skill, we are considering the issue of *self*; self-understanding, self-construction, self-adaptation and self-modification. The reason I propose that Authentic Leadership Development should start with the *self*, is that I propose authentic leadership is predicated on such an authentic self.

The skills piece in leadership is more than adequately catered for within the existing field of leadership development, by management training interventions and corporate education initiatives. But if an organisation wishes to genuinely develop authentic leaders, they have to be prepared to inquire deeper into their organisations leadership and in turn get their leaders to inquire deeper into themselves. In many instances both the organisation and the individual leader do not have the inclination for this and prefer to layer skills on top of whatever existing raw materials they have in their leadership talent pool. This of course is fine and indeed may even be sufficient, but what it's not, is Authentic Leadership Development.

The hope is that the opening paragraphs of this introduction convey the depth of this task in a postmodern time. I propose that genuine authentic leadership development is not something that can be achieved by reading books or texts. Nor is it something that can be achieved by attending seminars or lectures and certainly not something that can be achieved by digital or distance learning. In short, I believe genuine authentic leadership is not something that can be externally imposed or informed. So *how* is it achieved? And achieved is the right word. Development of an authentic self and an authentic leadership is not something received passively, but requires working at a depth of self that is new for many leaders. It requires the experiencing of new and confusing external data and uncomfortable and ambiguous internal shifts. But in time, through these internal shifts, personally significant insights begin to emerge. In the author's experience this simply doesn't happen in a typical management development classroom. So how does this learning occur and what sort of format can facilitate such learning? How can conditions be created that will allow for such deep personal learning outside of one-to-one coaching or counselling? One answer, I have discovered, are the Authentic Leadership Coaching Groups.

2.5 METHODOLOGY

In this section of the research the scientifically validated Self Concept Clarity Scale (SCCS) was used to establish what changes in participant’s sense of self-concept occurred, (Campbell, Trapnell, Heine, Katz, Lavalle & Lehman, 1996). Self-concept clarity refers to the extent to which self-beliefs are clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent and temporally stable. The 12 item, 5 point SCC Scale has strong reliability, both in terms of temporal stability and internal consistency with an average alpha reliability coefficient of .86. The SCCS assessment questionnaire was completed by all participants at the beginning of day 1 and at the end of day 3, three months later.

2.6 RESULTS

The Experimental Hypothesis for Chapter One was that – *there will be a significant difference between pre-coaching and post-coaching Self-Concept Clarity scores.*

To test this hypothesis, whether the pre-coaching and post-coaching Self-Concept Clarity scores were different, a Paired-Samples t-test was performed to compare the pre and post scores of the SCCS; pre-coaching ($M=37.96$ and $SD=7.33$) and post-coaching ($M=46.28$ and $SD=8.24$). The scores showed statistical significance at $p<.001$ and so the hypothesis was accepted. In addition, the Cohen effect size was calculated which showed a large effect size – $t(24)=5.03$, $p<.000$, $d=1.01$.

Table 8: Self-Concept-Clarity Scale t-test Scores

SCC Paired Samples T-Test								
	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
SCC Total Score	8.32000	8.27003	1.65401	-11.73370	-4.90630	-5.030	24	.000

Table 9: Self-Concept-Clarity Scale item *t*-test Scores

SCCS Paired Samples T-Test								
	Paired Differences					<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
SCCS1	1.04000	1.05987	.21197	-1.47749	-.60251	-4.906	24	.001
SCCS2	1.20000	1.04083	.20817	-1.62963	-.77037	-5.765	24	.001
SCCS3	.96000	1.36870	.27374	-1.52497	-.39503	-3.507	24	.002
SCCS4	1.00000	1.15470	.23094	-1.47664	-.52336	-4.330	24	.001
SCCS6	.76000	1.23423	.24685	-1.26947	-.25053	-3.079	24	.005
SCCS11	.60000	.95743	.19149	-.99521	-.20479	-3.133	24	.005

Self-Concept Clarity Scale

Finally, each SCCS item was examined with 5 of the 12 individual items showing significant score differences at $p < .005$ or below and with an effect size of $d = 0.62$ or above:

1. My beliefs about myself often conflict with one another: $t(24) = 4.91$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.98$.
2. One day I might have one opinion of myself and on another day a different one: $t(24) = 5.76$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.15$.
3. I spend a lot of time wondering about what kind of person I really am: $t(24) = 3.51$, $p < .002$, $d = 0.70$.
4. Sometimes I feel that I am not really the person that I appear to be: $t(24) = 4.33$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.87$.
6. When I think about the kind of person I have been in the past, I'm not sure what I was really like: $t(24) = 3.08$, $p < .005$, $d = 0.62$.
11. I seldom experience conflict between the different aspects of my personality: $t(24) = 3.13$, $p < .005$, $d = 0.63$.

2.7 **DISCUSSION:** The Process of Change

Parallel Development for the Parallel Self: Group Coaching as a parallel process for inter-personal and intra-personal Authentic Leadership Development

In conducting the research detailed in this thesis it is my view that the effectiveness of the group-coaching approach to ALD is due in large part to the opportunity it affords participants to work on the development of an authentic *self* specifically within a social context. I've proposed that if an individual's goal is to be an authentic leader it is reasonable to presume this must be predicated upon an authentic *self*. Also, if this self is formed in *contrast and comparison* to others, as argued in social psychology and discussed later, it is the group's social structure that makes the group-coaching process unique. The power of the presence of others is evident in various feedback comments such as – '*you learn about yourself from others*', '*there's a significant impact from learning about other's impressions of you*', '*I felt validated by the other participants*' and '*others made me believe I was worthy as a leader*'.

So, the results reported above appear to suggest that leadership coaching groups are an effective form of Authentic Leadership Development, and this may be that they enable participants to work in a social context and at a sufficient depth to increase development of an individual's authentic-self (as measured by the self-concept clarity scale). The question for this chapter is - how?

How does group-coaching work as a form of Authentic Leadership Development? What is it about this form of leadership coaching that proves so effective when working at the deeper level of self that Authentic Leadership Development, in my view, necessitates? I believe we have an answer. According to recent thinking (discussed below) the Self is now considered to be a dual-aspect concept. It is believed to have an internal mechanism that mediates self-relevant phenomena such as thought, emotions etc. whilst at the same time is also considered to be a social construct and one that emerges and is influenced by the social world in which it is embedded. Based on the empirical evidence gathered throughout this study, it is my view that the group-process is able to 'meet' this dual-aspect parallel model of self by itself operating as a dual-aspect parallel process that facilitates the development of both the intra-personal self and the inter-personal self. So, the purpose of this discussion is to explore the various parallel processes that may be in operation in this unique form of coaching. Specifically, I will explore aspects of the intra-personal self, such as the construct of Self and self-concept-clarity, and the inter-personal self, such as the Social Self and the Dialogical Self. Each will be considered in turn along with its relationship to authentic leadership group coaching.

The Parallel Self Construct

An emerging contemporary conceptualisation of the *self*, and one that seems to be generating some consensus, is that the *self* operates at two simultaneous levels and is both '*an internal organised dynamic cognitive-affective-action system*' and '*an interpersonal self-construction system*' (Mischel & Morf, 2003, p.23). This supports the idea that it is the group participant's ability to operate in both of these domains, interchangeably and simultaneously, that represents a unique active ingredient of the group and a fundamental difference between this coaching format and the more usual format of the coaching dyad. If it is the case that self-construction is wholly or partially rooted within interpersonal processes (Hoyle, 1999; Markus & Cross, 1990), then it would follow that the self-reappraisal and realignment that takes place within AL group-coaching is also facilitated by this interpersonal context. Mischel and Morf (2003) suggest that construction of the self-system takes place as a person interacts with their social world and that during this process '*...identity...goals...values...are built, maintained, promoted and protected*', (p.29), all of course being key elements in the development of both an authentic *self* and an authentic leader.

The Self-Concept and Authenticity

Definitions of authenticity spans the fields of philosophy, psychology and sociology, however a broad consensus is that authenticity requires self-knowledge (and congruent behaviours) that express a person's deeply held beliefs and values. As such, authenticity involves a variety of mental and behavioural processes that help individuals "*...discover, develop and construct a core sense of self*" (Kernis, 2006, p.293). A *core sense of self* that Kernis proposes is comprised of, among other things, '*a self-concept that is clearly and confidently defined contributing to a coherent sense of direction...*' (p.316). Similarly, in developing the Self Concept Clarity Scale used in this study, Campbell and Associates (1996) summarised self-concept clarity as the degree to which the contents of the self-concept are; *clearly and confidently held, internally consistent, and temporally stable* (p.147).

A summary of the above gives a good sense of the role the self-concept plays in authentic leadership - a clear, confident and consistent self, leading to a strong, coherent and self-determined sense of direction. As already stated, it is my view that authentic leadership must be predicated upon an authentic self, in turn achieved by the discovery and development of a core sense of self as described above. The task in this discussion is to try and understand how the dual inter-personal and intra-personal process of the group format helps facilitate such self-concept development and clarity.

The Social Self

There is a long tradition of researchers into the self that acknowledge the importance of social interaction in the construction and modification of the self-concept, notably the Chicago School of Social Psychology (James, 1890; Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934). Later researchers also share the same idea that the self is publicly constructed and exists not exclusively, but primarily in relation to others (Baumeister, 1982; Gollwitzer, 1986; Rosenberg, 1979; Schlenker, 1986). These Social theorists have developed ideas that may provide insight into the social functioning of the coaching-group, in particular the inter-personal aspect of the process. For example, the theory of Symbolic Interactionism (George Mead, 1934), argues that *'...it is at the level of human interaction and interpersonal relationships that the fabrication of the self arises'* (Elliot, 2010, p.29). That the self is fluid not fixed and is a project that the individual actively builds and develops throughout their *biographical trajectory* in the social and interpersonal context in which they are embedded. If it is so that the self is not fixed, but is actively constructed and re-constructed within a social context, then the coaching group might prove a particularly fertile environment for such personal growth and change to occur, where the authentic self can be explored and reappraised.

Another idea of potential use is the concept of the *reflected-self* introduced by Cooley (1902), who coined the term 'the looking-glass self'. Cooley also believed that the *self* develops in the social environment in which it is embedded. He argued that the whole concept of *self* cannot be separated from social influences and that the *self* is actually built by assimilating and reflecting the appraisals of others. In Cooley's view, a person incorporates into their own self-concept, the observations they make of other people's view of them, and they develop a self that is congruent with those views. Should this be the case, then this would further explain why the social and interpersonal nature of the coaching-group helps participants re-evaluate and re-calibrate their self-concepts.

The Social Self in the Coaching Group

Rosenberg (1979) has also used four principles to explain a social theory of self that may help shed further light on the social processes within the coaching group. First, there is the concept of 'reflected appraisals' which builds on the ideas of Symbolic Interactionism and proposes that people develop their self-concepts on the basis of the perceived attitudes of others towards them. Secondly, there is the principle of 'social comparison' which states that we evaluate ourselves by comparing ourselves with other people, groups and social categories. The third principle is that of 'psychological centrality' which emphasises the fact that the self-concept is not merely a *collection* but an *organisation*, with some factors being more central and significant than others. The final principle is that of 'self-attribution', meaning that we make conclusions about ourselves by

observing our actions and their consequences. Rosenberg's theory presses the point of social psychology generally that the self-concept is indeed a social phenomenon, constructed and modified through on-going social interaction.

Tice (1992) has conducted studies that appear to support the importance of this interpersonal context for producing change in a person's self-concept and talks about *internalisation* being key to self-concept change. *Internalisation* suggests that behaviour is much more likely to be internalised if it is publicly observed by others as opposed to just executed in private and that some degree of observation by others is an important and powerful factor for achieving this internalisation and change in the self-concept. Tice (1992) emphasised the power of public interaction and its ability to help an individual "...crystallise and articulate a particular view of self" (p.449) and concludes that this internalization of self-concept change is significantly influenced and enhanced by the interpersonal context.

Sociologists Kuhn and McPartland (1954) have provided some empirical evidence in support of the social-self theory in their development of Bugental and Zelens (1950) WAY test (Who Are You?) into the longer Twenty Statements Test (TST). The test asks subjects to provide twenty answers to the question 'who am I' with the responses then categorised into *consensual* and *sub-consensual* categories. Consensual-categories relate to groups and classes that are matters of common knowledge i.e. Woman, Parent, Teacher etc. and sub-consensual categories refer to things that require interpretation to be understood i.e. Happy, Creative, Ambitious etc. Mulford and Salisbury (1964) administered the TST to a sample of 1,213 adults in the US and the most frequent responses were the consensual categories and in particular those of; family position, marital status, occupation and religion, clearly illustrating the respondents inter-personal and social conception of self.

However, not all inter-personal relations and social interaction are equally important in the development of the self-concept, with the *primary relationships* and interactions with *significant others* being most influential (Mead, 1934; Taylor, 1991). Most primary relationships of course start with family relationships which are crucial for the development of the self-concept that first emerges where we first learn to view ourselves as our parents view us (Lauer & Handel, 1983). Then later friends and teachers become important in influencing our self-concepts as studies in education establishments have shown (Kipnis, 1961; Davidson & Lang, 1960) and finally most people enter the world of work where colleagues and bosses are then added to this growing list of significant others.

It was George Mead (1934) that first introduced the term 'significant other' proposing that we develop and negotiate our sense of self through *internal and external* dialogue with each of these

significant others in our social sphere. Taylor (1991) supports the idea that identity depends on such internalised *dialogical relations* with these significant others, even when they disappear from our lives. Speaking of the psychotherapy group, Yalom (1995) observed that group members tend to carry the group around in their heads and continue to converse with them between meetings. In this respect, the group can also take the form of what Mead (1938) also called a 'generalised other'. He claimed that there exists an "*inner conversation going on between this generalised other and the individual*" (p.152) and that this significant reference group then becomes an integral part of a person's thinking and in this way, contributes to their sense of self.

Mirroring these theories, we propose that each of the AL group members become a *significant other* to each of the members and that the coaching group as a whole becomes a *significant generalised other* to its members. In this way, each member and the group as a whole, join the constellation of already existing *significant others* capable of influencing each member's self-appraisal and self-concept. Like Yalom (1995) I also find that members seem to carry their group around in their heads and continue to have an internal dialogical relationship with them, with one particular participant commenting about the group that *'it touches my brain every day!'* In all of these respects, the main thesis of Symbolic Interactionism and Social Theory more generally, can almost become a working definition of the AL coaching group, "*a social process out of which selves arise and within which further differentiation, further evolution, and further organisation, takes place*" (Mead 1934, p.164).

It is worth commenting however, that even Cooley (1902) acknowledged that this was not the whole story, and that there is a balance between a person's autonomy and the influence of others, making clear that the self that depends exclusively on the appraisal of others is probably a comparatively weak and unstable self. So, this raises the question, along with the *significant other* and the *generalised other*, which appraisals are given more importance over others? Gergen (1971) investigated this question and looked at the specific factors that make some people's appraisal more likely to influence an individual's self-evaluation than others.

In looking at these factors I shall map them here onto a typical AL coaching group. First, the other person has to be seen as *credible*. This is invariably the case as AL group members are purposively selected as motivated, intelligent professionals successful in their respective fields. Second, they have to be experienced by the individual as *personable* rather than impersonal. Again, this is most often the case in the AL group, as inclusion criteria to the group requires the ability to relate constructively to others, even when challenging or being challenged. Third, there are *subsequent confirming appraisals* by others. This again is often witness as it is common to see similarity in the reflected appraisals of the group members, particularly if they are reflecting back to an individual an

observation of a blind spot that is apparent to the group but obscured from the individual's own self-view. A final important factor according to both Taylor and Gergen that makes an appraisal more likely to affect an individual's self-concept, is if it comes from a member of a relevant group considered a *significant generalised-other* by that individual. As already mentioned above, I have found through the collection of individual Reflective Log data that almost without exception the Authentic Leadership coaching group does indeed assume such a position for each of its members.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Even taking social theory and its principles as just part of the story of self, I believe these theories offer some illuminating insight into some of the parallel processes operating within the unique format of the Authentic Leadership Coaching Group. This chapter has considered the place of the *self* in authentic leadership development and has illustrated the development of a conceptual model of the ALD group-coaching process. The group coaching achieved significant score increases in the participants SCCS scores and I have suggested several theories from Sociology and Social Psychology to attempt a conceptual understanding of the unique feature of the group format and what I have termed its '*parallel-process*'. These included Rosenberg's (1979) four principle social-self theory which include the concepts of *reflected appraisals*, *social comparison*, *psychological centrality* and *self-attribution* and Tice's (1992) theory of *internalisation*. Finally, I considered Mead's (1934) principles of the *significant others* and the *generalised other* and Taylor's (1991) idea of *dialogical relations* with each of these.

Ichiyama (1993) has commented that "*Although interpersonal processes in small groups are viewed as powerful agents of change...the precise mechanisms and processes of...change...are not fully understood*" (p.87). It is hoped that this research will go some way to addressing this issue. In Chapter One I established that the coaching groups studied in this research can achieve an increase in Authentic Leadership scores using the ALQ and ALI. In Chapter Two I also developed an explanatory model of the group-process through Grounded Theory and offered various accompanying theoretical explanations focussed on the *self* and the *social-self*. In doing so it is my hope that this part of the research offers a small step in understanding possible agents and processes of change in an area of increasing interest to both fields of leadership and coaching psychology. The next part of the thesis moves on to answer the third of our research questions – what does *work* actually mean? In the next Chapter I shall attempt to answer this question once again through using Grounded Theory, identifying 7 leadership qualities that are developed through ALD group-coaching which in turn form an over-arching four-component construct of Authentic Leadership.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT does work actually mean?

3.1 **METHODOLOGY**

The second part to our proposed model of Authentic Leadership Development is made up of 7 key outcomes that emerged from the research along with the four core concepts that encapsulate them.

Recorded semi-structured interviews were undertaken with each participant three months after the last group session to assess the impact and outcome of the group-coaching. The interviews were based around three levels of evaluation typically used in corporate learning and development that evaluate; Learning, Behaviour Change and Performance Improvement (Kirkpatrick, 1975). The rationale for using this form of evaluation is that it focusses the interviewee on linking their learning to actual behaviour change and linking this in turn to improved performance or business benefit. Interviewees reported on anything they considered relevant.

3.2 **RESULTS**

ALD Group Output Grounded Theory

Transcriptions of the interviews revealed 7 categories of cognitive, emotional and behavioural change (Fig 5). Then follows definitions of each and in-vivo examples to help illustrate each category.



Figure 5: AL Group Coaching Output - Categories of Change

Category 1:

SELF-UNDERSTANDING & SELF-MANAGEMENT: [definition]: *self-awareness that fosters greater self-control and mastery*. This category indicates increased cognitive, emotional and motivational awareness. It also includes an increase in the effective self-regulation in each of these domains that such understanding can engender, for example, gaining greater insight into established behaviour patterns or potential alternatives.

(P) Participant 18: (IL) Interview Line 288 – ‘How I respond to things has changed enormously. Things in the past that I would have dispelled huge amounts of emotional energy on now just don’t affect me in the same way. I used to get triggered by all that craziness and now, it’s extraordinary really, I can now just pause and take a breath and decide how I’m going to respond. Not getting emotional and sticking to the facts has served me so well, it’s amazing. I’m not losing energy like I did, it’s so freeing’

P12:IL91 - ‘It’s recognising this sort of lack of the feeling part of it, but it actually encourages you, it makes it more of a requirement to actually think about it and because it’s not your intuitive place to be, it’s not your standard thing. Actually, forcing yourself to do it differently, if you’re predominantly rational and you have to force yourself to be more feeling, you might be better at it because you have to force yourself to do it rather than it just being your normal point’

P23:IL196 – ‘This was about recognising that you have to do some of the other stuff and it might feel a bit more challenging and uncomfortable with it but that was OK, so it was more about recognising and accepting who you are and what your drivers are and that kind of thing and more the sort of the skills to be able to manage it’

P7:IL317 – ‘Looking at how I’ve managed previously and the strengths that come with that and also areas I needed to work on and that was predominantly around ‘losing the emotion’. I didn’t have clarity previously, in a concrete way what that actually meant. The greatest learning for me is that I do actually understand that now in concrete terms. I can now recognise that balance and I can now see that there are times when the emotion absolutely serves me and times when it doesn’t and I have to behave and respond to people in a different way and that my thinking needs to be different. At times, it’s about moving from a place of emotional response to pausing and thinking ‘how do I need to respond to this?’ and ‘what’s going on for me here?’ My thinking has changed now in that I have an awareness now of choosing different ways of responding to situations that arise in the workplace. It’s a consciousness that I didn’t have before. It’s phenomenal learning for me really because I’d been told this over and over again and I just didn’t get it and now it’s crystallised that and I get what it means on a daily basis’.

Category 2:

MANAGEMENT MINDFULNESS: [definition]: *considered and deliberate execution of management duties*. This category indicates a more thoughtful approach to the functional tasks of management. One example might be thinking more carefully about a task of delegation. Not just what to delegate, but to *who* and *why* and *how*?

P18:IL59 - 'I've created an atmosphere and a situation where I'm able to do a much better quality of thinking and delivering that part of my job. So, the fundamental quality of thought process and output is just better'

P8:IL202 - 'There's a definite behaviour shift as well in terms of how I manage my staff and my availability to staff. I'm a lot less available than before when I had an open-door policy. Now, if I'm available I'll let people know but they can't just wander in. I'm also a lot less pre-occupied now with how I'm going to deliver things to staff, I'm much more direct and far more boundaried in terms of my availability to staff'

P15:IL365 - 'I feel my behaviour has become an awful lot more open because I do take time to step back. I've kind of realised that I do that more now because it is part of my personality and it is how I want to project myself. It has made me think about my interactions with other people I work with. I am being more considered'

P10:IL418- 'I do kind of stop myself and give myself more time to think. Normally my attitude has been quite cavalier about things, say disciplinary, if it feels right then let's get rid of them. But since this course, I've actually been giving myself time to sleep on things first and this has often led to a completely different view on things in the morning, not just on disciplines but on some pretty major decisions, nothing's going to change in the course of 24 hours'

Category 3:

UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS: [definition]: *appreciation and understanding of the styles and behaviours of others*. This category indicates a greater understanding of a leader's interpersonal domain. This may include colleagues and clients but is particularly pertinent to the people they lead.

