The Transformational Leadership of Daisaku Ikeda: A Diamond Polishing Diamonds

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This article breaks new ground in the literature on Daisaku Ikeda by examining his leadership through the lens of leadership theory, which although well established in the American academe has only recently entered the academic leadership discourse outside the United States. Specifically, Ikeda's personal actions and organizational leadership is considered through the theory of transformational leadership. This first article is the beginning of an exploration into Ikeda's transformational leadership and derives from a class project assignment connecting leadership and power with the exhibit *Gandhi, King, Ikeda: A Legacy of Building Peace*, which the College of Education at DePaul University hosted in 2010. After visiting the exhibit[1] and watching the related video, my leadership students and I discussed how these leaders exhibited power and influence to further their respective movements. The conversation about the leaders' style and approach reframed the general tone of power in this standard course in the leadership curriculum. Power seems to have a general connotation of being domineering and negative to one of leadership, social justice and the role of influence. Framing the conversation with a tone of positive change, the role of conflict, and the power of one into the power of the collective was an interesting conversation. This vantage directed the leadership conversation about creating change and contributing to the greater good through leadership. Since that time I have consistently used the examples of Gandhi, King, Nelson Mandela, and Daisaku Ikeda within the frame of "transformational leaders."

Daisaku Ikeda was an unknown to everyone in the course before seeing the exhibit; he is not discussed much within the extant leadership literature. One rare exception is Chilson's (2014) recent article on Ikeda's charisma and resultant transformational leadership. However,

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[1] The *Gandhi, King, Ikeda: A Legacy of Building Peace* was a traveling exhibit explaining the similarities between these three influential global leaders. The informational video helps to further articulate the power of peace and their ethical approach to social justice. This can be found on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9VexOP9PDg

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since viewing this exhibit Ikeda's embodiment of transformational leadership has been very intriguing. He is a complex man through multifaceted talents of education, peace activist, poet, and president of an international organization (Soka Gakkai International). This begins with a necessary introduction to general leadership approaches and definitions from an American discipline perspective. In order to connect Daisaku Ikeda with transformational leadership an overview of the theory will be included. Using the characteristics and components of transformational leadership, examples of Ikeda's actions and writings will be provided to make this point. Excerpts from Ikeda's *Embracing Compassion: A Revolution in Leadership* (2009, 2013) further exemplify his transformational leadership approach.

Leadership Theory

Leadership is a word that has been used to describe a position, or positions, within an organization as well as a common reference to a specific group of people. This word can bring to mind power, influence, managerial tasks, goals, and groups of people (Chilson, 2014; Northouse, 2013). The cumulative effect of leadership encompasses the present, respects the past, and has a vision perspective for the future. This author posits that the typical definitions of *leadership* actually define the *leader*. An example of this focus on the individual leader is offered through the business book *Good to Great* (Collins, 2001). The research team wanted to focus on the company and not the chief executive. However, the leadership and the type of leader guiding the company kept entering the equation. The final publication examined both companies as well as the leadership contributing to the success of the collective. The study of leadership seemingly needs individual touch points to assist understanding.

Leadership begins with the individual (Bennis, 2003; Gardner, 1990; Northouse, 2013; Popper, 1998; Sims & Lorenzi, 1992; Wheatley, 1996). As a leader clarifies personal values (Kouzes & Posner, 1995), he may have increased his awareness of his own thoughts and can then observe similar processes in others. Bennis (2003) provided four lessons of self-knowledge: 1) each person is his/her own best teacher; 2) one must accept responsibility; 3) one can learn anything he/she wants to learn; and 4) true understanding comes from reflection (2003, p. 50). Self-awareness and reflection seems to contribute to the ability to lead the collective (Bennis, 2003; Saunders, 2002; Van Kippenberg, Van Kippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004; Wheatley, 1996).

