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# **Beyond Quantitative Development**

**On the Nature and Direction of Qualitative  
Development, Change and Transformation**

**Discussion Paper**

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## Introduction

In the Keynote Address, *From Development to Transformation: Citizen Engagement for Social and Cognitive Justice*, at the CASAE/CASID Conference University of Victoria, June 5 2013, John Gaventa (Director of the Coady International Institute, St. Francis Xavier University, and Vice-President of International Development), talked about “the paradox of development, were by certain criteria there seems to be progress, while by other criteria underlying crises loom larger.” While there is progress in some areas of the South, there are larger underlying systematic crises affecting the quality not only in the developing countries, but in the developed countries as well. There are persisting and growing problems in both the South and the North that require more than quantitative development. The issue no longer is quantitative development, but qualitative transformation. Improving not just the quantity, but the quality of life and existence, in both the South and the North.

As the UNDP Human Development Report 2013, *The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*, indicates there has been progress in education, health and income, even in the least developed countries. The economic output of the BRIC countries is expected by the end of the decade to equal that of the developed countries of North America and Western Europe. A growing middle class is developing in the South, and more women are going to school, etc. However, environmental problems are increasing globally. Emission control efforts are lagging behind official commitments. There is growing income inequality both in the South and the North, in developing and developed countries. We see a growing disparity between hunger in some parts of the world and obesity in others. While there are fewer wars and conflicts than in previous times, the level of everyday violence seem on the rise, in North and South alike.

As John Gaventa observed in his address, “the development paradigm based on an understanding of a bi-polar world of north and south, and a vision of linear change, in which poor countries come to look like middle class countries, and in which poor people come to look like middle class people, does not in itself create solutions to underlying and critical problems which we all face, whether we live in south or north or are rich or poor.” The issue no longer is “about quantitative change along prescribed human development indicators. Rather, it is about qualitative change of the systems behind the indicators themselves.”

Gaventa raised a number of questions, issues and concerns regarding qualitative transformation, development and change. How does transformation occur, is brought about? Will popular participation and civic engagement lead to qualitative development, personal and social transformation? Participation and engagement not only in development projects, but in defining the quality, the nature and direction of development, of one’s own life and future. Participation and transformation to what, how to decide whose knowledge is to define the transformation possibilities, of qualitative development and change? Which raises the issue of power and cognitive justice. The power to shape one’s consciousness and understand the possibilities for transformation,

understand the nature and direction of qualitative development and change. Cognitive justice, individual participation and engagement defining and deciding the values and knowledge that will define and govern the transformative possibilities, the nature and direction of qualitative development and change. The question or issue then is, is participation in knowledge production, participatory research and learning enough to create another possible world, a more transformed and not just a more participatory world? More specifically, is producing critical knowledge and critical thinking, exposing and critiquing the system of power and meanings enough for transformation, for an alternative, to imagine a different world?

This discussion paper, picking up from the questions, issues and concerns raised in the Keynote Address, discusses the nature and direction of qualitative development, change and transformation, moving beyond quantitative development. Qualitative transformation, in its essence, requires a paradigm change in how we understand and manage existence and development. It requires understanding and managing existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions, everything we do and we engage in, from the ground up and from the inside out. Understanding and managing them in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way. Changing how traditionally we understand and manage existence and development, from the top down and from the outside in, in an externalized, fragmented, generalized and disconnected way in the abstract.

The problems and difficulties we face and we create globally today cannot be addressed at the socio-cultural and institutional level alone. They need to be understood and addressed at a more fundamental level, the human level. Specifically, they need to be understood and addressed in the first instance at the level of the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Human behaviour and action are not in the first instance defined and governed by socio-cultural laws, rules and regulations, and the established beliefs, views, values and conventions that lie behind them. They are defined and governed in the first instance by what takes place and what we do in the mind and our inner mental life. It is what takes place and what we do in the mind and the inner mental life that define and govern how we view and understand the conditions, demands and challenges of existence and development, and how we deal with them. They define and govern how we view, understand and conduct ourselves individually, how we relate and interact with each other, and how we deal with the world around us, with nature and the natural environment.

Existence and development need to be understood and managed at the level of the natural conditions of existence, not down from the level of the human-created socio-cultural conditions, established beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, superimposing them on nature. Understanding and managing existence and development from the collective social, political, economic, scientific and technological level down to the individual, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, superimposing them on individual existence and experience. Understanding and managing existence and development must begin with the individual, the mind, the inner mental life and the

mental self, from the inside out. Not, as traditionally is the case, understanding and managing ourselves, the inner mental life and the mental self, through understanding and managing the world around us. Existence and development need to be understood and managed in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way. Not understanding and managing them in an externalized, fragmented, generalized and disconnected way in the abstract, as traditionally is the case.

## **Traditional Approach**

Traditionally we understand and manage existence and development from the top down and from the outside in, in an externalized, fragmented, generalized and dissociated way in the abstract. We view, organize and manage existence and development in the collective. We consider and understand the conditions of existence in the abstract, beyond our experience of them. We try to establish in the collective, externally in the world around us what by nature we must establish and maintain individually in the mind and our inner mental life. And we try to understand and manage human existence and development through understanding and managing the world around us.

We understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions, everything we do and we engage in, from the human-created socio-cultural level down to the level of the natural conditions of existence. We understand and manage the mind and mental existence, the inner mental life and the mental self through understanding and managing the world around us. The focus is human-created socio-cultural conditions, beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices. They are taken to reflect the natural conditions of existence. We equate established socio-cultural conditions with the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence. The natural conditions of existence are understood through establish socio-cultural beliefs, views and values.

We understand and manage existence and development from the level of the collective, the social, political, economic, scientific and technological level down to the individual. Individual existence and development are considered and understood within the context of the existence and development of the larger collective social whole, society. Individual behaviour and action are guided and directed by established socio-cultural conventions and practices. The individual is understood to be part of a larger organic social collective whole, influenced and governed in its behaviour and actions by social, political, economic, scientific and technological conditions, forces and developments. Human internal mental conditions, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self are understood and manage indirectly through understanding and managing external conditions and the world around us. What takes place and what we do in the mind and our inner mental life is taken to be defined and governed by external forces and conditions, on the one hand, and by what takes place in the brain, neurological and biochemical processes, on the other hand.

We understand and manage human existence and development in an externalized way, focussing and concentrating primarily on external conditions and the world around us, at the expense of our inner mental life, what takes place and what we do in the mind. We are preoccupied with external reality beyond the mind and mental existence. The concern is primarily with the external physical world, physical behaviour and actions, understanding and managing external conditions and the world around us. We look externally for guides to behaviour and action — external conditions, externally defined knowledge, institutions, values, conventions and practices, laws, rules and regulations. We divide and separate an integrated and interacting world into different issues, subject matter, disciplines, fields of study, and areas of human activity, specialization and expertise, which are defined and governed by different, competing and conflicting assumptions, objectives, approaches and practices. Understanding and managing existence and development is divided into different and separate activities, such as public and private, personal and professional-occupational, intellectual and physical work and effort. Pursuing at times competing and conflicting aims, goals and objectives in public and private, personal and professional-occupational life. We deal with different but related and interacting elements and aspects of existence separately, in disconnected ways, treating them as separate and disconnected issues. Considering, understanding and dealing with them in different ways, from within different conceptual frameworks, using different approaches.

Existence and development are understood and managed in a generalized way, in the aggregate. Individual human existence, development and well-being are understood and defined within the context of the existence, development and well-being of the larger collective social whole, society. The primary focus and concentration are the existence, development, health and well-being of society. The individual, individual existence and development, individual health and well-being, are considered and understood within the context of the existence, development, health and well-being of the larger collective social whole. We understand and manage existence and development in a way largely dissociated and disconnected from individual experience, and the conditions of existence that lie behind and that are reflected in human experience. Disconnected from our experience of them, we understand and manage existence and development in the abstract.

More specifically, existence and development are understood, organized and managed in the collective, not individually in cooperation with each other. Individual existence and development are understood in terms of the existence and development of the larger social collective whole, society. The individual is viewed and understood as a dependent part of the social collective whole. Its role and responsibility is defined within the collective. Individual understanding, behaviour and actions, choices and decisions, goals and objectives, relations and interactions are defined, guided and directed by the larger collective. Individual human needs are understood and met within the context of meeting the needs of the collective.

The demands and challenges of human existence and development are defined and understood in terms of the demands and challenges of the larger collective whole. They

are divided and separated into different areas of human activity, specialization and expertise. Understanding and action, thought and practice, mental and physical work and effort are divided into different social positions, roles and functions. They are ordered and arranged hierarchically, with knowledge and understanding, mental work and effort taking place at the top of the social structure, and physical action and practice, physical work and effort, acting on established understanding, taking place further down in the structure. Human social relations and interactions, in turn, are defined, governed and take place within institutionalized and hierarchically structured social positions, roles and functions.

Those who produce knowledge do not translate it into action or practical application, and those who translate knowledge into practical application do not act on it. In turn, those who act on knowledge do not establish it, they tend to act on instructions, not the clarity of their own mind and the details of their own understanding. Knowledge and understanding moreover are not developed with their use in mind. Their development is not guided by practical needs. There is a growing gap or distance between knowledge and understanding and actions and practices, between the development of knowledge and understanding and their application, or acting on them.

The conditions of existence and the world around us are considered and understood in the abstract, beyond our experience of them. They are considered and understood without making sense of our experience of them, considering them and the conditions that lie behind them at length, in depth and detail. Instead, we extrapolate and abstract from the self-evident and the obvious in human experience, that which on its own impresses itself on our awareness, without uncovering the hidden, less obvious and self-evident in our experience, which does not impress itself on our awareness. We look for knowledge and understanding externally, beyond the mind and our experience. We interpret and make sense of our experience through established socio-cultural beliefs, views and values, or we extrapolate and abstract from first impressions and instant awareness, from the self-evident and obvious in our experience. We extrapolate and abstract from the perceptions, sensations and feelings that impress themselves on our awareness. From it we create abstract images and conceptual structures in the mind about the conditions of existence and the world around us. We create mental images and conceptual structures that are not firmly rooted in and do not fully reflect our experience and the conditions that lie behind them.

