



Integral Business: How to Make a Difference and Make Money While Doing What You Love

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Abstract

Given that most people want to have careers that integrate their needs both to make a difference and make money, why do so few do so? Based on a synthesis of integral theory and applied practice, this paper proposes an explanation for why it's often much harder to build careers and organizations that embrace such a dual mission rather than ones that are strictly for-profit or non-profit; explains five reasons why addressing this challenge is one of the largest opportunities in the field of integral business; and proposes three key principles for doing so. In doing so, it also proposes a novel way of approaching the field; a new definition of integral business; and a theoretical discovery regarding the core dynamics of psychological and spiritual growth.

Introduction

In working with hundreds of conscious businesses over the past five years, we noticed a curious pattern. The more conscious the business leaders were, and the more committed the organization was to making a difference in the world, the more difficult they found it to be for them to build a successful, profitable business – at least at first.

In other words, the more people were committed to both making money *and* making a difference, the more challenges they seemed to encounter.

This is the opposite of what we expected. We assumed there would be a high correlation between consciousness and success. We believed that consciousness was the ultimate competitive advantage. And we expected that it would be easier to build an organization that creates both money and meaning, rather than just one or the other.

Yet we found this often wasn't true. Or perhaps more accurately, that it was only half true – that while on the one hand conscious business comes with great gifts and opportunities (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003) on the other hand it also comes with some equally great challenges.

The more we explored this pattern, the deeper and more pervasive we found it to be. In retrospect, we can now see how integrating money and meaning has been a problem – often times the defining problem – in virtually every purpose driven organization we've worked with, including our own. Despite this, very few organizations appear to even be aware of the roots of this challenge, let alone have the tools to effectively address it.

We believe that learning how to help people create careers and organizations that integrate both money and meaning is one of the primary opportunities integral business has for creating value

in the world. When defined this way, vast numbers of people already *want* to do integral business – they just don’t know how. Under many names (corporate social responsibility, social entrepreneurship, spirituality in business, positive organizational scholarship, conscious business, venture philanthropy, etc.) the drive to create organizations and careers that are both purposeful and profitable is one of the largest and most exciting trends on the planet right now.

Furthermore, we’ve found that an integral perspective is virtually required in order to diagnose the root causes of the challenges that come up in these types of purpose driven businesses.

This paper, along with the accompanying animated videos at www.integralcoaching.org, explores this core challenge; proposes a new theory to explain it; shows why addressing this challenge is so important; offers a definition of what it means to do integral business from this perspective; and presents three core principles for integrating spirituality and business.

Related Work

In the general field of purpose driven business, most of the previous work has been either descriptive, prescriptive, or anecdotally based. Work like *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America* (Mitroff & Denton, 1999), *Megatrends 2010* (Aburdene, 2005), *The Cultural Creatives* (Ray & Anderson, 2000), *How to Change the World* (Bornstein, 2007), and *The New Wellness Revolution* (Pilzer, 2007) describe how businesses *are* becoming more purpose driven. Work like *The Cluetrain Manifesto* (Levine, Locke, Searls, & Weinberger, 2001), *The Speed of Trust* (Covey, 2006), and much of the popular media, argue why businesses *should* become more purpose driven. And work like *The Corporate Mystic* (Hendricks & Ludeman, 1996) and *Conscious Entrepreneurs* (Kloser, 2008) provide suggested solutions, but based primarily on anecdotal experience.

In the specific field of integral business, most of the previous work has used an explicitly integral approach, based on asking the question “*how can we apply integral maps to traditional theories of business?*” Work like *Good for Business* (Edwards, 2004) and *Integral Business and Leadership* (Burke, Forman, Thomas, & Putz, 2006), show how AQAL maps relate to business, rather than offering specific solutions.

This paper focuses on creating solutions to an acknowledged need in a way that’s equally grounded in theory and practice. It’s based on the model described in *From Theory to Practice: Turning Integral Genius into Widely Applicable Wisdom* (Whetten, 2008). In line with work like *Conscious Business* (Kofman, 2006) and *Presence* (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2004), it starts with an acknowledged, underserved need, uses the broadest possible theoretical maps to understand and diagnose the problems involved with that need, and then completes the process by creating a set of grounded, implicitly integral solutions that don’t require an understanding of AQAL to understand or put into practice.

Please note that an earlier version of this material appeared in the *Integral Leadership Review* (Whetten, *Integral Business: How to Make a Difference and Make Money While Doing What You Love*, May, 2010).

The Challenge

The division between profit-driven and purpose-driven work goes so deep we often take it for granted.

To simplify Maslow's hierarchy, we all have three levels of needs: survival, success and fulfillment. In integral theory, these correspond to the three levels of body, mind and spirit. And in the workplace, they equal the difference between having a job, a career, or a calling (Conway, 2007). All three levels of needs are important, and given how Western culture has become rich enough that people now *drive* to their protests, the desire to create meaningful, purpose driven work is becoming an increasingly important priority.