Moving from the individual view of identity and leadership broadens the conversation to a leadership theory or approach. A leader oftentimes is the role model for others. Wheatley (1996) posits that the leader has an obligation to help the organization look at itself to ensure the organization has understanding and clarity. Leadership has been described as a relational

process and dependent on the interactions of people working together to accomplish change (Bennis, 2003; Gardner, 1990; Northouse, 2013; Popper, 1998; Sims & Lorenzi, 1992; Wheatley, 1996). The following section introduces transformational leadership theory. A transformational individual leader, which I argue herein Ikeda exemplifies, works with others from a mutual growth and development paradigm.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The term "transformational leadership" was first used by Downtown (1973), but the biggest influence on transformational leadership theory has been James MacGregor Burns (1978) and his book *Leadership*. Note that Burns uses the term *transforming* leader, which connects to the active relationship of leader and followers and the mutual benefits of their work (Northouse, 2013). Transforming would also pay heed to the inner work and change the leader undergoes through the connecting with followers. "Transformational" is used to indicate a resultant inner change and modification in the followers of a transforming leader. The overall understanding of transformational leadership comprises the humanistic approach to valuing individual accomplishments, strengths and contributions of all members of the organization or team.

The theory posits the leader role is fluid and the possibility of any (or all) of the participants to assume this role depending on the situation or the individual skills, expertise, and knowledge. Transformational leadership "transforms followers' self-concepts and tries to link the followers to the collective identity of the organization" (2013, p. 173). All are seen as leaders, either assuming the responsibility in the forefront as the leader of the moment or supporting from the background as a participant (Wheatley, 1996). Gardner (1990) addresses leaders are often dispersed throughout the organization and contends that follower suggests passivity and opts for the term "constituent" to incorporate respect and wholeness.

Burns (1978) defines leadership as "leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers" (p. 19). He continues to say the leadership genius sees and acts on the combined values and motives of all involved. The complex process of connecting leaders and followers (i.e., constituents) in a shared vision is vital for an organization regardless of size (Yukl, 2010). This combined, two-way interaction and influence between leaders and followers results in a synergistic force of creating more than was expected in the long term (Burns, 1978; Gardner, 1990; Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Northouse, 2013). The transformational leader is attentive to the needs and wants of all, and empowers all to reach their full potential.

Transformational leadership components

While there are criticisms that transformational leadership is too conceptual and too broad with regard to activities and characteristics (Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Northouse, 2013; Yukl, 2010), some argue transformational leadership is a personality trait associated with charisma, influence, and even perhaps how power abuses affect leadership (Northouse, 2013). The inability to measure transformational leadership has also been offered as a criticism. Some researchers and authors have created instruments (see Bass & Riggio, 2006) which, we will not address here. Transformational leadership is the engagement of leaders and followers together (Burns, 1978, 2003) raising the consciousness and aspirations of all individuals. Conversely, transactional leadership is more of an exchange process (Burns, 1978; Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Northouse, 2013; Yukl, 2010). The exchange is not necessarily negative and contributes to a continuum (see Bass & Riggio for the Full Range of Leadership models); however this article will not focus on this component.

To discuss Daisaku Ikeda through the lens of transformational leadership two sets of descriptors of transformational theory will be interconnected. The five characteristics of (1) Vision, (2) Empowerment, (3) Creative, (4) Interactive, and (5) Passion (Hackman & Johnson, 2013) can be related to the transformational leadership components (Bass & Riggio, 2006) known as the four I's: Idealized influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation, and Individualized consideration, as detailed below.

Idealized influence. This factor is related to charisma and role modeling (Chilson (2014) considers this notion of charisma in his treatment of Ikeda's transformational leadership relative to excerpts from Ikeda's *A Youthful Diary: One Man's Journey from the Beginning of Faith to Worldwide Leadership for Peace*). There is a collective identity and a shared vision within the group. The modeling and shared attributes of identity and shared *vision* connect this to the characteristic of vision.

Inspirational motivation. This factor relates to the collective spirit of the organization. The high expectations of the followers are a motivator as is commitment to the common purpose. The support, coaching and encouragement of the leaders increase the collective spirit and the individual self-efficacy of the followers. The characteristic of *empowerment* is connected through encouragement.

Intellectual stimulation. Followers are encouraged to be creative and approach situations/circumstances with innovation. The challenging of the process is seen as a positive for the overall good of all involved; it is related to the *creative* characteristic.

Individualized consideration. The leader is supportive and understands each person on an individual basis respecting and honoring his or her unique contributions. This supportive cli-

mate connects each participant with the collective. The *interactive* characteristic is appropriate here. The characteristic of *passion* connects to many of the components illustrating the passion of the individual and of the whole.