We try to create externally, in the collective, in the world around us what by nature we must establish and maintain individually in the mind and our inner mental life. Trying to establish a sense of self, an identity, a sense of order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence externally in the world around us, beyond the mind and mental existence, in socio-cultural and physical-material terms. We fail to establish them where individually we are in charge and in control, in the mind and mental existence, through individual mental work and effort. We understand ourselves individually, we define our identity in terms of our social and professional-occupational position, role and function, power, possessions and wealth. We establish a sense of order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence through creating the ideal

external socio-cultural and physical-material conditions of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world around us. We establish them moreover through the possession, control and accumulation of material-financial resources, goods and values.

Moreover, we understand, manage and improve human existence and development through understanding, managing and improving the world around us. Trying to understand the self, our own existence and development through understanding the world around us, and improve our life and existence through improving the external conditions. We try to create the ideal external conditions of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world around us of easy material abundance. This is in contrast to establishing and maintaining the necessary conditions, where individually we are in charge and in control, in the mind and our inner mental life, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us. Instead, we try to create the ideal external conditions through managing, rearranging, controlling and directing nature and the natural environment, natural forces, processes and developments, attempting to control irregular, non-uniform, non-recurrent and unpredictable natural developments and changes.

## **Results and Consequences**

The traditional way of understanding and managing existence and development from the top down and from the outside in, in an externalized, fragmented, generalized and disconnected way in the abstract, contradicts, conflicts with and falls short of the natural conditions of existence, and the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. In turn, this has led to the persisting and growing problems and difficulties that we face and we create locally and globally around the world today.

Understanding and managing existence and development from the top down, from the human-created socio-cultural level down to the level of the natural conditions, contradicts and conflicts with the fact it is the natural conditions, not human-created socio-cultural conditions, which in the first instance define and govern human existence and development. Understanding and managing existence and development from the outside in, understanding and managing the human self through understanding and managing the world around us contradicts and conflicts with the fact we consciously exist and act in the mind. It is in the mind, in our inner mental life where we experience, become aware and where we must consider and understand the conditions of existence, our own individual mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and deal with them.

Dividing and separating the conditions, demands and challenges of existence into different issues, subject matter, disciplines, fields of study, and areas of human activity, specialization and expertise contradicts the holistic nature, the integrated, connected, related and interacting conditions of our existence and the world around us. Dividing, separating, and hierarchically arranging understanding and action, thought and practice,

mental and physical work and effort contradicts the interrelated nature of understanding and action, thought and practice, mental and physical work and effort. It contradicts the fact that our physical behaviour and actions are defined and governed by what takes place and what we do in the mind. Human behaviour and action need to be considered, planned, organized and managed in the mind, to avoid errors, mistakes, negative results and consequence in what we do and we engage in, dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us. They must be preceded, guided and directed by mental work and effort.

Understanding, organizing and managing human existence and development in the collective contradicts, conflicts with and falls short of the natural conditions of existence, existing mentally and physically independent of each other and of any larger organic social-collective whole, while depending on and having to interact with each other and the natural environment to meet our basic natural needs. The results and consequences are persisting and growing problems and difficulties for the individual, society and the natural environment. They include the development of strictly defined, rigid and inflexible social institutions, positions, roles and functions, rules and regulations. Leading to conflict and confrontation within the collective over individual needs and collective demands, individual autonomy and collective authority, individual experience and collective beliefs, views and values. It leads to competition, conflict and confrontation between individuals within the collective over shared resources, social positions, roles and functions, power and status. Between cultures, societies and countries it leads to competition, conflict and confrontation over territory and resources, as well as about different beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, different ways of understanding and managing human existence and development. The results and consequences are competition, conflict and confrontation, domination, exploitation and deprivation, injustice, inequality, the denial of individual needs, freedom and autonomy, in the name of collective demands, authority, beliefs, views and values.

Understanding, organizing and managing existence in the collective, dividing the demands and challenges of human existence and development into different social positions, roles and functions, moreover leads to specialization beyond actual human needs and understanding, and the development of inappropriate and insufficient individual understanding, skills and practices. It leads to the development of the knowledge, skills and practices to understand and manage existence in the collective, and contribute to the larger collective whole. It leads on the other hand to a failure to develop the knowledge and understanding, the skills and practices to understand and manage individual existence and development, in cooperation with others, the role and responsibility in them that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. The consequences are ignorance and alienation from the human self, from individual experience and the conditions of individual existence and development, which lie behind and which are reflected in our experience. Abrogating to others the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. Abrogating to others the responsibility to deal with the demands and challenges of individual existence and development that lie beyond our social position, role and



function. Moreover, with increasing diversity in human activity, understanding, organizing and managing existence and development in the collective leads to the development of increasingly more complex and costly social institutions, social positions, roles and functions, with growing demands on natural resources and the natural environment beyond actual, natural human material needs.

