

CHAPTER SEVEN

Personal (Micro) System Development

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving. To reach the port of heaven, we must sail, sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor.
Oliver Wendell Holmes

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An Introspective Overview of Personal System Development (PSD)

Personal System Development (PSD). PSD concerns human growth and development throughout one's lifetime. And for the learnership practitioner, it represents a thinking, learning, knowing and leading maturation process. The goal of self-fulfillment satisfies the ontological need for a "sense of purpose," and is best attained through interdependent growth and development in our character, ability, and health subsystems. The *character subsystem* highlights continuous refinement of our values, morals, ethics, and civic standards that establish how one relates with others in families, organizations, and communities. The *ability subsystem* concerns what we are able to accomplish in terms of applied knowledge, skill, and experience. And, the *health subsystem* focuses on our development of substantial mental, emotional, and physical capacity to perform desired human and social functions. Ideally, these three subsystems operate over time in a mutually reinforcing manner enabling us to learn and express the meaning and direction of our lives. Our lifelong learning objective is to achieve self-fulfillment.

Achieving Self-Fulfillment. The desired synergy among the subsystems is thought to increase a person's capacity to achieve fulfillment. Self-fulfillment is the term used, herein, to represent a desired end-state such as self-actualization, personal mastery, peak performance and other similar expressions of our self-described highest level of experience, satisfaction, or *being*. As experiences and goals evolve throughout our life journey, changes in what we consider to be fulfilling occur also.

While self-fulfillment is uniquely determined by each individual, it is accomplished within the values and expectations of the larger community. Many writers have studied human growth and development within the context of what the relevant community comes to view as esteemed attitudes and behavior. From this research, recognized *patterns* have emerged which establish the predominant attributes of self-fulfillment; those human characteristics that are well regarded by the community. These *patterns* are most often in evidence in individuals who have attained their highest maturity, which usually occurs later in life. These people are highly respected within the community because of their higher level of understanding, wisdom, and personal accomplishment.

A number of authors' perspectives, whose writings contribute to an understanding of the process of self-fulfillment, are considered in the succeeding section. It is noteworthy, however, to first observe the *objective* and *process* dimensions of self-fulfillment that are recognizable. As an objective, or end-state, self-fulfillment is seen as *achieving sought after personal objectives*. And, when viewed as a process, self-fulfillment is seen as resulting from *being fully in the experience*. Together, they convey the wholeness of self-fulfillment and the notion of a *higher level-of-being*.

Further consideration of this chapter's topics and supporting perspectives from contributing authors are anchored in the Personal System Development (PSD) for self-fulfillment model in Figure 7-1. Illustrated are the following features:

1. Micro-Cognitive Reasoning. Illustrated are the *four learnership social systems* with this chapter's emphasis being at the *personal micro-level*.

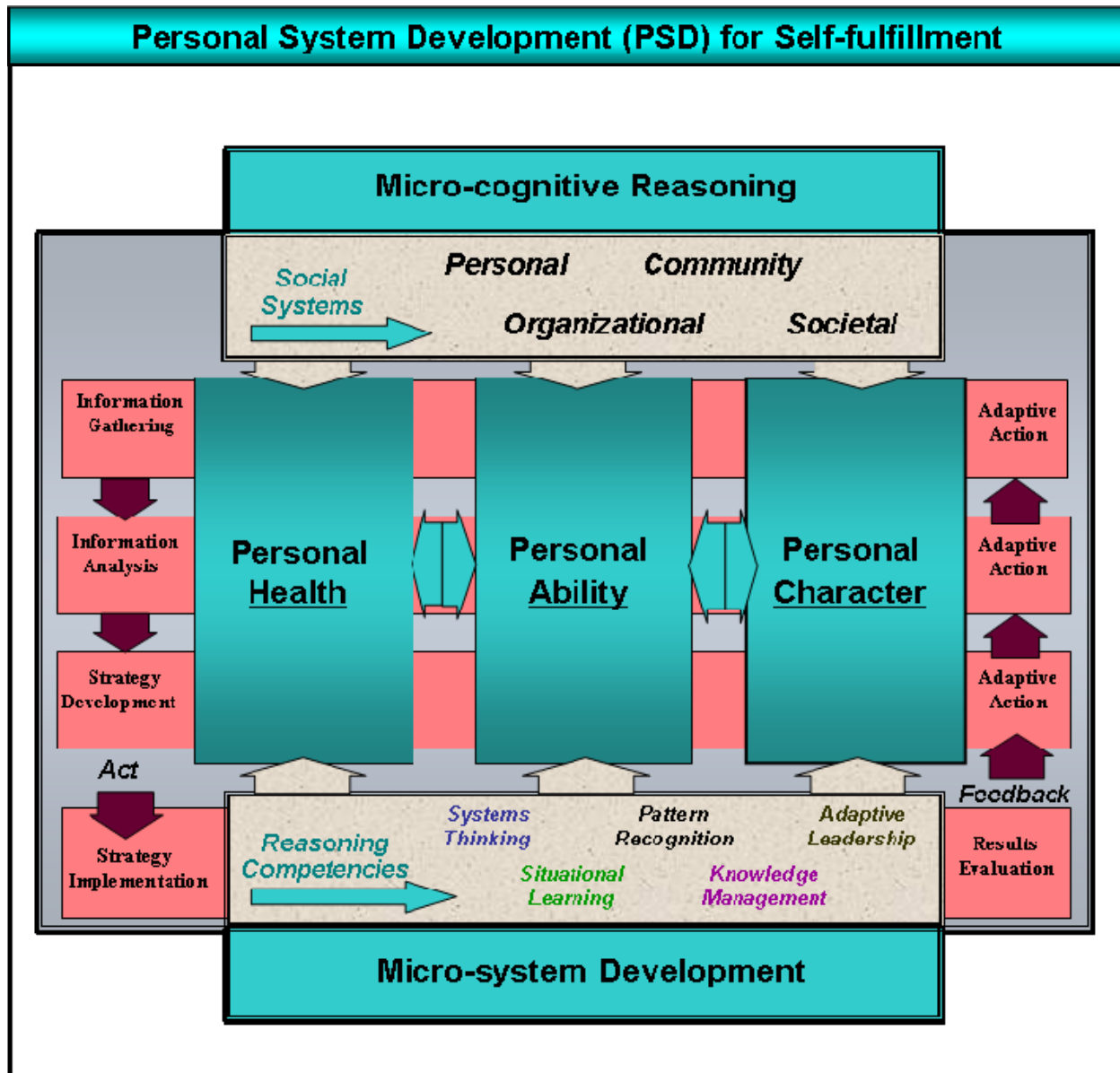


Figure 7-1

2. Personal Health Subsystem. The health subsystem emphasizes physical, cognitive, and emotional development.
3. Personal Ability Subsystem. The ability subsystem focuses on knowledge, skills, and aptitude development.
4. Personal Character Subsystem. The character subsystem applies to values, morals, attitude, and behavioral development.
5. Micro-Systems Development. Illustrate the five reasoning competencies that can be used to maximize personal social system development.

6. Information Processing Model. Illustrates a general approach to problem solving and decision making throughout one's personal life: Gather and analyze information, develop a strategy and implement it, observe and take corrective action, if required.

[Author's Note: A significant point to make at this juncture is that during Part One (Chapters 1 through 6) the Five Learnership Reasoning Competencies have been integrated into a comprehensive Total Knowledge Management (TKM) framework. That "total learning, knowing, and leading" framework has been embedded in the Learnership Integrated Systems Architecture (LISA) and all the principles, practices, and technologies of TKM are conceptually available, and should be appropriately applied, for full personal social systems development.]

Attention now focuses on selected perspectives that enrich this topic. Each offers unique insights to an important psycho-social aspect of human growth and development, and it is recommended that that readers return regularly to Figure 7-1 to reflect on new insights offered by the authors selected. The following list of professional perspectives is provided as an overview of the more detailed concept summaries that follow. The summary at the end of this chapter will serve to integrate these perspectives into a cohesive framework for understanding the Learnership Integrated Systems Framework (LISA) construct for personal system development.

Self-Image Perspectives:

- Structural Ontology for Social Systems
- One's Self-Image – self-images develop and mature over time
- A Mutable Self – an adaptable self that accommodates social change

Personal Development Perspectives:

- Stages in Adult Development – stages and sequence of ego-development
- Power Orientation and Development – power orientation and ego-maturity
- A Maturity Continuum – from dependence to interdependence
- Discipline and Human Evolution – from discipline to spiritual competence

Human Aspiration Perspectives:

- Experiencing Flow or Optimal Experience – being *fully in* an experience
- Man's Place in the Universe – foundations for spirituality and religion
- Achieving Self-Actualization – achieving full humanness and self-fulfillment

It's not the most difficult thing to know oneself, but the most inconvenient.
Josh Billings

Self-Image Perspectives

A Structural Ontology for Social Systems. Louis Gawthrop, author of Public Sector Management, Systems, and Ethics (1984) proposes that it is a basic issue for every individual to develop an understanding of their social ontology (basis for being). He suggests that having a sense of

identity (What do I stand for?) and a sense of faith (What can I hope for?) are essential elements of healthy social adjustment and development. In the context of this book on learnership, our task concerns the establishment of senses of purpose, consequence, history, and order:

1. The first concept concerns a sense of purpose which has to do with have a value-based goal or objective that creates purposefulness in the life of the individual, organization, or community. Without a purpose, most activity will appear to be disconnected and random causing a high degree of uncertainty about directions in which to head and procedures needing to be followed. The perspectives that follow abundantly illustrate this concern.
2. The second concept, a sense of consequence, acknowledges that all actions yield consequences. Ideally, all chosen courses of action should aid in accomplishing desired purposes, and responsibility for behavioral consequences should be attributed to those initiating action. The perspectives that follow indicate that higher levels-of-being are attainable through motivation and commitment to action.
3. The third concept, a sense of history, recognizes the historical linkages between past, present, and future, and establishes the perspective of a "steady evolutionary flow of time." This tends to provide a feeling of movement towards chosen objectives, and a belief that progress is being made. The perspectives that follow describe levels on a developmental continuum wherein individuals learn from experience and seek achievement.
4. The last concept is a sense of order which relates to the orderliness of individual and social life that allows choices to be made with partial predictability of likely outcomes. A sense of order includes an understanding of the relatedness (e.g., lower/higher) of phenomena and the recognition of system interrelationships. The perspectives that follow articulate essential relationships and a process for achieving higher levels of performance and self-fulfillment. The essence of Gawthrop's thesis appears to be that individuals (organizations and communities herein included) who establish self-awareness in terms of these ontological concepts frame their respective identities and place a foundation under their faith in what is yet to come.

One's Self-Image. In Change and Continuity in Adult Life (Fiske, 1990), the author focuses on the many ways in which adults view themselves and how their self-images change over time. She offers that: "Each of us carries around a self-image, or set of images about the self, that makes up what we see as the self. While these images may appear highly individualized and perhaps chaotic, certain patterns do emerge. These patterns constitute the individual's personality, the self-concept as viewed from outside the self." (p.20)

Her work suggests that each of us regularly review our self-image as it evolves from our personal histories, unique experiences, and the consequences of our choices to determine if what is revealed is satisfactory. In other words, what we stand for and where we are headed is our continuous concern, and is likely to become a personal issue should our self-critique yield less than

satisfactory results. It is probably safe to conclude that greater self-esteem, and achieving self-fulfillment are interrelated.

Fiske's longitudinal study of individuals over a 12-year period also revealed common patterns of goals and values that indicate what people typically seek in their life. The list (p.216) includes:

1. Achievement and Work. Competence, economic rewards, success, social status
2. Good Personal Relations. Love and affection, happy marriage, having good friends, belonging to groups
3. Philosophical and Religious. Living a spiritual life, doing God's work, having a philosophy of life, seeking the meaning of life, being wise, being morally good
4. Social Service. Helping others, serving the community, contributing to human welfare
5. Ease and Contentment. Freedom from hardship, security, self-maintenance, peace of mind, health, simple comforts
6. Seeking Enjoyment. Recreation, exciting experiences, entertainment, seeking pleasurable sights, sounds, feelings, and tastes
7. Personal Growth. Self-improvement, being creative, learning new things, knowing yourself, meeting and mastering new challenges

According to Fiske, most people are able to achieve some of their objectives, but a select few individuals (usually later in life) attain the ability to *function at the fullest* in terms of their goals and values. She associates the concept of *generativity* with them which may be defined as having full understanding of cultural tradition and the ability to dispense wisdom for the continuity and growth of the community.

A Mutable Self. In The Mutable Self: A Self-Concept for Social Change (Zurcher, 1977), the author poses the notion that there are four key components of self-concept: *physical self*, *social self*, *reflective self*, and *oceanic self*. He suggests that the pace and uncertainty of modern life tends to disrupt the needed balance among these selves causing individuals to focus disproportionately on one or the other resulting in self-limiting consequences. His thesis is that: "It is possible for people to develop *mutable selves* in which all four components are balanced and synthesized, purposely and productively for the individuals and for society" (p.14).

According to Zurcher, two aspects of the *self* must be recognized: (1) the self as process, and (2) the self as object. He states that: "In every day life the individual is engaged to a greater or lesser degree in a dialogue with social structure. The person may elect to minimize the dialogue (for reward, for simplicity, for certainty) by identifying closely or entirely with some specific piece of social structure (e.g., the church). Or the person may elect to maximize the dialogue with social structure, standing apart from it (though perhaps participating in it), reflexively, autonomously, continually evaluating the relationship. This again is a distinction between *self* as

process and *self* as object.” (p.27) A conclusion that may be made from this view is that when the locus of the individual's identity is based on external social structures (a stabilized or closed-issue approach), the *self* is understood objectively as being defined by those structures. On the other hand, when the individual moves the locus of his or her identity inward for subjective inquiry (an open-to-change and learning approach), the self is seen as accomplishing a needed transition in the human growth process, and is considered to be undergoing development.

Zurcher's concept of mutability is one in which flexible and resourceful individuals are able to move skillfully among their physical, social, reflective, and oceanic selves to achieve an appropriate, integrated, and balanced response to social situations. He notes that: "...though the motivational basis for the evolution of the Mutable *Self* may be survival, the definition of survival becomes increasingly more complex, increasingly more sophisticated, and increasingly more encompassing of a mutual understanding of the dignity of others' survival." (pp.218-219).

[Author's Note: The usefulness of these views within this study is notable in the dynamic tension between *stability and change, communality and individuality and between rights conferred and responsibilities accepted*. The latter item in each pair indicates movement away from the primacy of the "social external" to the growth of the "personal internal." Choices are required in the individual's developmental journey towards self-fulfillment.]

I guess the essence of life for me is finding something you really enjoy doing that gives meaning to life, and then being in a situation where you can do it.

Isaac Asimov

Personal Development Perspectives

Stages in Adult Development. In "The Psychological Development of Adults: Implications for Public Administration" (Schott, 1986), the author correlates the work of a number of adult development researchers—Jung, Erikson, Gould, Levinson, and Valliant (Figure 7-2). He suggests that there is a great deal of consistency in their findings, and that two major themes are recognizable. The first is that the adult psyche is continually unfolding, apparently seeking a greater level of self-understanding, individualization, and maturation. The second theme is that as psychological maturation proceeds, various stages of development are definable, each with its own characteristics. Schott quotes Erikson as suggesting that there are crucial turning points or moments of decision that provide transformation between developmental stages. Successful growth and development appear to depend on the reconciliation between internal psychic events and forces in the external social environment. At the highest levels of maturity and personal development, terms such as integrity, authenticity, meaning, wisdom, generativity, and dignity appear as representations of what the individual has been able to achieve. These are the objective results of *life span learning*—an iterative process of acknowledging one's capabilities, confronting life's challenges, and resolving major life issues.