Figure 1. Characteristics and Components of Transformational Leadership
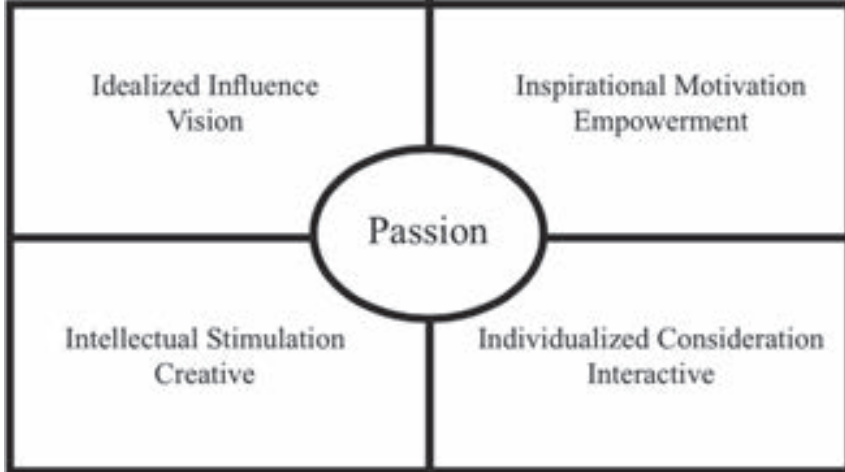
Transformational leadership works because of the personalized approach to leadership, similar to the synergistic effects of Nichiren's perspective of "many in body one in mind"(The Gosho Translation Committee, 1999–2006, Vol. 2, p. 914; hereafter WND, 1999–2006). The transformational leaders act as role models for constituents nurturing their individual needs and desires. The combination of many strengths and talents requires the leaders to act as social architects to establish the norms and expectations of the group. Finally, the power of the organization is distributed among the participants. This sense of power becomes a force of empowerment and reduces the power differentials to enhance group performance(Gardner, 1990).

Power

The concept of power is generally discussed within the overall leadership discourse; however, "Leadership and power are not the same"(Gardner, 1990, p. 55), but they do interweave at many points. Leaders exist without power; at the same time some with power are not seen nor function as leaders. We tend to give power to those we admire and who have influenced our actions or behaviors(Hackman & Johnson, 2013).

Charismatic leaders are generally seen as role models for their followers and can be connected to transformational leadership(Chilson, 2014). They are regarded as competent, and their ideological goals resonate with constituents. The charismatic leader may challenge the followers in a way that produces a moment of realization. This support enhances an affiliation with the group, and increases a sense of self-esteem. There are times in history when charis-

matic leaders have used their power and influence for negative or coercive purposes. There are also plenty of examples of charismatic leadership that is truly concerned with the collective and the common good of all (Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Yukl, 2010) —Ikeda's leadership is an example of this latter type. Empowerment distributes the power and facilitates a collective survival and the group can endure, allowing the charismatic leader to replicate the common vision. The paradox of power is that "leaders gain more power by empowering others" (Hackman & Johnson, 2013, p. 150). The empowerment model from the leader down is effective. It becomes a transforming culture. It is a hallmark and notable strength of Daisaku Ikeda.

Daisaku Ikeda

Typically within the American leadership literature the practice is to discuss the tenets of leadership through an exemplar leader. Lawrence Carter, Dean of the Martin Luther King, Jr, International Chapel at Morehouse College, said it best in the "Gandhi, King, Ikeda" video: "There is one who walks among us. His name is Daisaku Ikeda; he is the living embodiment of what Gandhi and King stood for" (GKI, video). Both Gandhi and King have been discussed as transforming leaders (Burns, 1978, 2003). For as much as Ikeda is the living embodiment of what these exemplar leaders stood for, he is the same for transformational leadership.

Daisaku Ikeda's presence and influence on the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is so ubiquitous and pervasive it is almost impossible to talk about one without the ever presence of the other. His leadership (both formal and informal) of the SGI spans 56 of its 84 years of existence. His curriculum vita includes well over 130 volumes for the SGI alone, not to mention educational treatises, university speeches, and annual peace proposals. The following will provide some examples the transformational leadership ethos of Daisaku Ikeda. The tenets and teachings of Nichiren Buddhism (WND, 1999–2006) guide Ikeda's actions, writing, and speeches so fully that beginning with the connections between these guiding principles and transformational leadership will set the context as we then proceed with Ikeda as an exemplar.