Considering and understanding the conditions of existence in the abstract beyond our experience contradicts and conflicts with the natural conditions of existence, human experience is the only connection of the mind and the mental self to the world beyond, and it is the foundation of all human understanding. The results and consequences include failing to understand the conditions, demands and challenges of existence that lie behind and that are reflected in our experience, a disconnect between our experience and our understanding, and between our understanding and the conditions of our existence. The consequences include failing to understand the role of nature, which lies beyond our control, and the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. Our behaviour and action, choices and decisions, goals and objectives, about the conditions of existence, our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and deal with them, are defined, guided and directed by abstractly defined beliefs, views, values and conventions. They are not defined and governed by the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence and our natural role and responsibility in them. They are defined and governed by abstractly defined beliefs, views and values, not substantiated by our experience and the conditions that lie behind and that are reflected in them. Our goals and objectives are not defined or limited by the natural conditions of existence, easily leading to conflict with the natural conditions of our existence, and interfering in nature and the natural environment beyond what is necessary.

The consequences include the development of different, competing and conflicting socio-cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices about existence and development, how to understand and manage them. Opening the door to competition, conflict and confrontation over different beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, different ways of understanding and managing existence and development. The 9/11 attack on the World Trade Centre, the war on terrorism, ethnic, racial and cultural conflicts, confrontations and discrimination around the world today are the most recent examples and evidence of this.

Establishing externally in the collective a sense of identity, order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence contradicts, conflicts with and falls short of the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. It contradicts, conflicts with and falls short of the fact it is in the mind, in our inner mental life where we are individually in charge and in control. It is where we must actively be engaged, and take responsibility for what we do and we engage in, individual behaviour and action. We need to establish and maintain a sense of self, the human and the mental self, a sense of order and stability, clarity of mind and understanding, a sense of certainty, security and confidence, where individually we are in charge and in control, in the mind and our inner mental life, not

externally in the world around us that lies beyond our control. Trying to establish collectively in the world around us, in socio-cultural and physical-material terms, what by nature we must establish and maintain individually in the mind and mental existence, contradicts the natural conditions of human existence, consciously existing and acting, being in charge and in control individually in the mind and our inner mental life.

The consequences include competition, conflict and confrontation about the nature and conditions of external order and stability, certainty and security, as well as about social positions, roles and functions, social status and power, and about material-financial resources, surplus, goods and values. The approach leads to the development of structures of dependence, control, domination and exploitation. It leads to resistance to change, dealing with changing conditions, demands and challenges only when they develop into larger problems and difficulties that can no longer be avoided and ignored. The consequences include failing to establish the necessary internal mental conditions before acting, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us. The results are persisting and growing individual mental disorder and instability, doubt, confusion, uncertainty and insecurity, feelings of fear, stress, anxiety, frustration, helplessness and depression. It leads to acting out, and acting out of doubt and confusion, mental disorder and instability, uncertainty and insecurity, feelings of fear, stress, anxiety, frustration, helplessness and depression. Choices and decisions, aims, goals and objectives, behaviour and action are defined and governed by doubt and confusion, fear and insecurity, not by clarity of mind and understanding, certainty, security and confidence.

The approach leads to demands on the natural environment, exploiting and consuming natural resources beyond actual human needs, meeting non-material mental needs in material ways. Interfering in nature and degrading the natural environment beyond what is required to understand and manage human existence. Trying to establish externally in the world around us what by nature we must establish and maintain individually in the mind and mental existence.

Understanding and managing human existence and development through understanding and managing external conditions and the world around us contradicts, conflicts with and falls short of existing in and as part of a constantly unfolding and changing natural world, which lies beyond our control, which we must deal with and accommodate, and to which we must respond and adjust. It contradicts, conflicts with and falls short of understanding and managing the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage, within existing and changing external conditions. The results and consequences include trying to understand and manage the role of nature that lies beyond our human control, while failing to understand and manage the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. Failing to understand and manage our existence and development where individually we are in charge and in control, in the mind, our inner mental life and existence, within existing and changing external conditions.

In our attempt and effort to manage the world around us, to create the ideal external conditions, we view ourselves as the creators of the conditions of our own existence, not existing in and as part of the natural conditions that lie beyond our control, which we must deal with and accommodate, to which we must respond and adjust. We try to overcome and move beyond the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence, looking for ways to move beyond the natural demands and challenges of existence, our natural role and responsibility in our existence and development, and overcome the mental and physical work and effort that by nature are required to understand, manage and improve our existence. Through science and technology we try to overcome and move beyond the natural limits of human existence, and try to improve the natural conditions of existence that lie beyond our control.

We develop an abstractly defined, artificial, socio-cultural, political, economic-material and scientific-technological superstructure, which we try to superimpose on the natural world. Through managing, rearranging, controlling and directing nature, natural forces, processes, developments and changes, we try to adjust and integrate nature and the natural environment into the socio-cultural superstructure. In the process we interfere in nature and degrade the natural environment beyond what is required to understand and manage human existence and development. Bringing about changes in natural developments that in the long term will render the natural environment of the Earth uninhabitable to the human species.