[Author's Note: An observation might be that those who complete the transformations between developmental stages—and do so with increasing competence and social grace—experience

fulfillment both through participation in the process and reflection on capabilities attained. The learnership practitioner must work through these stages of development.]

Comparison of Adult Life Cycle Stages

Jung	Youth, Middle Age, Old Age
Erickson	Early, Middle, and Later Adulthood
Valliant	Intimacy, Career Consolidation, Generativity, Meaning, Dignity
Gould	Leaving Parent's World, Nobody's Baby, What's Inside? Mid Life, Die is Cast, Search for Meaning
Levinson	Early Adult Transition, Entering Adult World, Age 30 Transition, Settling Down, Mid Life Transition, Age 50 Transition, Middle Adult Culmination, Late Adulthood Transition

Adapted: Richard L. Schott, "The Psychological Development of Adults"

Figure 7-2

Power Orientation and Development. Power may be thought of as the capability to control the manner in which one's needs and objectives are satisfied. According to David McClelland in *Power: The Inner Experience* (McClelland, 1975), there are four modalities of experiencing power and each represents a level of ego-development. The four modalities are established via a matrix in which two *sources of power* (from either inside or outside the self) and two *objects of power* (either the self or someone other than the self) are the axes. The result is that four orientations to power emerge as sequential and distinct phases of personal development which may be summarized as follows:

Phase I. The objective is for the self to feel stronger which is achieved when *others provide what is needed by the self*. This is seen as the oral stage of development in which the focus is on being supported, and the pathology of the stage might be hysteria due to denial of support. Adult behavior representative of the stage may be the reading of power-oriented material.

Phase II. The objective is for the self to feel stronger which is achieved when the *self takes responsibility for itself*. This is seen as the anal stage of development in which the focus is on autonomy and free will, and the pathology of the stage might be obsessive-compulsive neurosis. Adult behavior representative of the stage may be the practice of accumulating prestige possessions.

Phase III. The objective is for the self to feel stronger which is achieved when the *self is able to influence the action of others*. This is seen as the phallic stage of development in which focus is on assertive action, and the pathology of the stage might be criminal activity. Adult behavior representative of the stage may be a willingness to argue and compete.

Phase IV. The objective is for the self to feel stronger which is achieved when the *self becomes a conduit for others to influence others*. This is seen as the genital mutuality stage of development in which the focus is on principled assertion and duty, and the pathology of the stage may be a messianic complex. Adult behavior representative of the stage may be a desire for organizational membership and participation.

McClelland provides a number of conclusions from his studies and his power orientation typology. These include:

1. The acquisition and proper use of power is a grave concern of societies. Its use is best legitimized when associated with acts undertaken for others rather than for the self.
2. Power is learned sequentially from Stage I to Stage IV. However, the successive phases are best understood as enlargements of one's power orientation rather than the substitution of one orientation for another.
3. Maturity is achieved when one is capable of choosing the specific power orientation that is right for the situation encountered.
4. It appears that people who achieve a Stage IV expression of power are more fully actualized.

[Author's Note: The applicability of this reference to the learnership architecture is seen in its emphasis on the power orientation aspects of human learning and development. Through this process, individuals become *empowered* to pursue their respective needs and objectives. It may well be that those who evolve to become most empowered establish ever higher goals for themselves and attain a higher order of self-fulfillment. Of particular importance in this book is the *Adaptive Leadership Competency* as a Phase IV capability and one that is essential for social systems synthesis.]

A Maturity Continuum. In his popular book, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People (Covey, 1989), the author offers the view that human growth and development occurs in an incremental, sequential, and highly integrated manner as one's personal and interpersonal effectiveness improves over time. It is his view that reaching full maturity should be the individual's objective and doing so consists of concurrently attaining three dimensions of maturity—physical, emotional, and mental. Development is seen as occurring along a continuum in which there are stages of dependence, independence, and interdependence in all three dimensions. While in the *dependent stage*, the individual looks to others as the sole source of responsibility or blame for his or her life condition or situation. When in the *independent stage*, the individual takes responsibility for his or her choices, actions, and the resulting consequences. This is the stage of development in which it is important to distinguish ourselves from others and to understand the self more clearly. At the highest level of development or personal maturity, is the *interdependent stage* in which strong connectivity to others is deemed important. The individual's need to combine talents and abilities with others to form mutually supporting relationships is emphasized and seeking cooperation gains greater importance. This stage of development concerns learning to see oneself as being both a separate entity and as part of a larger, complex life system. For

Covey, the objective of life is personal effectiveness and success. This is achieved when a person becomes fully interdependent with others in the community. At this point, physical, emotional, and mental maturity is realized and synergistic relationships are possible.

[Author's Note: An observation at this point is that a person's self-fulfillment should be judged not only in terms of his or her own needs and perspectives, but within the context of community expectations. It may be that we may only achieve mature self-fulfillment when interdependency is recognized and celebrated. On the other hand, if we are unable to establish an intellectual life beyond our reference social group—and get beyond their average level of expectations and self-imposed limitations—how can we possibly achieve our own potential? Learning often means leaving in order to actualize our human capacities.]

Discipline and Human Evolution. In The Road Less Traveled (Peck, 1978), the author presents a psychiatrist's perspective on the relationships among (self-) discipline, love, growth, and spirituality. He speaks of a human evolutionary process in which the process of confronting and solving problems is the foundation for learning and personal development. One's capacity to absorb the pain associated with difficult problems and decision making, and to work through these situations successfully is seen as "learning and growing in the process" (p.18). The individual acquires self-discipline through experiencing pain constructively and learning to use the techniques of delayed gratification, acceptance of responsibility, dedication to reality and truth, and focusing on achieving balance. The willingness to confront one's "reality maps" or fixed frames of reference through open communication and self-examination is a critical skill in becoming more knowledgeable, responsible, and psychologically balanced. Peck uses the term "bracketing" in reference to one's becoming balanced: "Bracketing is essentially the act of balancing the need for stability and assertion of the self with the need for new knowledge and greater understanding by temporarily giving up one's self ...so as to make room for the incorporation of new material into the self" (p.73). An observation here is that individual learning occurs as a result of distinct tension between stability and change. To learn, the individual must reconsider what it is that they already believe in the light of any new, and potentially more influential, viewpoints and concepts.

Peck explains that it takes the force of love to make becoming disciplined desirable. Love is defined as: "The will to extend one's life for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth." He continues with the notion that love requires work and that: "The principle form that the work of love takes is attention," and "When we love another we give them our attention; we attend to that person's growth" (p.81).

[Author's Note: Peck's writing suggests a continuous learning and evolutionary aspect of personal growth and development which focuses on the attainment of "spiritual competence" which may be interpreted as achieving great understanding of our purpose within a larger universal context. In the context of this study, spiritual competence equates to the self-fulfillment anchor in personal system development.]

Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value.
Albert Einstein

Human Aspiration Perspectives

Experiencing Flow or Optimal Experience. In Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), the author describes occasions of personal experience "in which attention can be freely invested to achieve a person's goals, because there is no disorder to straighten out, no threat for the self to defend against...the flow experience" (p.40). He says that "Flow helps to integrate the self because in that state of deep concentration consciousness is unusually well ordered." The suggestion is that a degree of self-fulfillment, or realization of potential, is achieved during flow because of the alignment of attention and focus of energy that occur in attempting to achieve a specific objective. The result is that the person wins a battle "against the entropy that brings disorder to consciousness...(and wins) a battle for the self" (p.40).

Additionally, Csikszentmihalyi notes that through flow, or optimal experience, the person achieves growth of the self in terms of *complexity*. The self becomes more complex (synonymous with greater maturity and capability). He offers that the two broad psychological processes of *differentiation* (movement toward uniqueness, separation) and *integration* (movement toward union with others, ideas, and entities beyond self) are experienced, resolved within the self through deep concentration and consciousness, and result in greater self-confidence and capacity for skill development and societal contribution. His theme is expanded to suggest a plethora of positive results such as the enhanced ability to cultivate purpose, forge resolve, establish harmony, unify life themes, and achieve meaning in life so that the "individual's purpose merges with the universal flow" (p.240).

[Author's Note: It may be that self-fulfillment occurs temporarily when we are *fully in* an experience, but does not last. An objective might be to develop the capacity to function at our fullest capability as often as possible.]

Man's Place in the Universe. In Basic Teachings of the Great Philosophers (Frost, 1962), the author reviews the philosophical development of the concept of "man in the universe." This quest for understanding the meaning of man's existence and relationship to what is unknown is the basic for spiritual belief and the establishment of religion. Frost comments that: "...throughout the history of human thought man has endeavored to understand the universe in relation to himself. Some philosophers have arisen to tell him that the universe is like him and is his friend; that in the universe are forces which are concerned with his welfare. Indeed, the philosophic God is very often a Being whose concern is for man. But there are other philosophers who find the universe, and man included, a vast system of laws and consistencies in which human values have little or no place. Man lives his little day and is forgotten" (p.78).

Frost defines a continuum in which the extremes in belief are the "religious position" and the "scientific position." The religious position appears to be one in which a values-based explanation of man's relationships to others, a belief that which is eternal is given, and that one's attitudes and behavior are guided by the tenets of the particular religion to which one belongs. The quality of one's life is dependent on "proper living" which connotes living in accordance with chosen values and becoming more closely connected to God. On the other end of the

continuum is the scientific position which is based upon the scientific laws discovered through inquiry into the nature of practical experience with the physical environment, and the acquired attitudes and behavior that are guided by the laws and relationships that govern known aspects of the universe. While some have tried to reconcile the extremes, no arguments have been convincing to the majority of Americans to uniformly adopt one particular point of view; in fact, an effort to do so would violate basic American principles respecting diversity, pluralism, and tolerance.

Achieving Self-Actualization. The foundation for a concept of self-actualization was first developed by Abraham Maslow in his 1954 work entitled Motivation and Personality. In his later book Toward a Psychology of Being (Maslow, 1968), he elaborated on the concept, taking care to acknowledge the controversies surrounding his earlier views. The placement of Maslow's perspective at the end of this series of perspectives is because his work preceded the others cited and was often acknowledged by others' when developing their views. Another reason is that Maslow's conceptual explanations tend to be more comprehensive than those of others, thereby serving to integrate this section's various perspectives.

Self-actualization for Maslow is the term used to capture the notion of *full-humanness*. His view is that all individuals, regardless of time, place, or culture have a natural need to experience the fullness of the human experience—they seek self-fulfillment. *Fulfillment*, however, is a psycho-social accomplishment and is therefore a construction both of individual cognition and social influence. Maslow acknowledges *the being-psychology* (end-state) and *becoming-psychology* (process-experience) aspects of psycho-social growth and development, and establishes their part in an individual's capacity to become self-actualized or *self-fulfilled*. To appreciate the breadth of his view, one needs to understand self-fulfillment in Maslow's own words: "...any person in any of (his or her) peak experiences takes on temporarily many of the characteristics which I have found in self-actualizing individuals...these are moments of greatest maturity, individuation, and fulfillment...What seems to distinguish those individuals I have called self-actualizing people, is that in them these episodes seem to come far more frequently, and intensely and perfectly than in average people" (Maslow, 1968, p.97). The behaviors leading to self-actualization or *self-fulfillment* are listed here to anchor the theme of this chapter. (Maslow, 1971):

1. Self-fulfillment means experiencing fully, vividly, selflessly, with full concentration and total absorption
2. Self-fulfillment means seeing life as a process of choices, some progressive and some regressive—and choosing the progressive course
3. Self-fulfillment means “letting the true self emerge,” being free from cognitive constraints imposed by others
4. Self-fulfillment means that when in doubt, be honest rather than not
5. Self-fulfillment means listening to one’s previous experience and learning, and daring to be different, unpopular, and a nonconformist if necessary

6. Self-fulfillment is not only an end-state, but also the process of actualizing one's potentialities at any time, in any amount
 7. Self-fulfillment often occurs as transient moments of peak experiences for which conditions may be pre-selected and arranged
 8. Self-fulfillment means opening oneself up for examination, identifying one's defenses, and finding the courage to give up those defenses
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Description of PSD Life Cycle Model

I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has to overcome while trying to succeed.

Booker T. Washington

Personal Systems Development Life Cycle Model. Our attention now turns to a discussion of the progressive nature of our lives. Research has shown that while each of us are uniquely different in our experiences, decisions and actions; we still appear, fundamentally, to travel a very well worn path that others have traveled before. Figure 7-3 and the selected perspectives that follow are a compilation of symbiotic developments many of us experience as we move through our (hopefully) self-fulfilled lives. First, however, an overview of the illustration is in order.

The horizontal axis is a non-linear depiction of the adult lifetime constructed to emphasize certain patterns of activity. Age 18 is the starting point for adulthood, and age 30 is selected as the average end of *prolonged adolescence*— a period of time in modern times in which youthful thinking and behavior extends far longer than what was previously expected when economic times were less prosperous and personal time for formal education and entertainment was more limited. The other ages and times are notional boundaries for the *early adult*, *middle adult*, and *senior adult* periods of our lives, and serve as a measuring stick against which other topics and trends may be displayed and considered. A time period for mid-life transition/crisis is placed in the late 40s in order to accommodate two trends: (1) the occurrence of what might be termed “delayed adolescence” and, (2) the longer lifetimes now becoming the norm. For many of us mid-life issues are experienced later or longer than they used to be, in part due to advances in medicine and the healthier lifestyles that permit some of us to live significantly longer lives.

The vertical axis is used to display the thinking, learning, knowing, leading, and achieving (reasoning) processes that enable us to learn and understand ourselves and our external world, and to devise the knowledge and methods needed to influence the world's potential and trajectory. Five sets of developmental activities are presented below.