Most people want to have careers that create high levels of both money and meaning. Yet few do.

At the individual level, notice how often people who are pursuing their calling feel they have to sacrifice their financial success in order to do so.

And at the organizational level, notice how we've divided the world

into for-profits and non-profits. For-profit companies are measured by how much money they create, while non-profits are measured by how much of a difference they make. Market fundamentalists such as Milton Friedman argue that it's actually immoral for corporate executives to reduce profits in order to do good in the world, while non-profit organizations aren't legally allowed to make a profit (Friedman, 1970).

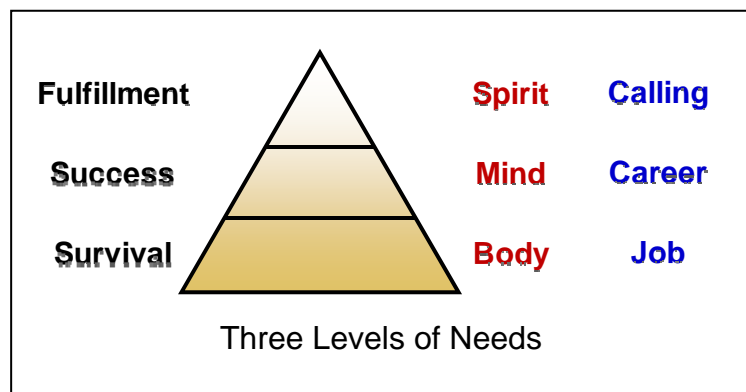
So why is this? Why does it seem to so many people like they have to pick one or the other?

For employees, at least part of this dynamic can be explained by the idea that people are paid in multiple currencies. From this perspective, total compensation is the sum of the money and meaning received. So one reason teachers have lower salaries than investment bankers is because they receive more meaning from their work.

And yet, particularly for entrepreneurs, executives and self-employed professionals, there also seems to be something much deeper going on.

Consider these examples.

Purpose Driven Practice Builders. At Core Coaching, much of our work has involved training coaches, counselors and healers how to market their services and fill their practices. Because of how meaningful their work is, these self-employed professionals tend to love providing their services. Yet we've found that almost all of them have a deep aversion to going out and proactively selling their services, and the more conscious they are, the more profound this





conflict tends to be. It shows up in many ways, such as procrastination around enrollment activities, difficulty charging what their services are worth, and an assumption that “if I build it they will come.”

Self Help Organizations. This conflict between sales and service has also shown up in each self-help organization we’ve had the opportunity to work with. Here’s a typical pattern. The organization starts when the leaders create a set of offerings that have a natural, relatively untapped market. Word of mouth creates an initial level of success – perhaps a best-selling book and a series of successful training seminars – and then as competition enters the market, the organization hits a wall. In order to turn things around, the leaders then have to face a deep resistance to enrollment (“can’t we just hire someone to do that?”) as well as a strong tendency to under-price their offerings (“the problem must be that we’re charging too much.”) Few make this transition successfully, causing many organizations to struggle and fail.

Medical Doctors. Being a doctor used to be one of the few professions that created a high level of money and meaning without having to deal with issues of money and fees. Because insurance paid for everything, doctors were largely able to divorce sales from service. No longer. Doctors are becoming increasingly upset with their profession because of the difficulties in dealing with the business side of things (“I feel like I need an MBA in order to keep my practice going.”) And the costs of the system are quickly becoming unsustainable, because the divorce between sales and service has created the incentive for doctors and patients to order as many tests and services as possible, rather than selecting care based on the level of value it provides.

Network Marketing. Network marketing has largely become split between the people who are part of these organizations (and love it) and those that aren’t (and hate it). This is because network marketing involves selling to people you care about – by definition, it requires integrating spirituality (love, meaning and care) with business (sales and profits). Yet few people are able to do this well, particularly without specific training.

Two Ways of Looking at Stages of Development

The more work we’ve done with individuals and organizations seeking both to make money and make a difference, the deeper and more pervasive we’ve found the conflict between these two goals to be. And its symptoms often have a strong emotional component. People find themselves avoiding the conflict, upset over the conflict, feeling insecure and unworthy over the conflict, or playing the victim over the conflict.

And surprisingly, the more conscious people are, the deeper this conflict often seems to be.