## **Qualitative Development**

Qualitative development, change and transformation, moving beyond quantitative development requires a paradigm change of how we understand and manage human existence and development. It requires changing how we understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions, everything we do and in which we engage. It requires changing understanding and managing them from the top down and from the outside in, to understand and manage them from the ground up and from the inside out. Changing from understanding and managing them in a externalized, fragmented, generalized and disconnected way in the abstract, to understand and manage them in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way.

Existence and development need to be understood and managed from within a different conceptual framework, in a different way. They need to be understood and managed at a more fundamental level, in their essence, in depth and detail. Existence and development must be understood and managed at the level of the natural conditions of existence, not at the human-created socio-cultural level. Existence and development, conditions, needs, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions, everything we do and we engage in, need to be understood and managed at the level of the natural conditions of existence. The natural conditions that in the first instance define and govern human existence and development, which lie beyond our human control, but

which we must deal with and accommodate, and to which we must respond and adjust. The natural conditions that are common to all human beings, which lie behind and which are reflected in human experience, the experience of every individual human being.

Existence and development need to be understood and managed from the inside, beginning with the individual, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Changing understanding and managing existence and development from the outside in, to understand and manage them from the inside, beginning with the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Not understanding and managing the individual, the mind, our inner mental life and the mental self through understanding and managing the world around us. It is in the mind where we consciously exist and act. It is where we experience, become aware, and where we must consider the conditions of existence and the world around us, and how to deal with them. The mind is where by nature we are individually in charge and in control, where we must actively be engaged, and where we must take responsibility for what we do and we engage in, individual behaviour and action. It is where we make choices and decisions, where we define aims, goals and objectives, and where we must consider, plan, organize and manage our behaviour and action. The mind is where problems, difficulties, failures, errors and mistakes in what we do and we engage in have their roots and beginnings, and it is where the answers and solutions must start.

Qualitative development and transformation requires changing from understanding and managing existence and development in an externalized, fragmented, generalized and disconnected way in the abstract, to understanding and managing them in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive and holistic way. Changing from understanding and managing existence and development in an externalized way of understanding and managing the world around us, to understanding and managing ourselves within existing and changing external conditions and the world around us. Understanding external conditions and the world around us through understanding ourselves. Understanding the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, through considering and making sense of our experience of them, and the conditions that lie behind them. It is in the mind, the inner mental life where we experience, become aware, and where we must consider and make sense of the conditions of existence, our own mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, and how to deal with them.

Qualitative development requires changing dividing and separating the conditions of existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions into different issues, subject matter, disciplines, fields of study, and areas of human activity, specialization and expertise, each defined and governed by different assumptions, objectives, approaches and practices. Instead, we need to understand and manage them in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way. Not dealing with demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions separately, from within different conceptual frameworks, using different approaches and methods. Instead, understanding and managing them within the same conceptual framework of understanding, about the natural conditions of existence, our own individual mental and

physical existence and development and the world around us, and our role and responsibility in them.

The fragmentation of reality is rooted in human experience. They fragment the connected and interacting world and reality of our existence into separate experiences, perceptions, sensations and feelings. We institutionalize this fragmentation into different subject matter, disciplines, fields of study, and areas of human activity, specialization and expertise. It is in the human mind where the fragmentation takes place and where it must be addressed. It is through considering and making sense of our experience and the conditions that lie behind them, connecting and integrating them into clear, detailed and comprehensive pictures in the mind that we must deal with the experiential fragmentation of reality. It differs from rationalizing and justifying different subject matter, disciplines, fields of study, areas of human activity, specialization and expertise, knowledge and understanding, and trying to connect them through building interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary bridges between them.

Changing from understanding and managing existence and development in a generalized way in the collective, to understanding and managing them in their essence, in depth and detail, at the level of the natural conditions of existence, starting with the individual. Beginning with the mind, where we consciously exist and act, where the inner mental life takes place and where the conscious mental self is active. Where we experience, become aware, and where we must consider and make sense of the conditions of existence, our own mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and deal with them. Changing from understanding and managing existence and development in a disconnected way, disconnected from our experience of them, in the abstract, to understanding and managing the conditions of existence that lie behind and that are reflected in our experience through considering and making sense of them.

Specifically, we need to change from understanding and managing existence and development in the collective, to understanding and managing them individually, in cooperation with each other. We exist mentally and physically independent of each other and of any larger independent, organic social-collective whole. While we depend on and must interact with each other and with the world around us, with nature and the natural environment to meet our basic needs. We need to understand and manage existence and development individually, in cooperation with each other, at the level of the natural conditions of existence that are common to all human beings, starting with the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. The common ground that is necessary to relate, interact and cooperate with each other, which traditionally has been provided by human-created socio-cultural reality, established beliefs, views, values and conventions, will be provided by understanding the natural conditions of existence, which are common to all human beings, which lie behind and which are reflected in human experience, the experience of every individual human being.

The demands and challenges, problems, difficulties and crises, change and changing conditions we face and we create globally today can no longer be addressed in the

collective, at the socio-cultural and institutional level. They need to be addressed at a more fundamental level, the level of the acting human being, with every human being. They need to be addressed where human behaviour and action are defined and governed, where problems and difficulties, failures, errors and mistakes have their roots and beginnings, and where the answers and solutions must start, in individual human minds, the inner mental life, with the mental self.