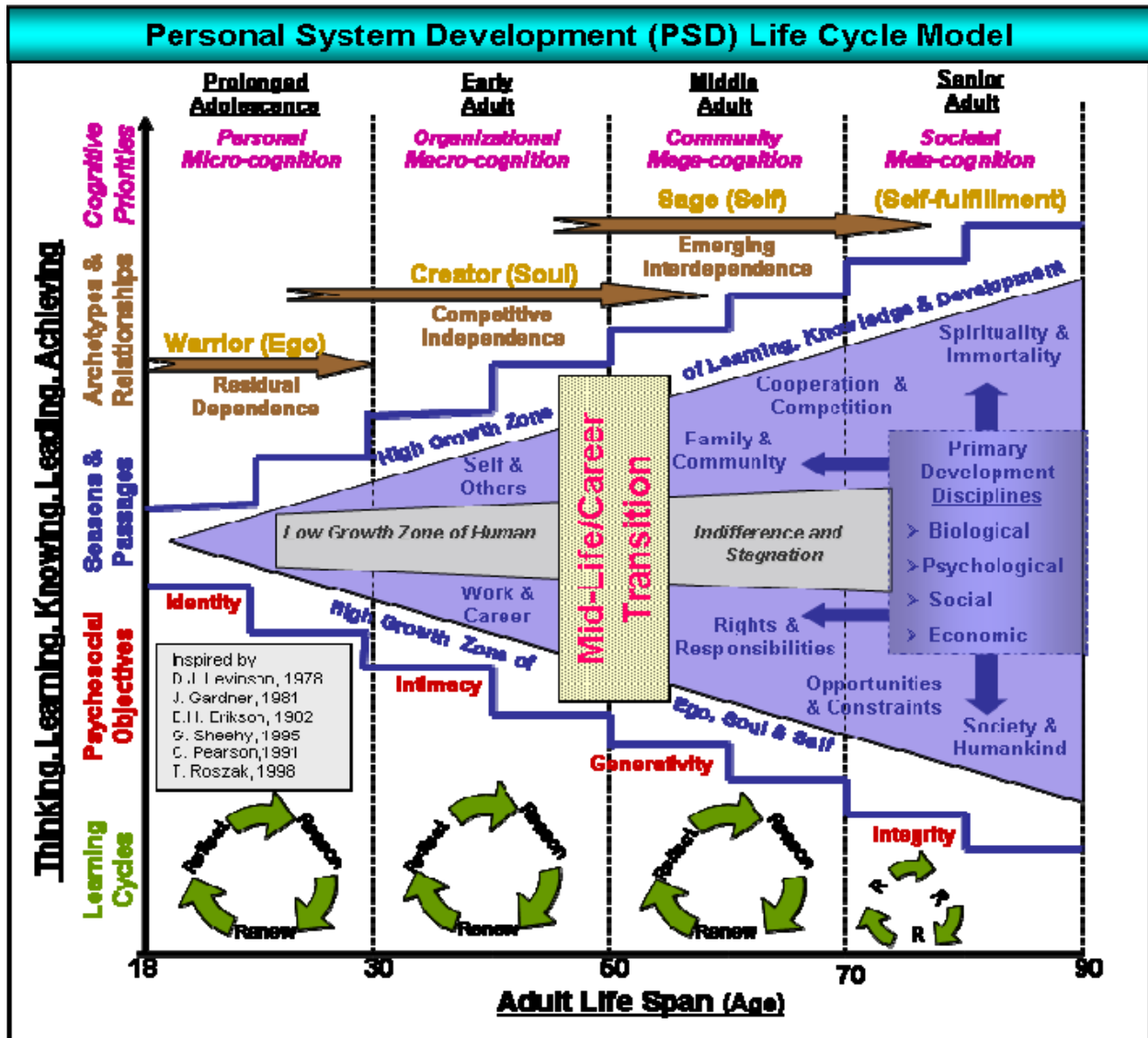


Figure 7-3

Cognitive Priorities. The Learnership Integrated Systems Architecture (LISA) envisions four levels of social systems development, each one requiring its own level of personal cognitive activity in which we come to understand our unique purpose and our relationship with others in society. We realize both the breadth and depth of our interrelationships as we sequentially shift our mental energies from (1) *personal micro-cognition* when it is “all about us” as we pass through prolonged adolescence; (2) through *organizational macro-cognition* when we take on the responsibility of family and career, (3) through *community mega-cognition* as we invest additional time to help manage and guide the future of our local communities (city, county, state); and lastly (4) to *societal meta-cognition* when we have lived the majority of our lives and begin to take measure of our larger world (our nation, the world’s nations) and our place in—our search for a *sense of wholeness and completion*.

Learning Cycles. The vertical scale identifies five major categories of activities that generally unfold in an overlapping, but systematic manner. As each of these activities moves through the sequential time periods, other opportunities for lifelong learning and development are presented, but of course are optional. The *reflect-reason-renew cycle* inserted in each age period is a reminder that there are distinct cognitive and emotional insights available to each of us as we continue to grow and develop.

Psychological Objectives. As we move through our adult time periods, we experience psychosocial changes. In the prolonged adolescence period our *identity* and personal *ego* are foremost in our attention. Who are we; what is our purpose; and how will our needs be satisfied are the questions that need to be answered. When we move to the early adult period our concerns expand to include getting in touch with ourselves (*soul*) and others (*intimacy*) at a deeper level. In middle adult life we evolve again as we attempt to gain a full understanding of what we really have become (*self*) and how we can begin to share with posterity (*generativity*) the best of our knowledge and insight. Lastly, if we are healthy and lucky, we transition into the level of psychological *integrity* when our interests, knowledge and accomplishments converge into mindfulness and *self-fulfillment*.

Archetypes and Relationships. Four distinctive periods of growth are recognizable across the human life cycle in terms of representative archetypes, psychological drivers and levels of dependence. The first three symbiotic relationships are: Warrior (*Ego*) Dependence; Creator (*Soul*) Independence; and Sage (*Self*) Interdependence. In the last stage personal *Self-fulfillment* is the culmination of a life well-lived.

Seasons and Passages. Running horizontally through the model is a conceptual vision of how each of us could hopefully become self-fulfilled. This vision is the space between the *High Growth Zone of Human Knowledge and Development* and the *High Growth Zone of Ego, Soul and Self*. Our ever-expanding acquisition of learning, knowledge and skills permits us to master the challenges in each time period, refine and maintain our focus, and experience a well-lived and successful life. It is important, however, to acknowledge the reality that given the unequal allocation of knowledge and resources among most social groups, a significant portion of each population will enter what is termed the *Low Growth Zone of Human Indifference and Stagnation*. Once in this zone, an immense effort is required to re-emerge and get back onto the road of development of life success.

The main contributors to the [Figure 7-3](#) conceptualization through their writings are Erik Erickson, Daniel Levinson, Gail Sheehy, and Carol Pearson. Selections from their insightful and symbiotic comments follow:

Childhood and Society. Following his association with Freud and Jung in the early 20th century, Erik Erickson posited a view of the human life cycle which he subsequently described in *Childhood and Society* (Norton, 1950) and “Identity and the Life Cycle” in *Psychological Issues*, 1 (1959), 1-171. He chose four stages: Childhood and Adolescence, age 1-17; Early Adulthood, age 17-45; Middle Adulthood, age 40-60; and Late Adulthood, 60 and onward. According to his thinking a major component of these life cycle periods was the individual’s need to resolve a sequence of eight “ego issues.” The first four “issues” were in childhood and the others applied

to the adolescent through the adult period. Specifically, he found that the issue to be resolved in the adolescent to Early Adult transition was *Identity vs. Identity Confusion*; the issue to be resolved in order to transition into Middle Adulthood was *Intimacy and Isolation*; the issue to be resolved in order to transition into Late Adulthood was *Generativity and Stagnation*; and lastly once in the last stage the issue of *Integrity and Despair* needed to be resolved in order to complete the human life cycle successfully. [Figure 7-3](#) uses the positive aspects of resolving these challenges (Identity, Intimacy, Generativity, Integrity) and aligns them vertically with the major cognitive priorities of the learnership integrated systems architecture social systems (personal, organizational, community, society).

[Author's Note: It is useful to understand at this juncture that Erikson's work in the 1950s, was studied and further developed by Levinson in the 1960s and 70s, and further studied and developed by Sheehy in the 1980s and 90s. Their views, however, attempt to account for the changes in Western societies—particularly the U.S.—in which cultural shifts and expanding life spans require a rethinking of the appropriate age boundaries. Pearson's theory of archetypes is also an extrapolation of original research by Freud and Jung, and serves to integrate many of the others' concepts. [Figure 7-3](#) is this author's consensus position of the four authors' writings.]

*In the longer run, our further progress in fostering adult development
may be a part of a transformation of human society and personality,
and thus contribute to a new epoch in human evolution.*

Daniel Levinson

Seasons of Life. In his [The Seasons of a Man's Life](#) (1978), author Daniel Levinson examines each of the adult eras from three contrasting perspectives: “(1) changes in biological and psychological functioning, (2) the sequence of generations, and (3) the evolution of careers and enterprises. Levinson points out that: “The *instinctual energies*, too, pass their maximal level and are somewhat *reduced in middle adulthood*...He can be more free from the petty vanities, animosities, envies and moralisms of early adulthood...he develops greater capacity for intimacy and integrates more fully the tender, ‘feminine’ aspects of his self...possibility of becoming a more responsive friend...more facilitating parent...more caring son...more compassionate authority and teacher.” (pp.24-25) From these comments we can begin to envision ourselves learning to manage two related, but separate mini-life cycles—one growth period up to middle adulthood (mid 40s), and then a short period of correction and renewal followed by the possibility of another 45 years of growth and development before death.

Levinson recounts that Jung conceived the term “individuation” to account for a person's development up through age 40, and again for the second occurrence that continues to death. Individuation is described as a “developmental process through which a person becomes more uniquely individual. Acquiring a clearer and fuller identity of his own, he becomes better able to utilize inner resources and pursue his own aims.” (p.33) However, as he eventually moves to and through his *late adulthood* ([Figure 7-3 Senior Adult](#)) into his 70s he must deal with the issue of *Integrity vs. Despair*. Levinson states that: “As a man enters late adulthood he feels that he has completed the major part—perhaps all—of his life work. His contribution to society and to his own mortality is largely completed. He must arrive at some appraisal of his life. The developmental task is to *gain a sense of the integrity of his life*—not simply of his virtue or achievement,

but of his life as a whole. If he succeeds in this, he can live without bitterness or despair during late adulthood. Finding *meaning and value* in his life, however imperfect, he can come to terms with death.” (p.37)

Let's refer to successful aging as sageing—the process by which men and women accumulate wisdom and grow into the culture's sages.
Gail Sheehy

Life Passages. In her New Passages (1995), Gail Sheehy states: “People today are leaving childhood sooner, but they are taking longer to grow up and much longer to die...Puberty arrives earlier ...Adolescence is now prolonged...true adulthood doesn't begin until 30...Middle age has already been pushed far into the fifties...Everything seems to be moving off by a decade.” (p.4) She continues with the thought that 80 percent of people in American can expect to live past their 65th birthday, that mid-life crises are now more common in the mid to late 40s and that a whole second adulthood of 45 more years are truly possible after the new mid-life period. She speaks of the flaming 50s, serene 60s, sage 70s, uninhibited 80s, and the nobility of the 90s.

Sheehy comments that: “Baby boomers in their forties, as they run out of rungs to climb in middle management, will be obliged to find other ways to redefine personal success. Men in their fifties will have to face the fact they have peaked professionally, rather than a gentle, stepped-down transition to honorable retirement in their mid-sixties, they may be handed a take-it-or-leave-it package.” (p.16) It is going to be extremely important that most of us experiencing similar career or psychological road-bumps learn to adapt to our new circumstances and get prepared for the second half of our lives. Sheehy indicates that we will be expected to live new cycles of learning within our longer primary life cycle—perhaps as many as three full renewal cycles. Figure 7-3 reflects her insights by illustrating repetitive *learning cycles* (reflect, reason, renew); a *mid-life transition/crisis* zone approaching age 50; the possibility of a second life after age 50; and the challenges that await many of us as we choose the *high growth zone of human learning, knowledge & development* in contrast to the alternative *low growth zone of human indifference and stagnation*.

A major portion of Sheehy's attention is on a period she terms “middlescence,” which is when we come through the late 40s mid-life transition/crisis with (hopefully) new found energy and focus to craft a *second life* that complements and completes our first life. She speaks of moving from a period of *survival* to a period of *mastery*—in terms of Figure 7-3 this is a transition from *competitive independence* and *intimacy* to *emerging interdependence* and *generativity*. She says: “The transformation of middle life is to move into a more stable psychological state of mastery, when we control much of what happens in our life and can often act on the world, rather than habitually react to whatever the world throws at us.” She also comments that we need to create and manage our way to a second life: “...we must construct our new *second identity*. Sooner is better than later. It means throwing off all the old stereotypes, letting go of outgrown priorities, and developing real clarity about what is most relevant in our lives for the future.” (pp.142-143)

Another aspect of the second life is the emerging *meaning crisis*. “The search for meaning in whatever we do becomes the universal preoccupation of Second Adulthood. It could well be called the Meaning Crisis. It is based on a spiritual imperative: the wish to integrate the disparate

aspects of ourselves, the hunger for wholeness, the need to know the truth. Women are more likely to develop their rational thinking functions and enjoy extending their powers into a broader arena, while men are often drawn inward, from thinking to feeling.” (p.148) This is the period when our genders begin to move closer as we awaken to our own mortality, and the fact becomes prevalent in our minds that our lives are not ready to be finished. We become more conscious that our individual lives are part of something much larger and we develop the need to understand and fully align ourselves with the past and the future.

Sheehy refers to further transformation into the 60s and beyond as: “Passage to the Age of Integrity.”(p.345)*Integrity* is the time in which we become ready for our *prime time*. The combination of good health, a successful career with a retirement program, and fewer family obligations often leads those in their 60s and 70s to continue to learn, grow and contribute significantly to their families and communities. Research shows that our brains are still able to learn and develop as we take on the responsibility of completing our self-development and achieving full integrity. Sheehy says that there is a “hunger for harmony” in this time period, and that she thinks of “...integrity as the work of integration. One of the overarching desires by men and women I have interviewed in late middle age is for balance—being able to bring all the parts of one’s life into harmony, as opposed to incongruity.” (p.355)

As Sheehy assesses her research and experience she comments prophetically that: “People with positive outlooks, who continue to connect themselves to the future and marshal their energies to defeat creeping depression or entropy, are far more likely to extend their Second Adulthoods into healthy and satisfying later lives...To engage in successful aging is actually a career choice. Your job is to revive your life energy to make the next passage. That life force is then ready to be applied to whatever current challenges you face or the life accidents that may occur ahead. Successful aging must be a conscious choice with a commitment to continuing self-education and the development of a whole set of strategies.” (pp.419-420)

*The issue for us today is not simply to create the unified self—connecting Ego and Soul,
heart and head, male and female—but also to express this self
in the everyday business of living our lives.
Carol Pearson*

Heroes Within. Carol Pearson is the author of Awakening the Heroes Within: Twelve Archetypes to help Us Find Ourselves and Transform the World (1991). Her research and writing explain how a selected number of well defined archetypes can be used to help us better recognize and understand recurring patterns in personal situations and social activities. The term “archetype” as used in this context refers to the controlling paradigm, metaphor or *controlling mind pattern* that has influence on human thinking and behavior. Pearson’s basic theme, building off the work of Joseph Campbell’s The Hero with a Thousand Faces (1949), is that a part of everyone’s life journey has to do with navigating through certain psycho-social transitions to higher levels of personal development. Through these transitions we develop an *ego* (a boundary between our self and the world), a *soul* (connects us with the transpersonal), and a *self* (our sense of genuine identity). She indicates that while this pattern is basically linear over our live time, it operates more like a spiral in which each new learning cycle falls back to reflect on previous

learning cycles for renewal and subsequent emergence to higher levels of learning and knowledge. This process synchronizes well with the *reflect-reason-renew* function in [Figure 7-3](#) and also with the Spiral Dynamics concept discussed in Chapter 3. Three developmental stages are considered:

1. Ego Level. The relationship between ourselves and others changes as a function of our age and stage of development. The childhood and adolescent years are committed primarily to developing our *ego* wherein we concentrate on becoming socialized and fitting into our culture. “Me” as the receiver of cultural direction is the primary focus, and this is a time of *dependence* (*residual dependence* if this continues through our 20s.) The *ego archetypes* of this stage include the *Innocent*, the *Orphan*, the *Caregiver*, and the *Warrior*—with the *Warrior* being perhaps the best representative of action we take to “change the world to meet our own needs.”
2. Soul Level. Our emerging sense of who we are turns to taking responsibility for ourselves and others who belong to us. We focus on becoming *competitively independent*. “I” the sender, becomes assertive and tries to influence the external world. The *soul* emerges and develops as our ability to make decisions and take action grows. Obtaining clarity on meaning, value and purpose becomes more important. Family, career and winning become a major emphasis in our lives into the mid 40s. Quite often, as we rush through this period, we crash right into our mid-life transition/crisis—our opportunity to rethink much of what we have done, become, and could be. The *soul archetypes* include the *Seeker*, the *Destroyer*, the *Lover*, and the *Creator*— with the *Creator* being an example of this stage as we use “our imaginative potential to create lives that emerge out of the truth about who we are.” (p.48)
3. Self Level. The *self* signifies our achievement of a sense of genuine identity as we close in on completing our “individuation process.” Our emphasis is on our *emerging independence*. The “I” and “Me” synchronize to form a more complete sense of *self*. In the *self stage* we become fully conscious of the world that has revealed itself to us, and we accept the “burden of consciousness” in which newly acquired wisdom creates new responsibilities and an “urge to know” what we still might need to know. The *self archetypes* include the *Ruler*, the *Magician*, the *Fool*, and the *Sage*—with the *Sage* being the most comprehensive example of this stage in that it “helps us face whatever is true in our lives and transcend our smaller selves to be one with cosmic truths.” (p.59)

Notwithstanding Pearson’s three stages of psycho-social development just described, she speaks of a period of time *beyond individuation* in which Hal Stone’s [Embracing Our Selves](#) concept comes into play. Stone provides a practice for helping people to re-experience the richness of the plurality within themselves...to speak and move from these other selves...to move from one identity to another...” (pp.67-68) Pearson comments: “It is the Wise Fool who can move past the illusion of a unified self, to express the diversity of his or her wholeness in the world.” (p.68) Furthermore, Pearson states: “Rulers and Magicians work hard to redeem and heal the planet. Sages struggle and strive to attain truth. Only the Fool simply trusts the moment and savors life in its fullness, without judgment, appreciating not only life’s joys but also its sorrows.” (p.68) Accepting these views leads this author to conceive of a life cycle period of *senior adulthood* in

which “*differentiated holism*” is possible. In [Figure 7-3](#) this is illustrated as a period of *self-fulfillment and integrity* in which multiple archetypes, methodological *patterns*, and styles of personal and social behavior are understood, integrated into ageless wisdom, and applied for the resolution of societal meta-system problems.