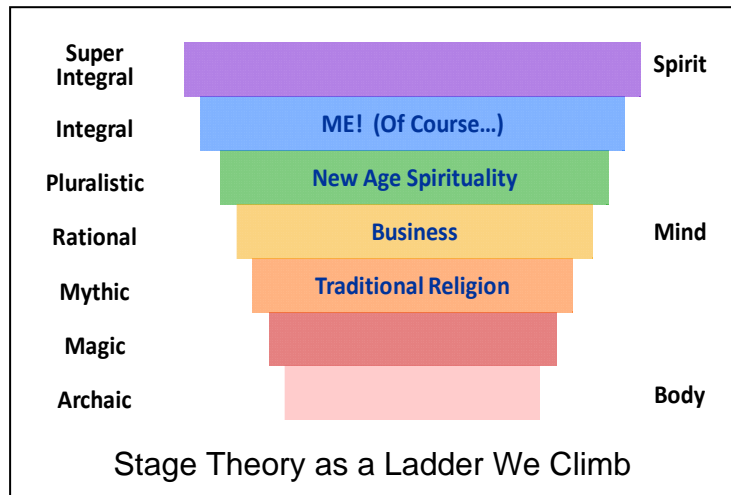
So why is this? Integral theory provides an answer – but in order to grasp it, I found I first had to shift the way I looked at stage theory.

(You can view a series of short animated videos on this topic – and on this distinction in particular – at www.integralcoaching.org.)

One of the foundational principles of integral theory is that evolution proceeds through a set of stages. As we start our journey, our primary identification is with our body. Then it evolves through identification with our mind, and into identification with our soul and spirit.

This is a key discovery. And as we connect with the power of this pattern, a natural temptation is to start categorizing people and organizations according to “what color they are.”

I did this for years. To me, traditional religion was blue (until it got renamed amber). Business was orange. New age spirituality was green. And of course, with all my insecurities, I had to be at the top of the pyramid, where I could look down on all those poor non-integral people out there.



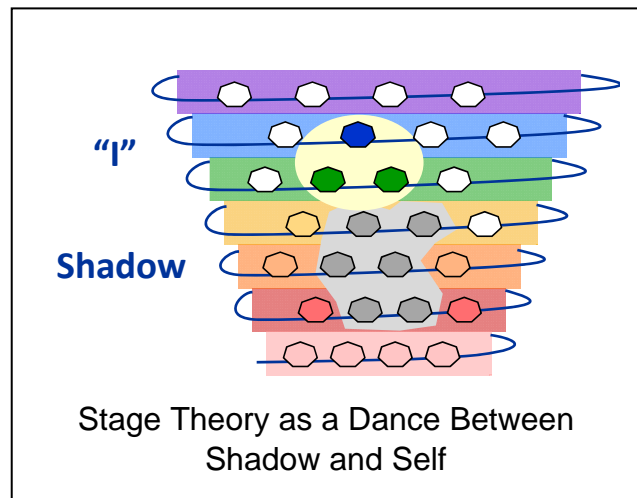
But the more I engaged in my integral life practice, the more something changed. Evolution started looking less and less like a ladder, and more like a dance.

In this dance, the process of evolution is still based on developing a stage, transcending it, and then including and integrating the prior stage.

And because we all have wounds and issues, as we grow we create a shadow, and then repress most of it into our unconscious mind.

As the dance continues, we find that our journey becomes increasingly dominated by a tension between two forces: our conscious self with its desire to grow and get our needs met, and our shadow with its seeming desire to block that growth.

While our conscious self may embrace both our urge to move the dance forward while integrating what’s come before, our shadow seems to pull us back. It’s like our conscious self is a hot air balloon seeking to rise upwards, and our shadow is the ballast holding it down.



But here’s the thing. Although our shadow may *seem* to want to block our growth, what it yearns for is to be healed. And healing creates growth. While our shadow’s symptoms may present themselves as painful emotions and dysfunctional patterns, each time our shadow

surfaces it's really coming up to be loved, healed and integrated. And as we do so, we naturally continue forwards with the dance.

While it's easy to focus on "what level of the spiral something is at," the entire spiral also exists inside us at each moment. In fact, it defines our experience of life.

At the top of the spiral is everything we most want in life, such as love, joy, inspiration, creativity and deep happiness. At the bottom of the spiral is everything we least want in life, such as death, fear, guilt, anger and shame.

When we're living near the bottom of the spiral, life looks like a battle for survival. It's kill or be killed. When we're living from the top of the spiral, life looks and feels abundant.