We need to understand and manage them at the human level, beyond or below the socio-cultural or institutional level. Problems, difficulties and crises cannot be address just through institutional rearranging, changing or improving organizational structures, procedures and practices. It requires changes at the human level, how individually we understand and manage ourselves. It requires changes, corrections or improvements in how individually we understand and manage the conditions of existence, particularly the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Institutional-organizational structures, laws, rules, regulations and practices do not in the first instance define and govern human behaviour and action. They are defined and governed by what takes place and what we do in the mind and our inner mental life. They are defined and governed by the knowledge and understanding we develop in the mind about the conditions of existence, our own mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and deal with them

Qualitative development requires changing from considering and understanding the conditions of existence and the world around us in the abstract, to understanding them through considering and making sense of our experience of them. Changing from speculating and abstracting from the self-evident and obvious in our experience, to considering them and the conditions that lie behind and that are reflected in them, at length, in depth and detail. Our experience, the perceptions, sensations and feelings that enter the mind are our only access, they are the sole access of the mental self to the conditions of existence, our own mental and physical existence and development and the world around us.

Qualitative development requires changing from establishing and maintaining an identity, a sense of order and stability, clarity and coherence, a sense of certainty, security and confidence externally in the collective, to establishing and maintaining them individually in the mind. We must establish and maintain them where individually we are in charge and in control, in the mind and our inner mental life. We need to establish and maintain the necessary internal mental conditions – a sense of self, the human and the mental self, mental order and stability, clarity of mind and understanding, and a sense of certainty, security and confidence, in everything we do and we engage in, before engaging and dealing with others and the world around us. Not establish them externally in the collective, in socio-cultural and physical-material terms. We must establish the necessary internal mental conditions, the conceptual foundation and mental capacity to reduce social competition, conflict and confrontation. To communicate, interact and cooperate with each other beyond socio-cultural differences, at the level of the natural conditions of existence that are common to all human beings. Meet our non-material mental needs in non-material ways in the mind and our inner mental life through individual mental work

and effort, not meeting them in material ways through the accumulation and consumption of material resources and goods. We must establish the necessary internal mental conditions in order to communicate, interact and cooperate with each other to meet the needs for which by nature we depend on and must interact with each other. Not compete and conflict over the control, accumulation and consumption of material resources, goods, values and wealth, or about different socio-cultural beliefs, views, values and practices, different ways of understanding and managing existence and development.

We must change understanding, managing and improving the conditions of existence through managing and improving the world around us, trying to create the ideal external conditions of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world around us. Instead, we need to understand and manage our individual existence and development within existing and changing external conditions. We exist in and as part of a constantly changing natural world, which lies beyond our human control, which we must deal with and accommodate, and to which we must respond and adjust.

Qualitative development, change and transformation, requires changing the priority order in understanding and managing, development and growth from collective and individual, to individual and collective development and growth. Traditionally the assumption is collective health and well-being, the health and well being of the community will lead to and ensure the health and well being of the individual. However, we all know this is not necessarily the case. In reality, it is individual health and well being that will lead to the health and well being of the larger social whole, the community or society. It is individual health and well being that will lead to positive and constructive social relations and interactions, and a healthy and constructive community and society. The health and well being of the larger collective social whole will not necessarily lead to positive, constructive and mutually beneficial relations and interaction of its members.

Qualitative development and change also requires changing the priority order from economic-material-financial, physical and mental health and well being, to mental, physical and economic-material-financial health and well being. Today the view and understanding is, economic-material-financial health and well being has to be the first priority. It is seen to be the foundation of all other aspect of our life and existence. The assumption is, economic-material-financial well-being will ensure our physical health and well being. Mental health and well being, in turn is seen as a function of both economic-material-financial and physical health and well being.

In reality, it is mental health and well-being that is a precondition for physical health and well being. It is through understanding and managing our mind and inner mental life, establishing and maintaining the necessary internal mental conditions that we understand our physical existence and development, nature, conditions, needs, demands and challenges, our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and meet them. Economic-material-financial health and well-being in reality are a function of mental and physical health and well being. It is through understanding and managing the mind, our inner mental life, and the mental self, establishing and maintaining the necessary internal mental conditions that we understand our physical existence and development, our

physical-material needs. It is our mental health and well being, mental order and stability that enable us to understand and secure our physical-material needs, establish and maintain our economic-material-financial health and well being. This is in contrast to our non-material mental needs, which we must meet in the mind and our inner mental life, through mental work and effort, not trying to meet them in material ways.

## **Education and Training in Mental Development and Growth**

Ultimately, qualitative development, change and transformation, understanding and managing existence and development in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways requires changing education and training. It requires changing education from socialization and training in established socio-cultural reality, established beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, to education and training in mental development and growth. Moving beyond traditional schooling of socialization, education and training designed to understand and manage existence and development in the collective, within established socio-cultural conditions. Traditional socialization and training where understanding of the individual self and the development of the individuals mental faculties, natural mental powers and abilities, necessary mental skills and practices, and engaging in the required mental work and effort are developed only indirectly. They are assumed to develop in the process socialization and training in established socio-cultural reality and conditions.