This compilation of studies and perspectives makes a strong case for the existence of human life cycles that have distinguishable common factors that may be described and analyzed. The conclusion is that there are eras of human maturity that apply in all societies as the result of their common biological, social, psychological, and economic needs. Each of us has the opportunity to learn and manage our own development across the phases of adult life, and doing this well helps us become who we want to become. However, for personal life cycle management to effectively contribute to Personal System Development (PSD) it must do so in a minimum of three PSD subsystems: the health, character and ability subsystems. These subsystems operate in a synergistic manner and each has its own life cycle attributes and contributions in optimizing the learnership practitioner’s learning, leading and performance.

Three PSD Subsystems

And remember friends, it's better to look good than to feel good.
Billy Crystal

Health Subsystem. The Personal System Development (PSD) health subsystem is the first of three areas of learnership practitioner assessment, learning, and development. And they are all interdependent.

Physical Health. This section addresses disease prevention, diet and exercise, and being a smart patient. Together they offer topics for consideration and action, as appropriate.

1. Disease Prevention. Mark Hyman and Mark Liponis are authors of Ultra-Prevention: The 6-Week Plan That Will make You Healthy for Life (2003). Their emphasis is the practice of holistic, health-based medicine. Their action plan has five major health initiatives designed to conquer what they term the five forces of illness: sludge, burnout, heat, waste, and rust. An overview:
 - a. Sludge (malnutrition) – Focus is on poor *nutrition, digestion and absorption*. Over 80 per cent of Americans are malnourished. They are not getting the recommended daily allowance of vitamins, nutrients and minerals. The major cause is improper digestion (breaking food down into components), and absorption (getting nutrients from the gut into the blood stream). Stomach and intestinal tract functioning is of concern here.
 - b. Burnout (impaired metabolism) – Focus is on improving *metabolism*, the creation of energy at the cellular level in our bodies. After the stomach and intestinal tract do

their work, the metabolism process creates Adenosine Tri-Phosphate (ATP), the usable energy for all bodily functions. ATP is stored in fat for use as needed by the body, but poor eating affects the quality of this energy store. Improper Insulin production, mitochondrial dysfunction and thyroid dysfunction are all related to insufficient metabolism.

- c. Heat (inflammation) – The signs of inflammation are: redness, swelling, heat, pain, and loss of function. Localized inflammation as the body seeks to defend against an unwanted invader is evidence of good health. However long-term, systemic, generalized inflammation throughout much of the body is destructive to health and longevity. The consumption or absorption of unhealthy foods, allergens or toxins and/or physical entry of microbes and poisons are causes for inflammation, that uncorrected, lead to rapid aging, disease and eventually death.
 - d. Waste (impaired detoxification) – “Detoxification is the process of breaking down and eliminating anything that shouldn’t be in it...also eliminates foreign, potentially toxic compounds often unavoidably ingested with our food.” (p.208) The waste products of metabolism, used hormones, and other cellular discards must all be removed to maintain health. The process requires making these products water soluble for excretion. The kidneys and liver receive attention here. Also, the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide by the lungs is also an area for medical review.
 - e. Rust (oxidative stress) – “Rusting indicates the damage incurred by exposure to oxygen...Every one of us has and needs millions of oxidants in our body. However, oxidant molecules can cause injury to our tissues whenever they are present in excess, becoming a source of illness, causing oxidative stress.” (p.216) Use of oxygen in metabolism yields high-energy oxygen molecules know as “free radicals.” These radicals cause cellular destruction, inflammation, and are associated with various diseases. Countering free radicals through proper eating and appropriate vitamins is good proactive behavior.
2. Diet and Exercise. You, On a Diet: The Owner’s Manual for Waist Management (2006) is a book by Drs Michael Roizen and Melmet Oz associated with The Joint Commission, a medical community oversight group. They provide factual, albeit humorous, advice on taking control of our most important asset—our health. A selection of useful topics that readers might find informative is:
- a. The Ideal Body. What your body is supposed to look like
 - b. Can’t Get No Satisfaction. The science of appetite
 - c. Taking a Fat Chance. How fat ruins your health
 - d. Make the Move. How you can burn fat faster
 - e. The Chemistry of Emotions. The connections between feelings and food
 - f. The YOU Activity Plan. Physical strategies for waist management
 - g. The YOU Diet. The waist-management eating plan
 - h. The Extreme Team. What to do if your weight is out of control

We have one life to live and it takes significant time for us to discover our unique insights and skills. How unfortunate it would be if we fail to accomplish some of our goals and make our social environment just a little bit better for having been here. Diet, exercise, and disease prevention is a responsibility for each of us.

3. The Smart Patient. Michael Roizen and Mehmet Oz are medical doctors. Their book: You, The Smart Patient: An Insider's Handbook for Getting the Best Treatment (2006) advises readers on how to ensure ourselves a safe and successful experience when dealing with health care providers and hospitals. Their prescriptions for preparing, participating and completing interactions with the medical community are both numerous and humorous. Not to be underestimated, however, is the life enhancing and life-saving advice they dispense. Topics addressed include: (1) find the right medical practitioner, (2) be smart in the use of prescription drugs, (3) always get a second opinion, (4) know your rights, (5) manage your health insurance, (6) know your alternatives and choices, (7) select the right hospital, (8) understand medical jargon, and (9) how to get through an operation successfully. Learning this information is a complementary effort to the physical health perspectives discussed earlier in this section. Considered together, we should be able to manage our medical affairs with some degree of efficiency and expertise.

Life is a comedy for those who think, and a tragedy for those who feel.

Horace Walpole

Emotional Health. Author Daniel Goleman's book Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ (1995) focuses attention on the role of emotion in human intelligence. He explains that while we depend on the rational mind for so much of our thinking, development and progress, it is the emotional mind that adds "heart" to any situation or relationship. In fact, the emotional mind often beats the rational mind into action leaving the rational mind to figure out what to do next. The learning here might be that systematically developing the emotional mind could do much more for human progress because of the social relationships that may be improved.

1. Emotion and the Emotional Mind. While the Oxford English Dictionary defines *emotion* as: "any agitation or disturbance of mind, feeling, passion; any vehement or excited mental state," Goleman suggests some refinement: "I take emotion to refer to a feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states, and a range of propensities to act." He says that some theorists propose basic families, though not all agree on them. The main emotions at the top of each family are: anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment, love, surprise, disgust, and shame...He also addresses derivative terms that move outward from emotion as if in concentric circles. These are: (1) *moods* which tend to be more muted than emotions but last for longer periods of time, (2) *temperaments* which are the willingness to evoke a given emotion to affect one's demeanor, and (3) *disorders* of emotion in which one finds themselves in a perpetual toxic state." (p.289-290)

2. Rational and Emotional Minds. According to Goleman, “In a very real sense we have two minds, one that thinks and one that feels. These fundamentally different ways of knowing interact to construct a mental life. One, the rational mind, is the mode of comprehension we are typically conscious of: more prominent in awareness, thoughtful, able to ponder and reflect. But alongside that there is another system of knowing: impulsive and powerful, if sometimes illogical—the emotional mind. The emotional/rational dichotomy approximates the folk distinction between “heart” and “head;” knowing something is right “in your heart” is a different order of conviction—somehow a deeper kind of certainty—than thinking so with your rational mind.” (p.8) The important point to realize is that these two minds are interconnected and are constantly working together in our perception, reasoning, decision making, and behavior. The mid-brain or limbic system evolved much earlier in human development thereby providing the emotion and feelings that supported continued survival and progress through the millennia. The human neocortex that developed during more recent history is the largest in the animal kingdom and is the storehouse for cognition and purposeful mental processing—rational thinking. To the degree there are common attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors among a group of people we say that there is a culture that they share.

Goleman states that: “Ordinarily there is a balance between emotional and rational minds, with emotion feeding into and informing the operations of the rational mind, and the rational mind refining and sometimes vetoing the inputs of the emotions. But when passions surge the balance tips: it is the emotional mind that captures the upper hand, swamping the rational mind.” (p.9) Goleman also refers to work by Paul Ekman (head of the Human Interaction Laboratory at the University of California, San Francisco) and Seymore Epstein (clinical psychologist at the University of Massachusetts) in which they offer a basic list of qualities that distinguish emotions from the rest of mental life. These are:

- a. A quick but sloppy response. The emotional mind is far quicker than the rational mind, springing into action without pausing even a moment to consider what it is doing. Its quickness precludes the deliberate, analytic reflection that is the hallmark of the thinking mind.
- b. First feelings, second thoughts. Because it takes the rational mind a moment or two longer to register and respond than it does the emotional mind, the “first impulse” in an emotional situation is the heart’s not the head’s.
- c. A symbolic, childlike reality. The logic of the emotional mind is associative; it takes elements that symbolize a reality, or trigger a memory of it, to be the same as that reality. That is why similes, metaphors, and images speak directly to the emotional mind, as do the arts—novels, film, song, theater, opera.
- d. The past imposed on the present. When some feature of an event seems similar to an emotionally changed memory from the past, the emotional mind responds by

triggering the feelings that went with the remembered event. The emotional mind reacts to the present *as though it were the past*.

- e. State-specific reality. The working of the emotional mind is to a large degree state-specific, dictated by the particular feeling ascendant at a given moment. How we think and act when we are feeling romantic is entirely different from how we behave when enraged or dejected. (Appendix B)

What has also been learned is that the whole brain is limited by its level of prior learning derived from study and experience, and everyone has their own preferences and insights concerning what they currently sense and experience. We should not be surprised at the social difficulty that arises as individuals and groups who basically agree from a rational standpoint still find roadblocks to harmonious collaboration when the emotions and feelings associated with an effort are not aligned. And, that if those same people lead with their feelings it is unlikely they can get focused enough to arrive at a rational conclusion.

3. Social and Emotional Learning. A topic of interest that arises from the above information concerns: What are the specific emotional skills and competencies we might want to teach people? What examples might be useful? Goleman provides examples from community early learning programs devised for primary and secondary level students. We should be able to draw the parallel that the same topics apply to adults.

In Example #1 he provides a Self-Science Curriculum developed by Karen F. Stone and Harold Q. Dillehunt entitled: "Self-Science: The Subject is Me," from Goodyear Publishing Company, Santa Monica, 1978) The curriculum proposes the following topics for instruction: (p.302)

- a. Self-awareness
- b. Personal decision-making
- c. Managing feelings
- d. Handling stress
- e. Empathy
- f. Communications
- g. Self-disclosure
- h. Insight
- i. Self-acceptance
- j. Personal Responsibility
- k. Assertiveness
- l. Group dynamics
- m. Conflict resolution

In Example #2, Goleman provides a list of results from the design and evaluation of a social problem solving program by M.J. Elias and J. Clabby: *Building Social Problem Solving Skills: Guidelines form a School-Based Program* (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1992). The result obtained and reported from the schools were: (p.309)

- a. More sensitive to others' feelings
- b. Better understanding of the consequences of their behavior
- c. Increased ability to "size up" interpersonal situations and plan appropriate actions
- d. Higher self-esteem
- e. More pro-social behavior
- f. Sought out by peers for help
- g. Better handled the transition to middle school
- h. Less anti-social, self-destructive, and socially disordered behavior, even when followed up into high school
- i. Improved learning-to-learn skills
- j. Better self-control, social awareness, and social decision-making in and out of the classroom

Could it be that some adults have still to learn to take responsibility for their negative impact on others in person-to-person situations? If so, can we reflect on that now?

Anyone can become angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right reason, and in the right way—this is not easy.
Aristotle

The Stress of Life. Stress is a major subject of concern in today's fast changing modern world. People everywhere complain that we do not have the time and energy to accommodate all the situations and people clamoring for our attention and assistance. If only we could get our sense of stress under control. Maybe if our lives were more organized, our living conditions more reasonable, and social relations more meaningful we could feel better about ourselves and others. There is little doubt that understanding the stress mechanism and how we might eliminate or at least accommodate the stress we feel would be immeasurable helpful. Dr. Hans Selye, at the University of Montreal did much of the seminal research on understanding the biologic impact of stress. His landmark book, The Stress of Life (1976), is used herein to communicate some foundational information on the topic.

General Adaptation Syndrome (G.A.S.). Selye's operational definition of stress is: "Stress is the state manifested by a specific syndrome which consists of all the nonspecifically-induced changes within a biologic system. Thus, stress has its own characteristic form and composition but no particular cause. The elements of its form are the visible changes due to stress, whatever its cause. They are additive indicators which can express the sum of all the different adjustments that are going on in the body at any time." (p.64) This definition encompasses the many biologic features and relationships that Selye recognized as an interdependent system to which he gave the name: General Adaptation Syndrome (G.A.S.). The deconstruction of this definition is useful for better understanding of what we term "being stressed." The major elements are:

1. Stress is a state manifested by a *Syndrome*. When we are under stress (biologic tension) there are many physiological indicators that may be witnessed and measured. These indicators are the result of biological interactions and they are very much the same in

everyone although not to the same degree or intensity. Technically, biologic stress is not the same as nervous tension.