Ikeda's personal biography can be found online (daisakuikeda.org) and within many scholarly articles (e.g., Goulah, 2010; Goulah & Ito, 2012). For brevity's sake, it is assumed readers have a fundamental understanding of Ikeda's philosophy and practice chronicled in the journal *Soka Education* (and *Soka Education Research*) and by Goulah (2010), Goulah and Ito (2012). Nonetheless, some points that should be noted here to discuss his identity and formation as a leader relate to defining moments in his life. Growing up in militaristic and wartime Japan deeply influenced his early life. The effects of losing his older brother brought him to write about his deep hatred for war and cruelty (Ikeda, 1996). While searching for a way to make sense of his lived reality, in 1947 he encountered future second president of the Soka Gakkai

Buddhist organization, Josei Toda (Goulah, 2010). Toda was speaking to a group about the transformation of Japanese society, and Ikeda soon took Toda as his mentor (Goulah & Ito, 2012).

Toda, with his admonition to continue the work of the Soka Gakkai, invested Ikeda with the responsibility of leadership. Ikeda's leadership over more than 50 years, which he has chronicled in over 100,000 pages of texts, speeches, poems and published dialogues (see e.g., Goulah, 2010), speaks to his expertise. The message he conveys and the modeling he embodies with his constant nod to the influence of his mentors, exhibits his referent power within the international organization he leads. Ikeda stresses the ability of all and the need for each person to contribute to the greater good through their contributions. From here examples of how Daisaku Ikeda fits the characteristics of a transformational leader will be presented following the components of the previous figure.

Passion

Soka, or "value-creating," is a neologism Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Toda coined for Makiguchi's educational philosophy; it was also the name they took for the Buddhist organization they founded in 1930 (for a more complete explanation of the derivation and meaning of the word *soka* see Goulah & Ito, 2012). The meaning of the word *soka* (i.e., value-creating) is significant relative to Burns' (1978) aforementioned explanation of transformational leadership. Burns posits that transformational leadership is related to the leader's value creation and to the followers' moral development and increased intrinsic motivation (Burns, 1978; Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Northouse, 2013). The very translation of the movement that Ikeda makes his life's work is directly related to the tenets of transformational leadership.

In the essay/speech *Unity Is the Starting Point for Victory*, included in *Embracing Compassion*[2], Ikeda (2009, p. 65) is speaking specifically to leaders when he refers to a story about an ancient Chinese hero Chuko K'ung-ming. His story centers on the responsibility K'ung-ming feels for the welfare of others participating with him. This sense of commitment and responsibility relate to passion. Ikeda provides an example of K'ung-ming's four points a leader should remember during a struggle: "1. Use new, unexpected strategies, 2. Plan thoroughly and carefully, 3. Act calmly and quietly, 4. Unite the hearts and minds of your forces" (p. 69). Within that same piece, Ikeda invokes the words of his mentor Toda: "It doesn't matter what others do. Everything depends on you, on your *determination*" (emphasis added; p. 68). Ikeda de-

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[2] *Embracing Compassion: A Revolution in Leadership* is a three volume set of selected leadership addresses given by Daisaku Ikeda, printed in English for leaders within the SGI.

scribes determination as a conviction for goals and reminds people to renew their determination when goal focus become difficult (Ikeda, 2010). He refers to determination as a "jeweled sword (p. 34) and uses a story about Nelson Mandela's passion as an example of this passion. This sense of determination (i.e., will power, resolve, strength of mind) is similar to passion (i.e., fervor, ardor, zeal) seems to connect the essence of Toda's words and Ikeda's examples through the lens of transformational leaders and transformational leadership. The concepts of human revolution, *kosen-rufu*, and Ikeda's peace proposals are discussed below and are all included as example of the passion component.

Human Revolution

Goulah (2010) states that "Ikeda calls his internal transformation through human education a process of "human revolution (*ningen kakumei*)…" (p. 263). In both transformational leadership and in Soka education and the SGI the end result is the transformation of individuals to think and act for themselves to create positive change, to be leaders in the community…for the greater good. Ikeda comments during a graduation of Soka University how his mentors, Toda and Makiguchi, would be so proud of the students (i.e., leaders of the twenty-first century) making a difference in the world (Goulah, 2010).