It requires changing education and training of focusing and concentrating on socialization and training in established socio-cultural conditions and reality, in the process only indirectly developing understanding of the individual self, individual natural mental powers and abilities, necessary mental skills and practices, and engaging in the required mental work and effort. Instead, the primary focus must be developing an understanding of the individual self, the conditions, demands and challenges of individual existence and development, our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and deal with them. Developing individual mental faculties, the natural mental powers and abilities, necessary mental skills and practices, and engaging in the required mental work and effort. In the process of education and training in mental development and growing, developing knowledge and understanding of existing socio-cultural reality and conditions.

Specifically, what is required is providing the individual with the knowledge and understanding, and develop in the individual the mental faculties, the mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices, the mental work and effort to deal with the conditions, demands and challenges of existence, our own mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, within the natural parameters. Understanding and managing them without contradicting, conflicting with or falling short of the natural conditions of existence, and without creating persisting and growing problems for the individual self, others, society, the world around us, nature or the natural environment. Educating the individual in the understanding and the mental faculties that are necessary



to understand and manage individual existence and development in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways, existing in and as part of a constantly changing and transforming natural world.

Education and training understanding the natural conditions of existence, which in the first instance define and govern our existence and development, behaviour and action, that lie beyond our control, but which we must deal with and accommodate, to which we must respond and adjust, the role and responsibility in them that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. The natural conditions of existence that are common to all human beings, which lie behind and which are reflected in human experience, the experience of every individual human being. Education and training understanding the mind as the place where we consciously exist and act, where the inner mental life takes place, and where the mental self is active. The place where we experience, become aware, and where we must consider the conditions of existence, our own individual mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, and how to deal with them. The place where by nature we are individually in charge and in control, where we must actively be engaged, and where we must take responsibility for what we do and we engage in, individual behaviour and actions. The place where we make choices and decisions, where we define aims, goals and objectives, and where we must consider, plan, organize and manage our behaviour and actions. The place where problems and difficulties, failures, errors and mistakes, in what we do and we engage in, have their roots and beginnings, and where the answers and solutions must start.

Understanding the nature, elements and processes, conditions, needs, demands and challenges of the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, the role and responsibility in them that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage, how to manage and deal with them. Understanding what takes place, what we do and what we need to do, what individually we must establish, develop and maintain, in the mind and our inner mental life. Establishing and maintaining the necessary internal mental conditions – a sense of the individual self, the human and the mental self, mental order and stability, clarity of mind and understanding, a sense of certainty, security and confidence, in everything we do and we engage in. Dealing in the mind with demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions when only a minimum in mental work, effort and adjustment are required, before they develop into larger mental problems, difficulties and crises, which we are no longer able to deal with alone.

Education and training understanding mental needs and how to meet them, mental faculties how to develop and use them. Developing the natural mental powers and abilities, translating them into the necessary mental skills and practices, and engaging in the required mental work and effort. Engaging in a process of continuous, life-long process of mental self-development and growth. Constantly reconsidering, updating, correcting, expanding and improving individual understanding, mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices, mental work and effort, in light of change and changing conditions. Reconsidering, updating, correcting, expanding and improving, whenever necessary and required, the understanding, mental powers and abilities, mental

skills and practices, mental work and effort we develop and on which we rely, how we develop and use them. Reconsider the choices and decisions we make, and how we make them, the goals and objectives we pursue, and how we define them, the behaviour and actions in which we engage, and how we plan, organize and manage them.

Education and training to provide the individual with the knowledge, understanding and the mental faculties to understand and manage individual existence and development, existing in and as part of a constantly changing and transforming natural world, in sustainable, secure and peaceful ways. To understand and manage existence and development from the ground up and from the inside out, beginning with the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Understand and manage them in their essence, in depth and detail, in comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way. Understanding and managing them in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. Understanding and managing existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions without contradicting, conflicting with, or falling short of the natural conditions of existence, and our role and responsibility in them. Without creating persisting and growing problems and difficulties for the individual self, others, society, the world around us, nature and the natural environment. Providing the individual with the conceptual framework within which to consider and makes sense of its experience, the conditions of existence that lie behind them, and how to deal with them. The conceptual framework within which to make informed and considered choices and decisions, define necessary aims, goals and objectives, and consider, plan, organize and manage the required behaviour and action.

## **Conclusion**

Understanding the natural conditions of existence, particularly of the mind, the inner mental and the mental self will provide a different view and understanding of existence and development, needs, demands and challenges, how to manage and deal with them. Understanding the natural conditions of existence provides the conceptual framework within which to understand the nature and direction of qualitative development and change, development to improve the conditions of existence. Dealing with the problems, difficulties and crises we face and we create globally today, and understand and manage existence and development in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways, existing in and as part of a constantly changing and transforming natural world. Understanding and managing existence and development within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature, without contradicting, conflicting with or falling short of the natural conditions of existence and our role and responsibility in them, and without creating persisting and growing problems, difficulties and crises, for the individuals self, for others or the world around us, for nature and the natural environment.