P13:IL69 - 'It dawned on me that there is a place for all of those different styles and that one is not necessarily better than the other. I guess in the past I made the assumption that everyone functions in a pretty similar way'

P22:IL195 - 'I now recognise that a breadth of humanity can be successful in managing information or delivering outcomes. I knew this hypothetically but to be confronted with it with other people was another thing altogether'

P1:IL72- 'I think I learnt, over the three days, perhaps how to listen to people with a bit less judgement. I think I can be quite judgemental about people but I'm now thinking about that more. Being in the group and having to listen to people and having to think about what they're saying, and really think about what they're saying means you have to listen in a different way'

P9:IL133 - *'Listening to the others in the group it dawned on me that there is a place for all of those different styles and one is not necessarily better than the other. I guess in the past I made the assumption that everyone functions in pretty similar ways but I realise now that people absolutely don't. It was great to listen to the others, particularly those that function in very different ways to me and hear about how that serves them. To discuss that in the group was really beneficial. To talk and hear other people's experiences was really, really helpful'*

P11:IL325 – *'I can also identify much more now about how other people around me are operating. There's clarity around that now so I'm far clearer on where the strengths of other people around me lay. That's fascinating as well'*

P24:IL379 – *'The diversity in the group was amazing in terms of how differently we all operate and to have had that opportunity to share quite deeply about our own experiences of how we operate was just so incredibly valuable to me and I have much greater respect now for other people that perhaps I didn't have previously, just thinking that my way is the right way. There was that arrogance I suppose. But everyone has their own way of doing things and their own gifts and areas to work on. It has been an amazing process'*

P16:IL23 – *'It wasn't until we had the time to explain why we are the way we are, and why we feel the way we feel about certain things and life experiences and the pathway we were taken down, its fundamentally changed the way I think about each individual in turn'*

P14:IL165 – *'I've got a team of guys and some within that team have similar character types to myself and I gravitate towards them when I want the job done, we'd work out the plan and then we'd tell the others what to do. I've realised that different people have different ways of thinking about things. And it's about trying to find and learn about their value and their input and what they need in the task'*

P19:IL47 – *'The other thing I learnt was about the way other people think. I knew on a values level that I should value that in them but I found I was less willing to value those differences in them before this course'*

P4:IL239 – *'I learnt that people really are different, even though I supposedly know that and lots of things tell you that. And working with people tell you that and I even tell other people that, but I think I really did learn that and have some belief and have some concrete evidence and it's not people just saying that or trying to disagree with you, but that people fundamentally do operate in different ways. I think I now know that on a different level. I learnt that on a different level and with a language to explain it'*

Category 4:

FLEXIBLE & EFFECTIVE INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS: [definition]: *ability to adapt to the styles and behaviours of others.* This category is the operationalising of the previous category. It is when an individual takes a new understanding of their interpersonal domain and uses this to inform new and more effective ways of communicating and relating to others.

P19:IL305 – ‘When I do lead I try and take a step back and not say – I’ve been thinking, I’ve got an idea and I this is what we’re going to do, because more often than not people feed into that anyway. So, it’s a case of taking the time to sit down with staff and the management team that I’ve got and give them the opportunity to tell me what their issues are or how they feel something will go’

P11:IL370- ‘I’ve always been able to get the work done, but the problem I’ve always had is in trying to pass on my vision. I need to make sure what’s going on in my head is translated into a format that other people could follow. And with all the other personality types I’ve never understood that before. But now I’m aware of it I try and accommodate it and try and accommodate the differences of what my character is capable of doing and what their characters are capable of doing and try to go some way in making a connection and bridging that gap. And it has massively worked’

P20:IL193 – ‘The behaviour change I’m trying for is to become more personable. I’m trying to build on the learning of valuing the way other people work. I have to recognise that sometimes if someone is asking me to help them and they’re looking at a way of doing things that I don’t think is right, that actually I need to give them room and permission to say - ‘actually I want to try and do it that way’

P15:IL247 - ‘It’s really helped me knowing the team and one guy in particular who just seems to fly off all over the place. He’s doing a million things and I really struggle to understand what he’s asking me sometimes. But recognising his personality type helps me work more with him. I just could have got completely frustrated with him. Probably stopped dealing with him. Whereas now I’m prepared to take time out to understand what it is he needs me to do for him’

P11:IL111 – ‘Something else is that I can understand people better even though I think I did before to a level. I understand why people decide what they do. I may not always agree with that but what I can do now is think there’s more confidence to understand why they do it. To recognise - ‘yes you are different to me and we have different ways of doing it but I understand why you’ve done that’. That affects things and your behaviour and the outcome can then change as a result of that. If you recognise that, you can temper your feedback to them and try and act a bit differently’

P24:IL89 – ‘I’m much better with challenge. I would never say I was poor with people and didn’t have time for people, but I wasn’t as good as I could be. Sometimes I didn’t exhibit the right behaviour towards them. I just think I’m much better at that now and so even quite difficult conversations don’t feel like things that are going to get pushed back to a different time and are now things that we can have in a very mature fashion’

P8:IL152 – ‘This point about people having different styles and having to use that, I think I did it before to a degree but I’ve become more aware of the fact that you do need to do that, and that you do need to adapt your styles and the first one you pick out might not necessarily be the right one the first time and you might need to try a few and you might not be successful with some of those. So that’s something that I’ve started to try and do now and I’ll continue to do and hopefully that’ll become part of me more naturally rather than having to think about it’

Category 5:

LEADERSHIP CAPACITY & PROACTIVITY: [definition]: an *active and resilient approach to leadership responsibilities*. This category indicates an increase in an individual's ability to manage their workload and also an increase in resilience as they do so. Without actually teaching new management skills as such, it appears the process of deep self-reflection removes intrinsic blockers that in turn enables an individual to engage more fully and effectively in their work.

P1:IL364 - 'My boss has talked about me being her successor and actually, now from a behavioural change point of view, I kind of see that as a distinct possibility. I still think there's a number of hurdles that would have to be overcome but I don't see them now as absolute blockers. Actually, now I see them just as hurdles that can be got over by my own performance'

P7:IL338 – 'Hugely beneficial to me professionally knowing how to deal with things, but also in terms of my capacity to move in a different direction as well. So, there's exploration around that for me as well as before I'm sure I wouldn't have been able to function at a higher level because it would have been too emotionally exhausting for me, whereas now with the detachment and clarity it may well be a possibility for me'

P15:IL186 – 'Looking back I thought I was doing a phenomenal job before but I think with this, this has now taken things to a completely different level and has been hugely beneficial not just to me but to those around me and ultimately for the organisational as well'

P12:IL258 – 'I can't pick out a point at which I said to myself - yes I'm going to do something about my self-confidence, but something's happened throughout the program where I've gone, 'yeah, I'm going to have a go at that and without even thinking about it I've volunteered for various things. That's thrown me into some challenges, and they've been met OK'

P18:IL149 – 'I think I'm behaving differently too, so for example, I've been kind of covering for my boss the last two weeks and rather than just cover for her I'm actually taking on some of the more transactional stuff that I can get involved with and actually do more of the strategic kind of stuff. It's actually kind of more doing her job for her. I think it's more about feeling ready now to do my boss's job, therefore while I'm deputising for her, that's more how I'd approach it so I feel more ready to do the job'

P2:IL398 - 'For me the timing was perfect because before taking that on I'd already got this job but it was expanding into this whole new other role and wondering am I in a position to be able to do that to such an extent now that one of the options going forwards is that I get the entire PI org reporting into me for the whole site so rather than it sitting in each of the Directorates, it comes to me so I get much more, I get all of the control then about who's where so all this issue we have about not being able to cover meetings and this teams got so many resources and I can't do anything about it, I will be able to. And again, if you'd offered me that a few months ago it'd been like - oh my god do I really want 50 or 60 people now expanding to 100 people working for me....no I don't! But yeah I'll give it a go now. I wouldn't have done that I don't think before'

Category 6:

LEADERSHIP CONFIDENCE & CLARITY: [definition]: *confident and focussed leadership*. This category indicates a more purposeful approach to the role of leadership itself, when individuals are beginning to look less at the technical management aspects of their role and more assuredly at the point and purpose of their own leadership.

P16:IL357 - 'I'm much clearer of why I'm doing what I'm doing. I am much, much clearer on what I need to do to be successful in the leadership role I'm doing, both in terms of my own team and also in terms of support to my own leadership team'

P14:IL419 – 'I think I'm much clearer about my expectations from staff and probably have heightened that expectation. I'm much more direct in delivering messages now where in the past I may have used jokey humour if I'd have had to be direct. They now know exactly where they are with me now and if I don't like something I see I tell them very directly, I can now deliver those messages with great clarity and with no emotion. And they're stepping up to that, which is great. They need to have that clarity and that's my role, I don't need to spend ages and ages about it deliberating. It's a revelation to me'

P18:IL367 – 'In my behaviour as a leader I'm a bit more convinced of myself. I've managed people for a while but I wasn't really convinced of myself as a leader. I'm more convinced that I lead people well because I'm good at it and I've got the skills to do. That my way of doing it is justifiable and I'm not pretending at doing it. I've got a particular way of doing it that is specific and feels a safe way of doing it to me. I've got a way of doing it and that works. But I can change that or I could do something different but it's one way and justifiable, you don't have to do it in a certain way to become a director or the MD, I could do that if I wanted and I could do it my way, you don't have to be that way to really lead people, you can really lead people all sorts of different ways. So, I just feel a bit more justified that the way I'm doing it, is a way of doing it. But recognising that it's a way is the key I think. So, I do feel more confident in what I'm doing and less like I'm pretending at times, because this is really what I do and really what I think'

P13:IL316 – 'I'll absolutely say that I'm much, much more clear of why I'm doing what I'm doing. I am much, much clearer on what I need to do to be successful in the role I'm doing, in terms of the technical side, in terms of my management skills for my team and in terms of my behaviour to support my own leadership team. So, I'm much clearer on personal leadership and responsibility than I ever was before. That makes it much easier to enjoy the positive and more challenging aspects of the day's work. And it makes it much easier for me to respond in an appropriate fashion to the challenges that are part of the business'

Category 7:

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION: [definition]: *a broad and long-term focus on strategic leadership goals.*

This category indicates an increased capacity to turn the previous category into strategic action. It is taking an increase in leadership confidence and clarity of purpose and translating it into important long term goals. The group coaching offers no training in strategic thinking or strategic planning but, as with the other categories this is one that emerges clearly and consistently.

P14:IL59 – ‘I think how I manage my staff now is better...which means I have a lot more time to do the corporate stuff that I avoided a bit. It all frees me up to do the strategic stuff, spending time doing the looking-up stuff rather than the organising-down stuff’

P6:IL170 - ‘I started to form the new team of which I am a member and said - let’s really get the strategy right in terms of what we are here to do. Let’s get the program and schedule of activities right so we know what steps we’re going to take to deliver that strategy and then let’s put in place the right machinery, behaviours and culture to deliver those activities to drive that strategy’

P18:IL247 – ‘So people understood my vision they were basically given a step plan to get from point A to point B and that has massively worked. And because my managers are now more clear on where they’re going we’ve been offered more work and we are more clear on what we can and can’t take on. In playing to everyone’s strengths I think it’s definitely had a massive impact. The area growth is sustainable now it’s not the massive, erratic growth as in the past where we grew very, very quickly and then we lost it very, very quickly, with me trying to make everyone keep up. Now we’re back up but it’s been steady and it’s been more considered’

P16:IL324 – ‘The other bit was obviously the Strategy bit wasn’t it and the fact that I don’t do Strategy and then I did do Strategy and I’ve used that Strategy I don’t know how many times now’

P7:IL378 – ‘One of the things I did last week was to get the observation program because it’s just floundering where it is, basically I offered and said it fits in too close with what we’re doing to put it elsewhere, so can I take that program and do something with it. We had a meeting the other day and one of the jobs I did was to do an outline plan of the things we need to do. Alright it was a reasonably short term plan but at least it was a plan. Again, I’m not sure I would have done in the past, but its recognising that I need that just to give it that visibility and structure so that its everybody and not just me, I might have it in my head or scribbled in my notebook or whatever but at least it’s now visible to everybody what it is we’re trying to do, it’s a start of how we can develop that into a detailed strategy as well’

Theoretical Sampling

At this point two groups of 11 individuals were reconvened and had the 7 categories and their descriptions presented to them for discussion. This discussion was conducted over two half days and generated no new properties for each of these categories. It was therefore concluded theoretical saturation had been reached. One individual's report from this session is presented below.

Table 10: Theoretical Sampling: Participant Log Example

Self-Understanding & Self-Management: For me this went deeper than just leadership. Life exploration in general. The big question in this category is why I'm not in a more senior leadership position? Lots of answers – still exploring. Mainly due to lack of sound judgement, can't see the bigger picture. Don't handle mistakes/failure/criticism well. I also accept other people's way of doing things might be equally good. Sometimes struggle with there being more than one way to skin most cats. I don't make decisions and stick to them because I am used to other people seeing a better or different way to do things. I am coming to accept my limitations – relaxing? Learning to see that not everything is important enough to make a stand about. I sometimes feel very split with a very black/white technically correct/incorrect precise letter of the law, judgemental approach to life at times, and at others a desire to be much less rigid, accepting that people have different points of view and that there are different ways of doing things, more accepting of other people.

Understanding of Others: Learning to be kinder, rather than just right or technically correct, and appreciative. Learning to see that not everything is important enough to make a stand about. Different personalities are motivated by different things. Must be mindful of what motivates others and try to encourage them more. I have a better understanding of other's characters now. I am definitely more appreciative of other's abilities now and aware that a team needs to be able to draw on lots of characteristics to cover all bases.

Flexible & Effective Interactions: Tension between being me and being different in order to adapt to someone else's style. Need to be more mindful of appropriate boundaries sometimes. Too strict and stressed. Have to use motivational understanding to encourage participation.

Management Mindfulness: Recent review noted that I was scared to go out of my comfort zone. If I've taken info on board and I am happy I know what I am doing, or that I am safe to make mistakes, then I will have a go at most things, but if I am uncertain and feel vulnerable or that I might no longer be respected if I make a mistake, then I can panic. Need to work on this more! Definitely more comfortable than I was last year with the commercial awareness, I need to continue to build this into some form of internal framework that I can use. I need to keep pushing boundaries and looking for more opportunities to gain experience here.

Leadership Capacity & Proactivity: I have struggled with some leadership expectations in the past (mine and others) but I feel as though I am bouncing back a bit and finding a better level, a step back, calmer, stronger, less worried, less cautious, more tough and finding resilience.

Leadership Confidence & Clarity: I think how I manage my staff now is better in that I'm much more concrete, with more boundaries, which means I have a lot more time to do other things and I'm not so preoccupied. So

now I do more of the corporate stuff that I avoided a bit. And making sure all the boxes I need to have ticked, are ticked and things that need to be done are done such as devising a task & responsibility matrix. That is definitely a change in the way I've worked in the past

Strategic Orientation: I even recently attended a meeting to present a finance request where instead of just delivering a speech I actually presented the business case which I wouldn't have done before the course. It's about change processes. And knowing that your own authenticity is valid and applying those authentic traits and styles to long term vision and planning.

Developing and synthesising the above categories it became apparent that they relate to each other in various ways. For example, an increased understanding of others can help an individual interact more effectively with them. An increase in leadership clarity and confidence can in turn improve strategic leadership. On this basis, we propose a further level of abstraction to a four-component model of Authentic Leadership, presented in figure 5. For example, a Conscious approach to leadership we suggest would include both sub-categories of Self-Understanding and Management Mindfulness. Competent leadership would involve Effective Interactions with Others and Leadership Capacity & Proactivity. Confident leadership would include Self-understanding & Self-management and Confident leadership would include Leadership Confidence & Clarity but also Strategic Leadership. These can be summarised as a: Competent leader that is skilled and able; a Confident leader that is assertive and self-assured; a Conscious leader that is deliberate and intentional; and a Congruent leader that is clear and consistent. Therefore, we abstracted the seven leadership qualities into four overarching concepts that were *defined by the empirical data within them* and the *theoretical category that the datum indicated* (Glaser, 2005).

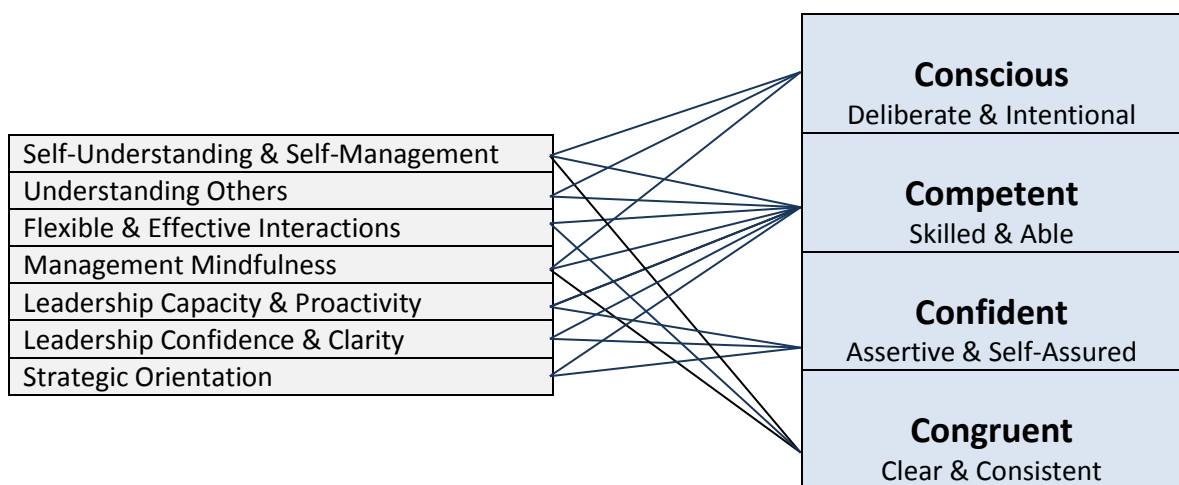


Figure 6: Multi-Dimensional Construct of Authentic Leadership



Figure 7: Four Component Model of Authentic Leadership

3.3 DISCUSSION

The Outcome of Change

Within each of the four proposed core concepts of Authentic Leadership; Conscious, Competent, Confident and Congruent leadership are the seven sub-categories which are to be reviewed here. The first consistent and emergent category we look at is *Strategic Orientation* which reflects the increased capacity for strategic leadership reported by many participants. This, despite the fact that at no point in the process, were participants exposed to any teachings in strategy or strategic thinking. We have observed that, rather than skill development, it seems the group-coaching effectiveness lies in its ability to remove obstacles to actual skill deployment. This supports the fundamental coaching tenet that insights, skills and solutions very much reside in the individual and it is a case of helping them access these resources. This is also witnessed in the next category of *Leadership Capacity & Proactivity*. The process seems somehow to increase an individual's reserves and resilience. Many participants report taking on much more work yet feeling even more positive and in control at the same time. This may be predicated on the next category of *Leadership Confidence and Clarity*. Participants report considerable surges in confidence as a result of the group work. They feel the confidence to take on increased responsibilities and appear to do so with a much greater clarity of the purpose of their leadership role. This is related to the category of *Management Mindfulness* in that it appears to engender a more focussed and deliberate approach to their management duties generally. The process also seems to achieve change that positively impacts on how individuals work with their colleagues, in terms of *Increased Effective and Flexible Interactions* and an *Improved Understanding of Others*. They report having much greater understanding of colleague's behaviours and motives which in turn gives them more tolerance and flexibility in dealing

with them. Finally, we come to the category of *Self-Understanding & Self-Management* that perhaps underpins all of the above and brings us back to the ancient admonition suggested to guide Authentic Leadership Development - 'know thyself'. This reflects the depth of self-relevant work described above and the increases in effective self-regulation which this engenders. All of these categories manifest in different constellations and to different degrees within each individual. However, the seven categories account for all of the behaviour change and resulting performance improvement in the 25 leaders participating in the group-coaching and are encapsulated in our proposed over-arching model of Authentic Leadership, of: Conscious leadership, Competent leadership, Confident leadership and Congruent leadership.

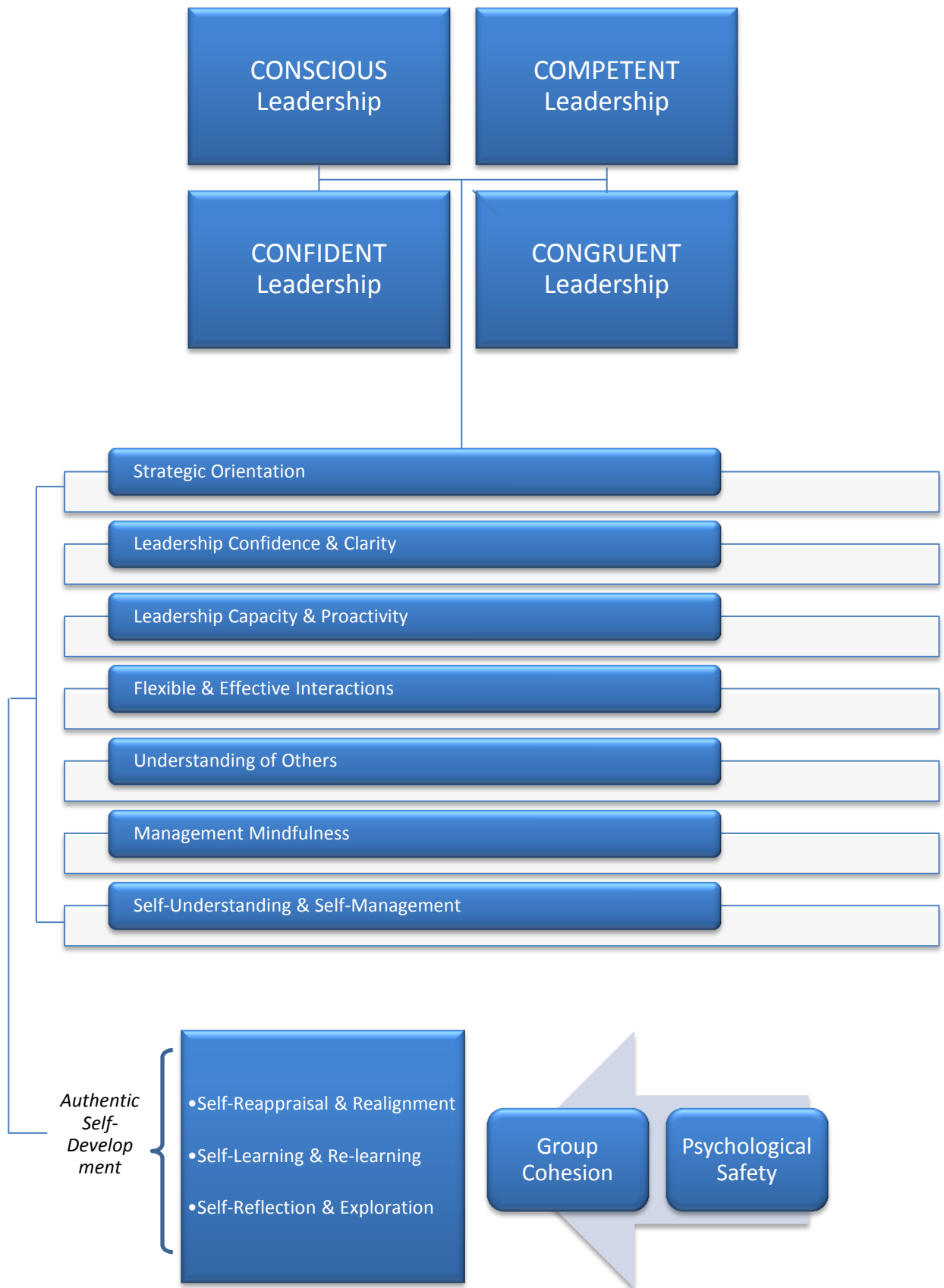


Figure 8: Conceptual Model of Authentic Leadership Development

3.4 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to design, develop and evaluate a leadership development intervention with the specific objective of developing authentic leadership initially measured by existing AL measures. The first challenge was to design a developmental intervention that would go sufficiently *deep* as to address issues relating to individual authenticity, such as a person's values, meaning and purpose. Traditional training methods are generally considered ineffective for such a pursuit (Avolio, 2005; Sparrowe & Eilam, 2005; Shamir, 2005) so the intervention had to take place outside of the traditional confines of the classroom.