A Core Challenge of Integral Business

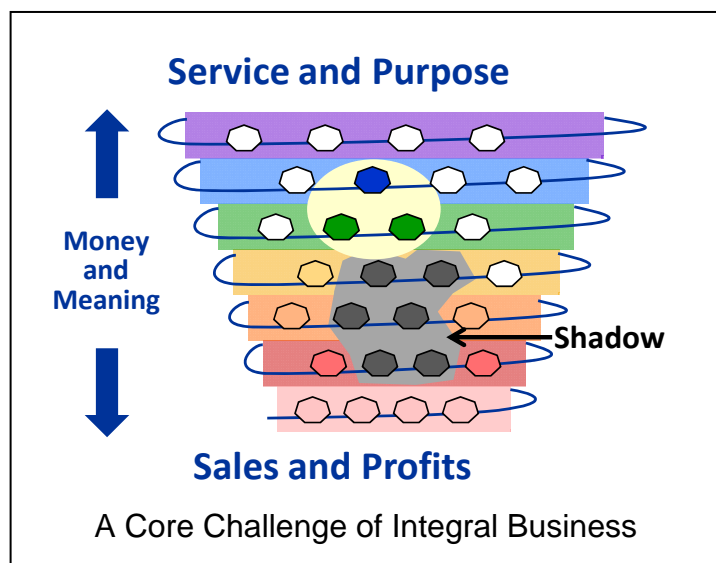
Traditional business tends to be conducted from the lower part of the spiral. While we tend to think of business as "being orange," the quest for money connects down to our deepest, most primal desires. When people say that "business is war," they're connecting to the places inside where money feels like oxygen, and business feels like a Darwinian struggle for survival.

Traditional business is founded on an assumption of competition and scarcity. For example, the law of supply and demand states that prices are set by competition over scarce resources.

In contrast, our need to make a difference connects up to the top of the spiral. Our desires to be of service and live a purpose filled life come out of our very heart and soul. For example, the spiritual teacher John-Roger says that "service is the highest form of consciousness on the planet." When we're being of service doing what we love, we're automatically lifted high on the ladder.

And there's the challenge. When we commit ourselves to building a business that provides both money and meaning, what we're doing is seeking to grab the top and the bottom of the spiral at the same time. We're seeking to reach up to the heavens while staying planted on the earth.

When we do so, everything we have yet to heal – all our remaining shadow aspects – automatically start coming to the surface.



Bringing the Shadow to Light

As described by integral theory, evolution is fundamentally a process of integration. It's a process of growing in consciousness, not by escaping the duality of the physical world, but by simultaneously transcending and including it, as we evolve in our awareness of Spirit. We do so through a process of thesis, antithesis, synthesis – first embracing one side of a perceived conflict, then the other, and then lifting to a point in consciousness where we're able to embrace both sides at once.

From this perspective, our shadow can be described as *our collection of unresolved perceived conflicts*. When we grab a single side of a polarity, we automatically tend to send the other side into exile. The inner aspects we associate with being a “good boy” remain conscious, while those we associate with being a “bad boy” get repressed.

Another way we deal with our unresolved conflicts is through compartmentalization, such as when an executive treats her family as a place for love and her business as a place for ruthless, success-at-all-costs competition. In this case, we act out one side of a polarity in one context, and then the opposite side in another – we deal with our shadow not by integrating our conflicts directly, but by creating different “sandboxes” where it feels safe to play with both sides.

We use these tactics because directly healing and integrating our conflicts isn't easy. And this challenge of integration continues as we evolve. Where someone at a “magic” level of consciousness has two stages worth of conflicts to integrate, someone at an “integral” level has six.

In coaching conscious business leaders, my experience has been that when someone fully commits to creating a business that equally integrates both money (i.e. the “thesis” at the bottom of the spiral) and meaning (i.e. the “anti-thesis” at the top of the spiral) all their unresolved shadow issues (i.e. the conflicts in the way of “synthesis”) automatically start coming forward. This pattern is one of the deepest and most consistent psycho-spiritual dynamics I have observed.

Proposition: *The more an individual or organization simultaneously seeks to embrace two sides of a polarity, the more their unresolved shadow issues will automatically surface for healing.*

For example, one student in our six month practice building teleclass spent the first two months of the program on mute, as she showed up each week and cried for up to two hours at a time. And for me, selling my coaching services has brought up layer upon layer of inner conflicts, despite having had years of prior success as a Silicon Valley entrepreneur.

As an analogy, imagine that your consciousness is a towel, and your shadow is some dirty water it's absorbed. Building a business that integrates both money and meaning has the same effect as stretching and twisting the towel – it wrings out the water inside. This process tends to be both scary and painful, and so we often judge the process and seek to avoid it.

We tend to assume that leadership is about somehow moving beyond the place where we get upset or feel torn over our inner conflicts. Yet the reality is that integral business leadership is



all about embracing these conflicts. And the more committed we are to conscious business, the more profound this challenge – and this opportunity – becomes.

The more we seek to create an organization that both makes money and makes a difference, the more of the spiral we're seeking to integrate, and the more opportunities for deep personal and spiritual growth we'll receive.

Most people don't understand this dynamic, let alone know how to work with it – even if they're highly conscious. Scratch the surface of almost any spiritually driven organization, and you'll find a remarkable – and remarkably consistent – set of dysfunctions.

(This is not to say that traditional businesses don't have emotional conflicts. “What we resist, persists.” While embracing our issues brings them up for healing, repression causes them to show up in other, usually even less productive ways, which is why the majority of unresolved issues in all businesses – both conscious and unconscious – tend not to be intellectual or ideological, but emotional in nature.)