2. Stress shows itself as a specific Syndrome yet it is *nonspecifically induced*. The body's reactions are very common and specific, but the *causes* that initiate the onset of the Syndrome are many, therefore *nonspecific*.
3. Stress is the nonspecific response of the body to any demand. That is, the demand placed on the body can be from a pleasant or unpleasant event or condition—and, the genesis of the event or condition can be from a wide variety of physical, emotional, or environmental sources.
4. Stress is a biologic Syndrome caused by demands known as “*stressors*.” If the body categorizes the demand as a harmful or threatening experience the stress induced is termed “*distress*,” however, if the demand is considered to be desirable or pleasant experience the stress induced is termed “*eustress*.” The mental component is an important factor because *how we choose to perceive a demand* affects the strength, within limits, of its impact on us.
5. Stress response of the body can be understood and demonstrated as occurring in three stages. The stage when a stressor is first recognized is termed the “*alarm response*” and the body immediately takes defensive action in the form of hormonal changes—G.A.S. begins. The second stage is when the full range of biologic actions takes place to either resist or adjust to the effects of the stressor. This is the stage of “*resistance*” and lasts as long as the body's health and energy reserve remains supportive. The third stage of “*exhaustion*” occurs when the body gives up struggling against the stressor (or the stressor is removed) and the G.A.S. is ended.
6. Stress uses and consumes the body's store of “*adaptive energy*.” Everyone has a level of health based largely on heredity and an investment in a healthy lifestyle. If we are able to ameliorate the degree to which we permit stressors to turn into an internalized stress syndrome we are able to control the “*wear and tear*” on our bodies. Distress, in particular, consumes more of the body's adaptive energy thereby affecting our overall level of health and rate of aging. (Chapter 4)

Diseases of Adaptation. Selye says that: “An ever increasing proportion of the human population dies from the so-called wear and tear diseases, diseases of civilization, or degenerative diseases, which are primarily due to stress.” (p.430) His research shows that our biological processes inevitably contribute to the increasing accumulation of waste products that are either insoluble or hard to remove from our bodies. In time, certain bodily functions and/or specific organs become weakened or incapacitated leading to malfunction. As this situation progresses to a stage not correctable through medical procedure, death is often the result. He says these are diseases of adaptation which include: “...high blood pressure, diseases of the heart and of the blood vessels, diseases of the kidney, eclampsia, rheumatic and rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory diseases of the skin and eyes, infections, allergic and hypersensitivity diseases,

nervous and mental diseases, sexual derangements, digestive diseases, metabolic diseases, cancer, and diseases of resistance in general.” (pp.169-170)

Philosophic Implications. Selye tells us that “ physiologic aging, is not determined by the time elapsed since birth, but by the total amount of wear and tear to which the body has been exposed. There is, indeed a great *difference between physiologic and chronologic age*... Vitality is like a special kind of bank account which you can use up by withdrawals but cannot increase by deposits. Your only control over this precious fortune is the rate at which you make your withdrawals...the intelligent thing to do is to withdraw and expend generously, but never wastefully for worthless efforts.” (pp.428-429)

“Apparently there are *two kinds of adaptation energy*: the superficial kind, which is ready to use, and the deeper kind, which acts as a sort of frozen reserve. When superficial adaptation energy is exhausted during exertion, it can slowly be restored from a deeper store during rest... [and] Life is a continuous series of adaptations to our surroundings and, as far as we know, our reserve of adaptation energy is an inherited finite amount, which cannot be regenerated.” (p.429)

What we learn here is each of us should act responsibly in the use of our personal bank account of inherited mental and physical energy. Some of us may have more and some will have less, but in every case our reserve should be tapped at a rate than allows systematic personal development without unnecessarily limiting our live span by squandering our life force.

Man’s ultimate aims according to Selye can be achieved within the context of his *philosophy of altruistic egoism*. This philosophy “advocates the creation of feelings of accomplishment and security through the inspiration in others of love, goodwill and gratitude for what we have done or are likely to do in the future.” (p.452)

*The power to fulfill our dreams is within each of us.
We alone have the responsibility to shape our lives.
Wynn Davis*

Rational Living. Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) is a method for practicing psychological well-being that advocates that individuals, themselves, have a *choice* in all aspects of their reasoning and behavior and that “others do not make them” think or act in self destructive and/or unsocial ways. In fact, if we always recognize that we have *alternatives*, tell ourselves what some of the more constructive alternatives are in challenging social situations, and choose a course of communication and action that moves us forward in our personal growth we will be inoculating ourselves against the irrational, sometimes destructive, elements in society.

In their [A New Guide to Rational Living](#) (1961), authors Albert Ellis and Robert Harper describe “...the humanistic educative model which asserts that people, even in their early lives, have a great more choices than they tend to recognize; that most of their conditioning actually consists of *self-conditioning*; and that a therapist, a teacher, or even a book can help them see much more clearly their range of alternatives and thereby choose to reeducate and retrain themselves so that they surrender most of their serious *self-created* emotional difficulties.” They present the view that: “...unlike lower animals, people tell themselves various sane and crazy things. Their

beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and philosophies largely...take the form of internalized sentences or *self-talk*.” (p.x) The authors make the critical point that we can choose more *sane self-talk* than crazy self-talk once we take the time to reflect on what we think and why we think that way.

Ellis and Harper believe that everyone can lead themselves through a moderate level of self-analysis in which we consider the mental scripts that we ourselves and others have programmed into us. We can rationally decide if those beliefs, attitudes and subsequent actions are moving us in directions we prefer. And, we can do this throughout our lifetimes so that as we gain experience and learn more we can make adjustments in our perspectives and choices. They provide a list of perspectives and scientific conclusions for review by those willing to expend energy and time on *self-management* and able to take responsibility for their own personal development. Some thoughts for further consideration based on the authors’ commentary are:

1. Try to be *rational* in our thinking and in how we appear to others. Excessive rationalizing, intellectualizing, and overgeneralization indicate excessive use of personal opinion, an unwillingness to obtain relevant data, and an attempt to influence through intimidation. Ellis and Harper state that: “When you think rationally, (1) you derive your thought primarily from objective fact as opposed to subjective opinion; (2) your thinking, if acted upon, most likely will result in preservation of your life and limb; (3) it will help you define your personal life goals more quickly; (4) it will produce in you a minimum of inner conflict and turmoil; and (5) if you act on it, it will prevent you from getting into undesirable conflict with those whom you live and associate.” (p.73)
2. Understand that we have *choices* in life as long as we avoid absolutist thinking and behavior. Applying semantics to ourselves such as: “I need” or “I must” or “I have to” gives the appearance of over-emotionalizing, being too ego-involved, or being dogmatic. When we think about it the only thing we ever have to do is die—everything else is optional! Say instead, “I would prefer” or “I am hopeful” or “I would like to consider some options.”
3. Avoid *perfectionism* as an objective for ourselves and others. In reality none of us can achieve absolute perfection wherein we are always right and never wrong. Even when we strive to be the very best we can be there will always have room for improvement—especially in the short run. When others annoy us or are unfair to us we should consider our own bottom line interests and proceed without excessive emotion to demonstrate tolerance, understanding and even some degree of acceptance consistent with that most admirable characteristic—humility.
4. Attempt to be *objective* in both reasoning and behavior. Feelings and emotions add a desirable flavor to human existence as they serve to inspire us and bring us pleasure. However, the advancement of humankind has been most significantly driven by the large cerebral cortex in our evolving brains. We can contribute most effectively to life situations through reasoning that emphasizes the factual, accurate and timely use of data and information. Try to see all sides of an issue, and to avoid the use of preconceptions and prejudices.

5. Strive for continuous, reasonable *improvement* in ourselves and others. However, be aware that there are few perfect solutions to complex issues so we should be prepared to understand others' frames of reference, expect to accommodate others' reasonable desires, and try to achieve a level of consensus among informed, well meaning people.

The value of this section on personal health is that it reaffirms the need for everyone to pay more attention to the one system that must work well for all other systems to be of any importance—our bodies. Learnership practitioners understand that we are inside the systems-of-systems we advocate. Because of this, we look to demonstrate our willingness to maintain and advocate good health practices.

*No person was ever honored for what he received;
honor has been the reward for what he gave.
Calvin Coolidge*

Character Subsystem. The Personal System Development (PSD) character subsystem is the second of three areas of learnership practitioner assessment, learning, and development. And they are all interdependent. Character is considered herein to be the distinguishing attributes of individuals that occur over time as we choose, acquire and demonstrate the personal values and socially encouraged virtues that frame our system of ethics. These individual attributes tend to both underpin and overlap the universal societal goals and ideals presented earlier in Chapter 1. We begin this section with a discussion on thinking as it relates to the purposeful activity of character development, and then continue on with two perspectives that focus primary on the attributes of moral character—the right way to deal with others in a good society.

Thinking and Character. According to John Maxwell, author of Thinking for a Change (2003), “Those who embrace good thinking as a life style understand the relationship between their level of thinking and their level of progress. They also realize that to change their lives, they must change their thinking.” (p.3) Maxwell is a lifelong student of good thinking skills, and has written many books on personal development on such topics as attitude, motivation, and leadership which are based on his knowledge of good thinking.

Maxwell's book presents a well structured, easily understood challenge to all of us who want to improve our lives by being able to think, learn, know, lead, and pursue our goals more effectively—a fundamental learnership theme. Maxwell comments on the need to understand the value of good thinking by saying: “If you are willing to change your *thinking*, you can change your *feelings*. If you change your *feelings*, you can change your *actions*. And, changing your *actions*—based on good thinking—can change your *life*.”[Italics added] Further, he provides three reasons everyone should value good thinking: (Chapter 1)

1. Good thinking creates the foundations for good results. He quotes James Allen, philosopher of the human spirit, as saying “Good thoughts and actions can never produce bad habits; bad thoughts and actions can never produce good results.”

2. Good thinking increases your potential. Quoting James Allen again, “You will become as small as your controlling desire, as great as your dominant aspiration.”
3. Good thinking produces more good thinking if...you make it a habit. Maxwell says “Every person has the potential to become a good thinker. I’ve observed that: unsuccessful people focus their thinking on *survival*, average people focus their thinking on *maintenance*, and successful people focus their thinking on *progress*.” [Italics added]

Maxwell comments that as a motivational speaker he needed to learn that no one can change someone else—everyone is responsible for their own change and improvement. He advises people to realize the potential impact of changed thinking:

1. Changing your thinking changes your *beliefs*. People will only attain what they can see themselves doing.
2. Changing your beliefs changes your *expectations*. A belief is not just an idea that you possess; it is an idea that possesses you.
3. Changing your expectations changes your *attitude*. Negative expectations are a quick route to dead-end thinking.
4. Changing your attitude changes your *behavior*. He quotes author LeRoy Eims as saying “How can you know what is in your heart? Look at your behavior.”
5. Changing your behavior changes your *performance*. Don’t be too impressed with goal-setting; be impressed with goal-getting.
6. Changing your performance changes your *life*. When you change your performance—that is, what you do on a consistent basis—then you have the power to change your life. Clearly, good thinking has to be a prerequisite for determining the values and beliefs that contribute to the formation of our character; which in turn, affects our ability to establish ourselves as constructive and valued members of our social communities. John McCain and William Bennett have suggestions on the attributes that are most desirable.

Character is Destiny. The first selection is from U.S. Senator John McCain’s Character is Destiny: Inspiring Stories Every Young Person Should Know and Every Adult Should Remember (2002). McCain presents thirty-four vignettes of individuals noted for their demonstration of high level social principles as a way of encouraging personal reflection and development by both adolescents and adults. McCain says: “Even a long life is a brief experience, hard as that is to believe when we are young. God has given us that life, shown us how to use it, but left it to us to dispose of as we choose. Our character will determine how well or how poorly we choose. [And] It is your character and your character alone, that will make your life happy or unhappy...Others can encourage you to make the right choices or discourage you. But you must choose.” (p.xi) He continues on to introduce people that illustrate one or more of the attributes (values, virtues, ideals) he has chosen and comments that: “Most are people of exceptionally good character. All,

no doubt, had flaws. Everyone does. But they all exemplify one or more essential attributes of good character.” (p.xii) McCain’s book focuses on thirty-four attributes arranged in seven primary groups: *Honor, Purpose, Strength, Understanding, Judgment, Creativity, and Love*.

Book of Virtues. The second selection which overlaps well with McCain’s presentation is William Bennett’s The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories (1993). Bennett also appeals to adolescents and adults to spend time learning “the do’s and don’ts of life with others.” He comments that: “Aristotle wrote that good habits formed at youth make all the difference. And, moral education must affirm the central importance of moral example...For children to take morality seriously they must be in the presence of adults who take morality seriously.” (p.11) Bennett organizes the stories, poems and essays written by hundreds of other notable writers into ten primary groups, each represented by a particular virtue: *Self-Discipline, Compassion, Responsibility, Friendship, Work, Courage, Perseverance, Honesty, Loyalty, and Faith*.

Upon review, the character attributes presented by McCain and Bennett in their respective books are nearly identical. Such a positive correlation is indicative of significant agreement in the American culture on desired attitudes and behavior, regardless if the categorization is virtues, values, or ideals. The only area around which dispute is likely is the *inclusion of God, religion or faith* as one of the required attributes. Approximately one-third of U.S. adults who do not subscribe to religious guidance or formal organization, but value a sense of higher purpose would likely prefer a non-binding term such as “*spirituality*” to describe humankind aspiration. The difference here is not inconsequential in that the belief, and the non-belief, in a form of an “intelligent guiding hand” outside rational human contemplation are opposing world-views for eternal debate. Some additional thoughts on the non-belief perspective follow.

Spirituality and the Secular Quest (1996), edited by Peter Van Ness is a review of European Enlightenment (1700s) and American philosophical perspective (1800s and early 1900s) concerning the movement from religious to secular based thinking about “*spirituality*.” According to Van Ness “...most enlightenment thinkers thought of *reason* as a broad and generous power for intuiting innate and universal truths that spell out the ends of humankind in relation to government, ethics and religion...[and that] becoming a *self* is a proleptic project of the whole person; for that reason, we can say that such a project contains a *spiritual*, if not always religious dimension.” (p.96) Van Ness also summarizes the characteristics of the American Secular Quest as framed by writers such as William James, John Dewey, and George Santana that speak to a “*aesthetic spirituality*.” “Spiritual life in the secular world consists in the progressive integration of even more complex feeling, thoughts, and habits by which one reacts to an ever larger portion of the world and relates oneself to the whole of reality. This mode of *spirituality*, like art, is therefore a matter of maximizing complexity and intensity is some degree of harmony.” (p.107)

[Author’s Note: An observation at this juncture is that the vast majority of people, regardless of their religious or non-religious worldview, can agree on the majority of ethical principles upon which they would choose to advocate and manage the interpersonal relationships among citizens and the common good of society at large. Differences of opinion on the source of these principles—sectarian intervention or secular construction—should not be the determining factor

on the worthiness of the principles as guidance in human affairs. All cultures and societies need to agree on an overarching set of standards to guide their moral affairs and to achieve their potential.]

Ethics and the Quest for a Good Life (1990). Another avenue for the consideration of character and ethics is presented by William Gellermann et al, authors of Values and Ethics in Organization and Human Systems Development. The authors discuss the professional code of conduct for human systems developers in organizations, and make a distinction between *ethics as morality*, wherein a code of conduct establishes basic obligations among people, and *ethics as a quest for a good life*. The latter view was ascribed to Aristotle who conceived that all objects had natural ends toward which they strive, and which determine the course of the object's natural development. This natural end was termed the object's *telos*, which for human beings was the *good life*. The *good life* was to be achieved through development of the individual's full capacity (*fulfillment*) within the context of the society of which they were a part. Society's role is to foster conditions under which individuals could attain the *good life*, or happiness, which at the highest degree consisted of achieving *virtue*. And, *virtue* was thought to be the ability to maintain in all things a point of moderation, somewhere between the extremes of deficiency and excess. In terms of the learnership architecture in this book, the quest for our *telos* is seen as a quest for *self-fulfillment* which is achieved through life-long *personal system development*.

Character and Social Class. While character is often thought of in terms of the conformance of something or someone to pre-established standards—as we have discussed so far—character also has the dimension of uniqueness in which it might be said that something or someone has certain distinctive traits or features. And, in many cases those things or people can be subject to classification. This is the situation when we turn our attention to the degree to which Americans have similar and dissimilar values, attitudes, interests, capabilities, influence, and accomplishments. The importance of social class in this book on learnership is that the social class we are currently in, or plan to join, has great influence on what we choose to value, learn, and accomplish during our lifetimes. Our personal levels of aspiration and motivation are affected by the context of our experience. Our exposure to fields of education, cultural artifacts, economic opportunities, social responsibilities, and accomplished leaders determine what we think is possible and desirable for ourselves.

According to the Wikipedia summary of research and information on “Social Class in America,” social class is the hierarchy in which individuals find themselves. The social class system is mainly a description of how society has distributed its members among positions of varying importance, influence, and prestige.” Reference is made to Society in Focus (William Thompson and Joseph Hickey, 2005) in which they say: “It is impossible to understand people’s behavior...without the concept of social stratification, because class position has a pervasive influence on almost everything...the clothes we wear...the television we watch...the colors we paint our homes in and the names we give our pets...Our position in the social hierarchy affects out health, happiness, and even how long we will live.” Clearly, each of us should reflect on our relative positioning in our careers, communities and society’s and decide how to invest the time of our lives. In other words, where do we want to be? and how are we going to get there?