Another consideration was how to create a format that tapped into the social nature of leadership, (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005). With these two factors in mind and based on the established efficacy of group therapy (Rogers, 1951; Yalom, 1995) and the emerging evidence for group coaching (Ket de Vries, 2005; Ward, 2008), it was hypothesised that group coaching would provide an effective vehicle for Authentic Leadership Development.

I have suggested that it is possibly the parallel process that holds the key to the effectiveness of the group format, enabling the participants to work at both the *intra* and *inter* personal levels of experience, exploring and developing their self-concept in the social context that is unique to this form of coaching and it is by introducing such social theory we are better able to understand how this relatively new form of coaching is uniquely placed to develop Authentic Leadership.

Although this group intervention is undoubtedly not the only effective form of ALD, I am proposing it is one of very few approaches to Authentic Leadership Development that has been scientifically evaluated and reported. Through Grounded Theory it was possible to understand better the group-coaching process and develop a multi-component construct of Authentic Leadership as: Conscious, Competent, Confident and Congruent leadership. I believe this represents the first attempt to offer both a *model and a method* of ALD and an explanatory theory of both. As such, I hope it represents a valuable contribution to the field of leadership coaching and starts to answer Gardener's call (2011, p.1140) for "...greater attention to the design and implementation of intervention strategies intended to foster the development of authentic leaders"

3.5 ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

If what you discover depends very much on what you are looking for (Dey, 1999), it is important in the name of researcher reflexivity to make explicit some of the assumptions that guided this research.

A first assumption is that Authentic Leadership is indeed a noble goal. That a leader, who has a clearer understanding of their inner self, will lead more effectively. They will have increased clarity and conviction which will positively influence their leadership. Second, and in agreement with Erikson (1956), I consider personal authenticity to be something that is relative and not absolute and therefore assume it is something that can be developed. Third, I assumed that coaching, and specifically group-coaching, might be one possible way to achieve this growth in personal and leadership authenticity.

Although the research was designed and undertaken with all of these assumptions in the background, it is important to state that the work in the foreground was clear of assumptions on what may be found. Indeed, this is why a Grounded Theory approach was chosen, to discover only theory that both emerged from and was *grounded* in the data (Willig, 2008). Before embarking on this research, I had no idea *if* group-coaching would actually help develop authentic leaders and *if* it did, no idea of *how* it would, but I believed from a positivist stance that if it did, Grounded Theory would uncover both the *what*, and the *how*.

There are several potential limitations to the present study that should be considered for future research concerning; sampling, generalisability, measurement and duration. Firstly, the sampling for this research involved purposive sampling, which for the reasons already discussed, was considered highly appropriate. Although the gold-standard of quantitative research is the randomised/control group design, the nature of the small group coaching process obliged the inclusion of participants who would work effectively, and quickly, within this format. The intense small group environment is not one that everyone works effectively within and the short-term nature of this intervention required groups to be populated such that they could operate constructively from the first session.

In large classroom style leadership programs a delegate can within reason participate as much or as little as they wish. This is not the case in small group-coaching where each participant has to engage in the process in a full and frank manner. If one individual refuses to participate, this would inevitably have an adverse impact on the work the rest of the group can do and the whole process could and probably would break down. This means the small group format is not a suitable method of development for everyone and therefore participants have to be chosen in a considered manner

which in turn makes generalisability all but impossible. However, this does mean the group's eventual composition creates the two fundamental group conditions that form the foundation of our entire model - Psychological Safety and Group Cohesion.

There are also ethical issues that need to be considered, particularly if there are contra-indications of this being a suitable medium for particular individuals (Kets de Vries, 2005). This means that this form of Authentic Leadership Development may not be effective or applicable for the general leadership population. This of course will have implications for both the generalisability of the findings reported here and also the practical application of the group format. Second, both the ALQ and the ALI are designed so they can also be used as a 360 instrument. In this research, purely for access and logistical reasons, they were used only as a self-assessment tool. While this allowed evaluation of the changes individual leaders believed had occurred, what is also of crucial importance in authentic leadership is the assessment of those they lead. Therefore, future research would be made more robust with the inclusion of peers and subordinates in the 360-assessment process. Finally, a longitudinal evaluation would help assess whether any of the reported changes are subject to atrophy, so an additional Time-3 assessment at 18 or 24 months may yield valuable additional data regarding this.

Mindful of these comments, one recommendation for future studies might be to assess the impact of an open-invite 'randomised' group format versus an invite-only format. This would help identify and better understand the contra-indicators to inclusion in a group and the impact these have. Another recommendation for future research may be to investigate further any hierarchical relationship or mediating factors between the seven categories of enhanced leadership capability that emerged from the research. This may help both individual leaders and sponsoring organisations make better informed decisions about participation.

While consideration of all of these factors may enhance future research, I still believe the results presented here offer a strong indication of the potential efficacy of Authentic Leadership group coaching and its ability to help participants develop as Authentic Leadership who *"...act in concordance with their deeply held values...are keenly aware of their strengths and weaknesses and strive to understand how their leadership impacts others"* (Peus et al, 2012, p.332). However, Authentic Leadership is not just about ethical leadership it's also about strategic leadership as I will explain in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4:

Authentic Leadership Group Coaching and its impact on Leadership Development Levels

The main section of this research looks at *how* group coaching may work as a form of Authentic Leadership Development. In considering this I have moved beyond the usual fields of Coaching or Management Theory to consider what other areas may help illuminate the investigation. For example, I have taken a sideways look at other forms of group-development such as; team coaching, group analysis and group therapy. I then presented a Grounded Theory of AL group-coaching and in the discussion included concepts from allied fields such as Sociology and Social Psychology.

Here I continue to extend this focus and introduce an idea from the field of Developmental Psychology that may add value to this exploration of the group-coaching process, namely Constructive Developmental Theory (CDT) and Leadership Development Levels (LDL). In this chapter I will consider, albeit retrospectively, what evidence there was from the group participants that the process was progressing them through such stages of adult development and what the impact of this may have been. I illustrate where participant reports appear to map onto this theory and include an extended section which gives an illustration of one particular participant's experience.

Constructive Developmental Theory

The CD Theory of adult development focuses on the development of a persons' overarching understanding of themselves and their world rather than on the acquisition of discreet skills and knowledge (Kegan 1982; Kohlberg 1969; Loevinger 1976; Torbert 1987). Keegan (1980) first used the term Constructive-Developmental and refers to it as the persons' continuing development of their meaning and meaning-making processes. *'A person's way of understanding the self and the world...such that earlier ways of meaning-making are integrated into more comprehensive and complex later ways'* (McCauley, Drath, Paulus, O'Connor & Baker, 2006, p.635).

Various theorists have attached different labels to each of these stages of development though they broadly relate to similar steps with similar definitions. For example, Kegan's *Interpersonal*, *Institutional* and *Inter-individual* stages can be broadly mapped onto Loevinger's *Conformist*, *Conscientious* and *Autonomous*, *Integrated* stages and in turn McCauley's *Dependent*, *Independent* and *Inter-independent* stages. Generally speaking, the further an Individual progresses through the developmental stages the less they see the world in black and white and the more their meaning and meaning-making systems become dynamic, complex and systemic in nature.

Kegan (1980) comments '*Although everyone makes meaning in richly idiosyncratic and unique ways, there are striking regularities to the underlying structure of meaning-making systems and to the sequence of meaning systems that people grow through*' (p. 374). And he suggests that '*...people have more in common with those who share their constructive-developmental predicament than they do with those who share their age, sex, IQ, socioeconomic status or level of education*' (p.375). Laske (1999) suggests that these different meaning-making structures not just influence but rather determine our relationships to ourselves, others and the world generally.

Leadership Development Levels

Eigel and Kuhnert (2005) have taken Constructive Developmental Theory and in applying it to leadership have coined the term Leadership Development Levels. These closely match the adult development levels described above, but look at development specifically from a leadership perspective and comprise three realms, where leaders move from an externally to internally defined sense of self in the *Intrapersonal* domain, from a self-focus to other-focus in the *Interpersonal* domain and from simplicity to complexity in the *Cognitive* domain. This theory comprises four levels and similarly to CD theory, movement throughout these levels is unidirectional, a leader cannot miss a stage nor can they regress in their understanding, each level encompasses the previous levels but then expands and extends to the next. Although the sequence of progress is universal, the speed of development, and potentially stalled development, will vary from one individual leader to another. It is helpful to think of this as the vertical-development of *how* we know (epistemology) versus the horizontal-development of *what* we know (knowledge). The characteristics of each level are described in more detail below:

Level 2 – This represents the lowest or least sophisticated level of development. Leaders at this level view the world in very simplistic terms. They see it mainly as either black or white and miss the many subtle shades of grey in between. They struggle with paradox, ambiguity and even alternative views. These leaders have to operate by following strict and concrete rules that they in turn expect others to follow also. Generally, leaders at this level prove quite ineffective as modern business VUCA conditions (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex & Ambiguous) often doom them to failure. It is estimated less than 10% of today's leaders operate at this level (Eigel, 1998; Kegan, 1994).

Level 3 – Leaders move to this level when they finally learn the limitations of Level 2. They are now capable of recognising alternate viewpoints and the subtler shades of grey in situations. Although they are capable of accepting outside counsel, one drawback of this stage is that they may become reliant on it. They seek external opinion even on occasions when what is called for is their own

internal guidance. They depend on their relationships not just for advice, but even for identity. Level 3 leaders are generally effective in routine and low stress environments.

Level 4 – At this level the understanding now starts to come more from within than without. Leaders become more independent in thought and act. They continue to consider external information but now simply look at it as one factor in the overall decision making process. They develop a more complex understanding of the world and it is considered that genuinely effective and even transformational leadership begins at this level (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). These leaders are most effective in novel environments.

Level 5 – This is the highest level but one that only about 5% to 8% of leaders attain. A complete paradigm shift occurs here, in that they start to welcome other paradigms (Eigel, 1998; Kegan, 1994). They ground themselves in their own vision and values but are completely capable of understanding and even integrating those of others. They have a capacity for the ambiguous, incomplete and paradoxical. And it is this complex and open view of themselves, others and the world that makes Level 5 leaders the most effective in the fast paced and dynamic VUCA conditions that characterise most modern organisations and business environments.

Although authentic behaviour can be witnessed at LDL 3 it is generally considered that authentic leadership only really begins to occur at LDL 4. It is only here that leaders become truly self-authored, as prior to this level the understanding of self and others comes from external sources and as such cannot be fully authentic (Eigel & Kuhnert, 2005). Supporting this, Gardiner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, (2005) say that they expect authentic leaders to have reached an advanced level of development such as Kohlberg's Stage 6 or Kegan's Stage 4.

Developing Leadership Development Levels

There are currently only a limited number of research studies that look at LDL's and *leader effectiveness* or *leadership development*. Some notable exceptions are a small number of studies that look at Leadership Development Levels and leadership effectiveness where the latter is determined by the measurement of leadership competencies via 360-degree appraisal. For example, Harris & Kuhnert (2008) showed that LDL predicted effectiveness in a variety of leadership competencies such as; managing performance, developing and retaining talent, developing team cohesion, thinking strategically and leading change. Rooke and Torbert (1998:2005) looked more closely at this last competence and found that higher LDL leaders do indeed make more effective change agents. Strang and Kuhnert (2009) also found through the use of 360 feedback that LDL is a predictor of leadership effectiveness assessed by peers and subordinates.

While more research is beginning to appear in the leadership development literature generally (Paulus & Drath, 1995; Torbert, 1994, 2004; Van Velsor & Drath, 2004), there has been less relating to coaching based upon CD theory (Drath & Van Velsor, 2006; Laske, 1999). Laske (1999) stresses that executive development is simply adult development in the workplace, and as such it should include ‘...a life span developmental perspective’, (p.139). He terms this *second-order* coaching which aims at change that originates in the self. He says issues that emerge in this second-order developmental coaching all relate to the individual’s readiness for transcending their existing meaning-making system and therefore it is not simple informative coaching (of skills), but transformative coaching (of self).

Authentic Leadership groups as *Developmental* coaching groups

In Kegan’s original work he also emphasised *developmental movement* rather than specific *developmental stages*. He claims that people often naturally have immunity to this developmental change because of a fear of losing existing meaning in the very pursuit of new meaning. Kegan & Lahey (2001) suggest that this immunity, or inertia, can be overcome by a holding environment that can support the examination and challenge of these existing meaning-making systems. They propose that leadership development interventions should create such holding environments that encourage such *developmental movement*. Many formal leadership development interventions occur over just a few days and while these may be effective for instilling organisationally relevant skills and knowledge, they are probably not sufficient to create the sort of environment necessary to support *development* progress.

Palus and Drath (1995) actually distinguish between such skills training programs and more *development* programs that place emphasis on the questioning and challenging of leaders existing meaning-making systems. We believe that the form of Authentic Leadership Development presented here definitely falls into this last category. Perhaps this answers the question considered elsewhere, why participants develop greater strategic thinking as one result of participating in the ALD groups, despite the fact that no element of strategic thinking or planning is incorporated into the format. Perhaps this is a natural manifestation of the development through the different LD levels.

Interestingly, Hirsch (1988) found something similar working with entrepreneurs and found that individuals at the Dependent stage led in a very hands-on way, whereas those at the Independent level delegated much more responsibility and those at the Inter-independent level focussed on even more broader and strategic issues.

Based on the group conditions of *Psychological Safety* and *Group Cohesion* presented in our ALD model, we are inclined to consider that the Authentic Leadership coaching-groups studied in this research do indeed achieve the type of holding environment discussed above, that enables the exact type of developmental-movement that facilitates movement from the *Dependent* to the *Independent stage* and in some cases even farther along into the *Inter-dependent* stage of adult and leader development.

In their paper mapping LDL's and Authentic Leadership, Eigel and Kuhnert (2005) describe the developmental journey that individuals take towards authentic leadership and the process involved. They explain the successive levels of LDL's and what more is achievable at each level by a leader. However, what they fail to do, like a lot of other researchers in the field, is tell us what the actual development process *looks like*? And most importantly, how do we purposely design a leadership intervention that incorporates such accelerators so they can be consciously built into an organisational leadership development program?

McCauley and associates (2006) comment that "*Despite the interest in using Kegan's constructive-developmental framework to better understand and design leadership development interventions, there has been no research that examines the features of these interventions...*" (p.642). I propose that the ALD coaching group illustrates some effective design features that do indeed support *development* progress. Also, if the AL measure scores reported in Chapter One reflect personal growth, then the design features of these groups also lead to *increased* development movement (see Table 11 for one participants extended account). I cannot however, make this claim more surely as I did not include constructive-developmental measures in the analysis. I would suggest that any future research on ALD coaching groups include such measures, (Loevinger & Wessler, 1970; Torbert, 1987; Lahey, Souvaine, Keegan, Goodman & Felix, 1985).

Table 11: LDL Participant (P15) Log Example

<p>The weeds, the long-grass and the blue-sky horizon</p> <p>After one of the sessions I came away asking myself- where do I get stuck? Where do I get stuck that doesn't allow me to do my job properly? So, I thought of – blue sky horizon, long grass and weeds, and this was quite an eye-opener for me because everything that was in the weeds was where I was really focussing and that's where I was stuck all the time – just bits of detail and bits of stuff that kept coming through the door. Then I knew there was other stuff that was a little bit more important that I got stuck with as well, but the bits that were really important for me at the level of the job I was at, which was the horizon and the blue sky...I was nowhere near it. So now, when my new team member started we had a conversation around how they could focus very much on that bit, the bit that I would never let go of, the detail bit, she's in there now and she does</p>

all the long-grass stuff and now I can focus on the stuff that's up at the top, whereas before I'd have stayed safe down in the weeds. Now, even though I don't have the same level of control over the detail anymore, I feel that I'm in a place where I know what's happening, I've got clarity of what's happening and I'm confident I know where I'm going.

Conclusion

Eigel and Kuhnert (2005) summarise *"The future of our organisations depends on successfully identifying and developing all leaders to higher LDLs – to a place of greater authenticity – so that they can respond effectively to the increasingly complex demands of our time"* (p.383). I would like to conclude this chapter by suggesting that the Authentic Leadership Development coaching-groups investigated in this research make a significant contribution towards this goal.

It seems from the participant reports and evaluation interviews that they often feel more confident when they return to work. They have a greater clarity of their leadership role and, either allied to this or perhaps because of this, they have a greater strategic appreciation of their role. Each of these leadership attributes are evidenced in the Grounded Theory categories that emerged from the research which includes; Leadership Confidence and Clarity and Strategic Orientation. Qualities of higher LDL's that according to Eigel and Kuhnert (2005) should elevate these leaders to a place of greater authenticity and allow them to respond more effectively to the complex organisational demands of our time.

CHAPTER 5

Authentic Leadership Group Coaching and its impact on the Imposter Syndrome

This chapter brings in another theory that I believe, once again in retrospect, is of value to this exploration of Authentic Leadership Development. I say in retrospect because similar to the CDT/LDL theory of the previous chapter, it is a theory whose relevance only really emerged once I had run the research groups and had begun to analyse the data. The theory I would like to explore in this chapter, along with its relevance and evidence in the ALD coaching groups, is the Imposter Phenomenon or Syndrome.

The Imposter Syndrome is a psychological pattern characterised by an individual's intense feeling of fraudulence in the face of achievement and success (Harvey & Katz, 1986). It is often found in people who are driven to achieve but live in the fear that each new achievement or level of success will simply reveal them as a *fake* who has got away with it (Clance, 1985). The striking thing about this phenomena is that it leads otherwise intelligent and rational individuals to totally disregard the empirical evidence of their success and class it simply as luck. They believe their accomplishments are wholly unearned and anyone else who rates their abilities, are simply mistaken or misguided. While others may look upon this person as skilled and intelligent, the person themselves feel incompetent and unqualified (Clance, 1985). This phenomenon or syndrome as it has been labelled more recently, has been scientifically studied for several decades and is estimated to affect around 70% of the working population at some point in their careers (Clance & Imes, 1978; Topping & Kimmel, 1985; Langford & Clance, 1993; Clance, Dingman, Reviere, & Stober, 1995; King & Cooley, 1995; Kumar, & Jagacinski, 2006).

In this chapter I shall investigate how this psychological pattern is formed and how it typically manifests itself at work. Then I shall look at data from the research groups to see what evidence there is that this phenomenon was something experienced by our participant group and how the Authentic Leadership group-coaching may have impacted any feelings of imposture they may have had.

The Imposter Syndrome

An irony of the Imposter Syndrome (IS) is that it can affect apparently successful people (Clance, 1985). Not necessarily just high flying CEO's, but anyone who has achieved any measure of success in any area of their lives that are important to them. It goes hand-in-hand with success because you have to have some form of success to feel *fraudulent* about. IS has three main over-arching

characteristics as described by Harvey and Katz (1986). First, the person suffering IS, has a sense of having fooled others into overestimating their ability. Generally, people around the individual with IS estimate their abilities and accomplishments on objective evidence. However, the individual themselves see things differently. They can't accept this evidence or internalise their successes so a discrepancy arises between how they see themselves and how they've *fooled* other people into seeing them and the feelings of fraudulence begin to rise. Second, they attribute their success to something other than their own intelligence or ability in their role. Because they can't accept the evidence for their success they have no explanation for it so they attribute it to almost any cause other than genuine ability; luck, disproportionate effort, right-place and right-time or they believe those who did the evaluating were mistaken or generally of poor judgement. Third, they fear being exposed as a fraud. If a person is convinced others are wrong about them then they live in constant fear that they will be exposed. This fear tends to make them perfectionists who dread any form of failure, as such failure will be what finally gives them away as the *fakers* they believe themselves to be (Harvey & Katz, 1986).

Clance and O'Toole (1988) break this list down further and have identified several other features that accompany the Imposter Syndrome; the dread of evaluation, fear of failure, guilt about success, difficulty in internalising positive feedback, overestimating others while under-estimating themselves and defining intelligence in a skewed (and detrimental) way. At their worst, these imposturous feelings can have serious implications at work, such as; feelings of inadequacy, compensatory hard work, over preparation, procrastination, doubt and guilt (Ket de Vries, 1990). So how is it that otherwise healthy intelligent people suffer from this seemingly irrational and illogical self-belief inconsistent with any objective measure? Where do these feelings of fraudulence come from?

Origins of the Imposter Syndrome

One significant contributor, perhaps unsurprisingly, lay in the IS sufferer's early family dynamics and in particular the type and source of approval and criticism they received during their development (Clance, 1985). One example is the family dynamic where nothing the child ever does is good enough. The parents focus on the child's flaws in performance, of which there are many as a developing child, and nothing short of perfection is satisfactory. Internalising their parent's impossible standards, as adults these individuals carry these voices of criticism around within themselves and feel they can never do well enough to satisfy themselves. A double-bind is that when these individuals begin to achieve some form of success the internal voices start to raise doubts, focusing on any weakness in their performance and raising doubts about the validity of any

success (Clance, 1985). The adult has thus adopted the critical parent's voice as their own and as a result becomes their own worst critic. In early childhood, we develop a sense of certainty or a sense of doubt about our competence and the influence of the disapproving parent, it seems, leaves an indelible mark during this critical period when we first begin to develop a sense of self-mastery.

Another family dynamic is the opposite, where a child receives almost constant praise and recognition from their parents for almost everything they do. These are the parents who believe their offspring, often an only child, are not just bright but brilliant, not just sporty but world class, not just pretty but a budding supermodel. The problem here is that the child isn't raised in a way that enables them to develop a self-concept based on their own opinions and judgements. The source of any positive feelings about themselves comes from the opinions of others, mostly their parents. This may follow through into adulthood where the individual seeks a similar level of praise and admiration from significant others in the workplace; bosses, senior colleagues or mentors. If this validation they have become so accustomed to isn't forthcoming, they can begin to feel like a fraud. They can only feel successful when they are praised and when they are ignored or criticised, they feel like a complete failure (Clance, 1985).

Each of these family scenarios are problematic in their own way and both adversely impact the child's development in a way that can help form the origins of the Imposter Phenomena. A primary psychological task of childhood is to ensure that "*the infant's primary narcissism, the belief in his own and in his parent's omnipotence...gradually recedes...replaced by autonomous functioning*" (Mahler, Pine & Bergman, 1975, p.226). Individuals who experience difficulties in establishing this process of separation and individuation often develop feelings of *imposture* (Ket de Vries, 2003).

So, it seems many instances of IS may have their origins early in the family context, however, there are also other circumstances in which IS may be developed or perpetuated in later life. One example that is pertinent to this research is that IS feelings may be brought on when a person faces a new and unfamiliar job, role or promotion (Topping, 1985; Fried-Buchalter, 1992; Fried-Buchalter, 1997; Cowman, & Ferrari, 2002; Hutchins, 2015). If a professional person continues to pursue advancement and achievement, there is a high likelihood that this will place them often at the edge of their zone of comfort, just the place where feelings of IS have increased potential to emerge.