Conscious business requires a conscious commitment to working with your shadow. But few people do this. Instead, either they accept the strict divorce we've created between for-profit and non-profit organizations, or else they jump into the fire, and then wonder why it hurts so much.

Proposition: *The more an organization's mission includes both making money and making a difference, the more its members' shadow issues and inner conflicts will surface as they seek to pursue this mission. This is a core challenge of integral business.*

This challenge plays out at both the individual and the organizational level. For individuals, it shows up as upset emotions and interpersonal conflicts.

For organizations, it shows up a permanent tension at the heart of the company, which can't be resolved, and must be managed instead.

In one key way, it's easier to run a Fortune 500 company than it is to run a family business. By definition, a family business is a purpose driven business – its mission is based on integrating the values of love and family with the values of money and business. In a standard company, all disagreements can be resolved according to a single standard: what makes more money? But a purpose driven business is always one decision away from a civil war, because its mission is built on two sets of radically different values.

For example, if the CEO of a family business wants to fire Uncle Harry because of incompetence, half the family might say this is absolutely the right choice (i.e. “business profits should be our top value”) while the other might say this is absolutely the wrong choice (i.e. “supporting the family should be our top value”).

Learning how to manage this conflict between money and meaning is one of the primary tasks of integral business leadership.

And this conflict is so profound and pervasive that it's one of the defining challenges of integral business.

Defining Integral Business from this Perspective

From this perspective, we define at least one class of integral business as follows:

Proposition: *An organization that meets the following two criteria is an integral business.*

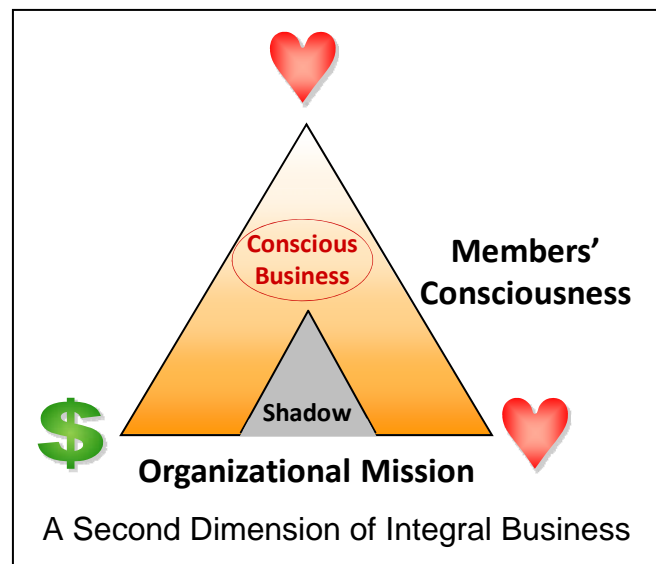
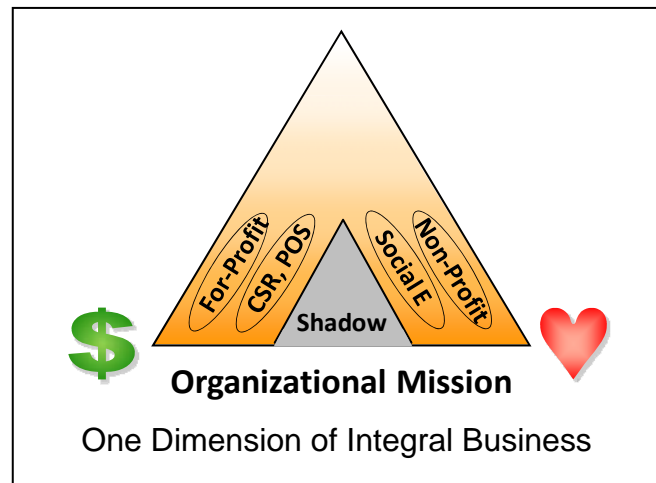
- 1) *The organization's mission is based on a dual commitment to both making money and making a difference.*
- 2) *The organization's members have a conscious practice of working with the conflicts and issues this dual mission automatically brings forward.*

In contrast, most of the existing conversations in the purpose driven business space have focused solely around questions of organizational mission. These conversations recognize that where in the past, we've had a strict compartmentalization between for-profit and non-profit organizations, there's an opportunity and widespread desire to create organizations that integrate these two extremes.

For-profits are seeking to embrace more of a sense of meaning and purpose, such as through the corporate social responsibility and positive organizational scholarship movements. Non-profits are seeking to embrace more of a sense of financial self-sufficiency, such as through the social enterprise and venture philanthropy movements.

The problem is that when this is the only dimension that's addressed, the actual process of building these hybrid organizations turns out to be much tougher than expected.