Ikeda notes that while he is not an educator, he is extending the humanistic educational system of his two mentors. Ikeda writes, "I consider education to be the culminating undertaking of my life. That is because the victory of education means the victory of the people" (Why Education webpage *www.daisakuikeda.org*). It should be noted that in various writings by and about Ikeda, as in the quote above, the words leader and leadership appear. This alone is not sufficient to tie Ikeda to a leadership theory. However, Burns' work in transforming leadership is indicative of what Ikeda presents through an educational lens and dialogue. Consider the corpus of Ikeda's work. He repeatedly states things such as "education embodies the timeless struggle of human civilization to create an unerring path to peace" (Why Education webpage *www.daisakuikeda.org*) and "a great human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change in the destiny of a nation…." (Ikeda as discussed in Goulah, 2010). This quote also appears often within *Living Buddhism*, a monthly publication of the SGI's American organization. Ikeda presents this encouragement within the sections of "who is SGI President Ikeda" and "What is the Soka Spirit." Through this ongoing reminder to all members to create a humanistic world for the mutual benefit of mankind, President Ikeda encourages all members to work for peace. This is similar to what Burns (2003) was describing as a leadership strategy that must be tested by results. He says that leadership partners could be the greatest act of leadership through "happiness empowered with transforming purpose" (p. 3).

Kosen-rufu

The Nichiren concept of *Kosen-rufu* is literally translated as "to widely declare and spread." This process is communicated to each of the members as a mission for the propagation of peace and happiness for humankind. Transforming leadership occurs when people "engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1978, p. 20). This transforming leadership helps to raise the "level of human conduct and ethical aspirations of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both" (Burns, 1978, p. 20). Ikeda (2010) explains in *Discussions on Youth* that *kosen-rufu* is necessary to communicate the ultimate way to peace to all people based on the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin (p. 263).

Peace Proposals

Starting in 1983 President Ikeda has issued a peace proposal to the United Nations every year on January 26. The purpose for the peace proposals is an effort to fulfill human security and worldwide peace. These proposals exemplify what Burns (2006) addressed in transforming leadership and the activist concept. This transformation of institutions lays a revolution of values that demonstrates a fundamental and constructive change. "Transformational leaders are passionately committed to their work" (Hackman & Johnson, 2013, p. 120). This ongoing and persistent track record that spans 31 years is a testament to passion. Ikeda's actions evidence Burns' (2006) view that, "The ultimate attainment of happiness is a cherished dream, but as a goal of transforming leadership we must view it more as a process, a pursuit" (p. 239).

Idealized Influence

The *Idealized influence* is related to the charismatic approach of the leader and the mentor role modeled by the leader with the follower. Communication of the vision among members and from leader to follower is an important part of transformational leadership. This idealized influence factor is related to vision and visionary leaders. There is a definite sense of mentoring and modeling of standards and moral and ethical leaders. Followers identify with the leader and the vision, which may be seen as synonymous.

Mentor Disciple Relationship

The 1947 episode that introduced Daisaku Ikeda to Josei Toda during a group meeting set the stage for a significant relationship for both, and Ikeda specifically (Goulah, 2010; Goulah & Ito, 2012). It is noted that almost all of Ikeda's speeches and writings give credence to the teachings of Toda, and to Toda's mentor, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, about value creation. Ikeda

became the third president (following Makiguchi and Toda, respectively) of the Soka Gakkai in 1960. Under his leadership the Japanese organization grew to international proportions and he became the first (and founding) president of Soka Gakkai International (SGI) in 1975. The mentoring relationship, and the devotion for which Ikeda had for Toda is a testament to his capacity to become the role model for countless others. This early mentor-disciple relationship is a perfect example of referent power attributed to Ikeda by SGI members around the world. While many of the SGI members have never met Ikeda personally there are many who claim him as their personal mentor (Strand, 2014).

Burns' (1978) definition of leadership—"leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers" (p. 19) —is very similar to the claims of Ikeda. Note the similarities in how Ikeda defines value creation when he states, "The capacity to find meaning to enhance one's own existence and contribute to the well-being of others under any circumstances" (Ikeda, 1996). Again, the leader-follower relationship associated with transformational leadership could very easily be restated in Ikeda's terms of mentor and disciple. From a cultural context the American leader/follower paradigm is likely analogous to the Makiguchi-Toda-Ikeda paradigm of the mentor and disciple. The word disciple in the American vernacular carries a tone of religiosity that may not work for some. Rather than use the word disciple, Americans tend to opt for the word protégé or mentee. Regardless of the words used, transformational leadership presents the fluidity of leaders among the constituency in much the same way as Soka education and the SGI.

