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A TRANSPERSONAL HEURISTIC INQUIRY INTO A LEARNING
ORGANIZATION UNDERGOING TRANSFORMATION

by

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Abstract

A Transpersonal Heuristic Inquiry Into a Learning Organization Undergoing Transformation

By

Kazimierz Gozdz

This transpersonal heuristic inquiry explored the personal and communal experience of transformation of 3 female and 9 male senior executives, all in mid- to late mid-life, who participated in their Fortune 100 size corporation's process of undergoing fundamental change to become a learning organization. The research design enabled a congruence between a transpersonal metaphysics and praxis. It blended intuitive inquiry, heuristic, and organic methodologies and encouraged collaboration between researcher and co-researchers. Data were gathered through an initial field study, followed by in-depth open-ended interviews with each co-researcher. Heuristic portraits developed from the transcribed interviews. Co-researchers participated in the shaping of the portraits by providing clarification and making corrections to verify that the truth of their experience was recorded. After co-researchers approved the portraits, a grounded theory thematic analysis was conducted by computer program. The 12 portraits conveyed a thick description of the whole of the experience of personal and communal transformation; 5 major themes conveyed its particulars. As this corporation became a learning organization, fundamental change occurred at multiple interdependent ontological levels: personal, communal, organizational, and interorganizational. The CEO's tacit praxis of

transformation was made explicit whereby credibility and moral authority to lead were commensurate with the depth and breadth of the target change. Executives who exercised self-awareness and the leadership attributes of vulnerability, authenticity, humility, and a posture of not knowing and openness were able to balance these 2 domains. A critical factor in this transformation experience was a governance change resulting in a devolution of corporate and executive power. Findings from this inquiry suggested the need for (a) a transpersonal organizational psychology, and (b) research on transpersonal leadership and organizational learning.

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