Conscious business (i.e. integral business or purpose driven business) can't just be defined by the consciousness of an organization's mission. It also has to be defined by the consciousness of the members that are pursuing that mission. It requires looking both at what the company *does*, and the way its people *are*.



The Opportunity for Integral Business

Defined this way, integral business is a really big deal. And it's being driven by some of the biggest trends on the planet today.

The first trend is the way that ever more people want careers that create both money and meaning. It's the rare person today who feels they can bring their whole self to work, yet the majority of people deeply want to (Mitroff & Denton, 1999).

The second trend is the rapid expansion of holistic wellness as a market. This market is now over \$500 billion a year, and continuing to grow rapidly (Pilzer, 2007). For holistic practitioners and other purpose driven practice builders, conscious business isn't a luxury. It's a necessity.

The third trend is the increasing dysfunction in our traditional health care systems. Doctors used to have the rare privilege of having careers that created both money and meaning without having to deal with this core challenge of conscious business. No longer.

The fourth trend is the need for sustainability. The great strength of capitalism is its capacity for exponential economic expansion. The great challenge of capitalism is its *addiction* to that expansion (Whetten, *The Real Roots of the Financial Crisis*, 2009). As Albert Einstein said, "a problem cannot be solved at the same level at which it was created." In order to create a sustainable future for this planet, business has to evolve and become more conscious.

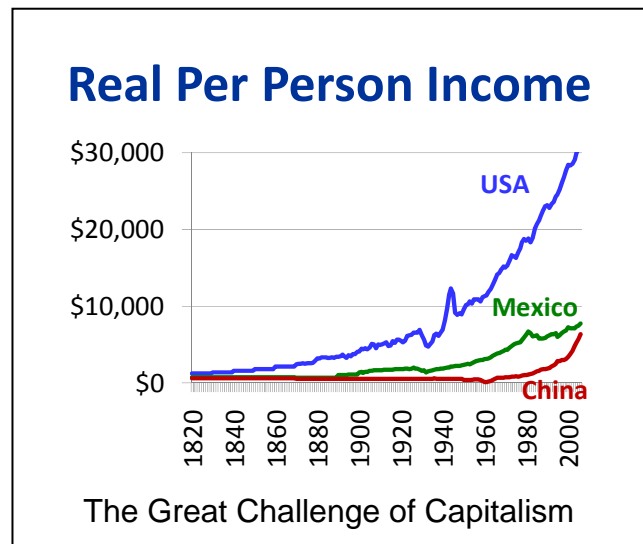
The fifth trend is the current financial crisis, which is discrediting market fundamentalism, and weakening Wall Street's power to dictate business values and hold companies hostage to short term quarterly earnings (Whetten, *Goldman, Wall Street and Financial Terrorism*, 2010).

Together, these trends add up to a megatrend. In fact, in *Megatrends 2010* Patricia Aburdene predicts that conscious business is going to be *the* megatrend of the next decade (Aburdene, 2005).

So there's a tremendous opportunity for conscious business. What's the problem?

First, most leaders don't understand this core challenge of integral business. Spirituality and business have been compartmentalized so strictly, and for so long, that we have very few role models for what a healthy integration looks like. While most people are aware of the emotional and spiritual dysfunctions that riddle companies, few people understand the roots of these symptoms.

The second challenge is that even for the people who get the problem, very few people have adequate tools for healing their shadow and working with their conflicts as they come up.



And the third challenge is that traditional business tactics often don't work very well when they're applied to conscious businesses. In many cases, business practices need to be re-invented in order to be able to function in this new environment.

Three Keys for Combining Spirituality and Business

So how do we work with these challenges? We've been asking this question, on our own and with our clients, over the past five years. What we've found are three keys for combining spirituality and business. These keys arise out of a combination of theory and practice. They're grounded in the core needs and challenges conscious businesses face, while also drawing on an understanding of integral theory. In particular, they're informed by the following.

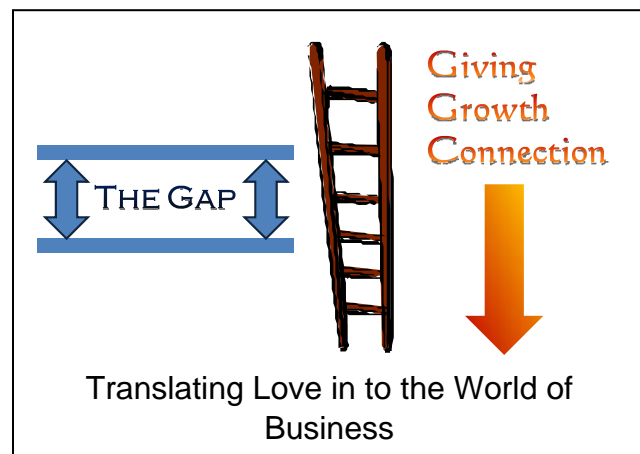
- **Stages of Development.** Evolution, as the hand of Spirit-in-action, proceeds from identification with body to mind to spirit. This process is not about escaping the body and mind, but about integrating them.
- **The Role of Shadow.** As competent adults, our shadow often becomes the primary block to our continued development. So in service to our evolutionary journey, our shadow regularly comes up for healing. And one of the most important shifts we can make is from fighting or judging this process, to embracing it.
- **Transcend and Include.** Healthy evolution involves a process of transcending and including all that has come before. As our primary identification and locus of control shifts upwards, the key is to integrate the lower and put it in service to the higher.