Before continuing, there are two limitations to this discussion that need to be addressed. First, it is difficult, if not impossible, to assess in retrospect how many of the research participants had feelings of IS, and to what degree. Second, although there are various instruments available to measure IS (Harvey & Katz, 1986; Chrisman, Pieper, Clance, Holland, & Glickauf-Hughes, 1995; Hellman, &

Caselman, 2004) unfortunately none were used in this research as the existence of IS and associated measures only came to my attention when the research project itself was well advanced.

As a result, I have had to examine the Reflective Log and interview data to identify anecdotal evidence that may be consistent with the presence of IS within the participant group and examine how their experience in the group may have shifted their feelings or perceptions with regard any personal sense of IS they may have felt. However, it is safe to say that many of the participant's comments alluded to apparent feelings of IS, with one or two individuals even using the Imposter Syndrome term itself. Therefore, I shall consider some of these participant experiences in more detail below to see if and how they may relate to participants experience of the Imposter Phenomena.

Authentic Leadership and Imposter Syndrome

It seems clear then from the descriptions above that the existence of IS can adversely impact a person's sense of genuineness and authenticity and is therefore clearly pertinent to our discussion of authentic leadership even if this, unfortunately, has to be done retrospectively. One of the *qualities* that emerged as a result of this Authentic Leadership coaching intervention that seems to be most pertinent to our discussion of IS, and already mentioned in the previous chapter, was an increased sense of *Leadership Confidence and Clarity*. This quality or attribute is defined as confident and focussed leadership with many participants stated that they believed the process had increased their self-confidence. This seems to be followed by a sheer increase in what the individuals are prepared to take on and be capable of doing, which is encapsulated in another quality we have termed *Leadership Capacity and Proactivity*. Below is presented in-vivo examples of these that give us some sense of how they follow and how this in turn could be seen to help combat feelings and behaviours associated with the Imposter Syndrome.

P5:RL1 - *'There's been a big part in these sessions about self-confidence. I can't pick on one thing that said 'this is now going to enable you to be a lot more confident', but it's just happened. But I don't know how it's happened yet. Maybe it's a case of sitting in the room with others and saying 'actually, same problems, same issues and I'm as good and as strong as these people'*

P3:RL2 - *'I think the confidence thing was another big bit. I always feel like I lack confidence but what you learn from the group is a big thing, just having the discussions with them, some of the people in the group I would look at and think they were incredibly confident people, so the simple fact that they were saying they have these similar feelings, that was a really big eye-opener and was really useful'*

As discussed previously through this thesis, the social element of the group-coaching approach appears key to its effectiveness. In these comments, we see that it was important for these individuals in normalising their experience and it seemed to help them re-calibrate their own level of self-confidence even though, as they state, they had no idea at that point exactly how that was happening. In the examples below we can see how individuals are able to actually feel less imposturous and less like they are pretending in their leadership role or are there through just luck.

P12:RL3 - *'In my behaviour as a leader I'm more convinced of myself. I've managed people for a while but I wasn't really convinced of myself as a leader. I'm more convinced now that I lead people well and I'm good at it and I've got the skills to do it and I'm not pretending at doing it. So, I feel more confident...and less like I'm pretending at times'.*

P3:RL3 - *'As we've gone through the sessions there was a light bulb moment about 'well actually yes you can do this and it is the skills you've been identified for so there's been a real confidence element in there'. Also, 'It made me take a good look at myself, probably tied in with comments about skill versus luck about my career path, that really made me think 'you know I can do this actually, and I'm going to do it'. So, I think it's made me feel more confident about it'.*

In this next section, we get an insight into how the individuals are viewing their working environment and assessing their readiness for the changes ahead that will undoubtedly require them to move beyond their comfort zone to learn new knowledge and skills.

P6:IL217 - *'When it became apparent I'd be working for him and we were looking at the new Department organisational chart, there were all these empty boxes. I pointed at the Head Of role and asked who's in there, and he said I don't know. I said 'that's the job I want, and if it's not me I don't know who it would be, but that's the job I want'. Well I got the job so I've definitely moved on in his eyes and I definitely wouldn't have done that before'.*

P16:IL419 - *'Before I took my role in this team I was concerned about this big step change from what I was doing before and I had a lot of concerns about whether I'd be able to do the job at that level, which is probably natural. But through this process I've come to realise that feeling is not really that unique. When I recognised that and I've taken stock and been more confident in what I can do with my abilities. I've learnt to recognise that when you're asked to do things sometimes it's because somebody recognises that you have a skill in that area and that someone else has confidence that you'll get the job done'.*

P5: IL338 - *'My boss has talked about me being her successor and actually, now from a behavioural change point of view, I kind of see that as a distinct possibility. I still think there's a number of hurdles that would have to be overcome but I don't see them now as absolute blockers. Actually, now I see them just as hurdles that can be got over by my performance. So, from a behavioural change point of view, I'm thinking actually there's nothing wrong with that notion. It's more in my hands than I thought'.*

P1:IL265 - *'And the thing for me was the timing was just perfect because I'd already got this job but it was expanding into this whole new other role and wondering - am I in a position to be able to do that to such an extent now that one of the options going forwards is that I get the entire dept reporting into me for the whole site rather than it sitting in each of the Directorates, it comes to me so I get all of the control. Again, if you'd offered me that a few months ago it'd been like - oh my god do I really want 50 or 60 people now expanding to 100 people working for me....no I don't! But yeah, I'll give it a go now. I wouldn't have done that I don't think before'.*

It is important to remember that these were confident and capable leaders who were clearly intelligent and successful in their respective careers. Yet through the process of the group-coaching they were able to access their thoughts and feelings about their confidence, their abilities and their potential for successfully moving up to the next challenge in their roles and careers.

In their book *'If I'm so successful, why do I feel like a fake?'* Harvey and Katz (1986) suggest various ways of overcoming the feelings of IS. The first strategy they suggest is *Naming It*. They suggest that knowing IS exists and affects many other people, including those even more successful who seem totally confident and self-assured, helps loosen IS's powerful grip. In some of the comments above it is clear to see that the AL coaching-group can be an effective vehicle in helping facilitate this. Other suggestions they make are; *Practice Being Your Own Person; Being Open and Honest, Owning your Inner and Outer Selves* and *Talking to Other People Who Feel like You Do*. Mount and Tardanico (2014) of the Centre for Creative Leadership also list several similar strategies such as; *focusing on facts; challenge your limiting beliefs, get clear on your strengths and talk about it*.

As discussed throughout this whole thesis, these are things inherent in Authentic Leadership group-coaching. The social format can even help with one of Harvey and Katz's other advised strategies of tackling IS with the intellect. They suggest using a particular Cognitive Behavioural approach and in particular Rational Emotive Behavioural techniques (Ellis, 1975) that can help individual's asses the irrational and illogical basis of much of the IS thinking patterns. This too can be facilitated in the AL group as one participant describes how they were able to recognise an element of their own IS and how they were able to garner their reason and intellect to respond to it constructively.

P14:IL18 - *'I have that Imposter Syndrome worry, which I think is irrational, but recognising that other people have that same concern as you, you can kind of put it in the irrational box and not really worry about it unless there's some half decent corrective actions you need to do, it's something that you're not just going to fix, it's just a kind of natural thing that people have'*

To summarise this exploration of how the AL group-coaching may have helped participants combat any experience of IS that they might have suffered I'd like to present another extended individual account from one particular participant. A senior finance manager who had achieved this position after an initial career in catering, and was therefore, as she put it just – 'a chef in a suit'.

Table 12: Imposter Phenomenon – Participant (P23) Example

A Chef in a Suit

When I was first introduced to the group I thought – why am I here? Why am I amongst this group? Because I believe that I didn't fit because I probably didn't feel like I was as experienced or as knowledgeable as everyone else in the room, which is a bit of a problem that I do have at times. But when people started asking me questions or commented on some of the things I said, I suddenly started to think – hang on a minute, I am the same as everybody in this room, I have as much right to be in this room as everybody else and at that point I kind of flew with it, and it was...it's had a profound effect...it has had a real, real effect on me. I've been to the Board again since, more than once and I used to feel very nervous about that, but I've been to the Board more than once now and I feel completely different about that now. On Monday I'm going to a meeting with the commissioners of our next big project, I'm going but my boss is not going, then we're going on Wednesday to present back to the committee, which six months ago I would not have been doing, a/ I wouldn't have wanted to because I would have thought I wasn't good enough to do it, but b/ I probably wouldn't have been in that position to, so that's made a big difference and I've had the confidence to say to my boss that this is something I'd like to do.

Some of what I wanted to do was about challenging my boss to get him to be clearer about what he wanted from me and I think some of my concern was around the fact that I didn't know where I was going and where the Commercial function was going, I hadn't really got an angle on what he wanted me to do, I think I wanted him to almost give me more direction in my job description. But I am now so much happier challenging him and doing the goal that I set myself after day 3, which was just to go ahead and talk to him and pin him down. But then it all changed, maybe he realised that I am capable. I feel he's changed towards me too, I've noticed in the last few months that he seems to be relating to me differently...more positively, more open and quite happy to give me the permission to do the job...confidence in me and I'm getting less and less inclined to ask him. Yesterday the Program Manger from the Commissioners came in to see me and I challenged him about the way they were putting some of the stuff together...I would not have done that before. I would not have stood there and felt confident enough to have had that debate with him and ask him questions and challenge his thinking.

Conclusion

It can be argued that imposture, like authenticity, lay somewhere on a continuum. Increasing or decreasing along a scale dependent on a host of factors such as our experience and competence, but also our ability and opportunity for self-awareness and self-development (and in-turn self-acceptance and self-congruence). Should this be the case, as many cited throughout this thesis believe it is, therein lies an opportunity to adjust it's positioning on the scale, ideally decreasing the former and increasing the latter. It may well be that the Authentic Leadership coaching group kills two birds with one stone. We have shown in Chapter One that it increases self-reports of Authentic Leadership and from that, one would also assume general authenticity. This in turn (and in theory) should decrease experiences of imposture, at least within the particular domain of leadership that is under investigation here. Unfortunately, as already mentioned, these ideas came about too late for this particular piece of research but it may well prove an interesting avenue to pursue in future research projects.

The last task of the main body of this portfolio is to bring together, and hopefully bring alive, some of the various themes covered in this thesis by way of an historical case study. As mentioned in the Preface, the idea of an illustrative case study came about through the repeated questioning of each of the AL groups about one particular leader in history. The inevitable question was - where *they* authentic? And the inevitable leader was of course – Adolf Hitler.

CHAPTER 6

Historical Case Study - Was Adolf Hitler an Authentic Leader?

“The Soviet Union was gravely harmed by Premier Joseph Stalin’s paranoid destructiveness, but no country was so ruled by the personal demons of its leader as the Third Reich” (Victor, 2007).

Whenever there is discussion in a Leadership development group about the virtues of Authentic Leadership, the subject of Adolf Hitler inevitably arises. Discussion of a leader that was ultimately responsible for over 13 million deaths is never a comfortable one however, as one of history’s most famous and infamous leaders, and with the current interest in Authentic Leadership, I think this is a discussion worthy of consideration.

It can certainly be argued that Adolf Hitler showed characteristics associated with an authentic leader. For example, he had tremendous clarity on the *principles* that drove his vision and he worked tirelessly to achieve it. He appeared transparent with regards his purpose and communicated this persistently and consistently at every occasion. Followers generally knew what he wanted from them and where he was leading them. On the surface we could therefore conclude, however reluctantly, that Hitler was indeed an authentic leader. The story of course, is inevitably far more complex and this chapter will explore the man’s history, personality and ideology and how all of these were intimately linked. It explores some of the reasons his apparent internal hatred and rage began, how this informed his ideology and national politics which in turn ultimately determined the fate of nations.

For much of this chapter, history obliges us to speculation and interpretation. However, we do this only where there is some degree of supporting evidence, albeit necessarily circumstantial, from established experts across various disciplines. Charting how the personality of this leader influenced his rise and fall, we will attempt to map his character onto the contemporary construct of Authentic Leadership to offer a considered response to the question posed by every AL group that is run—was Adolf Hitler an Authentic Leader?

Introduction

The idea of studying a political leader’s personality was first introduced by the American political scientist, Harold Lasswell (1930). In his pioneering work Lasswell demonstrated how the private and public lives of political leaders are often intimately linked, showing how successful politicians can displace and rationalise their own psychological problems by projecting them externally as public

policy. Such psycho-biographies have been attempted on the likes of Richard Nixon (Volkan, Itzkowitz & Dod, 1997) and Bill Clinton & Saddam Hussein (Post, 2003). Briefer personality profiles have also been published on leaders such as Osama Bin Laden (Post, 2003), Kim Chong-il (Baird, 2003), Basher al-Assad (Hemmer, 2003) and Muammar Qaddafi (Black, 2003). Needless to say, there is also an entire catalogue of such reporting on Adolf Hitler, much of which is used and cited extensively in the short psycho-biographical case-study presented here.

The idea of case studies assessing a leader's authenticity is also not new. In response to recent global examples of poor political and commercial leadership, and as already discussed elsewhere, there has developed considerable academic interest in the concept of Authentic Leadership (Kernis, 2003; Avolio, 2010; Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa, 2008). This interest has led to various authors debating the level of authenticity demonstrated by various historical leaders such as Mother Teresa and Abraham Lincoln (Jones & Grint, 2013) and Nelson Mandela, (Ciulla, 2013).

Despite some recent disquiet about the positivistic and deterministic versus the philosophical and phenomenological nature of the research into Authentic Leadership (AL) for example; Lawler and Ashman (2012), Ladkin and Cheilie, (2013) and Hayek and Williams (2014), a scientific construct of AL has been developed nonetheless. This higher order construct (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Avolio, Luthans & Walumbwa, 2004; Gardner, Avolio & Walumbwa, 2005) as used in Chapter One, is based on a four-part model and is defined as *"A pattern of leader behaviour that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalised moral perspective, balanced processing of information and relational transparency on the parts of leaders working with followers fostering positive self-development"* (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing & Peterson, 2008, p.94).

It is these four elements that this definition proposes the authentic leader draws upon and that I thread through this discussion, namely; Self-Awareness, Relational Transparency, Balanced Information Processing and an Internalised Moral Perspective. Each of these elements will be considered as we progress throughout this discussion and will be summarised within the concluding section. As much of the material presented has been gathered previously by historians, biographers and psychoanalysts it is this mapping of the Authentic Leader constructs that I believe represents the originality in this particular case study. I have strived to collate and present the relevant information available in a bid to answer the one specific question about this leader, or at least offer a thoughtful response to it – was Adolf Hitler an Authentic Leader (at least as defined by the 4-component model of AL described above).

It should also be noted that the writers quoted throughout this essay freely admit that much of their data is incomplete and variable in its reliability however, as professional researchers they have been transparent about what is evidenced versus what is simply likely or probable according to testimonies or other observations available. This is particularly true of the psychologists who have commented on Hitler's character and state of mind, for example Dr Langer, Dr Kelley and Dr Bromberg. They have had to do this by considering a mass of raw data, none of it first hand and none of it obtained under controlled conditions. Their analysis is to be considered speculative as it was not conducted on primary but rather this secondary data. However, these interpretations were still attempted with utmost clinical professionalism and as we will see below, some with astonishing accuracy. With all of this in mind, I think this is a useful case study into Authentic Leadership and should prove of interest from a political and historical, as well as a social and psychological perspective.

A Divided Individual

Adolf Hitler was a deeply divided individual who battled with a duality that dominated both his personality and his leadership. Historical sources tell us of a man torn between feelings of omnipotence and vulnerability, creativity and destructiveness, pragmatism and fanaticism, industry and lethargy, bravery and cowardice, unimaginably cruelty yet even some kindness, Waite (1977). His was by no means a straightforward psyche. He believed he appeared as a messiah with awesome power to the German people. But as we shall see, he was in many ways infantile and vulnerable, beset by neurotic fears, compulsions and strong sadomasochistic tendencies (Langer, 1972).

Hitler also outlived five siblings which itself is suggested to be a key factor in the formation of his personality and his belief that he was destined for greatness and chosen by Providence to fulfil a grand mission. All of these conflicts and contradictions create their own tension and confusion with regards authenticity and authentic leadership and the reality is a story of a pathological character that wreaked a colossal revenge on a despised world. For this particular case study in Authentic Leadership, we will consider his upbringing and how this may have informed his character and his mental health, and how this in turn influenced his political ideology and ultimately his military strategy. If the guiding admonitions of Authentic Leadership are both; *know thyself* and *to thine own self be true*, it is of particular import to our observations to ponder; did Hitler have a true and enduring sense of self to both *know* and *be true to*? Or was his a fragmented and pathological Self never fully aware of and integrated into its own self? It is for this reason that we give considerable focus to how the inner world of Adolf Hitler developed and so our study begins at the beginning, in the infant Hitler's household.

The Father

Adolf was son of Alois Hitler, a successful civil servant who was described by those who knew him as unresponsive, cold and violent and someone who the children never dared speak in the presence of. He reportedly summoned the young Adolf with a whistle much the same way he did the family dog, and was not above beating both (Langer, 1972). According to one of his secretaries, Hitler recounted one particular beating that amounted to over 200 lashes that put him in a coma for days but after reading that American Indians proved their courage by refusing to cry out under torture, he claimed he made no sound and simply counted the lashings (Waite, 1977). This was the beginnings of what he called his *'iron will'* (Victor, 2007).

If these accounts are true, it is improbable to think this would have had no adverse impact on the developing infant, who would have undoubtedly been overwhelmed by terror, rage and helplessness. Psychiatry tells us of such experience, murderers are made (Victor, 2007) and that frequent or severe punishments convey to children that they are evil and being nearly killed by parents conveys they are unworthy to live. Many have to accept their situation and what it implies about them but when in a position to, some then go on to abuse others. Hitler was troubled by such feelings and described himself as both evil and worthless and when in a position to, did indeed go on to severely abuse others, having millions beaten, mutilated and killed (Victor, 2007).

The renowned psychologist Erik Erikson described the consequence of such habitually hostile and negative parenting as a deep-seated desire to negate and destroy. He says *'Anxiety and rage mostly develop where essential needs are not satisfied. In the child's unconscious, the habitually unresponsive adult can assume the image of a mortal enemy...and most importantly lead to the aimless impulse to negate and annihilate others'* (Erikson, 1972 quoted in Waite, 1977, p.134). It is suggested that the abuse Hitler suffered at the hands of his father remained the driving force of his life and that his sense of personal victimisation and betrayal led him to identify with national victimisation which at the same time justified his internal hatred (Victor, 2007).

The Mother

At age 16, a distant relative Klara Polzl moved into Alois's household as staff. When Alois's wife became terminally ill Klara was required to care for their children and after the wife's death she became pregnant and was married to Alois within a year. Within a further 3 years she had a total of three children, all of who died. So, by the time the child Adolf was born the mother was wracked by the stress of bringing up her dead rivals children and watching three of her own children die in close succession (Waite, 1977). After Adolf, she finally gave birth to a further two siblings; a brother who

died when Adolf was 11 and a sister of who almost nothing is known. The mother got no companionship or comfort from her husband and so turned, with increasing intensity, to her only one remaining source of comfort and only surviving child, Adolf. This relationship was symbiotic, though neighbours and the family physician apparently reported that their love for each other seemed to verge on the *pathological* (Waite, 1977, p.141). Klara died of breast cancer aged 47.

Allegedly Hitler only admitted to crying twice in his life. The first was the death of his mother in 1907 and the second was what he called the death of his Motherland, in 1918. He carried a picture of her always in his pocket and hung her portrait over his bed in all of his bedrooms in Berlin and Munich. Never marrying, Hitler often said Germany would be his only bride. Psychoanalytic interpretation has proposed that Germany represented his idealised mother and Austria his hated father and that Hitler would go on to reconcile his Oedipal conflict by invading Austria and dedicating his life to the saviour of his downtrodden German Motherland, interestingly, known to everyone else at the time as the Fatherland (Waite, 1977).

It is generally recognised in psychoanalysis that a male with Oedipal problems can actually harbour an ambivalent and contradictory attitude towards both the father and the mother. Although Hitler always proclaimed devotion to his mother, Erikson (1972) believed that nobody could have had the general sorts of relations with woman that Hitler did '*...without having been in some way deeply disillusioned and disappointed with his own mother*' (Waite, 1977, p.143). When considering the intensity of Hitler's hatred and cruelty, Menninger (1942) also wondered just what it was that Hitler's mother did to him that he felt an eventual need to repay to millions of others?

Monorchism

The widely accepted Soviet autopsy report concluded that Hitler did in fact have only one testicle (Bromberg, 1971). While this is not pathogenic in itself, it can become so if there is a disturbed parent-child relationship and in that context, it can have a profoundly detrimental effect on the child's psychological development (Blos, 1960). Erikson's mentor Blos wrote a detailed study on emotionally disturbed young boys suffering this condition and found the symptoms all the same; learning difficulties, hyperactivity, social inadequacy, chronic indecision, a tendency to lie, fantasise and toy with physical danger. Blos (1960) suggests that although they ostensibly love their mothers, they in fact blame them as the perpetrators of this damage and hate them as the parent responsible for their inadequacy. He says these individuals also report strong feelings of being a special or magical person and being endowed with a great life mission to fulfil. Thoughts and feelings Hitler seemed to possess and which may have been exacerbated by the guilt of surviving his siblings.

It is suggested that such guilt is defended against, *'To justify their survival on the grounds that they have been specially selected by Fate or Destiny for a particular purpose'* (Waite, 1977, p. 171). Finally, in all of the Monorchism cases Blos studied, he observed an extreme defence against any hint of feminine tendencies which would manifest itself in extreme masculinity; hardness, toughness, ruthlessness and destructiveness. Niederland (1965), found additional pathological consequences of Monorchism that Hitler demonstrated, which included; compensatory self-aggrandizement, heightened aggression, outbursts of hate, the prevalence of revenge fantasies and aspirations to greatness and immortality. In addition, Niederland (1965) observed extreme narcissism, a characteristic Hitler also demonstrated, caring little for anyone else, a mere hint of the void that would appear in place of the *internalised-moral-perspective* required by the contemporary model of authentic leadership considered in this chapter.

The fateful consequences of all of this hate and rage are of course well known, and it can be reasonably hypothesised that these childhood experiences contributed to the shame, guilt, mistrust and hatred that would in turn lead to the Psychopathic Borderline Personality that he is believed to have developed (Bromberg, 1971; Langer, 1943; Kernberg, 1966; 1967; 1970). Amongst this inner turmoil, it is hard to believe that as a young man Hitler made a meagre living as an artist and twice applied unsuccessfully to the Vienna School of Fine Art (Kubizek, 2011). How different the trajectory of world history would have been had Adolf Hitler become an Artist or Architect.

Personality and Pathology

Any attempt at formally diagnosing personality or pathology, conducted remotely or historically without direct access to the individual concerned, does of course have to be considered extremely tentative and speculative. However, there seems to have been two notable attempts at just this endeavour conducted during and shortly after World War II. The first was conducted in 1943 by the American Psychoanalyst Dr Walter Langer (quoted extensively in this essay) who prepared a report on Hitler for the U.S. Office of Strategic Services and based on material available to him at the time, concluded that Hitler was a psychopath. The second diagnosis was conducted by the prison psychiatrist at Nuremberg, Dr Douglas Kelley. Kelley undertook extensive interviews with 22 members of Hitler's immediate Nazi circle and also concluded that Hitler could be classified as *'Paranoid Psychoneurotic'* concluding *'In simple terms Hitler was abnormal and mentally ill'* (Waite, 1977, p.351).