Inspirational Motivation

Within the *Inspirational motivation* factor as it relates to collective spirit, coaching, and encouragement of leaders we find support in Ikeda's writings and practice. Ikeda's frequently used concept of *ningen kyoiku* (humanistic people centered education), whereby "People are shaped by people" (Ikeda, 2006, p. 76) is a good example. Ikeda continues, "There is no genuine education without earnest life-to-life interaction and inspiration" (Ikeda, 2006, p. 76). Inspiration and motivation contribute to a sense of team spirit. This notion of team is how the characteristic of empowerment connects to this factor through encouragement, participation, and involvement (Hackman & Johnson, 2013). "A sense of empowerment fuels the pursuit of happiness" (Burns, 2006, p. 240).

An example of empowerment and commitment that ties transformational leadership with the words of Ikeda once again appear in his first commencement address to the Soka University of America:

　　　Just as a diamond can only be polished by another diamond, it is only through intense human interaction engaging the entire personality that people can forge themselves, raising themselves up to ever greater heights. It is the relationship between teacher and learner, mentor and disciple [leader and follower], that make this possible. (Ikeda, 2006, p. 181)

Here again we see the power of the mentor/disciple, educator/student, leader/follower relationship. Inspirational motivation moves the idealized influence of the leader to encouraging the follower engagement. Ikeda writes that, "nothing is more powerful than dialogue between two people" (Ikeda, 2013, p. 86). Ikeda's essay entitled, *Laying the Foundation for Victory One-Hundred Years Ahead* (Ikeda, 2009, p. 45) outlines the qualities of a leader based on the comments of his mentor Josei Toda. These qualities are that a leader must be trusted and respected; the leader must gain the trust of the people; inspire the members, and listen carefully.

　　Ikeda repeatedly comments on the need to understand people and to work with others to help them with their own human revolution. He understands and embodies that individual achievement is the basis for team achievement which contributes to greater success for all involved (Hackman & Johnson, 2013). "Those who cannot empathize with others will never become true leaders" (Ikeda, 2010, p. 12) is taken from the *Discussions on Youth* under the subsection of "Becoming a Person of Depth and Substance."

　　The inspiration and empowerment are related to cause and effect in Buddhism. The notion that in order to gain respect is to first give respect, in contemporary vernacular (or possibly American context) this is paying it forward. Ikeda admonishes SGI leaders to sincerely respect fellow members for these reasons of the simultaneity of cause and effect. He believes so ardently in this point that he warns, "There is no need for leaders who have lost their spirit for *kosen-rufu* in the Soka Gaakai" (Ikeda, 2009, p. 12). This propagation of personal happiness increases into worldwide happiness. This is the commitment of Daisaku Ikeda as much as it is for the SGI collective. His hope that members should love fellow members and care for each other with dignity is how inspirational motivation is empowerment.

Intellectual Stimulation

　　The *Intellectual Stimulation* factor relates to creativity and leaders/followers adding to the common good through talents and competencies. This creativity characteristic is actually how we describe this factor. In his speech to the third class of Soka University in 1973 Ikeda proclaims, "Creativity is much more than simply having the occasional good idea…It is like a mountain pinnacle: It cannot exist without a broad sense of knowledge and solid foundation of

deep thinking and reflection" (Ikeda, 2006, p. 27).

The Buddhist concept that life is not without challenge is illustrated within this section. Ikeda suggests that challenging oneself a little at a time is a good thing, these smaller struggles may even help to build one's personal armor against larger struggles in life. He uses a creative metaphor to illustrate his point. "Develop 'faith like water' that flows steadily and unceasingly, like a river that gradually grows in size and converges with the vast ocean" (Ikeda, 2010, p. 220). The "many in body, one in mind" (2009, p. 35; WND, 2, 914) message is supported through the message that we have to "give leadership responsibility to people of ability and potential, build a strong central core" (p. 35) to unite and advance together. Here ability and potential relate to problem solving and innovation to move forward.

