

**Developing Human Resources through Actualizing Human Potential**

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Note: Parts of this paper have been adapted from my forthcoming book, *Truth, Love and Justice: A New Paradigm for Education and Its Reform*. You may request a free electronic draft of the book by writing me at [rclarke@nmu.edu](mailto:rclarke@nmu.edu).

*Abstract:*

*The key to human resource development is in actualizing individual and collective thinking, feeling and choosing potentials related to our minds, hearts and wills respectively. These capacities and faculties must be balanced and regulated according to the standards of truth, love and justice for individual, community and institutional development, health and well-being.. These cognitive, affective and conative faculties are the dynamic focal points for effective interactions with our environments, and are key aspects of learning and development actualized in pursuing the spiritual principles of truth, love and justice. Human nature is conceptualized as consisting of physical, psychological and spiritual qualities. The dynamics among them are considered. The mind, heart and will are associated with the cognitive, emotional and moral intelligences. A brief description of these capacities, faculties, standards and intelligences are given and their importance for human resource development explained. Developing human resources is an intellectual, emotional and moral endeavor. I propose truth, love and justice as the guiding principles for human resource development and actualizing potential.*

People involved in developing human resources, whether as professionals or as leaders, often waste tremendous energy, as well as social, political and economic resources, on helping others be more productive in beliefs and practices that are not only ineffective, but counterproductive. As a teacher, counselor and administrator since 1972, I have been actively involved in human resource development through actualizing human potential. Whether in helping children and youth develop their capacities or working with adults to help them realize their potentials so they can effectively contribute to their own and others' welfare and prosperity, I have sought to enable others to become the most they could be. I have also been involved in developing human potential and resource through my study of and involvement in the Bahá'í Faith.

My learning about human development has included academic study and experience in several different contexts and countries. As I learned more about development, I tried to be more systematic and thoughtful in my approaches. In that process, I have tried to identify the key capacities and principles of development. Below, I will briefly share some of what I have come to believe is true in the hope it may be of some assistance to the reader and of service to humanity. It is my belief that this knowledge will help others to achieve their potential and promote the welfare of the world more effectively.

**Human Potential**

We have enormous potential, much of it unrealized and unknown. Our physical, psychological and spiritual capacities continue to develop and unfold as we extend our frontiers of knowledge and possibility. As human health, development, productivity, research and their benefits continue to evolve, the technical, intellectual and moral life of humanity progresses. How can we help to stimulate that growth in our world and ourselves? First, we need to understand what constitutes human nature and potential, and then how to develop them.

Humans, individually and collectively, have three basic aspects that are important to consider in developing human resources and potential. The most obvious and accepted by all is our physical nature. To be human means to have a human body. Scientifically, our bodies place us in the animal kingdom; therefore, part of our nature is common to other animals with whom we are genetically very similar. We have physical needs that must be met to an adequate degree if we are to be able to effectively develop our distinctive abilities to think, feel and choose that make us unique from animals.

The psychological qualities to know, love and choose are faculties of our minds, hearts and wills. I believe these three capabilities have an immaterial or spiritual nature that some call the soul. The soul is defined as “the complex of human attributes that manifests as consciousness, thought, feeling, and will, regarded as distinct from the physical body” (Encarta Dictionary). In other words, the rational soul is what causes our minds, hearts and wills to manifest in our physical bodies, resulting in the psychological qualities of conscious thought, feeling and will. Attending to all three natures and all three faculties is important in developing potential.

Our thoughts, feelings and actions can be directed by either our bodies or our souls. Whichever nature predominates determines the character and condition of the individual and group. In our physical nature we see the animal characteristics of survival of the fittest and competition for resources as driving forces, and in the other we see altruistic and transcendent motives directing our behavior. Current theories of human resource development tend to emphasize the physical, material and animal aspects of human nature and neglect the spiritual, immaterial and transcendental parts of our nature. We prosper when our spiritual nature influences how we think, feel and choose. It can direct our minds, hearts and wills in healthy ways. If our animal nature prevails, then we actually become more destructive than any animal, with our increased powers of thought, feeling and action being driven by our baser desires and impulses.