In addition to these psychological reports there is also a recorded physical diagnosis in Hitler's medical records that is worthy of mention, especially in considering Hitler's last years. These are

reports collected by the US Military Intelligence, now in the U.S. National Archives, which include the results of four ECG's taken in 1940, 1941, 1943 and 1944 that apparently show quite clearly that Hitler suffered from *rapidly progressive coronary arteriosclerosis* (Waite, 1977, p.353). This medical evidence could explain his physical deterioration later in life for which there are other unsubstantiated explanations including both Parkinson's and Syphilis. Importantly, it is recorded that this condition '*...can also produce personality changes, where hitherto psychologically stable persons may begin to exhibit delusions of grandeur, paranoid tendencies and moral aberrations*' (Waite, 1977, p.353).

The general consensus by those qualified, including Dr Langer, Dr Kelley and Dr Bromberg – himself Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, is that Hitler displayed psychopathic tendencies that would now be labelled *Borderline Personality Disorder*. This perhaps brings us a step nearer to answering the question of whether Hitler was an authentic leader. It may be argued that authentic leadership has to be predicated on an integrated, coherent and authentic sense of self, but as we will see below, Hitler's sense of self would have been far from stable.

Borderline Personality

Individuals with a Borderline Personality can often function normally and sometimes with great effectiveness even though they are considered mentally ill. Their pathology is different from Neurosis and less severe than psychosis and lays somewhere in between the two. '*Borderline Personality patients characteristically show narcissistic, paranoid tendencies. They distrust and are highly suspicious of other people. They consider themselves especially privileged persons, they fantasise about their magical omnipotence and they believe they have a right to exploit others for their own gratification*' (Waite, 1977, p.356).

Ultimately however, they have an impulse towards self-destruction which is something of prime importance and discussed later. Hitler's own symptoms would have been intensified by his Monorchism which, as already noted, can produce very similar symptoms. These Borderline characters can be quite infantile and show a child-like oral aggression and demandingness, a well reported and observed characteristic of Hitler. They are narcissistic, have an inflated opinion of themselves and have a considerable need for admiration from others. Along with their sense of omnipotence though, they also harbour deep seated self-doubt and insecurity. Overall, they have a confused sense of identity and are unable to fully integrate their self-identity, having what Erikson termed 'identity diffusion'. This splitting of the Self results in dramatically opposing personality traits as discussed earlier, for example they can be at once, '*cruel and kind, sentimental and hard, creative*

and destructive' (Waite, 1977, p.357). This is described by Kernberg as having '*...two distinct selves...equally strong but completely separate from each other'* (Waite, 1977, p.356).

Importantly, Borderline Personalities don't want to reconcile these two selves either, as they seem to be not just a defect of the ego, but a defence of it as well. The main purpose of this duality is to protect a weak ego from the anxiety of choosing between its two violent extremes and so it accepts them both. This splitting, of course, doesn't solve the problem but weakens the ego further by reinforcing the identity diffusion. Hitler suffered from this tormenting self-deception and confused sense of identity all of which must have had a significant impact on all four elements of the AL model that I am attempting to map Hitler's leadership onto, namely; self-awareness, balanced-information-processing, relational-transparency and an internalised-moral-perspective. One manifestation of a need to compensate for this confused and contradictory sense of identity was always, having to appear to be in control. He often talked of his iron-will and it became clear that his whole political system was basically "*...a system for dominating other people*" (Waite, 1977, p. 358).

Finally, Borderline Personalities reinforce this splitting by introjection and projection. They introject good into themselves and they project bad onto others. Hitler introjected all the aspects of Aryan good into himself and all bad onto others, especially the Jews. This splitting can create a terrifying split world view, as it did with Hitler, of irreconcilable forces of good and bad at war. Hitler externalised his internal conflict and felt compelled to fight the encircling enemy that he believed constantly threatened him. Whilst this brought untold misery for others, it served as a crucial defence mechanism for himself, preventing possible mental disintegration and collapse. This Borderline Personality defence may explain why Hitler never actually crossed over into full-blown psychosis. He was able to externalise his inner conflict, project it and rationalise it, eventually being able to proclaim his world view as actual government policy (Waite, 1977). Generally, these intrapsychic processes happen out of awareness; duality, splitting, introjection and projection are all forces of the unconscious and as they were so key to Hitler's world-rationale we can reasonably assume further evidence that the *self-awareness* part of the AL construct is fundamentally impaired.

Irrational Ideology

Although Hitler's world view often bore little relationship to external reality, it would have corresponded very closely with his own internal psychic needs. And while his actual fantasies may not have been unlike many other mentally disturbed people, there was one crucial difference. Instead of being given psychological treatment, he was given political power. This meant his internal neurosis could be transformed into an external reality that institutionalised hatred and warfare and

demanded total obedience to just one dominant Fuhrer (Langer, 1972). For this Fuhrer, anti-Semitism was an obsession and in various speeches Hitler betrayed the hidden torment he carried with him all his life, the possibility that his father's father was a Jew, and his oratory often contained such phrases as; '*Jewishness is a poison*' and '*it is imperative to get rid of the poison within us*' and he is even reported to have said to an aide '*All of us are suffering from the ailment of mixed corrupted blood*' (Waite, 1977, p.363).

Over the years, historians have explored and discussed the possibility of Hitler's paternal grandfather being a Jew (Langer, 1972). The actual answer to the question is lost to time, an ambiguous familial history and Hitler's own concerted efforts to remove all trace of his childhood, birth and ancestry. However, there is a more important psychological question – did Hitler *think* he may have had a Jewish grandfather? And the answer to that at least, is almost definitely yes (Langer, 1972). We know this because he sent his personal lawyer along with the Gestapo to investigate this possibility, though they were ultimately unable to establish any evidence that would give him certainty on the matter. These reports remain in the Nazi Party archives and show investigations were conducted into Hitler's family background in 1932, 1935, 1938 and 1940 (Langer, 1972). Interestingly, Langer himself did a similar exercise for the U.S. OSS so there was the peculiar situation of Hitler's patronage being investigated by both sides at almost the same time.

Whether factually right or wrong, the point is that Hitler lived his life with the *suspicion* he himself may have been part Jewish, which must have given him considerable psychological torment as he had based his entire identity on the projection of his own feelings of guilt and inadequacy onto the Jews. In terms of our AL model, it is pertinent to wonder, how much of this did Hitler consciously ponder (balanced-info-processing) or indeed how much of it was he even consciously aware of in himself (self-awareness). But either way, this was his own personal reality and it helped shape the leadership that established a government dedicated totally to anti-Semitism and the extermination of the entire Jewish race in Europe. In so doing, and in the absence of any internalised-moral-perspective, Hitler demonised the Jew as the enemy of all Germany and fulfilled both a personal psychic need along with a strategic political need. When he took power, his personal hatred for the Jews was externalised and rationalised and finally became the law of the land.

These ideas drove how Hitler reordered society. '*His ideas on race determined the law, art, medicine and education of the Third Reich. They dictated that Physics be taught without Einstein and Psychology without Freud*' (Langer, 1972, pp.259-260). The latter was alleged to have quipped '*What progress we have made. Last century they would have burned me but now they are content just to burn my books*'. As Hitler's anti-Semitism became law his first measures were to prevent Jews

participating in the cultural and civic matters of the nation. A law passed in 1933 dismissed all Jewish civil servants. This was then extended to lawyers, doctors and educators. Then came the law for the death or sterilisation of carriers of all hereditary diseases, all of course were decided to be mostly transmitted by the Jews. Hitler's concern about Jewish blood then produced a law in 1935 making it a criminal offence for a German to have sexual intercourse with a Jew, known as The Law for the Protection of German Blood.

But all of this restrictive civil legislation could still not solve a problem which he saw ultimately as biological. He was desperately afraid that his own blood was *poisoned* and the blood of his people was threatened. The 'Final Solution' was inherent in the problem as Hitler saw it – Germany could only be safe if all Jews perished. Hitler never knew for sure if his own grandfather was Jewish or not and since no one could ever prove he was not, he decided he had to do that himself. And he was to do that by becoming the greatest enemy of the Jews in all history. He could prove to himself, beyond a shadow of a doubt in his own mind, that he could not have tainted Jewish blood if he was willing and able to annihilate the entire race down to the third generation. This of course, being down to his own suspect grandfather's generation.

The *moral-perspective* of the AL construct is clearly and painfully at odds with the story of Hitler as military commander, but as we see here its absence began to influence his leadership of the Reich years before he actually went to war. There is a lack of clarity among biographers and historians as to the exact event or experience that instilled in the adolescent or young-adult Hitler such extreme anti-Semitism. But the absence of any guiding morality allowed this prejudice and xenophobia to achieve mass homicide and near total genocide.

All of his life Hitler was also plagued by self-doubts about his physical strength and masculinity. His own appearance did not really fit his image of the brutal, all-conquering Aryan he preached of so often. He was effeminate in many ways, was of ambiguous sexuality and along with sadistic had clear masochistic tendencies as well (Victor, 1997). As a result, every defeat unnerved him so much he would have to pursue further battles and victories as proof that he was in fact the ice-cold and ruthless leader of his fantasies. He was as obstinate as he was brutal and he considered these '*masculine traits and prided himself on them*' (Waite, 1977, p.54). Olden (1943), a psychiatrist who studied these traits actually suggests that their roots lay not in mastery, but in anxiety and as a defence against one's own feelings and fears of inadequacy.

Although this lack of the *relational-transparency* element of our AL model helped bring about astonishing early success, it also led to ultimate failure. Hitler's stubbornness served him well

tactically and in the short term, but ultimately as a long-term strategy, it brought defeat and disaster. This need for overt masculinity meant he always had to take the offensive. He could never consider a defensive strategy or tactical retreat for any reason whatsoever.

If there was just one word, other than *Jew*, that was certain to send him into one of his famous rages it was *capitulate*. He would say '*One word I never recognised as a National Socialist in my battle for power: capitulation. Never! Never!*' (Victor, 2007, p.212). This led to many fateful errors in his leadership, wasting many men's lives in the wrong place at the wrong time meaning on other fronts objectives could not be obtained (Waite, 1977). Even when a victory had been won, this would not stop him from attacking further. He is quoted as saying '*Wherever our success ends, it will always be only the point of departure for a new struggle*' and '*we shall attack and it is immaterial whether we go 10 km or 1,000 km beyond the present lines. For whatever we gain, it will always be only a starting point for new battles*' (Attanasio, 1961, p.163).

War wasn't forced on a reluctant Hitler, the war existed *within* him. Normally, wars are fought to defend, to liberate or to conquer. But for Hitler, war itself was more important than liberation, conquest or in the end, even national survival, '*War was his call*' (Victor 2007, p.53). Hitler's suspected Borderline Personality would have given him severe aggressive stirrings which he was able to direct outwards through war and a paranoia that gave him the need to destroy potential enemies before they destroyed him. His private fears of inadequacy and weakness meant war could give him the opportunity he so desperately needed to cover these in an exaggerated bid to prove his strength. However, these fears could never be allayed and so war became the sole purpose of the Reich. And in the end, it was less painful for him to see his Reich and his Motherland destroyed, than it was for him to personally *capitulate* (Waite, 1977).

Towards the End

Eventually, when he could not secure his victories over the Russians or the Western Allies, Hitler began his ultimate campaign to secure his victory over the Jews with his death camps. This was the only front left in which he could assure himself victorious. Dr Langer recognised this weakness in Hitler, and long before knowledge of the death camps emerged, he anticipated Hitler would compensate for his defeats with increasingly ruthless acts of brutality and destruction. He predicted, '*Whatever else happens, we may be reasonably sure that as Germany suffers successive defeats Hitler will become more and more neurotic. Each defeat will shake his confidence still further and limit his opportunities for proving his own greatness to himself. In consequence, he will feel more and*

more vulnerable and will probably try to compensate for his vulnerability by continually stressing his brutality and ruthlessness' (Langer, 1972, p.241).

This vulnerability and pathology ultimately contributed to Hitler's defeat and so too did his difficulty in achieving the effective balanced-information-processing of the AL model. His personal orders to kill all of the Jews in Europe caused considerable disruption to Germany's war effort, but he continued regardless. The collecting, transporting and disposing of such a mass of humanity was logistically demanding and complex and resulted in an immense reduction in Germany's workforce. It also tied up thousands of fit SS men, the equivalent of several divisions, and a large amount of rolling stock urgently needed for war supplies (Haffner, 1997). Viewed from a purely strategic military perspective, the genocide was counter-productive, but he continued regardless. During the military disasters of 1942-45, the nation could simply not afford to dedicate so much effort and resource to the Final Solution. With his war efforts crumbling and his enemies closing in around him, it simply made no sense. But Hitler did not see it that way. Even with impending disaster all around, nothing meant more to him than annihilation of the Jews and victory over an enemy that existed only in his pathological mind.

Given the credibly informed reports and interpretations discussed here, and a more recent meta-study (Coolidge, Davis & Segal, 2007), we cautiously propose that it was a potential Borderline Personality with associated pathologies such as Paranoid Schizophrenia (Hyland, Boduszek & Kielkiewicz, 2011), that more strongly informed Hitler's leadership than a genuine, enduring sense of authentic sense or authentic leadership. He never actually possessed the personal qualities of strength and integrity that he projected, yet gave such an illusion of them he was able to command millions to kill millions. There was no *relational-transparency* of the AL model in that respect, but the icy warning of history here, is what can still be achieved in its absence, if conditions such as environment and followership are ripe. Hitler steadfastly believed in his mission to deliver a new supreme nation, but the reasons for it and the methodologies chosen to achieve it were not born of an *aware, balanced* and *moral* mind. It was predicted, should Hitler have lived to witness the total collapse of his vision, unable to keep together his disparate and warring personality, his mind would probably have collapsed into full blown psychosis (Waite, 1977).

Conclusion

I would like to conclude this historical psycho-biography by summarising how what I have discussed thus far about Hitler maps onto the current framework of Authentic Leadership developed by Walumbwa, Avolio and associates (2008). As a reminder, this construct of Authentic Leadership is

made up of the four elements referenced throughout this discussion which I shall now summarise in turn; Balanced Information Processing, Relational Transparency, Self-Awareness and Internal Moral Perspective.

Balanced Information Processing?

As discussed, there is a fundamental trait of Hitler's thinking that would fail this first test unequivocally. Some observers have referred to it as the thinking pattern more of an artist than an intellectual (Langer, 1972). What this means is that Hitler did not tend to think things out in a logical and consistent manner. For example, gathering all available data and intelligence pertinent to the issue in hand, weighing the evidence, the pros and cons and then developing various courses of action based on this analysis. His mental processes seemed to work in reverse. He would wait for his fabled *internal voice* to present him with a solution to a problem and then he would go about gathering only the facts that supported his plan and seemed to prove him right. Yet he would do this so thoroughly and judiciously that by the time he presented his analysis it looked like a well-considered, sound and rational judgement.

One of the definitions of Balanced Information Processing is - *Soliciting views that challenge deeply held positions*. One thing that was guaranteed to throw Hitler into one of his rages was to have his plans and ideas contradicted. He once said - *'I do not look for people having clever ideas of their own but rather people who are clever in finding ways and means of carrying out my ideas'* (Langer, 1972, p.140).

Relational Transparency?

Hitler's childhood was plagued by feelings of mistrust, suspicion and resentment which stayed with him throughout his life, meaning he was never able to properly open himself up to another single person. He had no friends and even his closest associates never really knew him. By his own admission in *Mein Kampf* (1924) he lied to them all and the closer they got to him the more he lied, *'You should know first of all that you will never be able to discover my thoughts and intentions until I give them out as orders...you will never learn what is going on in my head. As for those who boast about being privy to my thoughts-to them I lie all the more'* (quoted in, Victor 2007, p.61).

Mistrust therefore became the hallmark of both his leadership and his Reich. Though the great rallies of Nuremberg gave the impression of machine-like efficiency, the government was plagued with mistrust and jealousy and as a result, corruption and inefficiency (Waite, 1977). In addition to this, Langer observed that Hitler's behaviour gave the impression of not just one single personality, but rather two that alternated back and forth. An oscillating Jekyll and Hyde personality structure

common to many psychopaths, that can make the individual almost unrecognisable and very difficult to read and predict (Langer, 1972). The lack of Relational Transparency it would seem was once again a manifestation of Hitler's troubled mind. Waite (1977) neatly summarises this for us when he notes *'a political leader who creates conflicting agencies, who sets forth irreconcilable policies and who thinks he conquers when he divides, is a person externalising profound splits and conflicts in his own psychological makeup'* (p.398).

Self-Awareness?

It is a difficult task to judge an historical figures degree of self-awareness, so I choose for examination, the psychiatric assessment of Hitler's ultimate unconscious drive, that of self-destruction. *'There is strong evidence suggesting that Hitler was massively self-destructive'* (Waite, 1977, p.392), and Masochistic self-punishment seemed to be a reoccurring feature of Hitler's life. Time after time he seemed to cultivate difficulties for himself and to court disaster. He talked of defeat even in moments of triumph and repeatedly involved himself unnecessarily in situations fraught with danger. He once confessed to a close aide that he felt compelled to court disaster – *'I am like a wanderer who must cross an abyss on the edge of a knife. But I must, I just must cross'* (Waite, 1977, p.393).

Towards the end of the war Hitler's mistakes were so great, so costly and so many in number, it is suggested these could only have been the result of a strong, unconscious impulse for self-destruction. If Hitler had an unconscious desire for punishment and defeat it would help explain some of the more curious acts of his career. Let us consider specifically the concluding chapter of the war. In spring 1941 Hitler had most of Europe in his grip. But instead of consolidating this and focussing his forces against his only remaining enemy, an isolated and battered Britain, he sent his armies marching into Russia, who was at that time, his most valued ally. He mistrusted Russia and believed they were about to attack, even though they were supplying huge amounts of vital war supplies at the time. It is further puzzling that Hitler did this without seeking assistance from his ally Japan, had he done so, he most likely would have conquered Russia, and as this had never been accomplished before, it would surely have secured his position as the greatest military commander of all time.

Instead, in 1941 while enduring catastrophic failures on the Russian front, Hitler declares war against the U.S. Both in retrospect and at the time, judged in either military or political terms, this was an unnecessary and irrational act that would have always benefited his enemies far more than himself. After the war both U.S. and German officials said they could give no adequate explanation for this

decision. One U.S. official said '*We found the most baffling question in the whole Nazi story to be the prompt German declaration of war on the United States*'. Another said, '*Hitler had not only blundered...he had ruined his own cause*' (Waite, 1977, p.403 & p.407). Even Hitler himself said there was no logic for what he had done saying war with the United States was tragic and illogical. It seems full self-awareness was absent, and that along with both rational and irrational forces at work in making these momentous decisions, so too was an unconscious drive to punish himself and ultimately to fail. McRandale (1965) concludes, '*Many of Hitler's actions remain inexplicable unless we assume that he did not, either consciously or unconsciously, always intend to succeed*' (Waite, 1977, p.392).

Internalised Moral Perspective?

During his leadership, Hitler ordered genocide and mass destruction while ignoring all ethical or moral principles. He did not feel guilty about the brutality of his government but rather he gloried in it. He appeared to have no remorse over either the calculated murder of millions or the huge and often pointless loss of his own soldier's lives. He had countless harmless people put to death, for no military or political purpose, but more for personal gratification. '*He was, among other things, quite simply a mass murderer*' (Haffner, 1997, p.125). It has been said that these mass murders were not simply war crimes, but crimes pure and simple, and crimes on such an unprecedented scale they represented '*...a civilizational disaster*' (Haffner, 1997, p.127).

The first order of mass killings was dated Sept 1st 1939, the *first* day of the war. This was for the killing of roughly 100,000 disabled people that he termed *useless-eaters* (Haffner, 1997, p.132). There quickly followed the order for the extermination of the gypsies. Research into this particular area is scarce but some records go as high as 500,000. Then there came orders for the mass killing of the Polish Jews and intelligentsia which over the 6 years of war reached an estimated 4 million people. Approximately, 560,000 Russian intelligentsia were killed by Special Operations Units and 3 million Russian POW captives were left to starve to death. His greatest atrocity is well known to be his genocide of the European Jews estimated at 6 million people.

In total, it is estimated that Hitler had about 13 million non-combatants killed during the course of World War II (Victor, 2007). However, he had from the very beginning, pursued two ultimately incompatible goals, world domination and the annihilation of the Jewish race. In the end, he abandoned the former goal for the latter and '*Hitler the politician abdicated in favour of Hitler the mass murderer*' (Haffner 1997, p.137). We conclude an internalised- moral-perspective was absent from his psyche.

This chapter has been a simple historical case study but ultimately, as the psychiatrists could not diagnose for certain his psychological state, nor really can I claim a definitive answer to the question of Hitler's authenticity one way or another. However, Authentic Leadership's rallying admonition to '*know thyself*' and '*to thine own self be true*' seems to be at odds with the mind of the leader we have analysed here. Erik Erikson's formulation of identity crisis suggests that throughout his life Hitler was plagued by problems of *identity diffusion* and this, combined with the; splitting, projection and introjection associated with a possible Borderline or Schizoid Personality would lead us to suggest that his was a leadership more informed by pathology than an enduring sense of authenticity.

SUMMARY

The question of authenticity in leadership has possibly always been a consideration, for both the followers and the leaders themselves. But it is clear that in modern times it is becoming more of an issue rather than less. Scientists study it, Philosophers debate it, the Public ask for it and some of the leaders at least, try to deliver it. But there is still some doubt as to what *it* actually is. Science has tried to capture it in its usual rational and deterministic way, and for good reason. If we can conceptualise it, we can measure it, if we can measure it we can probably predict it, and of course if we can predict it, we can control it. What this is saying in summary, is that if we can conceptualise it we can develop it and importantly deliver it. This is probably why, when you go into most modern organisations competency frameworks abound, along with their behavioural indicators and contra-indicators - perhaps in a bid to predict and control leadership or perhaps in an attempt to measure and develop it?

However, the philosophic tradition has different ideas about authenticity and has been debating them for centuries. There is a more phenomenological, humanistic and existential perspective (something I explore in more detail in the Literature Review in Section D). That is, Authenticity by its very nature is unique to each of us, leaders or not, which of course makes it very problematic for those interested in developing leaders along typical 'leadership competency' lines.

This brings me onto the potentially troublesome issue of the output of my own research, which has been summarised as the *Core Four* and the *Sub-7* in Chapter Two. This relates to the over-arching four-component construct of Authentic Leadership and its seven sub-categories, as identified through the process of Grounded Theory used in the research. At first sight these may seem like my own version of an Authentic Leadership competency framework. However, how I would like to present them is as a combination of leadership qualities and attributes; one's that a leader can possess (and develop) as a *unique* individual regardless of their *unique* starting point and their *unique* end point. Let me take the four-component Authentic Leader model first - the *Core Four*.

Conscious Leadership – This advocates if you will, a raised awareness in the leader – 'know thyself'. A raised awareness, not just of their; strengths, weaknesses, blind-spots and talents, and their values, principles and beliefs, but also of the histories that have helped create each of these, and the futures to which they want to apply and dedicate each of these. This represents a far more complete leader, a more integrated and more authentic leader. But what do they do with this?