Ikeda's use of stories, metaphor, and poetry illustrate some ways in which he approaches creativity to make his points and share his leadership. It is through these creative endeavors that his followers connect with him as a person. Seeing a picture that President Ikeda (or "Sensei" as many refer to him) took, or a piece of his calligraphy artwork connects with people at different entry points of intellectual stimulation. Ikeda persistently moves forward with generally the same message. The intellectual stimulation is that his message is delivered to many of various intellectual abilities, cognitive learning preferences, and different worldviews. His variance is delivery, while his results are consistent. Take for instance his example of fire. Generally, fire is seen as destructive and consuming. He uses fire to illustrate suffering and happiness, two things seemingly opposite. "By igniting the firewood of earthly desires (struggles) can the flame of happiness be attained" (Ikeda, 2010, p. 222). He has altered struggles from something debilitating to something that provides the medium of light and energy for forward movement.

Individualized Consideration

Finally, in the *Individualized Consideration* factor transformational leadership understands, respects and values the dignity of each person. The central tenets of Ikeda's thought are the sanctity of life and the self-directed transformation of the individual. This one mind is truly made up of many bodies. The key to making this work is through support, coaching, and affiliation. This is interaction and being interactive.

Consider, "educators must never look down on their students" (Ikeda, as cited by Goulah, 2010, p. 253). Or the Japanese word, *kyosei*, which Ikeda defines as "an ethos that seeks to bring harmony from conflict, unity from rupture, that is based more on 'us' than 'me'" (Ikeda, as cited by Goulah, 2010). This word *kyosei* is a *greater self* that creates and sustains an environment of individuals coexisting as a whole. Again, in the American leadership vernacular the word synergy; perhaps even the German word *gestalt* is used to describe this sense of the

whole.

Ikeda has stern words for arrogant leaders and calls them the "worst"（2009, p. 41）. As stated he understands and values the importance of everyone and that leaders need to encourage and foster people with whom they are in contact. "People are the essence. Everything depends on people"（2009, p. 13）. The responsibility of leadership is to set the example and modeling supportive actions. Ikeda cautions that leaders who are "indolent and who manifest the arrogance of authoritarianism［are］guilty of negligence"（2009, p. 9）. His lifetime of interaction and visits that span from countries to district meetings is evidence of his commitment to every individual.

As discussed above, leadership emphasizes the importance of interaction and relationships among the members of a group（Bennis, 2003; Northouse, 2013; Popper, 2005; Saunders, 2002; Sims Jr., 1992; Van Kippenberg, 2004; Wheatley, 1996）. Members of the group contribute to the common purpose and the cumulative values of the whole. Margaret Wheatley（1996）argues it is the duty of each member to look within themselves for the resources of their collective voyage of discovery and change. The congruence of the group members builds on common purpose as well as each individual's consciousness of self. In transformational leadership, the group works because it tied the participants to the group self-concept, purpose and organizational identity（Northouse, 2013）. One's approach to the world is the cumulative effect of one's past, as well as a future perspective. This worldview could be seen as the effects that one's past events have on his/her outlook. In Bennis's book *On Becoming A Leader*（2003）, he says leaders are products of everything within their entire lives. The same can be said for Daisaku Ikeda. The charisma and influence of this man rests in his credibility, his unending passion for people, and in the work he has dedicated his life to fulfilling. It is evident in the commitment he made to Toda to continue the work of the Soka Gakkai and to expand the humanistic principles of Soka.

Furthermore, a strong influence on the leadership approach of Ikeda relates to the Buddhist teaching about the unchanging equal value of all human beings. Ikeda's leadership is based on the ethic of care and the ethic of equality. This ethic compels him to lead in the manner consistent with ethical, as well as transformational leadership. The equitable approach to working with one another to create happiness, positive change, and social justice are similar through Ikeda's lens or transformational leadership.

Conclusion

The components of transformational leadership—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—are all related to the brief intro-

duction provided here of Ikeda as a transformational leader. Ikeda's transformational leadership is manifest in his model of Soka education and, perhaps more acutely, in his SGI leadership of helping each individual to realize his or her full potential, dignity, and capacity to contribute. This conviction is illustrated in his words "We need to initiate an earnest and principled rethinking of what it means to win in life and what a genuinely affluent society would look like" (Ikeda, 2006). When viewed through the lens of transformational leadership theory, Ikeda is "influence"; Ikeda is "leadership". Ikeda is transformational leadership embodied as he walks among us and teaches that, "Education must inspire the faith that each of us has both the power and the responsibility to effect positive change on a global scale" (Ikeda, 2003).

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