The section that follows is a compilation of social class characteristics from two sources: (1) Society in Focus (2005), (William Thompson and Joseph Hickey), and (2) Popular Culture and High Culture (1999) (Herbert Gans). The five categories and percentage of Americans in those categories are stratified using U.S. government data on income, education, culture, and taste preferences (Gans). The reader is encouraged to contemplate his or her own positioning in the categories, and to reflect on whether there are opportunities for additional personal growth that he or she might want to pursue. It is important to remember that social class mobility and ascendancy is always possible over time—particularly in American—and is being accomplished everyday.

Upper Class (1-5%). Have a disproportionate amount of societal influence and income (\$150,000+). Tend to be prominent government officials, CEOs and successful entrepreneurs. Top 1.5% with incomes over \$250,000 (many that do not work), includes old (inherited) money “blue bloods,” and “nouveau riche.” Tastes: Prefer exclusive pursuits; original and abstract art, music, literature; relies on critics and experts for professional input and opinion; only top tier clothes, homes, furnishings, and cars; high culture TV (when available); foreign movies and cars.

Upper Middle Class (15%). White collar salaried management and professional employees, advanced college degree. Household income commonly above \$100,000, but may be considerably less for one income earner households or lesser paid professionals, active in politics and social issues. Tastes: Selectively interested in Upper Class worldviews and consumption; interested in TV and film plots rather than moods and in activities, ideas, and feelings relevant to own careers and endeavors in social and civic organizations. Like Broadway shows, prints of original art, news magazines like Harpers, New Yorker, Vogue; like public TV/radio, network documentaries, museums, concert halls; high quality clothes, homes and cars; some foreign movies and cars.

Lower Middle Class (33%). Bachelors degree from state universities and smaller schools. White collar employees have considerably less autonomy than upper middle class professionals. Incomes are commonly between \$30,000 and \$75,000 depending on the number of income earners. Emulate consumption patterns of the more affluent Upper Middle Class. Tend to be overworked, little leisure. Tastes: Value wholesome TV plots, heroes and traditional values, institutions, and religions; major mass media consumers, get advice from TV and friends/neighbors; read life, look Saturday Evening Post, Readers Digest, homemaking and hobby magazines; art and entertainment tends to be romantic and common to own experience; few foreign films or cars.

Working Class (30%). Blue collar and clerical workers, work often in uncomfortable environments, and have little or no college education. Little job security, prone to outsourcing, closely supervised. Household income commonly between \$16,000 and \$30,000, pride themselves in doing “real work.” Tastes: Often support church, police, and government efforts to censor erotic materials, albeit that they themselves prefer action, often violent, and melodramatic entertainment; aesthetic standards of low culture stress substance, little concern for form; little interest in fictional accounts of contemporary social problems and issues.

Lower (Under) Class (17%). Less than high school completion. Prone to job loss, often work multiple jobs. Household income is likely to be less than \$16,000. Tastes: Typically tabloids and comic books; prefer church and street festivals; TV soap operas, folk culture, and low culture street art.

The Wikipedia summary also includes cultural study data by Dennis Gilbert from his book The American Class Structure (2002). Commentary based on Gilbert's data states: "Parental views are perhaps the most essential factor in determining the socialization progress which shapes new members of society. The values and standards used in childrearing are commonly closely related to the parent's occupational status. Parents from the professional class tend to raise their children to become curious independent thinkers, while working class parents raise their children to have a more communal perspective with a strong respect for authority. Middle Class parents tend to emphasize internal standards and values while Working Class parents emphasize external values. A comparison between Middle Class and Working Class norms follows, and the reader is encouraged to assess how his or her values currently align with their peer group.

Middle Class (48%). Consideration of others, self-control, curiosity, happiness, honesty, tolerance of nonconformity, open to innovation, self-direction.

Working Class (30%). Manners, obedience, neatness, cleanliness, strong punishment of deviant behavior, stick to old ways, people not trustworthy, strict leadership

In-Group versus Out-Group. Author Matt Ridley provides a different perspective on the establishment of social character in his book The Origin's of Virtue: Human Instincts and the Evolution of Cooperation (1996). He argues that through the evolutionary process human genes direct people's behavior in a manner likely to achieve their ultimate objective—the continued propagation of their unique species (Richard Dawkins: the "selfish gene"). As such, "cooperation is a frequent feature of human society; trust is the very foundation of social and economic life." (p.57) Cooperativeness, however, has a significant downside in that it generates self-seeking "groupishness" among people attempting to manage and control their social environment for their own selfish purposes. Groups form to seek and protect their own interests, develop their own values and character, and create rituals to reinforce conformity within, and distance from, other groups. As an example he refers to the development of varying cultures, ethnicity, religions, and states that seek to emphasize how they are different (and better) than the others—which often results in hostility and war. Ridley quotes anthropologist Lyle Steadman saying that: "...ritual is about more than demonstrating the acceptance of tradition; it is also specifically about the encouragement of cooperation and sacrifice." (p.189)

Ridley continues with the observation that religious teachings, in particular, have always been about identification of those who were part of the in-group (the adherents) and the out-group (the enemy). He says: "Religion teaches its adherents that they are a chosen race and their nearest rivals are benighted fools or even subhuman. There is nothing especially surprising in this, given the origins of most religions as beleaguered cults in tribally divided, violent societies." (p.191) He points out that the Old and New Testaments of the Bible are full of *rules of morality that*

apply to the in-group at the expense of the out-group. Enemies may be slain e.g., God's instructions to the Jews (Joshua) and the authority to Christians to conduct the Crusades, the Inquisition, and killing in Northern Ireland and Bosnia. Similar contradictory rules for moral character and acceptable conduct may be ascribed to virtually all religions even in today's contemporary world; therefore, religion cannot be the only source of ideas regarding virtue and character formation.

Given this state of affairs, and the compelling evidence of evolutionary selection Ridley says that: "Human beings have social instincts. They come into the world equipped with predispositions to learn how to cooperate, to discriminate the trustworthy from the treacherous, to commit themselves to be trustworthy, to earn good reputations, to exchange goods and information, and to divide labour...this instinctive cooperativeness is the very hallmark of humanity and what sets us apart from other animals." (p.249) Ridley sums up his view with "Trust is as vital a form of social capital as money is a form of actual capital...[And] Social contracts between equals, generalized reciprocity between individuals and between groups—these are at the heart of the most vital of all human achievements: the creation of society." (pp.250-251)

[Author's Note: The Learnership philosophy and architecture has as its integrated social systems goal: personal self-fulfillment, organizational high performance, the community common good, and societal human enlightenment. This meta-system construct exists on the basis of democratic pluralism in which human reasoning and rational action combine to encourage critical thinking, informed dialogue, and collaborative consensus. To accomplish this outcome requires a marketplace for innovative ideas and moral expression without undue censorship or social intimidation.]

American Moral Character. A useful way to bring closure to the character subsystem overview may be to consider the perspective of Alan Wolfe in his book Moral Freedom: The Search for Virtue in a World of Choice (2001). He comments that there is an underlying moral philosophy of Americans that may be perceived and that it can be understood in terms of the following framework:

1. Moral Agreement. His observation is: "A pluralistic liberal democracy committed to equality and respect for difference ought to appreciate the fact that no one conception of the right or wrong way to live has the power to drive out all others. [And]...we should not confuse differences over how and why virtues ought to be applied [global warming, abortion, capital punishment] with differences over the underlying moral philosophy that guides people's understanding of the world." (pp.167-168)
2. Human Nature. His research shows that: "When it comes to human nature, our respondents know what they think and the overwhelming majority of them think the same way. They believe that people are not born with a predisposition to do evil. Although some are convinced that human beings are innately good, most think that we are shaped by our environment and that we can be taught to do the right thing...when things go wrong, and even when they go right, they also ought to be viewed as responsible for the decisions they make." (pp.177-178)

3. Character Formation. His data indicated that: “Character in American is no longer viewed as preformed, as if it were a quality known in advance...rather, [it] is a base from which children can obtain the confidence from which they discover rules of right conduct that apply best for them...[and are] capable of discovering meaningful values by which they ought to lead their lives.” (pp.186-187)
4. Beyond Good and Evil. People who lack a radical sense of evil may not be capable of grasping the full complexity of the human condition; they may be ill prepared for evil when it shows its face and they may even, in rare cases, be unable to recognize the evil existing inside them. Yet compared with radical evil, radical niceness is worth appreciating...[And] It may also represent a fairly realistic assessment of what it takes to make a society function smoothly.” (p.192)

Wolfe continues to describe the emergence of “moral freedom” – its presence and its challenges. He says: “The defining characteristic of the moral philosophy of the Americans can therefore be described as the principle of moral freedom. Moral freedom means that individuals should determine for themselves what it means to lead a good and virtuous life...Schooled in the language of self-fulfillment and convinced that words like “maturity” and “growth” are preferable to “sin,” they find themselves quite comfortable with the idea that a good society is one that allows each individual maximum scope for making his or her own moral choices.” (p.195) Wolfe sums up his perspective with the following observations:

1. Americans have become comfortable with the idea of moral freedom because its optimistic theory of human nature makes more sense to them than the one [Victorian or Puritan] it replaced.
2. Americans would rather assume that human beings are born good, thereby giving them a standard to which they can aspire.
3. There is a moral majority in America. It just happens to be one that wants to make up its own mind.” (p.197)

The significance of this section on personal character is that we are all participants in a variety of social systems, and the degree to which we can accommodate our own purposes and needs while collaborating with others on their personal desires, and on what we have in common, the better it is for all involved. There is little doubt that most people prefer working and socializing with others of good moral character, a positive outlook on the meaning of their lives, similar values and social class, and an aspiration to live a life that includes doing something constructive for their community. Fundamentally, however, we need to consider both our rights and responsibilities and strike a balance that is realistic and socially supportable.

When we say that high achievers have priorities, we mean they have rank-ordered their goals...By means of persistence they translate goals, arranged by priorities, into action.

B. Eugene Griessman

Ability Subsystem. The Personal System Development (PSD) Ability Subsystem is the third of three areas of learnership practitioner assessment, learning, and development. And they are all interdependent. Ability herein addresses not only the knowledge and skills required for career success in a fast changing world, but also the personal dimensions of each of us as we fulfill our personal, community and societal roles. Starting with the assumption that we have positioned ourselves well in terms of the Health and Character Subsystems already discussed, this section presents the reader with a variety of topics that allow us to jointly envision a person who *has their physical and emotional act together* as they present themselves to associates, colleagues, and citizens in their communities.

Multiple Intelligences. Howard Gardner, author of Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983) is the starting point for this section. His well framed but often controversial theory tells us that “intelligence,” that well advocated concept focused on the depth of human knowledge, is not one but a number of “extraordinary potentials” within human beings. These potentials are believed to be primarily inherited capabilities (nature) that can be further developed in the right environment (nurture) and are consistent with the either the modular or network theories of brain functioning. Gardner states that: “I argue that there is persuasive evidence for the existence of several *relatively autonomous* human intellectual competences ...the frames of mind of my title” (p.8) He continues to say: “To my mind, a human intellectual competence must entail a set of skills of problem solving—enabling the individual *to resolve genuine problems or difficulties* that he or she encounters and, when appropriate, to create an effective product—and must also entail the potential *for finding or creating problems*—thereby laying the groundwork for the acquisition of new knowledge.” (pp.60-61) Gardner proposes that there seven types of intelligences or extraordinary potentials that are often distinguishable in early in childhood; and are positioned for further development within a supporting environment. These are:

1. Linguistic intelligence. Is one’s skill in expression through the use of language, and Expertise in the semantics (meaning) of words used in speech and writing.
2. Musical intelligence. Is one’s understanding and skill in the pitch (melody), rhythm, and other characteristics of music construction and performance.
3. Logical-mathematical intelligence. Is the ability to understand and apply the principles of logic and the highly structured relationships of mathematics to problem solving and decision making.
4. Spatial intelligence. The ability to perceive the visual world accurately, perform transformations and modifications upon one’s perceptions, and to be able to re-create aspects of one’s visual experience. Having a sense of the whole; seeing all relationships.
5. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence. Is one’s skill is the use of the body to convey meaning, demonstrate thoughts and feelings, and elicit sensitivities and behavior by others.

6. Personal Intelligence (Self). Is the ability to assess one's own needs and feelings and to make discriminations among those findings. This provides a learnership opportunity to *learn*.
7. Personal Intelligence (Social). Is the ability to notice and make distinctions concerning the underlying purpose, feelings, and behaviors of others, and this provides a learner-ship opportunity to *lead*.

The usefulness of being able to understand and appreciate the existence of different intelligences are threefold: (1) to help us assess whether we have unique talents that should be further developed, (2) to help us recognize others' skills and interests in an effort to build constructive working and social relationships, and (3) to help us interpret and appreciate the richness of the human knowledge and culture for improved social development. In particular, the identification of *personal intelligences* (self and others) reminds us that Personal System Development (PSD) is critically dependent on our willingness to play constructive roles in the social systems in which we participate.

Learning and Leading. Peter Vaill's Learning as a Way of Being (1996) is a foundational reference in this book. In it, he explains the "permanent white water" within which most of us exist, and provides strategies for understanding and succeeding in this turbulent social and career environment. "Vaill's central thesis is that:

1. Our continual imaginative and creative initiatives and responses to systems are, in fact, *continual learning*; in other words, continual learning is what we are seeing as we observe people acting in complex situations.
2. We need to consider carefully what we need to learn about continual learning to live productively and comfortable in our macro-systems.
3. We need also to consider whether we are prepared to engage in continual learning as we need to be, and if so, how we go about engaging it." (p.5)

"There are five intertwining characteristics of Permanent White Water (PWW). (1) PWW conditions are full of surprises, (2) Complex systems tend to produce novel problems, (3) PWW conditions feature events that are "messy," (4) white water events are often extremely costly, and (5) PWW conditions raise the problem of recurrence." (pp.10-13) Conditions such as these make continual learning an essential Personal System Development (PSD) responsibility.

Vaill provides a definition of learning: "Changes a person makes in himself or herself that increase the know-why and/or the know-what and/or the know-how the person possesses with respect to a given subject." (p.21) He explains that he is not talking about institutional learning in which students are busy absorbing previously selected subject matter as a means to achieve an objective not necessarily needed or desired by the student. Instead, Vaill suggests "that learning as a way of being has real substance, that it is an authentic way of living and working, thinking and feeling, in the world of permanent white water." (p.42)

In terms of a leader's role in learning, Vaill coins the term "leaderly learning." "His main hypothesis is that *managerial leadership is not learned; managerial leadership is learning.*" His says that: "The ongoing process of learning is occurring all the time in executive life. The word *leaderly* is an adjective modifying learning. Thus, *leaderly learning* is the kind of learning that a managerial leader needs to engage in as an ongoing process in the job." (pp.126-127) Vaill suggests that: "Instead of memorizing "subject matter" [in management courses] would be managerial leaders can learn about learning processes in general by becoming immersed in the seven qualities of learning as a way of being. These are:

1. Pre-programmed Assumptions. Learn how to surface and examine our assumptions about human being—assumptions that derive from our past experiences and also assumptions that are built into any specific principles we have been employing.
2. Accurate and Useful Information. Learning about human behavior requires the confrontation of much literature which needs to be reviewed for accuracy and applicability.
3. Personal Synthesis. There is a need to achieve a personal synthesis about human behavior in organizations that balances and integrates all the kinds of data and concepts that are available.
4. Frame of Mind. The learner needs to discover and recognize the temptations to become a passive spectator and contemplator or a detached critic and skeptic.
5. Objectivity and Subjectivity. The learner should achieve a balance between objectivity and subjectivity, between one's personal perspective and...a more objective stance that takes in account other points of view.
6. Micro and Macro Continuum. Human behavior exists on a continuum from the deep intrapersonal to the macro-sociological. Learners need to appreciate the need to understand this range of knowledge.
7. Variety of Contexts. Learners should be willing to grasp the huge variety of contexts to which the basic idea can be applied.