Providing the individual with an understanding of the individual self, the natural conditions of existence, particularly of the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self,

our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and deal with them. Moreover, developing individual mental faculties, natural mental powers and abilities, translating them into the necessary mental skills and practices, and engaging in the required mental work and effort. Engaging in a process of continuous, life-long mental development and growth, provides the individual with the means to be actively engaged in managing individual existence and development, existing in and as part of a constantly changing and transforming world. They are the means to improve individual existence. Understand and manage existence and development in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways, within the natural parameters. Understanding, managing and conducting the self, relating and interacting with others, and dealing with the world around us in positive and constructive ways.

The real question and challenge is how, in what way, in what sector, and at what level of society, in what area of human activity to raise, introduce and put into practice understanding and managing existence and development from the ground up and from the inside out, in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive and holistic way. What is the entry point into established socio-cultural reality? Where to start qualitative development, change and transformation? The question and challenge is how to bring about the necessary changes within the context of existing institutional-organizational constraints and obstacles, and individual human opposition and resistance. That is, how to deal with and get beyond them.

## References

The discussion paper is based on twenty years of research and study about qualitative development, change and transformation. Specifically, research and study of the root-causes and developments behind the problems and difficulties we face and we create as a species globally today - persisting and growing cultural, religious, racial, political, social, economic, environmental, collective and individual problems, difficulties and crises, competition, conflict, confrontation and violence. Including associated negative results and consequences such as greed, corruption and dishonesty, injustice and inequality, domination, exploitation, marginalization, poverty and starvation, mental problems, substance abuse, addiction and suicide. The direction of the answers and solutions, the direction we need to take to deal with the problems we face, and to understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways.

The project involved research and study understanding existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions at a more fundamental level, in their essence, in depth and detail, beyond the self-evident and the obvious, beyond conventional wisdom and established practices. Consider and understand them in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way. Going beyond viewing and dealing with them in separate and disconnected ways, as has been the case traditionally.

The project involved research and study considering and understanding the natural conditions of existence, and the role and responsibility in them that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. The natural conditions of existence, which in the first instance define and govern human existence and development, human behaviour and action, which lie beyond our human control, but which we must deal with and accommodate, and to which we must respond and adjust. The natural conditions of existence, which are common to all human beings, that lie behind and that are reflected in human experience, the experience of every individual human being. Differentiating between the natural conditions of existence which we share in common, which are common to all human beings, and human-created socio-cultural conditions, different, competing and conflicting socio-cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, which divide us.

The project included research and study understanding the human mind as the place where we consciously exist and act, where our inner mental life takes place, and where the mental self is active. Differentiating clearly between the mind and the brain, between what takes place and what we do in the mind, and neurological and biochemical processes taking place in the brain. Understanding the mind as the place where we experience, become aware, and where we must consider the conditions of existence, our own mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, and how to deal with them. The place where by nature we are individually in charge and in control, where we must actively be engaged, and where we must take responsibility for

everything we do and we engage in, individual behaviour and action. The place where we make choices and decisions, where we define goals and objectives, and where we must consider, plan, organize and manage our behaviour and actions. Considering and understanding the mind as the place where problems and difficulties, failures, errors and mistakes in what we do and we engage in – in views and understanding, choices and decisions, aims, goals and objectives, in behaviour and actions, have their roots and beginnings, and where the answers and solutions must start.

The nature, elements and processes, conditions, needs, demands and challenges of the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and deal with them. What takes place, what we do and what we need to do, what individually we must establish, develop and maintain in the mind and our inner mental life. Establish and maintain the necessary internal mental condition – a sense of the human and the mental self, mental order and stability, clarity of mind and understanding, a sense of certainty, security and confidence, in everything we do and we engage in. Deal in the mind with demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions when only a minimum in mental work, effort and adjustment are required, before they develop into larger mental problems, difficulties and crises, which we can no longer deal with alone. Understand our mental needs and how to meet them, our mental faculties, our natural mental powers and abilities, how to develop and use them. Translate them into the necessary mental skills and practices, and engage in the required mental work and effort. Engage in a process of continuous, life-long mental self-development and growth.

The project, research and study, involved understanding the historical path and direction of human development through the ages, which has brought the human species to where we find ourselves today. How through the ages human beings have considered and made sense of their experience, and the conditions of existence that lie behind and that are reflected in them, and how to deal with them. How today we understand and manage human existence and development, limits, shortcomings and contradictions, negative results and consequences, the problems and difficulties we face and we create globally today. Considered on the conceptual foundation and within the framework of understanding of the natural conditions of existence, particularly of the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self.

The direction of the answers and solutions, the direction we need to take in mental development and growth, to understand and manage existence and development in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways. To understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. To understand and manage them without contradicting, conflicting with or falling short of the natural conditions of existence, our role and responsibility in them, and without creating the persisting and growing problems, difficulties and crises which we face and we create around the world today.

In addition, the project involved research and study into socio-cultural constraints, opposition and resistance to change and transformation. Research and study into institutional-organizational constraints, and individual human opposition and resistance, individual conceptual and mental limits, shortcomings and contradictions, which lie behind individual human opposition and resistance to necessary development and change.

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