When it comes to the core challenge of conscious business, we've found that bridging the gap between traditional business (which connects down to the bottom of the spiral) and service consciousness (which connects up to the top) requires reinventing much of the way that business is done. It requires taking the higher value system and translating it into the world of the lower, by asking the question, "*what does business look like when it's done from a place of love?*"

Proposition: *Integrating two values systems (i.e. money and meaning) requires translating the values of the higher into the world of the lower (i.e. transcend and include).*

In our experience, mature love, meaning, and spirituality are largely synonymous. They involve *growth, giving and connection*. These are three of the core values involved in reaching towards the top of the spiral. They are three of the primary ways we're able to meet our needs for meaning and fulfillment. And they're three of the primary aspects of mature love.

So, "*what does business look like when it's done from a place of growth, giving and*



connection?”

One answer is that it’s based on the following three keys for combining spirituality and business.

- **Provide Exceptional Value (Giving)**
- **Adopt a Learning Orientation to Life (Growth)**
- **Only Connect (Connection)**

(You can view another set of short animated videos, which walk through these three keys in a way that speaks specifically to purpose driven practice builders, at www.sellingbygiving.net)

Provide Exceptional Value (Giving)

The first key is to adopt a total commitment to providing exceptional value. This translates the ethic of *giving* into the context of business. And it provides a safety net that frees us from having to be perfect. We all have aspects of ourselves that yearn to give and aspects that yearn to take. To our most physical aspects, money can feel like oxygen, and business can feel like a battle for survival. Even when we feel like giving in to these aspects, a total commitment to providing exceptional value ensures that each transaction is a gift. It also creates self-trust and allows us to strive for excellence instead of perfection.

Another way of stating this principle is that it involves adopting a paradigm of *win/win or no deal*.

At the bottom of the spiral (which I often draw as a ladder when speaking to non-integrally informed audiences) relationships are based on lose/lose. They’re about war, violence and revenge. If we move up a bit, we find a choice between winning and losing – between win/lose and lose/win. Then at the next rung, we find the win/win relationships that most conscious business builders say they want.

But here’s the thing – what happens when a relationship can’t be win/win? For example, there are lots of people who wouldn’t get exceptional value from the services Core Coaching offers. If we try to take one of those relationships and force it into a win/win, then someone’s going to lose.

In contrast, a true commitment to providing exceptional value is based on a paradigm of win/win or no deal. It recognizes that the strength of our yes can only be as strong as the strength of our no. So instead of feeling like we need to serve everyone, it involves seeking out only the relationships that are a mutual fit.



Adopt a Learning Orientation to Life (Growth)

The second key is to embrace the inner conflicts that conscious business brings up, and use our negative emotions as opportunities for learning, upliftment and growth. This step translates the ethic of *growth* in to the context of business.

This means fundamentally changing our relationship with the gap between our most physical and most spiritual aspects (which shows up when we embrace both money and meaning). Instead of seeing it as a bad thing, or as something we want to eliminate, our opportunity is to embrace the conflict and use it as a vehicle for spiritual growth.

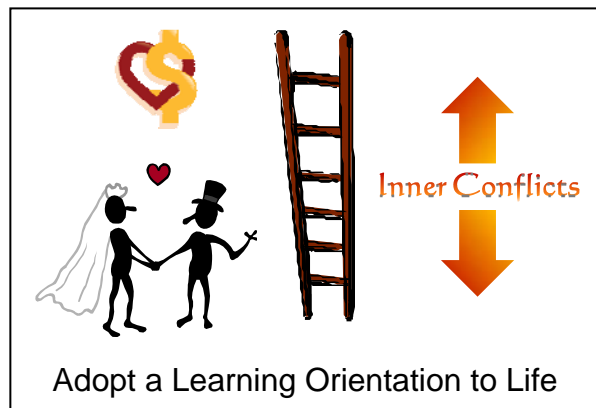
And what an opportunity it is. Do you remember your teenage years, and the fantasy of finding “the one” who will make everything okay, so you can live happily ever after? In this fairy tale, the purpose of marriage is to find someone who will make us happy – all the time, and without having to work for it.

In reality, the true purpose of marriage is to find someone who will challenge us, who will trigger our deepest issues – and who will also support us in healing those issues. A conscious marriage is an amazing thing. It’s much more difficult than a fairy tale. And it’s also much more rewarding.