Vaill summarizes the above leaderly learning description by noting that a one-time learning event is not sufficient exposure to adopt this leadership skill. The requirement is for *lifelong leaderly learning* and an extended program would be necessary to allow for training and development to have its effect over time. Lastly, the educational program content should address leaderly learning from seven aspects which are: self-directed, creative, expressive, feeling, online, continual, and reflexive leaderly learning." (pp.128-146)

Lifelong Learning. In Wise-Up: The Challenge of Lifelong Learning (1999), Guy Claxton comments that "learning is living." "To be alive is to be learning. Learning is not something we do sometimes, in special places or at certain periods of our lives. It is a part of our nature. We are born learners." (p.6) Claxton also makes a useful distinction between learning itself and the developmental process of "learning-to-learn;" he says: "Learning, in the way I am using the term

is what you do when you do not know what to do. Learning to learn, or the development of learning power, is getting better at knowing when, how and what to do when you don't know what to do." (p.11)

Claxton provides a comprehensive overview of traditional beliefs about learning, but with insightful extensions to make his points. He does this in terms of beliefs about learning (Chapter 1) and feelings about learning (Chapter 2), each of which are paraphrased below for easy review. Concerning beliefs about learning:

1. The outcome is knowledge, but is more importantly an ongoing life process.
2. Knowledge is thought to be the truth, but it is really a provisional assumption.
3. Learning is considered to be for the young, but is really life-long for everyone.
4. Learning is simple in concept, but it can be difficult to do.
5. Learning involves teaching, but learning and the learner is for a lifetime.
6. Learning can proceed calmly and steadily, but may be just the opposite.
7. Learning results in explicit understanding, but much is tacit and not easily explained.

We can see here that learning requires diligent effort, and our self-esteem is often tied to our ability to learn. How well we learn is considered to be a function not only of the learning tools we possess, but of the implicit beliefs which we have acquired. Additionally, our beliefs help provide resilience, that is, we have learned to believe in ourselves and that our ability is expandable. We know we can overcome difficulties. However, we do need to stay aware for "articulate incompetence" wherein someone is clever in rationale and presentation, but wrong in the substance of what they say.

Concerning feelings about learning, Claxton says that:

1. Learning may be experienced as a journey or adventure and we may sometimes feel like withdrawing to protect ourselves.
2. We need to have the courage to persevere based on our innate tenacity or practical experience. This comes from emotion (desire or drive) and might be coupled with excitement.
3. We often need to choose between staying with the current situation and the possibly that new experiences might be beneficial; there is always some uncertainty and risk.
4. Inattention and detachment can be feigned to avoid the pressure. Anger and shame may occur over time if learning and success are not achieved.

Another aspect of learning is that it takes many years to become fully competent at using both *thinking* (hard reasoning) and *intuition* (soft reasoning). Learning to think requires rational thought, critical thinking skills, valid arguments leading to well thought-out conclusions. Pieces of information must be aligned, hypothesis created, alternatives considered, and choices made leading to effective decision-making and problem solving. A limitation to this process occurs when those involved have a tendency to rely on sources of unsubstantiated belief (clairvoyance, horoscopes, spirits, etc) that reduce the quality of their reasoning. Claxton quotes David Perkins:

“Despite their ability to do better when reminded, people’s thinking generally tends to be *hasty* (impulsive, coming to premature conclusions without examining all the evidence); *narrow* (failing to challenge assumptions and explore alternative points of view); *fuzzy* (careless and imprecise, tolerant of ill-defined and ambiguous concepts); and *sprawling* (generally disorganized and unfocused, not adding up to a coherent argument).” (David Perkins, “Post-primary Education has Little Impact on Informal Reasoning,” *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 77, pp.562-571)

In the area of learning to use intuition (soft reasoning), it is known that some situations require the reframing of the problem and viewing it from other perspectives. This is may be achieved by freeing our minds to allow for hunches and insights. Being able to shift our minds between a tight focus and a broad focus, and to being able to adjust to the timing and the amount of information perceived is a useful skill that can be developed. Claxton credits philosopher George Spencer Brown as recognizing that: “The ability to hold a problem in mind without activity, purposely deliberating on it—perhaps even for years—is one of the keys to soft thinking.” (p.155) He also quotes Arthur Combs and Charles Taylor with reporting that: “Some individuals, because of past experiences with frustrating situations involving delay of need satisfaction, become generally incapable of tolerating frustrating situations...the inevitable consequence is behavioral rigidity.” (“The Effect of Perception of Mild Degrees of Psychological Stress on Performance,” *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, vol. 47, pp.420-424)

Claxton addresses the subject of reality and perception by noting that: “...people’s learning depends not so much on the challenges and uncertainties that their world contains, but on how these are perceived.” (p.180) He maintains that perception has two distinct aspects: the in-take activity (sense, context and personal filters) and the out-take activity (imposed worldview, rules, methods). If we perform well we are said to be *mindful* in our activity, if not we are then said to be *mindless*. In terms of our learnership theme, our ability to balance *open-minded inquiry* with *closed-minded advocacy* and action creates cycles of learning and determines the efficiency and effectiveness of the actions we take. When we perform well, we demonstrate our mindfulness.

The learnership theory and practice advocated in this book is based on the premise that there is a select set of sequential *reasoning competencies* (thinking, learning, knowing, and leading), when skillfully applied to an integrated set of *social systems* (personal, organizational, community, societal), empowers individuals to optimize their life accomplishments in the form of self-fulfillment, high performance, the common good, and human enlightenment. At the very core of this proposal is the idea that individuals are well informed in the logic of reasoning, and they are willing to apply the knowledge acquired through thinking and intuition to various personal and social situations.

[Author’s Note: At this juncture it is significant to recognize the mutual support relationship between Claxton’s focus on *lifelong learning* and Peter Vaill’s *concept of learning as a way of being* in the previous section. Together, they represent two main pillars in understanding the dynamics of learnership, and the distinctive characteristics of the learnership practitioner.]

Learnership Practitioners. The operative agent in the learnership philosophy is the learnership practitioner. All the espoused effort toward thinking, learning, knowing, and leading does not

amount to much unless there are catalysts for change and development. Learnership practitioners are meant to be those catalysts. The nature of their knowledge, skills and abilities is that they have been lifelong learners who have sufficient experience with the continua of failures and accomplishments that affect individuals, organizations, and social communities. A high degree of maturity is incumbent in the behavior of the learnership practitioner. They typically experience the need for reinvigoration and self-renewal as well as the desire to communicate and share their learning (cognition and feelings) with others. Learnership practitioners, regardless of their career specialties, are drawn to the social role of facilitator, mentor, coach, and consultant. They have knowledge, experience, and concern for the betterment of human relationships and performance.

Frederic Hudson, author of The Adult Years: Mastering the Art of Self-Renewal (1999), brings unusual insight into this subject area. In the preface of his book, Hudson observes that: “Abundant research describes and explores aspects of adult life but precious little wisdom for how adults can design and manage their own lives. “ He then expresses the purpose of his writing: “This book is an effort to provide both guidance and wisdom. We will explore ways an adult today can establish a life course, construct durable life chapters, manage life and career changes and transition, engage in lifelong learning and training, live an anticipatory life rather than a reactive one, master the art of self-renewal, and contribute to planetary renewal.” (p. viii)

After presenting a systematic review of the adult life experience, he ventures into an explanation of the need for “A New profession of Adult Mentors and Coaches” in Chapter 13 of his book. He proposes the concept of the mentor-coach, saying: “A mentor is a trusted role model, adviser, wise person, friend, mensch, steward, or guide. A mentor-coach is someone trained and devoted to guiding others into increased competence, commitment, and confidence. Coaches play their roles to achieve future-oriented results—fostering career paths, facilitating personal and professional renewal, training high-performance teams, and providing informal leadership for transition management.” (pp.253-254) Hudson continues with “a five-point description of a mentor-coach in action:

1. Models mastery in professional arenas that others want to obtain
2. Guide others to high achievement in emerging scenarios
3. Advocates, criticizes, and extends corporate culture and wisdom
4. Endorses and sponsors others without having power or control over them
5. Facilitates professional development and organizational system development”

Hudson comments that: “for at least eight reasons, mentoring-coaching is important as this time, not only in corporate America but throughout society. These are:

1. To help adults manage change effectively
2. To model mastery
3. To provide ongoing training in technical abilities
4. To elicit core values and commitments
5. To renew human systems
6. To sponsor future generations
7. To model collaboration and consensus building
8. To tap the genius of older workers” (pp.254-261)

Hudson's mentoring-coaching construct adds value by its focus on the learnership practitioner's ability to maintain interpersonal credibility based upon his or her continuing accomplishments, and generative outlook when working with others. The text that follows adds three additional insights to the competency and demeanor needed by learnership practitioners: Reflection-in-Action, Self-Renewal, and Generativity.

Reflection-in-Action. The seminal book on self-reflective, learning-in-action is The Reflective Practitioner (1999) by Donald Schon. His concept of reflection-in-action pertains to those individuals and circumstances in which a person (the reflective practitioner) approaches a complex issue or problem differently than most others. Instead of taking the problem statement as a "given" and proceeding to the selection of one of the available solutions that they have embedded in their minds from previous, and most likely easier situations, they hold the issue or problem in mental suspension while they test other possible definitions of the problem or frameworks for thinking about the problem. Then, through dialogue with others and the testing of their pat solutions against the problem, they go through cycles of experimentation and learning from which they evolve toward a restatement of the original problem and/or the solution of the original problem with discoveries and appreciations not known at the start of the deliberation. This trial and error approach, while somewhat eclectic, is not without structure. There is a period of assessment, data gathering, testing of potential or partial solutions, review of likely consequences, and re-cycling through the process again until a preferred, if not optimal, path becomes clear.

Schon is particularly insightful when he considers implication for professionals in formal organizations which maintain a premium on stability and predictability of organizational life. Coaching such organizations is difficult because by its definition learning requires new experiences and new perspectives on those experiences which usually interject surprise and complexity. The organization and its leaders are primed to reject such incursions and thereby prevent the very organizational learning they require to meet their constantly changing environment.

Self-Renewal. The preeminent author on the subject of self-renewal is John Gardner. His book Self-Renewal: The Individual and the Innovative Society (1963) is perhaps the most referenced intellectual resource on this subject. On the topic of self-renewal, Gardner states: "No one knows why some individuals seem capable of self-renewal while others do not. But we have some important clues to what the self-renewing person is like, and what we might do to foster renewal. For self-renewing men and women the development of their own potentialities and the process of self-discovery never end. It is a sad but unarguable fact that most people go through their lives only partially aware of their abilities." (p.10) As budding learnership practitioners we are encouraged by Gardner's straightforward acknowledgement that "most" people are not thinking like us, which means, of course, that some of us will be often misunderstood while the professionals among us will be resisted when they attempt to make significant change in their community or work environments.

Gardner is also astute as he cautions us to acquire *self-knowledge* to go along with our willingness for *self-renewal*; together they cooperate in our *self-development*. He says that for many of us it appears to be inconvenient to get to know ourselves. He comments that: "More often than

not, we don't want to know ourselves, don't want to depend on ourselves, don't want to live with ourselves. By middle life most of us are accomplished fugitives from ourselves." (p.13)

Again, as learnership practitioners we seek to know and understand ourselves and open-up our minds and hearts for greater learning, higher performance, and memorable service to others.

Generativity. Most people who have reached middle age and survived their mid-life transition and/or crisis begin to see new terrain on the horizon. This is the time when a combination of nature and nurture introduce the fact that at least half of our lives is irretrievably behind us and we realize that others in our families, organizations, and communities could benefit from a bit more of our guidance and attention. The generativity stage of life is calling, and if we were not thinking about "renewal" maybe this is the time we did. The question is what should we do with the (hopefully) second half of our lives? Stephen Berglas, author of Reclaiming the Fire: How Successful People Overcome Burnout (2001), tells us that a large percentage of super successful people eventually face the end of their meteoric social and economic rise, and have to deal with psychological burnout. They become stagnant in their lives and careers, overextended in attempting to maintain feelings of accomplishment, and uncertain on what to do next to sustain a meaningful life. Very often they are candidates for transitioning into a *generative stage of life*—if they are ready and able to seize that opportunity. Doing so leads to personal development and greater maturity.

Berglas says that: "People who aim to achieve generativity utilize their wisdom or mental excellence in ways that allow them to realize their dreams while enabling successive generations to prepare to realize theirs." He provides a caveat, however, in that: "...the essence of generativity ...[is] ceasing self-absorptive thoughts and actions in order to nurture or give yourself to others." (p.171) An ancillary point is that people in the generative stage stop trying to gain recognition and reward simply for what they now do, and instead focus on coaching others on their way to success. About the best they can hope for is a legacy formed by how they have positively aided others – not a bad deal for most people in their post-career years.

At this juncture we are able to articulate specific attributes of the learnership practitioner. He or she has good personal *intelligence skills* (H. Gardner), is a *leaderly learner* (Vaill), is a *lifelong learner* (Claxton), is a *mentor-coach* (Hudson), is a *reflective practitioner* (Schon), practices *self-renewal* (J. Gardner), and is a *generative mentor* (Berglas). The reader is now invited to consider three additional learnership practitioner skills: (1) Conversational Skills, (2) Future Work Preparation, and a (3) Focus on Excellence.

Conversational Skill. In the book Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High (2002), authors Kerry Patterson et al, explain that: "When stakes are high, opinions vary, and emotions start to run strong, casual conversations become crucial. Ironically, the more crucial the conversation, the less likely we are to handle it well. The consequences of either avoiding or fouling up crucial conversations can be severe. When we fail a crucial conversation, every aspect of our lives can be affected—from our careers, to our communities, to our relationships, to our personal health." (p.16) Building on extensive research and practical observation, Patterson and team caution us to *work on ourselves first* before becoming too entangled trying to bring others around to our point of view; they say: "More often than not, we do something to

contribute to the problems we're experiencing. People who are best at *dialogue* understand this simple fact and turn it into the principle "Work on me first." (p.29) [Italics added] The key self management techniques advocated are: (1) maintain the right motive, (2) be willing to listen, (3) replace *either/or* thinking with *both/and* thinking, and (4) remember that *dialogue* is an option.

An abstract of the authors' model for successful conversation begins with establishing a *pool of shared meaning* through the use of dialogue techniques coordinated by the person (primary discussant) most concerned about the direction or meaningfulness of a conversation. This requires, as a first step, taking responsibility for assessing where the conversation needs to be focused and in determining what he or she needs to have happen. Second, the primary discussant looks to see when a conversation becomes crucial and *reduces anxiety and stress* without agreeing to premature *either/or* thinking or to the typical silence or violence emotional response often employed. Third, the primary discussant works to establish the sense of *mutual purpose and mutual respect*. Fourth, all parties to the discussion *share their perspectives and experiences* on the situation or issue with the expectation that others listen carefully. Fifth, the primary discussant seeks to *determine points of agreement* and reach consensus for action. And sixth, the primary discussant or group leader helps the group decide to decide, schedule action, and commit to following up on results. While this methodology does not guarantee successful results, particularly in tough situations, it does give the high road of maturity to the primary discussant in terms of skill, courage and demeanor—a reaffirmation of his or her developmental progress.