### **Developing Human Resources**

Human resource development can be explained and understood as the interaction and realization of these natures operating through the three basic faculties of mind, heart and will that possess the thinking, feeling and acting powers or capacities for developing human potential. When our thinking capacity is directed toward knowing ultimate truth, our feeling toward valuing altruistic love and our doing toward choosing justice, we flourish. As we build unity in the diversity of expressions of truth, love and justice, through grass-roots efforts and the involvement of all parties, we increase our capacity to inform and transform our communities and institutions. Using and encouraging the assets of all parties is the key to effective human resource development and actualizing human potential.

In developing human resources, the earliest years are the most important, beginning with prenatal development. Good nutrition and health form the foundation of later development. Later, training and forming the character and capacities of mind, heart and will are added. Education in intellectual, emotional and spiritual endeavors to prepare for the advancing demands of life follows, with special attention to each person’s abilities, talents and inclinations. Eventually we should take on the responsibility of our own and other’s development.

Thinking, feeling and willing are directly related to the cognitive, affective and conative domains that must be properly nurtured, developed and harmonized for individual, community and institutional health and well-being. These cognitive, affective and conative faculties are the dynamic focal points for effective interactions with our environments, and are key aspects of learning and development actualized in pursuing the spiritual principles of truth, love and justice. Our growing consciousness or awareness of these potentialities and principles allows us to develop our practice of realizing life-enriching authentic, valid knowledge, altruistic, sincere love and autonomous, virtuous will. To be effective, human resource development must practice and be based upon truth and authenticity, love and altruism and justice and autonomy.

Truth, love and justice relate to the Greek ideals of truth, beauty and good and their expressions and manifestations in science, arts and morals. Each develops an individual and collective ability, skill, or capacity. Figure 1 illustrates these concepts and their relationship.

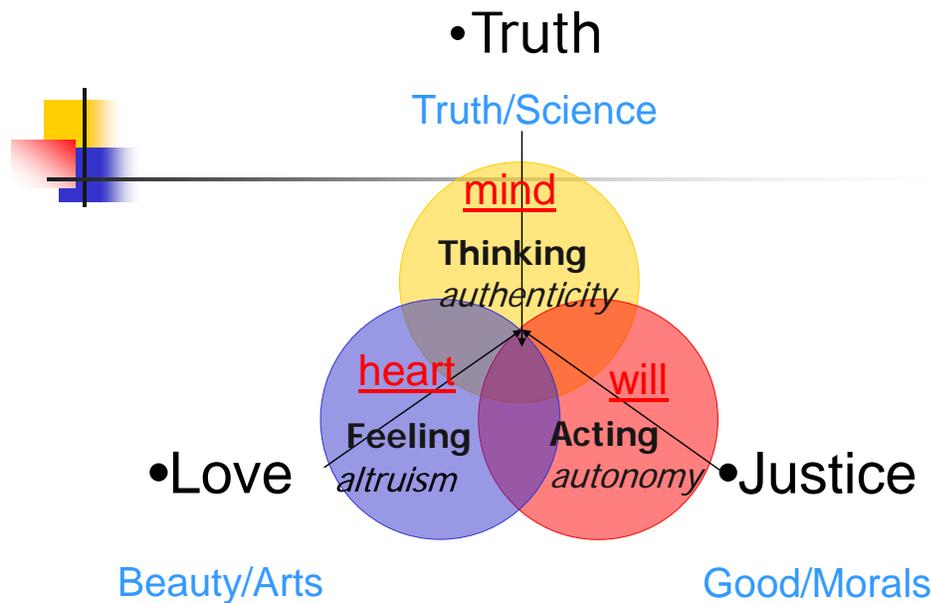


Figure 1. Mind, heart and will correlates.