Competent Leadership – Judging by this research, it seems what they *can* do with this is almost limitless. Some take promotion some ask for promotion, some deliver their existing leadership

responsibilities in an enhanced and elevated way...and some hand their notice in. The latter point could be a disconcerting fact for most potential purchasers of genuine Authentic Leadership Development, but it is a fact nonetheless. If a leader recognises they're on the wrong path, from an authenticity perspective, it is better for those involved to part-company, maybe not always in the short-term but almost always in the long-term. This is what those who have taken this path have reported.

Confident Leadership – This seems to soar and for those suffering any degree of the Imposter Syndrome it comes as a relief. I've strived in this research to identify, conceptualise and understand where this confidence comes from and I think to some degree I have achieved this. However, when conducting the follow-on evaluation interviews, it never ceases to amaze, intrigue and satisfy me, the levels of confidence this approach to leadership development achieves. It might be worth remembering at this point that the AL group participants in this research were not leadership neophytes, but were already established and successful leaders in their own fields and in their own right, and yet their confidence still increased.

Congruent Leadership – Allied to all of the above, and of key importance to the whole idea of Authentic Leadership, the leaders studied here went on to continue their practice, and their careers, in a manner that they felt more congruent with their goals, values, ambitions and aspirations. In some (rare) cases this led to career changes, but more often it simply led to an increased ability to execute and manage their leadership responsibilities in a way more in keeping with *who* they are and not just *what* they are. That is Authentic Leadership.

In terms of the *Sub-7*, I maintain these could and should be considered less leadership skills and more (authentic) leadership qualities:

1. Raised Self-Understanding & Self-Management
2. Greater Understanding of Others
3. Increased Flexible & Effective Interactions with Others
4. Enhanced Management Mindfulness
5. Expanded Leadership Capacity & Proactivity
6. Elevated Leadership Confidence & Clarity
7. Heightened Strategic Orientation

It appears that these elevated leadership attributes are ones that benefited all of the research participants. Not all leaders developed in all of these, but all leaders developed in their own individual combination of these. Each *constellation* depended on each individual's starting point and

trajectory. By that, I mean it depended on their experience, their existing skill and their existing lack of skill. It depended on their ambition and aspirations and of course it depended on their personal philosophies and professional principles. But the important thing to conclude, is that it ultimately did depend on *them*. That I believe is Authentic Leadership and *that* I believe is Authentic Leadership Development.

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SECTION C: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

ALD-Lite! **IS AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP GROUP COACHING EFFECTIVE AS A ONE-DAY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTION?**

Overview

The following is a case study of a one day version of the three day ALD event described thoroughly in the main body of this thesis. It was decided to run an ‘abridged’ version of this program to investigate what the impact of such an event would be. Would it work, or not? If it did work, what would it actually achieve? And if it didn’t work, why not? There would not be sufficient participants to run statistical measures on the AL instruments, as with the main research, so it was decided the answers to the above questions would be gleaned via qualitative data gathered from the participants during and at the end of the one day.

Two one-day group sessions were organised; a main session preceded by a pilot. The main group was to be based on an open-group format used throughout the overall research. That is senior leaders from different organisations coming together to form the group. The pilot on this occasion however, actually used an intact team. This wasn’t considered problematic as the main purpose of the pilot was to trial-run the ‘mechanics’ of distilling a 3-day event into just 1-day, therefore it wasn’t as crucial how the group was populated. Indeed, it was actually considered somewhat serendipitous a team was able and willing to participate as this afforded a valuable opportunity to assess just what sort of impact this kind of group-session would have with individuals who worked together on a day-to-day basis. The final group was made up of 4 members of an Operations team from a social care non-profit organisation; the Operations Director and 3 Operations Manager. Overall the day ran ‘satisfactorily’ and all attendees agreed it had been a worthwhile exercise. The following is a brief account of the group dynamics and the impact these had on the researcher/facilitator.

ALD-Lite - Pilot

In summary, the Director and one of the managers were reasonably reflective and self-aware and the other two managers weren’t. The impact of his was that the latter two seemed to slow down the whole process, preventing it from achieving any reasonable sense of depth, which was always going to be a challenge anyway due to time constraints. These two weren’t overtly disruptive or resistant in any way, but nonetheless they did appear to impede meaningful progress. One was an extremely

vocal social-reformist character, who despite her awareness of social and political issues and their impact on people, appeared to have considerable difficulty accessing and articulating her own 'inner theatre'. By her own admission, she had difficulty listening properly to people and while ostensibly welcoming feedback, proceeded to talk over much of what was offered to her. I brought this to her attention and offered several indicators when it continued to happen. I also illustrated its impact on her communication with others, in particular when a more introverted group member attempted to give her feedback, but because she wanted to remain on 'transmit' versus 'receive' she turned to another group member who appeared more willing to listen and laugh with her so she could finish what she was saying.

This left the feedback giver addressing the other members of the group (including me) who were actually still listening to her. This, of course, made her feedback redundant as the true recipient of that feedback, who by now actually had her back turned to her, never actually got to hear what this feedback was. This dynamic was highlighted by myself and its obvious consequence should it happen regularly in their team meetings. The individual in question acknowledged the point and, on the surface at least, seemed to take the learning on-board.

The other individual was possibly a bit young and inexperienced for such a reflective process. He was shifting in his seat almost non-stop, appearing very uncomfortable and restless. He kept looking at his 'exercise' he had written and placed on the floor and had to be pushed at the beginning to think of questions to ask the other participants after their turn in the 'hot seat' (This was for the Life-Narrative exercise explained in more detail in the main body Methodology section). Again, this was highlighted to the individual and its potential impact on the group, and in particular the person who had just been addressing the group. He said he was very introverted and needed time to think about what he had heard. While this was acknowledged by myself and accepted as their own particular and authentic style, I pressed them, for the good of the individual, the group and the group-process, to try and 'extrovert' their thinking and so make it available to the group to use as data.

As it emerged later (at lunch) the relationship between these two individuals, while good, was not great. When it came the turn of the team manager to contribute she took the opportunity to offer this individual feedback on how their 'introvert' style comes across, to her at least, as distant and unhelpful in the normal course of work events. She often doesn't know what this person thinks about issues and this, in her view, makes it difficult to communicate with them effectively. Others in the group started making light-hearted comments at this point to alleviate what was clearly an awkward moment for them, but I asked the group to stay with that exchange and allow it to conclude. The two people involved agreed that this 'dynamic' between them had been

unacknowledged and therefore left unaddressed and in the future they would explicitly agree what sort of communication, and when, was needed to improve their working relationship.

The day progressed well and everyone concluded it had been a productive use of their time, particularly the live feedback that emerged, either from me or between each other. The day also met my own personal objective which was to streamline the format of the main session to happen two days later.

In addition to this though, other learning also occurred to me. For example, it was good learning as to what might happen if people are included in a group that, 'on-balance', maybe wouldn't have been included in a normal group screened by me as the facilitator. If I had interviewed each member of this group prior to the session, I probably would have excluded the two individuals mentioned above. Not because of any major concern, other than I would not have been convinced it was their medium. By that I mean, I think I would have concluded they probably wouldn't have been able to get a significant amount out of the group session and nor would they have probably contributed a significant amount to the session. This, it has to be remembered, is me thinking of it as an Authentic Leadership Development group not just, for example, an Action Learning Set.

However, this was an intact team and the leader of the group was of the opinion that they would all be suitable and it would be a beneficial session and that it should go ahead. In addition, I sent each participant joining instructions which included an overview of the nature of the session and what they were to expect. Everyone gave informed consent and confirmed they were happy to proceed and on this basis, we did. The result was a good team-development exercise for them, but would they have benefitted from the full 3-day event? Obviously, we remain unable to answer that for sure.

Important learning here for me is not so much concerned with the dangers of having someone in the group that might de-rail the whole process, (dealt with through pre-screening and purposive sampling) but rather the more 'pedestrian dangers' of including people that simply don't add significant enough value to the group and in the process possibly inhibit contributions from others.

The other important factor of the 1-day version obviously, is time. It may be that these two individuals may have 'warmed' up and eventually became valued contributors to the process. Even in the 3-day groups it is important to involve people who can help the group hit the ground running, so in this 1-day version, that is even more critical. But I took the Directors lead on this when she said that they work well as a team. It's obvious that the ALD session is not normal team-work and as such

normal effective team-working isn't necessarily a sufficient indicator of the ability to work together as a cohesive group on someone as significant as personal and leadership authenticity.

I had to manage myself quite carefully throughout the day. On the one hand, I obviously wanted the day to be a success. However, they had curbed the length of the day by two hours, to allow for commuters, and this I noticed had a rather adverse impact on me. It made me question their commitment to the session which in turn led me to start thinking – “well if you're not going to take this seriously you can't expect/hope it will work?!” I had to keep this in check otherwise it may have led me to mentally abandon the session myself, particularly if/when met by individual or group dis-engagement.

As some of the participant comments below indicate, it seems that the day was perfectly good as a team-development session but what I think it failed as, was a genuine authentic leadership session.

<p>Participant 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- I would like to have spent a lot more time on the session and done a much deeper analysis- The session worked because it gave me an insight into how my colleagues work, how they perceive themselves and how they perceive me- It gave me insight into how I work so I can adapt my own work style and methods to improve my effectiveness
<p>Participant 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It gave me a greater understanding of where people are coming from and what their needs are and why- I think the team will feel 'closer' and more confident in approaching each other?- I hope we will be able to continue coaching each other following today. The session has helped complete the groundwork for this- Everyone will try and make changes/developments and the team will recognise these
<p>Participant 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It will help us work together as a team- It will help us understand one another and recognise the different personalities- The feedback from colleagues will be great to reflect on
<p>Participant 4: The Team Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It has given a me an insight into the drivers and values of colleagues and so gives me an understanding of how to get the best from them, motivate them and communicate with them- On a basic level, we have all got to know each other more at a deeper level therefore bringing us together as a team and discovering some common ground- Provided a safe environment for challenge and feedback- Interesting to hear others values and aspirations – would have helped to have had more time to discuss and question further

So, the pilot demonstrated that the 1-day session with an intact-team is just as good (possibly better?) than many of the traditional approaches to team-development regularly sold into organisations. It also achieved two further things. First, it was useful in helping adapt the following 1-day session to maximise timing, interactions and therefore hopefully impact. Importantly, it also helped me clarify some of my own expectations about what could be achieved in such a short time period and led to the consideration that while this may not be genuine *Authentic Leadership Development*, it may nonetheless be perfectly effective as a starting point for - *Authentic Team Development*.

ALD-Lite Session

It was useful to have run this first as a pilot because as a result I made a variety of changes to the main 1-day ALD session. These changes appeared to have worked well and a summary is presented below. This summary attempts three things. First, it overviews the process of the day including the participants comments on the process, as reported during the lunchtime break. Second, it presents a summary of what the participants thought at the end the eventual impact of the day would be. Finally, an attempt is made to link these comments to the theoretical idea of self-actualising *paradoxical change* with an explanation as to why this is considered a valuable theoretical lens through which to consider this approach to personal change and authentic leadership development.

Overview of the day

As with the groups that were run as part of the main research, this 1-day case study group was comprised of strangers that were brought together for the sole purpose of this one day leadership development event. As experienced on the 3-day version, this factor was experienced positively by all members of the group. It seems to contribute significantly to the safety and cohesion necessary for the self-disclosure that is required by this particular approach to Authentic Leadership Development. This can be seen in such comments as:

- There was real power I thought, in working with leaders I did not know (T)
- Working with strangers is liberating! (C)
- The level of openness that each participant was able and prepared to offer was key, not being able to be open and honest would definitely have led to a suboptimal outcome (A)
- It leads to open and honest participation and encouraged self-examination in what was a 'safe' environment - you need to be honest or there's no point (C)

The open interaction enhances the opportunity that participants have to learn from each other's stories and the social exchange and social comparison appears to have an extremely *normalising* effect:

- You learn a lot from others life stories and experiences and by having the opportunity to observe and question (K)
- There are some useful things learnt from others in respect to their journeys (S)
- It is good to hear people's stories, it shows that we are all normal within our differences (T)
- There's the realisation that others share common experiences, self-doubts and drivers (K)
- The similarities in stories re. the impact of events and their effect on leadership styles, really emphasises that everyone is the product of their experiences (C)
- Listening to people's stories helped me understand them as individuals (S)
- I learnt the most from listening to other people discussing themselves (A)

It is clear that when these *group conditions* and *group processes* get underway, personal reflection naturally takes place. The various exercises focus that reflection and the questioning from the group further encourages and facilitates the thinking, but at no time *directs* it. The individuals take responsibility for their thinking and in so doing choose what data is personally relevant and meaningful to themselves. They are not overburdened by the so-called *learning objectives* of common leadership development programs and each person assumes full control of their own learning. In this way nothing is superfluous, irrelevant or wasted. It is an extremely elegant and efficient method of personal development that creates genuine learning, enduring development, and as we will see, *natural* change. Where this begins is in the way each participant is able to non-defensively explore their own thoughts, feelings and behaviours, particularly in respect to where these characteristics have come from and developed:

- The life-line approach really does make you think about the – what, how and why! (C)
- It is challenging and you are out of your normal comfort zone in terms of talking about what drives you (K)
- It was challenging and emotional at times – but the coaching approach, as opposed to advice-giving, helps you to consider things without being defensive (C)
- Drawing and presenting my own time line helped me to understand what is important and unique about me! (S)
- Being reflective is a valuable tool and is contributing to my on-going learning journey (S)

The combined impact of all of the above factors appears to facilitate not just self-reflection and self-exploration, but also self-acceptance:

- Focusing on my path has certainly reminded me of how tough and exciting a journey I have been on to get here. It really helped me celebrate my success (T)
- There are no wrong way – just different ways (C)
- It reaffirmed there is nothing wrong with my leadership style and qualities and helped me appreciate that we all just lead in different ways (S)
- I will be kinder to myself and not criticise myself so much. All experiences are good if they help you move and improve (C)
- I appreciate now that my leadership has evolved over time and will continue to evolve (S)

Self-awareness, along with acknowledgement and acceptance (somewhat ironically), appear key ingredients in the personal change process and has been previously identified by various Humanistic writers and researchers such as Rogers (1967), Maslow (1970) and Perls (1951). In Gestalt theory, this is called Paradoxical Change and it will be explored in more detail below. This sort of change is witnessed regularly in the 3-day ALD version but was even beginning to tentatively emerge by the end of this 1-day version, as exemplified below:

- I realise now that I am selective in how I respond to others – and how I respond to feedback depends on my view of my management group. In this group, I've had to overcome that and I need to reflect on how I take the learning from this forward (K)
- Through the questioning from others I have realised that I have an issue with working in a permanent position as a result of my experiences. I believe I should look at that and decide if I want to continue as interim or move to a more permanent leadership position and build some permanency into my leadership role (T)
- This has enabled me to start thinking about actually *doing* some of the actions I know I should do. I will step back, reflect, be less reactive and address weaknesses which previously I'd thought as being barriers to being a really successful leader. The first step is to write a personal action plan and talk to the Chair of the Board (my boss) for their input (K)
- I now see there is a risk of burnout and some sort of physical and psychological energy management is required, so I will design an 'energy management system'. I also feel some 'soul-searching' would be beneficial as I'm concerned I'm often just busy-being-busy (A)
- I am going to look at my workload and see how I can build in quieter-locations to support me when doing more complex tasks (C)

- I need to be aware of my impact on others and takes into account the needs, styles and qualities of others (S)
- I will work hard to manage my own unrealistic expectations – trying to think if any more effort would actually have any more effect on outcomes (C)

Paradoxical Change

Paradoxical change (Beisser, 1970) is a phenomena that through this research, I believe is fundamental to the process of Authentic Leadership Development. It is also my personal view that the clearest and most illustrative roots of this theory of change, lay in the work of Rogers (1967) which I shall elaborate on below to explain how and why I think it is extremely pertinent to our investigation into Authentic Leadership Development.

Although Rogers didn't explicitly use the term Paradoxical Change, he did nevertheless refer to person-centred therapeutic change itself as *paradoxical* saying '*It is a very paradoxical thing – that to the degree that each one of us is willing to be himself, then he finds...himself changing*' (Rogers, 1967, p.22). He claimed this simple fact to be one of the deepest things he had learnt in his personal and professional life. He also talked of another deep learning that had been *forced* upon him through 25 years of research and practical experience and that is that people '*...have a basically positive direction...towards self-actualization*' (p.26). Whether this is termed a growth-tendency or maturation, he believed it to be an urge evident in all organic life – '*to expand, extend...develop, mature*' (p.35).

It is sometimes overlooked that Rogers was a supreme empiricist and the core Rogerian conditions we talk of today, and the human potentiality they release, is born of much experimental data. He pioneered the science of therapy in a way some may argue has never been replicated since (Rogers, 1951; 1954). One can hear it in his reporting, for example '*Gradually my experience has forced me to conclude that the individual has within himself the capacity and the tendency, latent if not evident, to move forward toward maturity*' (p.35).

The other thing not always remembered about Rogers and pertinent to our research is that he didn't simply focus on therapy. He also applied his ideas to non-clinical and educational groups, in business and in the military, nor where his interventions always long-term ones. Again, we hear the scientific Rogers comment on his findings in this respect '*...I can depart from speculation and bring in the steadily increasing body of solid research knowledge which is accumulating. We now know that*

individuals...even after a relatively limited number of hours show profound and significant changes in personality, attitudes and behaviours, changes that do not occur in matched control groups' (p.36).

In the illustrative model presented below, designed simply to encapsulate the feedback from this one day event, there is also an element of self-acceptance that is achieved even after just a few hours in an appropriately facilitative and non-threatening environment. Rogers often comments on how individuals in this environment become less evaluative and more acceptant of themselves which in turn moves them towards a greater congruence and '*...unity and integration of functioning'* (p.65). If, as we have said throughout this thesis, personal authenticity precedes authentic leadership, all work that is done to help the former will in turn help the latter. Rogers said '*It seems to me that at bottom each person is asking "Who am I really? How can I get in touch with this real self? How can I become myself?"*' (p.108). What does this actually mean in practice? Well, among other things it means moving towards being an autonomous person and choosing the goals the individual wants to move towards themselves. It means deciding which activities have meaning for them. In sum, it is self-direction and self-responsibility for such questions as '*What is my goal in life? What am I striving for? What is my purpose?*' (Rogers, 1967, p.164). Questions that are pertinent to an authentic self, as well as an authentic leader.

This of course requires conditions within the ALD coaching group that help enable the individual to trust and value the self that they sense they are exploring, moving towards and becoming. Rogers draws some similarities with famous figures saying at some point Hemingway, for example, must have said '*Good writers do not write like this, but I write like this*'; El Greco must have at some point thought '*good artists do not paint like that*' and even Einstein must have thought '*good physicists do not think like this*', but each moved towards being themselves rather than toward someone else's conception of what a good writer, painter and scientist should read like, paint like and think like. In this way they exemplify what an authentic person and leader represents and have - '*...dared to feel their own feelings, live by the values they discover within, and express themselves in their own unique ways*' (Rogers, 1967, p.174).

The process through which this can happen, even in the ALD 1-day that we are exploring here, is represented below. There has been no attempt at a full Grounded Theory approach to understand the social and psychological processes at work during this one day. More simply, written participant accounts of the day have been themed to attempt an abstract understanding and summary of the processes involved that help facilitate such self-discovery, self-acceptance and paradoxical change (Fig.9).

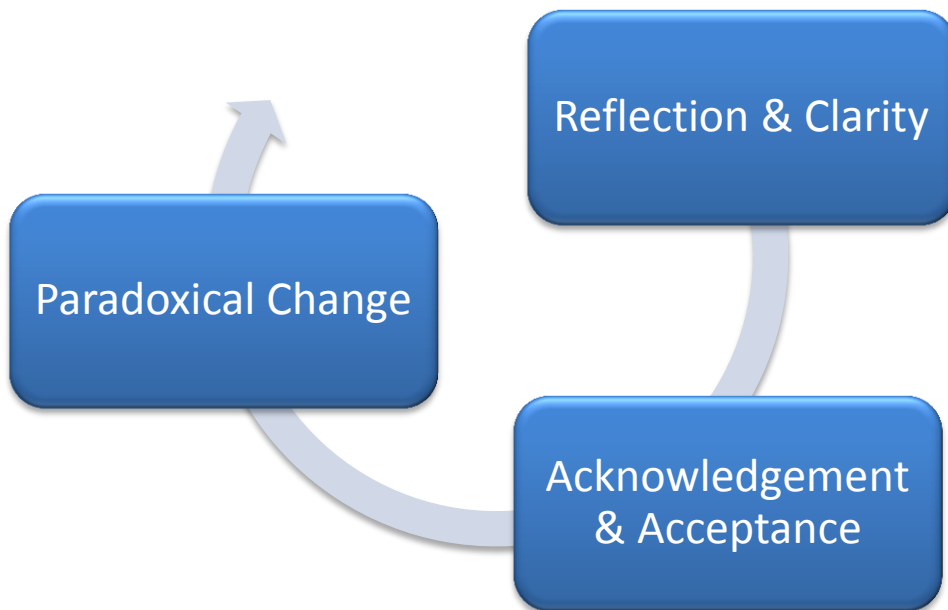


Figure 9: – Paradoxical Change in ALD

Observations and Reflections

Here I would like to share some thoughts on how I personally found the 1-day ALD session. This includes; the group members, the process and then myself.

Observations on Group

A – Appeared very relaxed throughout. They may have been because they were comfortable with the group and the process, or as a result of not particularly extending or involving them self within it. Interestingly, and somewhat surprisingly based on the day's observations, this person's main 'action-point' they took away from the day was to develop some sort of self-energy management-system to maintain optimal levels of psychological and physical resilience.

C – Appeared nervous and hesitant at first but in the end appeared to be the person to gain most from the process. They seemed to achieve genuine insight and acceptance of different aspects of their personality and leadership style that they had hitherto sought to ignore, *manage or minimise*. They made some quite strong commitments to both personal and leadership change at the end of the day.

T – Was ostensibly open and participative but was in fact the most guarded and *managed* presence in the room. It is difficult to get a sense over just one day of how much the group perceived this and

how much it did or didn't impact the interactions between them. They did however achieve one very significant insight along with a follow-on question that needs answering to help them determine the mid/long-term direction of their leadership career.

S – Extremely vocal and participative, mostly in a positive and constructive way but with some of the questions appearing asked as much for them self as for the recipient. There was also a tendency to take the conversation out of the room and so they needed managing in both of these respects. They seemed to get a lot of validation of their own leadership approach from the process.

K – Worked well within the group and appeared to map some genuine insights onto other feedback and observations already made prior to the day. They made a very practical action-plan of how to take this learning forward and translate into something concrete. This seemed something they already had an awareness of but the process seemed to move the whole thing forward for them – paradoxical change in action?!