Patterson and team offer many tips on managing our conversational styles and building successful communication habits. Their suggestions tend to remind us that: (1) our ability to pull ourselves out of the *content* of a conversation and to focus on the *process* is inversely proportional to our emotional involvement in the subject, (2) we have learned to carry *scripts* around in our heads that may not really apply to the situation at hand, (3) the more we know about the subject under discussion the better off we are in helping others think more clearly, and (4) good conversation is enabled by a combination of rational thinking and emotional moderation.

Finally, Figure 7-4 is comparison of conversations on the basis of a person's desire to move others to immediate action and results, or to build relationship and capabilities. The reader is invited to identify his or her own preferences (style, objective, process) when working with others. Is there a best way? What are the positive and negative aspects of each? What learning might you take from your reflection?

Future Work Preparation. Barbara Moses, in "Career Intelligence: The 12 New Rules for Work and Life Success" (The Futurist, World Future Society, Aug-Sep 1999) explains that becoming a *career activist* is one of the key principles of career intelligence. The ability to define ourselves independently from our organizations and taking change of our career choices is a direction for more and more of today's workers. She says (paraphrased) that:

Comparative Conversations

Concern For:	Move to Immediate Action and Results	Build Relationships and Capabilities
Time	Tactical View	Strategic View
	Impatience/Immediate	Patience/Ongoing
Knowledge	Advocacy of Facts	Inquiry into Facts
	Deliberate/Know Enough	Contemplative/Know More
Feelings	Fear of Failure	Confident of Success
	Impersonal Style	Personable Style
Others	Followers/Resources	Partners/Assets
	Dismissive Toward Others	Appreciative of Others
	Monologue/Directive	Dialogue/Collaborative
	Win/Lose	Win/Win

Figure 7-4

Our responsibilities include:

1. Writing our own script. Rather than having someone write it for us
2. Being vigilant on our own behalf. Identifying and preparing for opportunities rather than expecting anyone else to guide us along or do reconnaissance
3. Becoming an independent agent. Defining ourselves in terms and concepts that are independent of our job title, our organization, or what other people think we should be
4. Being entrepreneurial. Looking for opportunity, undertaking enterprises that provide opportunities (as well as risks)

The twelve new rules for career success:

1. Ensure our marketability. Think of our boss as our client; know ourselves, our skills and strengths; know our market

2. Think globally. See the entire world as our marketplace; use technology to keep connected
3. Communicate powerfully, persuasively, and unconventionally. Capture our listener's attention, make information vivid, communicate clearly, translate concepts into value propositions
4. Keep on learning. Stay current in our fields; take time off for course work; read books, journals, and practice new skills
5. Understand business trends. Stay aware of key trends in business, society, and politics; know our competition
6. Prepare for areas of competence, not jobs. Titles and nature of work is changing, keep up on the latest skills and roles being sought
7. Look to the Future. Stay on top of emerging "hot" career fields and innovative practices; develop new skills that will be needed
8. Build Financial Independence. Work to get ahead of our bills and put six month's income in the bank; plan for our own health care and retirement
9. Think lattice, not ladders. Track our career progress by the type of jobs not our step on the corporate ladder; keep networking and seek horizontal advancement
10. Be a generalist with a specialty, or a specialist who's a generalist. The requirement is for both. Become competent in two or more specialties while also broadening our cross-organizational integration skills.
11. Be a ruthless time manager. No one has enough time to do everything they could do so set priorities that have long term strategic implications for growth and success. Avoid just being busy with routine matters.
12. Be kind to ourselves. Set realistic objectives and celebrate even small accomplishments. Being less than perfect on some things allows time for excellence on the right things.

Wherever we look; change, complexity and chaos are all challenging the status quo. Issues of war, illegal immigration, terrorism, white collar crime, growing national debt, gang activity, illegal drugs, rampant consumerism, a decline in school performance, unfunded pension plans, pandemic threats, middle-class decline, global warming, Medicare deficits, and dozens of other trends are straining the traditional safety nets of family, government and society. Workers in all occupational specialties face uncertainty within their current organizations, which in turn, seek to stay competitive in an expanding world marketplace that seeks to reallocate resources more efficiently across the globe. The only way to assure long-term employability and sustain personal

progress is for more and more workers to become business entities of their own. Learnership practitioners are not immune to these trends. However, the flexible, adaptable, lifelong learning and competent business entities that they are; learnership practitioners should do well by themselves as they assist others in their strategies for development and performance.

Commitment to Excellence (Relationships, Personality, Professional Presence). Here are three topics of great importance to those of us committed to growing professionally and emotionally.

1. The Importance of Relationships. In Managing Your Mind: The Mental Fitness Guide (1995), Gillian Butler and Tony Hope reflect on the value of social relationships. They say that: “We are, to a great extent, social animals. Our happiness, our self-esteem, our moods, our capacity to flourish, all are influenced enormously by our relationships. [And] In order to improve relationship we can only work on ourselves, and then others will change the ways in which they relate to us.” (p.119) Their point is clear from a psychological perspective, but surely we know how hard this is for many of us to do. Drs. Butler and Hope anticipate this difficulty and suggest four specific techniques to assist us in improving this area of our personal system development initiative (Chapter 12):
 - a. Looking for Patterns. (Addressed in Chapter 3 of this text) Do a comparison of our feelings between when we find ourselves separated or excluded from others, and when we are communicating and socializing with those whom we know a lot about.
 - b. Focusing on Specific Areas of Difficulty. Separate and review our relationship problems into disputes (hostile relations with others), role changes (choosing a perspective or persona that fails to have desired effects), and loneliness (inability to maintain friendships).
 - c. Learning to Pilot Our Own Ships. Instead of focusing on our outward appearance and activities, focus on what we really need and desire from relationships in order to be happy. What should the outcomes be?
 - d. Noticing How Others Change in Response. Pay closer attention to the social outcomes that result from our change in purpose and behavior.
2. Pastiche Personalities. In The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life (1991) author Kenneth Gergen reviews many contemporary topics of concern in today’s life and work environment. In particular, he identifies a personality type that seems to be becoming more prevalent—*pastiche personalities*. He crafts a scenario in which the chaos and rate of change affecting our thinking and behavior tends to move us away from the traditional moorings we once relied upon. He says: “It becomes increasingly difficult to recall precisely to what core essence one must remain true. The ideal of authenticity frays about the edges and the meaning of sincerity slowly lapses into indeterminacy. As the guilt and sense of superficiality recede from view, one is simultaneously readied for the emergence of a pastiche personality.” (150)

Gergen continues to develop his thesis by saying: “The pastiche personality is a social chameleon, constantly borrowing bits and pieces of identity from whatever sources are available and constructing them as a useful or desirable in a given situation...[And] interest in “true character” and disgust with “false advertising” diminish...[And] we learn that “seeming” rather than “being”...becomes the most reasonable orientation to daily life.” (pp.150-151). Having proposed this controversial perspective, Gergen adds that Zurcher (The Mutable Self earlier in this chapter) also discovered that his concept of human social adaptation could give rise to a form of narcissism indicating that: Daily life becomes suffused with the search for self-gratification...[In which] Others merely become the implements by which these impulses are served.” (p.154)

[Author’s Note: While the learnership practitioner is encouraged to continually develop his or her mental, emotional and physical capabilities through a lifetime of learning, adjustment and development; the learnership philosophy is a rejection of self-centered extremism characterized by the concept of “pastiche.” Instead, coming to know and evolve our “better selves” consistent with the *universal goals and ideals* introduced in Chapter 1 of this book is what we seek to accomplish.]

3. Professional Presence. Professionals in all fields of endeavor are people who have built a personal and career *presence* that has aided in their development and success. The best practices in relating to others, and influencing those others to seek out personal and business relationships with these professionals have been amply documented. Because we, as learnership practitioners, may be knowledgeable and experienced in any academic discipline or career field, we are responsible to ensure our professional image and behavior is exemplary. Research has yielded two sources of good advice that are herewith identified and used to provide an overview of topics everyone should use to conduct a self-review of their personal professional presence. The sources are Your Executive Image (Victoria Seitz, 2000) and 5 Steps to Professional Presence (Susan Bixler and Lisa Scherrer Dugan, 2001). Integrated excerpts are:
 - a. Image. “Our executive image is our total persona. Mastering it is like packaging a product...but one appropriate for our chosen profession.” (Seitz) Areas for review and improvement include: good posture, pleasant facial expression, firm handshake, purposeful eye contact, appropriate dress, and awareness of personal space and positioning.
 - b. Communications (Verbal, Non-Verbal, Virtual). The sound of our voice and how we use it has significant impact. It can reveal what kind of person we are, warm and friendly or cold and distant. It can also excite or bore our audience.” (Seitz) Areas for review and improvement include: choice of words, tone and volume, rate of speaking, and frequency of speaking. Important non-verbal communications include: appropriate use of gestures, supportive facial expression, and inclusive body positioning. And, good virtual communication includes the use of appropriate written products (letters, invitations, emails) and verbal tools (phone, email, conference calls).

- c. Etiquette. “Genuine good manners and a working knowledge of professional behavior are essential and productive business skills. Good manners are a show of respect. They humanize and harmonize business relationships, and promote a powerful spirit of cooperation in our work environment.” (Seitz) Areas to pay attention to are: introductions and greeting, table manners, gift giving, active listening, avoidance of smoking and excessive drinking, use of others’ time and attention, background noise reduction, and avoidance of gossip and rumors.

Learnership is a capability integral to all other personal abilities: The thinking, learning, knowing, and leading *reasoning competencies* developed in Chapters 2 through 6 enable us to proactively influence our own *personal systems development* by their support to the health, character and ability subsystems described in this chapter. And, the learnership practitioner is the idealized representative of learnership in action.

Conclusion

*[If we] can include everything coherently and harmoniously in an overall whole
that is undivided, unbroken, and without a border, then...from this
will flow orderly action within the whole.*

David Bohm

Pursuing Self-Fulfillment. In closing this chapter on personal system development, it may be useful to recap the various aspects of cognition, emotion and behavior that contribute to our understanding the concept of self-fulfillment. It appears that our search for fulfillment progresses at an uneven pace along a maturity continuum containing stages of learning and development. We seek various forms of optimal experience and achievement, with the goal of becoming self-actualized (Maslow) and attaining a higher level-of-being (Schumacher, 1977). It is likely that as we pursue our objectives, we achieve temporary states and degrees of self-fulfillment; and that the greater the variety and intensity of our achievements over time, the greater our total sense of self-fulfillment in a life well-lived. Self-fulfillment has two major dimensions and may occur through participation in an experience (a process dimension) and/or by obtaining end results (an objective dimension). In either case, we experience a sense of accomplishment uniquely suited to our own needs, wants, and desires.

It is important to note, however, that our pursuit of self-fulfillment is inextricably linked to the social networks to which we belong. Through an iterative process of socialization and re-socialization within the community, each of us constructs our own reality, and therefore, our own personal meaning for fulfillment. In The Social Construction of Reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), the authors introduce the notion of two realities which we, the developing individuals, must consider and accommodate. One is termed the "objective reality" which is the social-structural nature of society as it exists outside the individual, and the other is the "subjective reality" which represents reality based on the our own perspectives and current level of learning. They state that "successful socialization...[is] the establishment of a high degree of symmetry between objective and subjective reality (as well as identity)," and that "*Identity* is a phenomenon

that emerges from the dialectic between individual and society" (pp.173-174). The conclusion that may be drawn is that we are hardly ever isolated from the social effects of the community to which we belong, and we spend a good deal of time reconciling our respective views of reality, meaning, and identity. For this reason, self-fulfillment is better understood as a psycho-socially defined concept which leads to the establishment of a range of desirable experiences and objectives acceptable both to the community and to the majority of the community's members.

In terms of the ability, character, and health subsystems that shape our *personal system development*, it is reasonable to assume that each of us must participate in a dialectic that is specific to our learning and purpose. In each, there is need for us to define our current capabilities, estimate our potential capabilities, and develop strategies for closing the gap between the two. For the *ability subsystem*, we receive societal feedback that indicates a continuing need to increase our capacity to use physical and mental skills focused mostly on our technical, rather than human, interests. This is achieved through continuous career learning and skill improvement. For the *character subsystem*, we receive feedback on social relations that indicate a continuing need for increasing our capacity to conduct ourselves within accepted societal standards. And lastly, for the *health subsystem*, we receive health and safety information which may be used to assure the full utilization of our physical, emotional, and mental potential. Higher levels of personal development and self-fulfillment are obtainable when the three subsystems achieve a synergistic relationship. Optimization of the larger personal system is preferred over maximization of any of the individual subsystems, that is, it does us little good to become highly educated if we allow deterioration in our character and health subsystems.

Pursuing self-fulfillment can be a journey without end, a process of personal growth and development throughout our whole lifetime. For most of us, development occurs as the countervailing forces between stability and change, between individuality and community, and between differentiation and integration are rationalized allowing a socially acceptable self-image and sense of identity to emerge. In these situations, a high degree of maturation is attained which may be characterized as each of us developing a multidisciplinary understanding of our interdependence, generativity, authenticity, integrity, and an overall belief that we are connected to something larger and more important than ourselves. Within the context of this study, we might say that we have used meta-cognitive thinking to achieve a meta-system perspective in which the locus for reasoning and judgment is flexibly distributed across the personal, organizational, community, and societal systems of social activity. For the learnership practitioner, the personification of the learnership philosophy as an integral part of the personal micro-system should now be more clearly understood and appreciated.

Application of Learnership Reasoning Competencies. A fundamental goal of learnership is to enable most readers of the book to gain a fuller understanding of how their personal lives and careers are progressing in terms of the larger social systems of which they are a part. This book provides a beginning baseline for this assessment by presenting a philosophical viewpoint, an architectural framework, recommended practices, and a methodology for immersing the reader horizontally into numerous knowledge disciplines, while exposing them vertically into greater depth in topics they never knew they wanted to know more about. The long-term objective is for those individuals who desire to rapidly develop their skills in this arena—and to begin to train

and consult with others—to become accomplished learnership practitioners. A little theory can go a long way once we start to appreciate the benefits of becoming holistic thinkers, lifelong learners, and adaptive leaders.

This section is presented at the end of each chapter on social system development (personal, organizational, community, and societal). A little effort is now required from readers desiring to exercise their evolving understanding of learnership. Your task: using Table 7-5 below and a separate piece of paper, write down some examples of how the five learnership competencies influence, drive, support, or otherwise have a powerful effect on the personal social system discussed in this chapter. Save your notes for later reference and potential use in your Learnership Journal.

Reasoning Competency	Personal Social System
Systems Thinking	Impact on you?
Pattern Recognition	Impact on you?
Situational Learning	Impact on you?
Knowledge Management	Impact on you?
Adaptive Leadership	Impact on you?

Figure 7-5

Personal Reflection. This topic appears at the end of each chapter and is meant to serve two purposes: (1) be a reader’s guide to main points and “takeaways,” and (2) to encourage everyone to take a moment to engage their mental cognition and intuition on what the chapter means to them—especially at this time in their lives. Questions for chapter reflection follow immediately below; and for those readers inclined to maintain a self-assessment, your thoughts may be recorded in your Learnership Journal for Life and Career Reflection and Renewal which is located in the epilogue.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Where are you positioned in the Figure 7-3 adult life cycle model? What influences are you experiencing that cause you to feel the need to change direction or build capability?
2. To what degree do you believe *good thinking* enables people to modify their behavior and better achieve their goals? Have you had such an experience?
3. The theory of *multiple intelligences* recognizes that there are many different ways for people to excel. What would be a lesson everyone could learn from knowing this?
4. What are the similarities and differences between *soft reasoning* and *hard reasoning*?

5. Can you list two to three major learning points from this chapter that you want to keep in mind to improve your ability to manage your life and career?
6. Can you identify two to three topics, models, or perspectives in this chapter you would like to learn more about?
7. Should you be making an entry into your learnership journal at this time?