### The Mind

Developing the mind for unfettered search for knowledge and independent investigation of truth is essential for human resource development and realizing potential. As we each develop our unique perceptions of reality constructed from our experiences and limited knowledge, we must continually reevaluate and renegotiate our understandings of truth with the individuals, institutions and communities with whom we interact. Divorced from the guiding principle of the

search for truth, as well as emotional principle of love and the moral standard of justice, the mind can be dangerous to both the individual and society.

The faculties of the mind are related to the capacities to think, rationalize, remember, and comprehend along with other cognitive functions that help us to know and distinguish truth from falsehood. The skill of knowing involves a disposition towards truth and is related to what is generally referred to as intelligence, defined as

A very general mental capability that, among other things, involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly and learn from experience. It is not merely book learning, a narrow academic skill, or test-taking smarts. Rather, it reflects a broader and deeper capability for comprehending our surroundings—"catching on," "making sense" of things, or "figuring out" what to do. (Gottfredson, 1997, p 13).

The mind's guiding principle and actualizing virtue is truth. Truth is defined as conformity to fact or actuality, a statement proven to be or accepted as true, sincerity, integrity and fidelity to an original or standard. Truth is that which is considered to be the supreme reality and to have the ultimate meaning and value of existence (American Heritage Dictionary). The basic goal of the mind and object of truth is to know and understand ourselves. Knowing our strengths and weaknesses and developing our potentialities are fundamental tasks for each individual.

We learn from our experience and those of others to develop an understanding of life. Being able to think critically, constructively and creatively to solve the problems of life is an important capability. We use scientific methods to help validate what our senses, reason, traditions and intuition tell us. Each of these ways of knowing can help "to initiate positive and productive interaction with the environment" (Hatcher, 1998, p. 38), but used together, they provide a surer foundation upon which to determine truth.

Science and reason provide powerful tools for exploring physical reality; whereas religion and philosophy can be useful for exploring non-material reality. If we balance and use those tools wisely, recognizing their strengths and limitations, we can avoid the fanaticism, absolutism and fundamentalism to which they are susceptible. A scientific approach to investigating the claims and interpretations of religion and a moral and spiritual approach to our science will be essential for each to be constructive.

### **The Heart**

There are several definitions for heart, generally referring to its physical and emotional character. Here we are talking about the heart defined as "3. basis of emotional life, 4. character, 5. compassion, 6. affection, 7. spirit" (Encarta Dictionary). Definition three describes the heart as "the source and center of emotional life, where the deepest and sincerest feelings are located and a person is most vulnerable to pain" (Encarta Dictionary). The capacities of the mind are generally associated with the physical brain, as those of the emotional and spiritual heart may be associated with the physical heart; however, they are different.

We traditionally have seen the heart as an important part of our natures, and many everyday expressions, such as to give or take heart, demonstrate its role in our lives. Modern science is

providing evidence to support that the physical heart is connected to our metaphysical heart. We have come to learn that the organ of the heart does more than pump blood. It communicates neurologically, biochemically, electromagnetically and hydrostatically with the rest of the body. *HeartMath* is one such research-based approach to use scientific data to identify and develop the capacities of the heart and describe how they are regulated by love (Childre & Martin, 1999).

Those interested in developing human resources and other's capacities should first purify their own hearts with love and altruism so that the mind and heart, reason and emotion and thinking and feeling can work together effectively. The heart manifests an affective state of consciousness, distinguished from cognitive and volitional states. It is influenced by the mind and will, and it also influences them. Emotional health, morality and spirituality affect the ability to attach effectively to others, regulate emotion and moods, cognitively process and act responsibly (Stillwell, 2002).