Observations on Process

There are several key observations achieved as a result of running the 1-day ALD session and its pilot. First, there is the issue of purposive sampling. This one day event highlighted and reinforced the importance of group make-up. I wonder how much an individual's participation is influenced not just by the actual make-up of the group, but their perception of that make-up. What comes to mind is Rosenberg's (1981) theory of *Generalised Significant Other*? That the group is helpful in facilitating individual change, only in as much as that individual has a respect for that group and therefore consider it a *significant* other? In the 3-day ALD event each individual has the opportunity to get to know each other person, but in the time limited 1-day event I wonder if face-validity of the group is more important, i.e. each, member considers each of the other members; senior enough, experienced enough, intelligent enough etc to be considered worth listening to and taking notice of from the very start.

There is also an issue of how *active* the facilitation has to be? I noticed that I had to be more overtly involved than normal in managing everyone's participation, i.e. on the one hand hurrying participation to ensure everyone maximised their time either as questioner or 'coachee', on the other hand also having to prevent too much contribution to keep things on time and on track. This constant time-management was certainly an issue for me, I'm not entirely sure how much it was or wasn't an issue for the group members.

Observations on Self

By far the most significant issue for me was the level of involvement or 'presence' with the group. It dawned on me midway through the session that my own connection with the group was less strong than with an 'average' 3-day group. I felt that there was almost less of a need or reason to address clear barriers or other unhelpful dynamics I sensed within both the individuals and the group generally. There was an on-going tension to decide what was worth engaging with and what wasn't? To try and judge effectively, what would add value to the individual and/or the process, and what wouldn't? This also made me realise that if I was feeling that, there could be every chance others may have felt that also. In the feedback data, several comments were made about how open, honest and participative people felt they were able to be, but I can't help wondering what that was *in-comparison* to. The design of the program itself necessitates an unusual level of personal disclosure, particularly in comparison to regular leadership training programs which might be the only thing these participants had to compare it to. By contrast, I was inevitably comparing it to my own experiences of the 3-day format.

I have witnessed what can be achieved in the longer 3-day ALD version, which is at least in part down to some obviously different design features. For example, the longer program is conducted over three months so there is reflection time built in between each session. This creates additional material that each person is able to return with to the next session. In addition, the individuals involved get to know and trust each other more as their journeys progress. This may be matched by the amount the individual's come to *know and trust* themselves more as their journeys progress.

The over-riding sense of the 1-day I am left with though is of transience. Both for the group, and if I am to be frank myself also. There seemed a palpable difference in the group 'feel' between the 1-day and 3-day group. It seems to rest in my mind on the difference between it being *an event versus a process*. The 3-day participants know they are beginning a journey together and simply because of that maybe come more prepared to commit to participating in a very active fashion, as indeed do I. In the 1-day there is almost a build-in opt-out clause in the transient nature of the group. If people don't want to fully contribute they only have to get to the end of the day. In the full-length version, there is nowhere really to 'hide'. Plus, all participants have a genuine opportunity to get to know each other and trust each other and feel more secure about participating fully and in this respect possibly create more of a virtuous and progressive cycle.

Conclusion

Based on the feedback from the pilot, I would conclude that the 1-day ALD event is an *acceptably performing* one day team-development event. The team got to know each other better and according to their feedback, this knowledge will help them work together more effectively as a team. From the main session, I would similarly conclude that the 1-day format is a perfectly acceptable, albeit limited, leadership development event. The event is designed in such a way that the learning that does occur is self-focussed and self-relevant. This means that any self-development that occurs as a result of that learning will probably help the individual towards becoming a more authentic person and leader, however modestly or tentatively.

But I think the overriding conclusion has to be just that – the 1-day version is an event and the 3-day version is a process. According to Eriksson (1994), authenticity is relative and not absolute and according to most Existential philosophers, who probably have most to say on the subject, it is a never-ending process of becoming. Therefore, it seems both logical and intuitive that such development and growth takes a lot more than one day in a group to achieve.

Rogers believed that in every organism there is '*...an underlying flow of movement toward constructive fulfilment of its inherent possibilities...towards a more complex and complete development*' (Rogers, 1980, pp. 117-118). This we call the *actualising tendency* and is the inherent nature of the process of life (Goldstein, 1947; Maslow, 1967; Rogers, 1954). It is operative at all times but can of course be *thwarted or warped* (Rogers, 1980) and therefore can benefit from the additional facilitation of favourable life events. We might go as far as to include our version of Authentic Leadership Development in this category of *life-events*, though to greater and lesser degrees for each of the two versions discussed above.

In both however, are the same principles and philosophies designed to help individual leaders release this natural self-actualising tendency in the pursuit of increased authenticity. Rogers summarises this well '*The essence of it is self-discovery. With knowledge one person can teach it to another...but significant learning one person cannot teach another...the teaching would destroy the learning*' (Rogers, 1980, p.204). Of the Existential philosophers, Kierkegaard also believed that there can be no direct communication of such significant self-learning. That the most one person could do to further this learning in another is to create the conditions that make the learning itself possible. It sounds like he is talking to us across the ages about coaching and the self-responsible and self-directed learning that allows the self-actualising tendency itself to achieve the paradoxical change that genuine Authentic Leadership Development can involve.

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SECTION D: CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

AN EXISTENTIAL APPROACH TO AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: A REVIEW OF THE EXISTENTIAL COACHING LITERATURE AND ITS' RELATIONSHIP TO AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

OVERVIEW

Authenticity is a key concept within Existential thought and practice, yet despite the growing interest in the field of Authentic Leadership, very little has been written that brings these two fields together. This review explores the existing work that does attempt to bridge these two areas, specifically considering how Existentialism might relate to the actual development of Authentic Leadership. It examines the tension behind the two opposing epistemologies of science's rationalist approach to Leadership and Authenticity and philosophy's phenomenological perspective. It argues the effectiveness of an existential approach to Authentic Leadership Development and proposes a phenomenological model of Authentic Leadership Coaching and illustrates how this might address the key existential issues pertinent to Authentic Leadership such as; values, meaning, purpose, temporality and finitude.

Introduction

The idea of taking an existential approach to business and leadership is a relatively new phenomenon though existential thought itself can be traced back to European philosophers of the 19th and 20th century. The central premise of Existentialism is that each human has a responsibility for giving meaning to their own lives rather than *unthinkingly* accepting an external meaning-structure offered, for example, by society or religion. This branch of philosophy emerged following the Enlightenment, when a lot of the world started moving away from superstition and Religion towards rationalism and Science and was originally espoused by thinkers and writers such as Kierkegaard (1846) and Nietzsche (1844:1900) and later Heidegger (1927) and Sartre (1943).

The field of Psychiatry also found value in existential thinking which was adopted through the work of psychiatrists such as Binswanger (1946), Jaspers (1955) and Laing (1965). This in turn influenced existential psychotherapists who also wanted to base their therapies more on a philosophical than a medical approach, such as Frankl (1946), Yalom (1980) and May (1954). These fields of Existential Philosophy, Psychiatry and Psychotherapy provide a rich heritage for Existential Coaching, however,

each in themselves are too copious to review here, so this review focuses purely on the latest application of existential thought and practice, that is the development of Existential Coaching.

The overarching aim of this review is to assess the existing literature that brings together existentialism and leadership with a particular examination of how this then relates to the growing field of Authentic Leadership Development. To achieve this, I will summarise the argument in the literature from the existential-phenomenological perspective and its criticism of the leadership field’s insistence on the prevailing empirical positivist approach to leadership research and explore why this paradigm is proving problematic for the *development* part of Authentic Leadership Development. The review looks at the work of contemporary writers, practitioners and theoretical contributors and as the existential perspective is relatively new to the field of leadership coaching, it includes both published book chapters as well as peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles, sourced through the main university databases (see Table 12). Needless to say, the final review extended beyond this initial search as the exploration took me down various allied paths as it progressed. Finally, to enable the review to provide an original contribution to the literature, it moves on to propose and detail an existential-phenomenological approach specific to Authentic Leadership Development Coaching (Fig 10).

Table 13: Existential Coaching Literature Search Results

Databases	Search Terms	Results
Academic Search Complete	Existential Coaching	16
Applied Science & Technology Source	Existential Leadership	26
British Education Index	Existentialism in Business	5
Business Source Complete	Existential Leadership Development	4
EBSCO	Existential Authentic Leadership	2
E-Journal	Existentialism in Organisations	1
Medline Complete		
ProQuest Dissertations & Theses		
Political Science Complete		
PsychARTICLES		
PsychINFO		

Existentialism and Leadership Development

Existential thinking has often been used to frame various issues beyond philosophy itself, for example Education (White, 2001), Mental Health (Jones, 2001) and Organisational Theory (Kelly & Kelly, 1998). Although somewhat limited in size, there is also existing literature that applies an existential perspective to a range of business issues, in particular business ethics and decision-making, (Agarwal & Malloy, 2000; Ashman & Winstanley, 2006; Jackson, 2005 and West, 2008). West (2008) has proposed an ethical decision-making model based specifically on Sartrean existentialism, considering the issues of *choice, freedom* and *responsibility*. Ashman and Lawler also discuss Sartrean existentialism in business leadership in a sequence of articles, (Lawler, 2005; Ashman, 2007; Lawler, 2007) adding to the discussion the Sartrean topics of *meaninglessness, nothingness* and *bad-faith*.

These writers also bring in other key figures such as Karl Jasper and Martin Buber. In considering leader-communication, they introduce further existential concepts such as; *inter-subjectivity* and *being-in-the-world* with a particular focus on Buber's idea of communication as relationship (Ashman & Lawler, 2008) and Sartre's perspective of leader-authenticity, (Lawler & Ashman, 2012). Other writers have similarly focussed on particular philosophies, such as Bolle (2006) who is one of the very few to consider existential leadership development and looks at management specifically through the work of Heidegger. He argues philosophy is a form of self-management, self-regulation and self-insight and suggests that each of these are, in turn, based upon principles derived from thinking about 'existence'. He even proposes Heidegger's classic *Being and Time* as a handbook of management skills.

Leader development is the key focus of this discussion and herein we propose that genuine and efficacious Authentic Leadership Development should be based upon existential inquiry. We explore how Authentic Leadership Coaching in particular is an existential-phenomenological inquiry that aims to help people live more authentic lives based on "...an awareness of the human condition" (LeBon & Arnaud, 2012). Confronting existence in such a direct manner goes far beyond a behavioural or trait approach to leadership development as we shall see, and can have a profound impact on those involved as they contemplate the significant matters of their existence, including their: beliefs, values, meaning, freedom and finitude. Each of these *existential concerns* are addressed throughout our discussion, in particular how they each relate to Authentic Leadership and Authentic Leadership Coaching specifically. First, I want to consider more broadly the field of Authenticity from the existential perspective.

The Authenticity Debate

Very little has been written about how existentialism relates to Authentic Leadership, even though Authenticity is a key concept within Existential thought, making them obvious and natural bedfellows. What has been written fundamentally takes issue with how the construct of Authentic Leadership has been developed, with little or no consideration of what the field of philosophy has to say about Authenticity.

For example, in *Theorising Leadership Authenticity*, Lawler and Ashman (2012) make the point “*Whilst the number of articles discussing authenticity in relation to leadership may be increasing, few overtly relate the concept to philosophical foundations...*” (p.327). They take issue with various assumptions made in the Authentic Leadership literature and the lack of “*...a convincing ontological basis for the concept of authenticity as it is applied to leadership*” (p.327). They criticise the developing orthodoxy of AL research being based upon a positivistic epistemology which they believe limits the scope for the development of the Authentic Leadership concept. They argue that the implied objective in this approach, as indeed with most leadership research, is to “*...identify and define the core characteristics of a universal model of leadership*” (p.331). They propose this positivistic approach to research is ultimately concerned with an objective, quantified and generalised theory of Authentic Leadership which they believe “*...is unlikely to be successful and more importantly...restricts our potential understanding of authenticity in relation to leadership*” (p.331). This they believe creates *internal difficulties* and *unresolved inconsistencies* within the Leadership literature leaving Authentic Leadership as “*...a construct with no philosophical roots*” (p.333). Algera and Lips-Wiersma (2012) concur stating “*...in its haste to be operationalised, (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing & Peterson, 2008) the concept of authenticity as it is currently used in authentic leadership is limited as there have not yet been sufficient attempts made to gain an understanding of the ontological roots of authenticity*” (p.118).

Hayek and Williams (2014) also criticise the current research on Authentic Leadership for focusing on primarily *leader traits and behaviours* and make the point that phenomenological views of authentic leadership are all but absent. They observe that “*...maintaining that individual virtues are traits, reflects a deterministic view of authenticity that contrasts with the attitudinal/phenomenological view of authenticity espoused by existentialist philosophers*” (p.293) and they conclude that the existentialist view of authenticity is all but missing from the Authentic Leadership debate.

Representing the science-philosophy debate, Lawler and Bilson (2009) present a matrix upon which to place the different approaches to leadership research. On one end of the axis sits the rational-

objectivist approach and at the other the reflective-pluralist approach. They place much of the leadership theory and research on the rational-objectivist end of the scale. Lawler and Ashman (2012) suggest that “...developing an existential authenticity perspective adds to the relatively unrepresented theorising in the reflective-pluralist category” (p.340), and conclude that “...the authentic leadership process needs to move away from prescriptions of how leaders behave” (p.341), this they suggest will allow each leader’s own unique approach to emerge.

Ford and Lawler (2007), Ashman (2007) and Algera and Lips-Wiersma (2012) all agree that the existential perspective has something important to offer the study of leadership precisely because it goes beyond the traditional and limited rationalistic-objectivist approach discussed above. It can deepen our understanding of leadership as it focusses more on the individual leader “...rather than on the abstract generalisations common to leadership research” (Algera & Lips-Wiersma 2012, p.121). In so doing it can “...provide a deeper understanding of the human experience which has long been ignored in leadership theory. If AL theory embraces its existential roots...a substantial contribution to leadership theory can be made” (p.126).

In this review, we try to address these points by introducing a form of ALD that substitutes the positivist approach, with its generalised character traits and competency models, with a constructivist-phenomenological approach that takes participants through the individual experience of their own life and leadership. However, before focussing specifically on this form of Existential Authentic Leadership Coaching, let’s briefly consider the development of existential coaching generally.

Existential Coaching

There are various forms of coaching that can be integrated with existential ideas (Lewis, 2012). For example, it can be combined with NLP (Reed, 2012), CBT (Mirea, 2012), a Solution Focussed approach (Langdrige, 2010), with psychometrics such as MBTI or FIRO-B (Pringle, 2012) or with other theoretical approaches such as Attachment Theory (Fraser, 2012) and Mindfulness (Nanda, 2012). It can also be an effective approach for particular coaching applications such as coaching through conflict management (Hanaway, 2012), stress-management (Krum, 2012), decision-making (LeBon & Arnaud, 2012), creativity (Deurzen-Smith, 2014) and career development (Pullinger, 2012). When describing Existential coaching generally, Deurzen (2012) and Peltier (2010), list a variety of things a client can expect, that we paraphrase here: Existential coachees are encouraged to speak up for themselves and the values they hold. They are helped to gain clarity on who they are and what they want from their life. They are encouraged to challenge the assumptions they hold about

themselves and others. They will be enabled to recognise their own personal life-ideology and any distortions, bias or prejudice held within it. In turn they will develop a wider perspective on life generally and their own life more specifically. They will explore new and more meaningful ways in which to engage with their life with a meaningful and unique purpose. Overall, they will get a better sense of who they are, what they want to become and the kind of life they want to live.

Deurzen (2012) however, makes a pertinent point when she asks *“How many of us can afford to think about life in this way? In this contemporary culture of rushing and competing. Perhaps it is true, that it is precisely because of the pressures we are under that we have to stop to take the time to ponder and consider”* (p.16). Authentic Leadership Coaching can create just this opportunity and within it the chance for individual leaders to address such questions as - *what kind of leader do I want to be and how can I lead in a way that is meaningful to me?* (Jopling, 2010).

But how do individuals actually go about addressing these sorts of issues? Even if a busy leader can find the time to step back from their own theatre of operations long enough to *ponder and consider* the human quest, what questions exactly do they explore? How does one effectively question their quest? There are a number of key existential concerns common throughout the philosophic literature that effectively guide this enquiry and are therefore, I contend, key to effective Authentic Leadership and Authentic Leadership Development. Each of these issues I will come on to discuss and illustrate how each fit within my proposed coaching model of Existential Authentic Leadership Development.

Existential Authentic Leadership Development

Authentic Leadership and Existentialism are uniquely Western ideas that both aspire to the same ideals of *“...living (and leading) with meaning and purpose”* (Deurzen, 2012 pxix). Although drawing on philosophy’s lofty and often dense erudition, Existential Coaching remains a very enabling and pragmatic approach with its emphasis on individual choice and freedom. In *Existential Perspectives on Coaching*, Deurzen and Hanaway (2012) describe the existential approach as one that uses *“...the ordering of thoughts, feelings, experiences and actions, enabling people to bring their behaviour and actions in line with their best intentions, motivations and purpose”* (p.xix).

This summary highlights its relatedness to Authenticity and in turn Authentic Leadership which is described in the AL literature as *“a process whereby leaders become self-aware of their values, beliefs, identity, motives and goals, and grow to achieve self-concordance in their actions and relationships”* (Gardener, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2007, p.392). As an overarching existential concern, Authenticity is achieved through the exploration of human issues such as personal beliefs and

values, meaning and purpose, freedom, responsibility, uncertainty, ambiguity, temporality and ultimately finitude. It is a rare leadership development intervention that covers such matters of profound personal significance, but that's precisely what I believe Authentic Leadership Development should involve itself with.

An authentic leader needs to be an authentic person and an authentic person, it could be argued, needs to have confronted such issues of life (and death) to fully understand themselves and to have arrived at a personal philosophy for their life and their leadership. As Algera and Lips-Wiersma (2012) comment, "*the concept of authenticity goes to the heart of what it is to be human and hence dwelling on 'what it is to be authentically human' before asking 'what is it to be an authentic leader' seems...essential...*" (p.122). This is why I argue that Existential Coaching possibly forms the most effective and genuine form of ALD and why I propose the coaching model detailed below.

Existential Authentic Leadership Coaching Model

Here I would like to propose a new Authentic Leadership Coaching model that addresses each of the key existential concerns and is based around the four existential perspectives relating to the four dimensions of existence (Deurzen, 2012); The *Umwelt*, *Mitwelt*, *Eigenwelt* and *Uberwelt* dimensions. These are: the Physical dimension, the Self dimension, the Social dimension and the Spiritual dimension, or as I have renamed it, the *Strategic* dimension. These four domains have been adapted for my proposed new model of Authentic Leadership Existential Coaching, described below.

The Physical Dimension

The *Physical dimension* is made quite explicit in this Authentic Leadership coaching approach in a very particular way. Although this domain relates to how we interact with our bodies and the worlds other natural features, I also place in this dimension the existential concerns of temporality and finitude, which brings into focus the fact that we *travel through a shard of light between two dark abysses* (Yalom, 1980) and that ultimately, we are always *living and being towards death*, (Heidegger, 1962). This might seem to some like a rather deep and potentially depressing fact to include in a simple leadership development programme and indeed it might be for a simple one. However, I suggest that an enduring Authentic Leadership programme is not a simple intervention. Rather, it is a potentially profound experience for those involved, especially for those facing significant 'life-events', job change, promotion, retirement etc. which are already forcing them to look carefully at themselves, their careers and their lives.

For these it is not a depressing exercise, but quite the opposite. It brings clarity of what is important to them, what they stand for and what next they want to achieve with their life. Pondering our

finitude can bring tremendous clarity on such issues thus enabling us to act with more deliberate self-determination. It is therefore perhaps no coincidence that the people who appear to get the maximum value from this approach to ALD are the more mature and experienced leaders.

Those individuals who are perhaps becoming more aware of the passage of time and therefore more attuned to the larger existential issues relating to their life and their leadership and more prepared to break from the herd in this self-determining fashion. However, it can be a significant exercise for any participant to look at their lives through a temporal lens, that is, to ponder in turn, their past, their present and their future. It is for this reason that I don't just include the *Physical* perspective but place it as the baseline x-axis (Fig.10) as it forms the fundamental direction of travel within this proposed new model of Authentic Leadership Existential Coaching. On the y-axis is then placed the various domains that guide the leader's reflection and exploration, the *Self*, *Social* and *Strategic* domains.

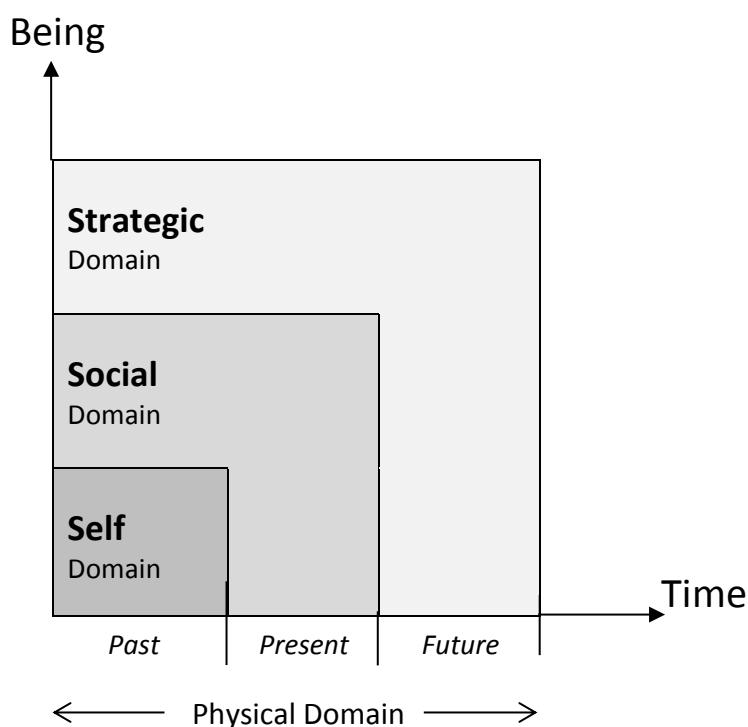


Figure 10: Authentic Leadership Existential Coaching Model

The Self Dimension

The first dimension for explicit reflection and discussion in this model of Authentic Leadership Coaching is the domain of *Self*. The *Self* perspective relates to issues such as personal identity, strengths, weaknesses etc. In existential terms the Self is considered as something *becoming* and there is a palpable sense of this through the journey of Authentic Leadership Existential Coaching.

As a starting point, it asks participants to look back over the significant events in their lives and to make sense of how these have influenced how they have *become* who they are and how these are continuing to influence who and what they are continuing to *become* as a person and as a leader. AL Existential Coaching invites leaders to reflect on their past in an attempt to understand how and where their key life-lessons were formed, and how this in turn informs their leadership principles and philosophy. The process of mapping out one's life trajectory seldom fails to present the individual with, often unexpected, self-insight and understanding.

This exercise brings into focus the two key existential concerns of Temporality and Finitude. These issues are certainly core among the great sources of existential anxiety and ones that we can invest considerable amounts of unconscious energy in preventing them from seeping into conscious thought, busy being busy if you will. Being a self-conscious creature man is (probably) unique in being aware of the passage of time and his inevitable demise as the unavoidable conclusion to his life.

This ability leads us to construct myriad ways and means to keep this awareness at bay. Yet paradoxically, though death ultimately ends us, contemplation on the idea can save us (Yalom, 1980). It is the conscious appreciation of our temporality and ultimate finitude that makes us realise that our lives are not automatically underwritten by significance or meaning, but that we should accept self-responsibility and consciously choose what it is we value and how we want to live our lives.