Being committed to building a conscious business is similar.

Building a business that provides both money and meaning requires marrying some of our most extreme polarities together, and then using the challenges that come up as opportunities for learning, upliftment and growth. It means creating a conscious marriage inside ourselves.

As strange as it may seem at first, I’ve found my practice of doing conscious sales – and then working with the conflicts that come up in this process – to be one of the most powerful spiritual practices in my entire integral life practice.



Only Connect (Connection)

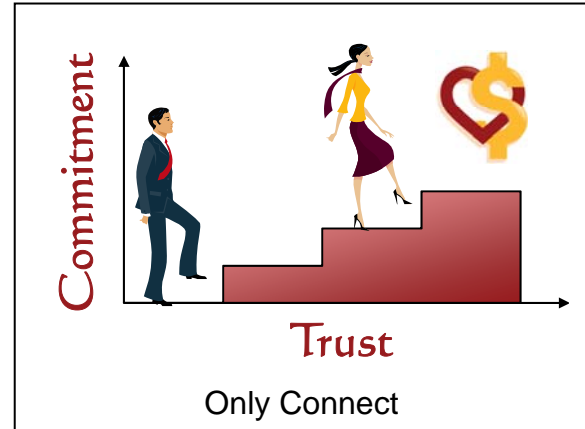
The third key is to Only Connect. This translates the ethic of *connection* into the world of business. When a salesman knocks on our door, or a telemarketer calls during dinner, we tend to react defensively. Few people like “being sold,” because most sales and marketing is based on interruption (Godin, 1999). It's based on someone trying to take our attention from what we care about, and focus it on something they want us to buy.

But one of the key things about love is that it doesn’t inflict itself on others. Only Connect involves creating authentic connections based on permission and invitation. It means listening

more than talking, seeking to understand someone else's world rather than selling them on yours, and doing our best to make each conversation an invited gift.

We're often acutely aware of the dangers of interruption based marketing, and so we may run away from sales instead. I often meet coaches, counselors and healers who are great at making connections and giving away their services, but who struggle to turn those efforts into successful sales.

And that brings us to the other half of Only Connect – building relationships based on stair steps of trust and commitment. It's like dating, where we get to know each other, build trust, and then if it's a mutual fit, we agree to step up to the next level of commitment.



We tend to get this when it comes to dating, yet with sales, most people either propose on the first date (i.e. hard sales) or they never ask for commitment at all (i.e. build it and they will come.)

Selling By GivingSM

These three keys form the foundation for how to integrate spirituality with business. Then the next step involves taking the different aspects of traditional business and re-evaluating them from this new perspective.

As one example of this, we've created a system for conscious business called Selling By Giving. It starts with an integral understanding and these three keys of conscious business, and then walks through six primary elements of business: motivation, value, profitability, marketing, sales and positioning, and redefines each of them from this new perspective. Not as a theoretical exercise, but as a set of tools and practices that have created radical results for hundreds of conscious businesses.

In doing so, much to our surprise, we've found that what we'd judged as some of the least spiritual aspects of life – sales and marketing – have turned into some of the most profound opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.

(If you're interested, you can download a free overview of Selling By Giving by visiting www.sellingbygiving.net and registering for the free practice building kit. While tailored specifically for practice builders, we've found that 80-90% of the system also applies to the larger conscious businesses we've worked with.)

Future Work

Both the principles in this paper and the Selling By Giving system originally emerged out of our work with purpose driven practice builders – self-employed coaches, counselors, healers, and other types of heart centered service professionals.

This has made things easier to understand, as it involved working with a relatively tractable example of the challenges and opportunities of conscious business. Our practice building clients are their own organizations, and they are typically so committed to making a living while being of service that they have no other option than to practice conscious business.

However, in doing so we've primarily worked with the upper two quadrants. Much of our current and future work involves applying these principles and systems to larger organizations, and seeing how organizational dynamics affect the findings presented in this paper.

We also want to further explore the shadow dynamic proposed in this paper (how unresolved issues automatically surface when we reach for both the top and the bottom of the spiral, such as when we combine our needs for money and meaning) both in terms of validating this dynamic across different contexts and in terms of exploring additional approaches for addressing it.

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About the Author

Brian serves as a coach, author, speaker and facilitator. By the age of 30, he had received a Ph.D. in C.S. from U.C. Berkeley, raised \$20 million for two startups, become an internationally known speaker and academic, made and lost millions – and burnt out twice. This was followed by six years of deep inner work and a M.A. in Spiritual Psychology from the University of Santa Monica, and he now focuses on the integration of spirituality, psychology and business. He serves as the President of Core Coaching, is the founder of Selling By Giving and writes a conscious business column for the Huffington Post.



For more information, please feel free to visit www.integralcoaching.org and www.sellingbygiving.net.