Love is the vital and potent releaser of the heart's potential. Loving relates to affect, "a feeling or emotion as distinguished from cognition, thought, or action" (Webster's Dictionary). Any resource development effort not motivated and guided by the principle of love will be limited or harmful in its effect. Love is the foundation of healthy development in individuals, institutions and societies. It is the foundation of unity and attitude. It can overcome conflict and hate through self-sacrificing and selfless actions for others' good and by giving priority to legitimate needs of others over our own needs.

What are some tools that help develop the heart? Traditionally used were prayer, meditation and reciting sacred scripture. Service to others, overlooking their faults and loving them as a daily practice were also encouraged. HeartMath recommends consciously disengaging from mental and emotional reactions while focusing on the area around your heart and positive emotions such as love, locking in to the heart's power and cutting through distorted feelings. These tools have been shown to improve physical, mental and emotional health (Childre & Martin, 1999).

### **The Will**

As we associate our cognitive capacities with our brains and our emotional faculties with our hearts, we might refer to our will as centered in our guts, resulting in expressions such as "intestinal fortitude" and "gut reactions." Gershon states the nerve cells of the enteric nervous system, the digestive tract, acts as a second brain, having more nerve cells than the spinal cord (1999). It also produces more than 90% of the body's serotonin and about 50% of its dopamine, both important neurotransmitters that affect mental and emotional states.

The faculty of the will represents our capacity for self-directed and self-initiated action. It relates to volition, "the power or faculty of choosing," and conation, "the aspect of mental processes or behavior directed toward action or change and including impulse, desire, volition, and striving" (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition). Conative capacity is defined as "the enduring disposition to strive" (Brophy, 1987, p.40). People strong in conation are enterprising, energetic, determined, decisive, persistent, patient and organized (Giles, 1999). Will is a vital part of human resource development giving direction and magnitude to human potential.

Will influences what we will do and purposively strives to accomplish it. It requires training and control of our impulses and desires. We show the results of our choices through our lives, deeds and actions. We should all strive daily for excellence and promote learning and service as we encourage others to reach their highest levels of potentiality and take responsibility for their development.

To develop willpower, individuals should be encouraged in making plans and decisions, setting and achieving goals and in developing commitment, perseverance and self-regulation. By thinking, deciding, doing for ourselves, carrying on in the face of difficulties and seeing challenges as opportunities for growth we develop discipline, conscience, confidence, trust and faith.

The guiding principle of will is justice. Our willpower must be used in the interest and promotion of justice. Justice is defined as fairness or reasonableness, especially in the way people are treated or decisions are made (Encarta Dictionary) and as the quality of justness, righteousness, equitableness, or moral rightness (Dictionary.com). Exercising will requires the capacity to strive, initiate and sustain action to develop our powers for justice and good. The principle of justice encourages us to strive for love and truth, seeking to eliminate prejudices and inequity from our environments and our selves. Justice requires courage and generates greater intentionality. Through its application, we develop autonomy, the capacity to make independent moral decisions and act on them, and positively transform our inner lives and those around us, creating a cycle and culture of safety and well-being.

The distinction between legalism and justice is important to consider, as legalism is often substituted for authentic justice and morality. Legalism is defined as “strict adherence to a literal interpretation to a law, rule, or religious moral code” (Encarta Dictionary). In short, limited legalism gets substituted for the hard and purifying process related to the more powerful concept of justice. For example, though we may abide by a moral code or a law, we may do so with malicious intent or without integrity. If justice is not combined with a pure, loving motive and based on honesty and trustworthiness, it can become mere form without substance.

### **The Mind, Heart and Will as Aspects of Emotional, Moral and Spiritual Intelligence**

The mind, heart and will each need to be trained and their capacity gradually increased. These capacities can be referred to as intelligences, a term that is being used to describe more than cognitive knowledge and skill. As such, mind, heart and will are associated with the cognitive, emotional and moral intelligences. As cognitive intelligence is better understood and accepted, we will very briefly look at emotional, moral, and spiritual intelligences to see how they might be used to help us develop human resources and potential.