Accepting and allowing this awareness of our *being-towards-death* (Heidegger, 1962) can help us genuinely confront the limited time we have and to create for ourselves a life that is meaningful and authentic. As Peltier (2001) poignantly comments, "*Deaths presence serves as a values clarifier*" (p.161). As described above, ALD Coaching facilitates this appreciation of *temporality* and *finitude* by asking leaders to reflect on their life-stories. It requires them to reflect upon their past and how this has informed their career choices and their leadership values. It asks them to contemplate their present and how satisfactorily they believe they are living and leading.

Finally, it asks them to consider the future and what sort of legacy they want to create. Seldom do leaders get such an opportunity to consider deeply the interconnections between their lives and their leadership, how they inform each other and what they want to actively achieve with each. In this way, we suggest genuine Authentic Leadership Development is a fundamentally existentially-contemplative endeavour.

The Social Dimension

The next sphere of consideration is the *Social* domain. This relates to a leader's relationships with others as it is in the *present* in the cultural and organisational networks within which they are embedded. This domain is a key feature within AL Existential Coaching as this is the context within which individuals enact their leadership role. This *Social* domain becomes even more pertinent in Authentic Leadership group-coaching (Fusco, O'Riordan & Palmer, 2015).

Authentic Leadership group-coaching brings the participants social world right into the here-and-now of the group as each leader relates individually and collectively with all other group members. They engage with other members in much the same way as they engage with significant others in their outer worlds, so this particular dimension comes to life right there in the group. The work that can happen in this group context, in terms of observational feedback, questioning and challenging, is already a well know therapeutic factor in group-therapy and its relevance for group-coaching, and in particular AL group-coaching, is now also becoming apparent (Fusco, O'Riordan & Palmer, 2015).

The Strategic Dimension

Finally, there is the *Spiritual* dimension. As can be seen in Fig.8 I have taken the arbitrary decision to rename it in this model as the *Strategic* dimension. I made this decision for the simple pragmatic purpose of *face validity*. The word *spiritual* brings with it unavoidable connotations of faith and religion which I have found to be more of a hindrance than a help in the field of leadership coaching. Spirituality can be an issue of great significance for some leaders but more often than not it can be an irrelevance or cause for distraction in the practice of leadership coaching.

However, what does have considerable resonance in leadership terms, and significance in existential terms, are the subjects of meaning and purpose. A strategic and long-term system of meaning and purpose (which may include a spiritual element but certainly doesn't require it) is highly relevant in Authentic Leadership Coaching as it is an individual's way of *operationalising* all that has significance for them by drawing on their ideals, values, principles and philosophies. It is when they bring all of these into their world that they can achieve a *strategic* sense of meaning, purpose and of course authenticity.

Key to the Existentialist view is that humans are self-determining and that they can, and indeed should, create their own personal meaning and purpose. However, as part of a wider organisational community, some leaders embrace this responsibility while others recoil from it, identifying too easily with the *communal character* of their existence (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012, p.123).

There is an inherent complexity of human life within the organisational constellation and “...the autonomy and freedom required for the expression of authenticity will always be restricted and challenged by the need for co-ordination and direction within the organisation” (p.128), but at the same time authentic leaders are mindful that “Authenticity involves a connection to, and expression of, a higher aspiration or purpose...a purpose beyond profit” (p.128).

So, from an existential perspective it is important to explore, to understand and to reconcile this domain. In so doing the *Strategic* perspective builds on the previous *Social* and *Self* dimensions and invites leaders to ponder this ultimate higher purpose and consider what sort of future legacy will have personal significance for them and their authentic selves. This means contemplating their individual authenticity based on their core values, meaning and purpose, and mindfully accepting their individual freedom, choice and responsibility. Each of which we consider in more detail below.

Individual Authenticity

The idea of choosing one’s own life and living it sincerely and authentically is a theme that runs throughout most Existential writing. Therefore, Authenticity is the overarching idea that links Existentialism and Authentic Leadership.

Kierkegaard (1846) first spoke of Authenticity as a *way of being* which was then further pursued by the writings of Heidegger (1962), who believed less in absolute authenticity, more that we live in constant tension between being authentic and inauthentic. More recently Mandic (2012) talks of authenticity in *Authenticity in Existential Coaching* and suggests the existential approach takes the ontological as fundamental. What this means is that the more usual coaching issues around *knowing* and *doing* emerge from the exploration of the individuals *being* in the world, “*The Existential approach simply emphasises and attends to the individuals being who they are and the possible implications that follow from this*” (Mandic 2012, p.22). In Existential terms, Mandic talks of authenticity as a fundamental aspect of human existence and engagement with the world and others, that is, *being*.

But what specifically in existential terms, does being authentic mean and how does one achieve it? It means confronting the core of human existence and what this means to our own individual lives. It means confronting and contemplating the unique human absurdities and anxieties that we are usually more prone to distance or distract ourselves from. We have become the intellectual masters of our known universe and acquired such evolved imagination as to be able to conjure at will; myths, legends, ghosts and gods. Yet, in existential terms, we come from nought and return to nought. It is easy to understand why we distance and distract ourselves from that potential *zero that lurks*

beneath (Lawler, 2005). But the existential perspective compels us to face and accept this absurdity and finitude and to use this knowledge to help us choose what in our own life holds genuine value and meaning for us. It means making choices and accepting responsibility for these choices and the purpose they imbue into our existence.

Individual Values, Meaning & Purpose

In *Existential Coaching and Major Life Decisions* LeBon and Arnaud (2012) bring together the core existential concerns of *values, meaning and purpose* by saying “*If we live according to our values we cannot only be said to live authentically, but we are also likely to lead more purposeful lives*” (p.52). These are closely connected, as the purpose someone chooses for their life gives it an inherent meaning and will be inextricably linked to what they value.

Business, Political and Military leadership biographies often show us how an individual’s North Star (George, 2007), the guiding light for their life’s purpose and meaning, is formed and developed in relation to what they have learnt to value. The Existential approach to ALD Coaching helps leaders discover or define what is of true value to them personally. Autonomy in thought and self is encouraged over “*...herd mentality and group morality*” Peltier (2001, p.164). However, this is learning that cannot be directly taught and is achieved only through a process of self-discovery. From Gandhi to Google, clear and confident leadership is invariably built upon a deep and enduring sense of values, meaning and purpose.

Individual Freedom, Choice & Responsibility

However, it is not just about *having* values, meaning and purpose, it is also about having the *freedom of choice* on these and indeed the *responsibility* to make such choices. This being *condemned to freedom* (Sartre, 1973) and having both the opportunity and responsibility to consciously decide on each of these matters for our own life, brings with it huge potential anxieties that can lead us into a state of *inauthentic avoidance or withdrawal* (Mandic, 2012, p.27) and potentially lead us to live our lives in *bad faith* (Sartre, 1973). *Bad Faith* being of two minds or two hearts, intentionally or unintentionally duplicitous, fraudulent, inauthentic. The prospect of leading in *bad faith* is an omnipresent issue for the leader as the cacophony of competing calls of significant organisational others demand to be heard. The Board, the shareholders, the consumers and the staff, all wanting their voices heard as to what the leader should do and how they should do it. It is clear that the leader who has a solid foundation for their life and leadership, based on authentically chosen values, meaning and purpose, can take both these responsibilities and these decisions with much more clarity and conviction than those who have not. Existential Authentic Leadership

Coaching gives individual leaders a phenomenological perspective of their own lives that helps them author or re-author just such concerns.

Conclusion

As discussed in previous chapters, the tradition of leadership research to date has generally been one of a *rationalist paradigm*. In the past, the primary focus of leadership research has been an attempt to distil down the essence of leadership to identify its “...*composite qualities/behaviours/competencies*” (Ford & Lawler, 2007, p.409), the ultimate aim of which has been to seek objectivity, generalisability and ultimately predictability and control. In this respect, the phenomenological approach to Authentic Leadership Coaching described above, sets it aside from most other forms of leadership development.

Rather than attempting to standardise the leadership phenomena it creates a heightened awareness and deepened understanding of the existential-humanistic issues that all authentic individuals and leaders face. This existential approach emphasises reflection and exploration of experience over immediate goals or performance. Spinelli (2014) says “*Existential coaching’s primary focus is on the client’s worldview – which is to say, the whole range of beliefs, values, attitudes, assumptions, affects, feelings and behaviours that make up, maintain and identify a person’s ‘way of being’*” (p.94). As such, the individuals most likely to benefit from this approach to coaching are often found to be those who are open to the challenge of *grappling with complex and paradoxical issues* (Spinelli & Horner, 2007). Such existential grapples are not without tangible benefits however and are “...*as likely to provoke performance-focussed change as is any other model of coaching*” (Spinelli, 2014, p.101).

This suggests a more thoughtful approach to leadership coaching, supporting the comments of Deurzen (2012) “*It is more urgent than ever before for human beings to take time out to wonder about their lives and be in wonder for long enough to take stock*” (p.16).

I echo this call, for all the reasons already mentioned throughout this thesis. I echo this for all those leading in this postmodern world, and propose that the existential approach to Authentic Leadership Coaching described earlier in this thesis creates just such an opportunity for leaders to *wonder* and *take stock* of their lives and their leadership, in a way far deeper than is usually permissible in most leadership development interventions. The challenge is to bridge ‘existential leadership development’ with ‘practical leadership development’. My hope is that through this research I have been able to demonstrate how this is possible.

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APPENDIX

1. Participant Reflective Log
2. Ethics Approval
3. Participant Consent Form
4. Authentic Leadership Questionnaire
5. Authentic Leadership Inventory
6. Self-Concept Clarity Scale
7. Published Papers

Appendix 1: PARTICIPANT REFLECTIVE LOG

Authentic Leadership Coaching – Workshop Review

Please record here your thoughts and reflections following your participation in the Leadership Coaching Programme. These are to be personal insights and observations you may have made about yourself as a result of participating in the session.

Appendix 2: ETHICS APPROVAL

Dear Tony,

Ref: PSYETH(UPTD)1213 02

I am pleased to inform you that the Chair of the Departmental Research Committee has approved your updated ethics approval and is happy to grant ethical approval for this project.

Kind regards,

Sam

Project Title:

How can Coaching Psychology help develop Authentic Leadership?

I agree to take part in the above City University research project. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I may keep for my records. I understand that agreeing to take part means I am willing to:

- Participate in a 3-day Leadership Development coaching workshop facilitated by the researcher
- Complete questionnaires asking me about my leadership before and after the coaching
- Complete Reflective Logs after each session
- Participate in a semi-structured recorded interview 3 months after the last session

Data Protection

Information will be held and processed for the following purpose(s): Statistical analysis of pre & post coaching questionnaires and recorded interviews. All of which will be kept securely, reported anonymously and destroyed or returned to each participant after the research report has been written up.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party. No identifiable personal data will be published. The identifiable data will not be shared with any other organisation.

I agree to City University recording and processing information about me. I understand that this information will be used only for the purpose(s) set out in this statement and my consent is conditional on the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Re-use of data for further analysis

I give my permission for re-use of the questionnaire data collected by the researcher in any future research study to be completed by the researcher only, and subject to the conditions specified in the Explanatory Statement Form.

Withdrawal from study

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

Name:(please print)

Signature:

Date:

Address:.....
.....

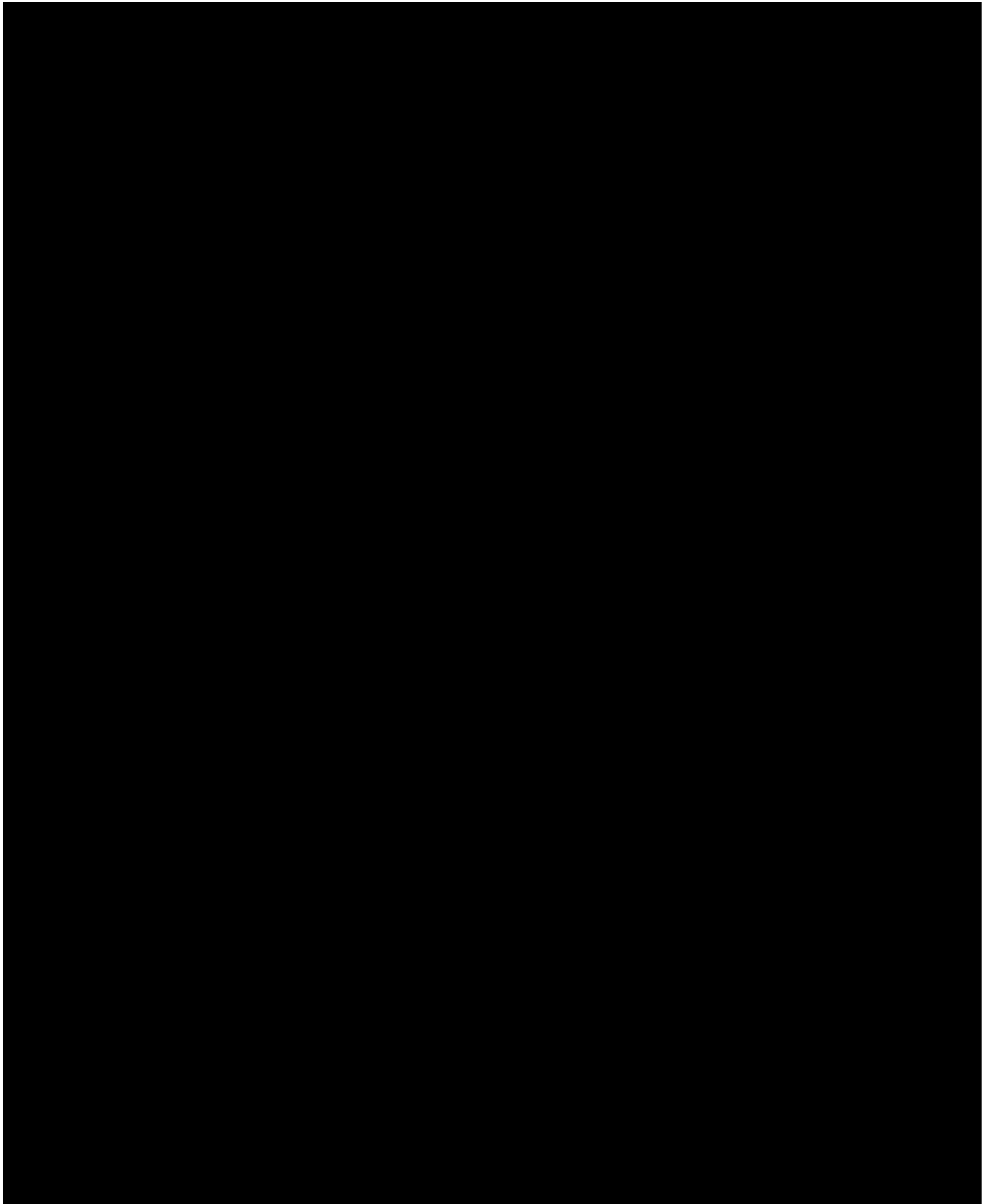
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FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS:**

Appendix 4: Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ Version 1.0 Self) Bruce J. Avolio, Ph.Dp166
Appendix 5: Authentic Leadership Inventoryp167
Appendix 6: Self-concept clarity scalep168

Appendix 4: ALQ

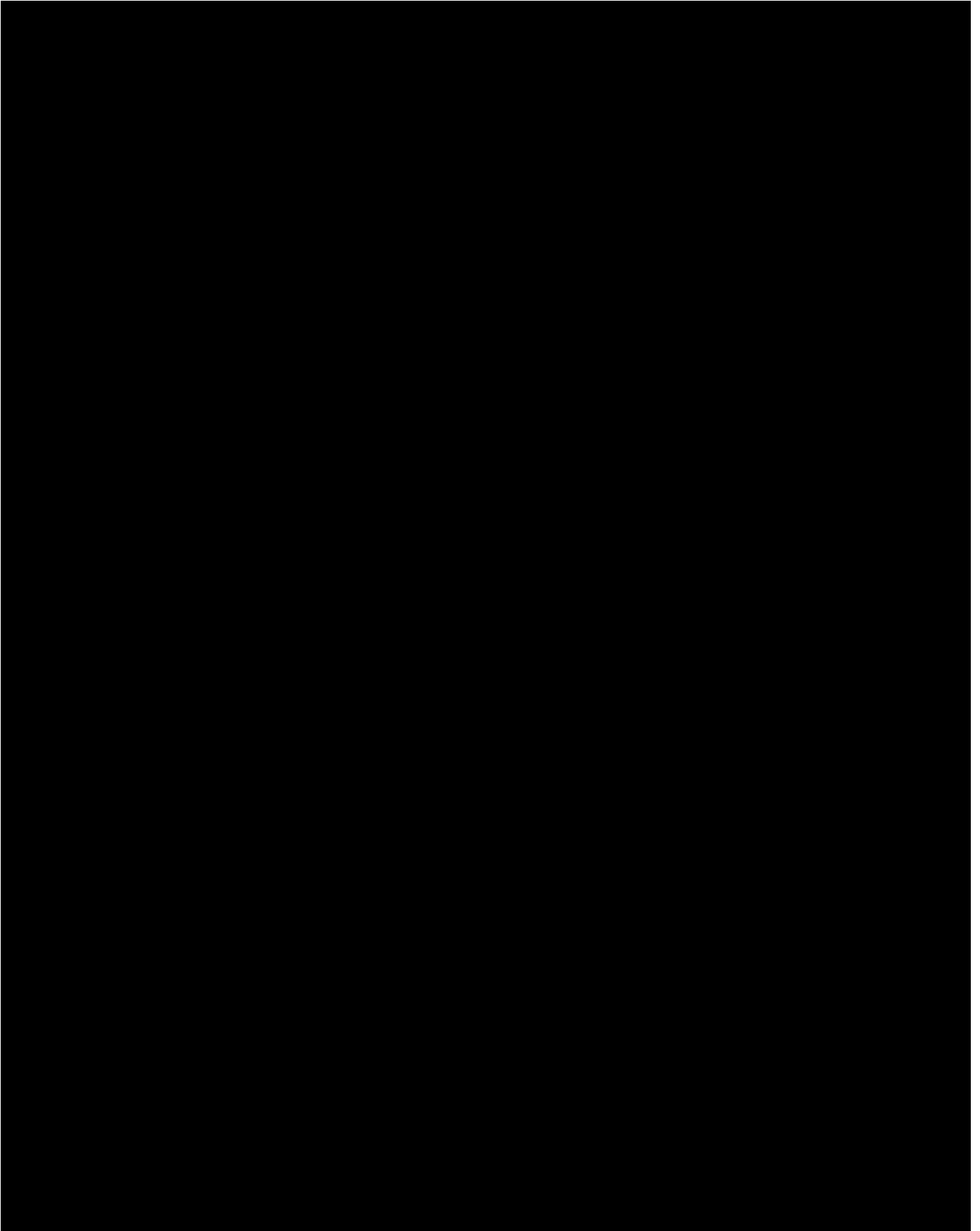
Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ Version 1.0 **Self**)

Bruce J. Avolio, Ph.D.



Appendix 5: ALI

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP INVENTORY

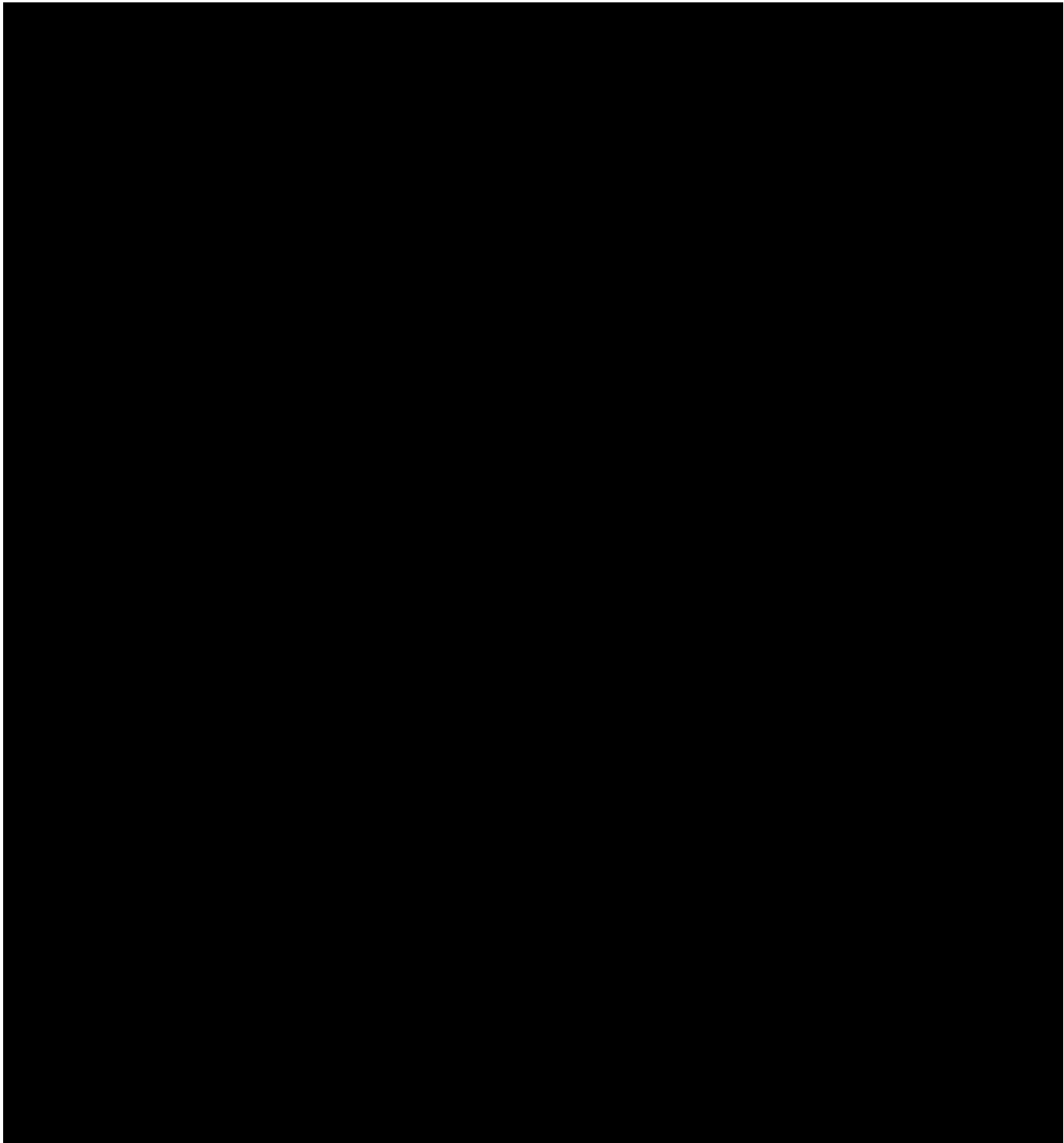


Appendix 6: SCCS

SELF-CONCEPT CLARITY SCALE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Campbell, J. D., Trapnell, P. D., Heine, S. J., Katz, I. M., Lavallee, L. F., & Lehman, D. R. (1996). Self-concept clarity: Measurement, personality correlates, and cultural boundaries. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(1), 141-156.



Published Research Articles

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