Mayer and Salovey define emotional intelligence as "the ability to perceive emotion, integrate emotion to facilitate thought, understand emotions and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth" (1997). Goleman's definition, “a feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states, and range of propensities to act” (1995, p. 289), includes four main competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (1998). Emotional development and intelligence “has been tied to cognitive functioning (Isen, 2008; Lazarus, 1999), conative development (Buckley, & Saarni, 2009;

Saarni, 1997), social development (Goleman, 2006), moral development (Hoffman, 2000), spiritual development (Guela, 2004), and self-views (Hamacheck, 2000)” (Huitt, 2010). “Emotional intelligence concerns the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought” (Mayer, Roberts & Barsade, 2008, p. 511).

Moral intelligence, “the mental capacity to determine how universal human principles should be applied to our personal values, goals, and actions” (Lennick & Kiel, 2005, p. 7), is a combination of integrity, responsibility, forgiveness and compassion. Integrity includes four competencies: 1) acting consistently with principles, values, and beliefs, 2) telling the truth, 3) standing up for what is right, and 4) keeping promises. Responsibility’s three competencies are 1) taking personal responsibility, 2) admitting mistakes and failures, and 3) embracing responsibility for serving others. Forgiveness involves 1) letting go of one’s own mistakes and 2) letting go of others’ mistakes. Compassion is defined as actively caring about others. These are also similar to Borba’s (2001) conscience and fairness, self-control and respect, empathy and kindness and tolerance; the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development Panel on Moral Education (1988) definition of a moral person; Damon’s (1988) description of morality and other conception of moral intelligence.

Spiritual intelligence addresses meaning, motivation, vision and value (Emmons, 2000; Zohar, 2000; Zohar & Marshall, 2001). It is “the application of spiritual abilities and resources to practical contexts” (Nasel, 2004, p. 4, cited in King & DeCicco, 2009, p. 69) involving existential questioning and the awareness of divine presence. Covey states that “Spiritual intelligence is the central and most fundamental of all the intelligences, because it becomes the source of guidance for the other[s] (2004, p.53). Zohar & Marshall identify twelve qualities or principles of spiritual intelligence: self-awareness, spontaneity, being vision and value led, holism, compassion, celebration of diversity, field independence, humility, tendency to ask why, ability to reframe, positive use of adversity and sense of vocation.

Emmon’s original core spiritual abilities and capacities are for transcendent awareness, heightened spiritual states of consciousness, sanctifying daily experiences, spiritual problem-solving and virtuous behavior (2000). King and DeCicco define spiritual intelligence “as a set of mental capacities which contribute to the awareness, integration, and adaptive application of the nonmaterial and transcendent aspects of one’s existence, leading to such outcomes as deep existential reflection, enhancement of meaning, recognition of a transcendent self, and mastery of spiritual states” (p. 69). They propose a four-factor model with the components of critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness and conscious state expansion.

Further, positive psychologists identify the core virtues of wisdom and knowledge, courage, love and humanity, justice, temperance and spirituality and transcendence (Seligman, 2002), along with the qualities of positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment (Seligman, 2011) as related positively to authentic happiness and flourishing. These can also be seen as correlates of the various intelligences and the faculties of mind, heart and will.

### **Combining Mind, Heart and Will to Actualize Potential**

Developing human potential is the process of using will to choose to develop our knowing and loving and then translating them into positive action. We can do this by starting at any of these three points and combining it with the others. For example, we may start with action: we may be doing something and feel it is not as effective as it could be. As we reflect on why we feel this way and how we might improve, we think about what might work better. In these processes it always helpful to consult with others, especially those involved in the activity, as well as those who might have more knowledge and experience.

The change process must involve all three capacities to be systematic, sustainable and effective. In this process, all participants should be considered as collaborators in establishing clarity of vision, purpose and roles that evolve and are reevaluated as needed according to new learning and changed circumstances. Positive power results from combining these three components. (See figure 2.)

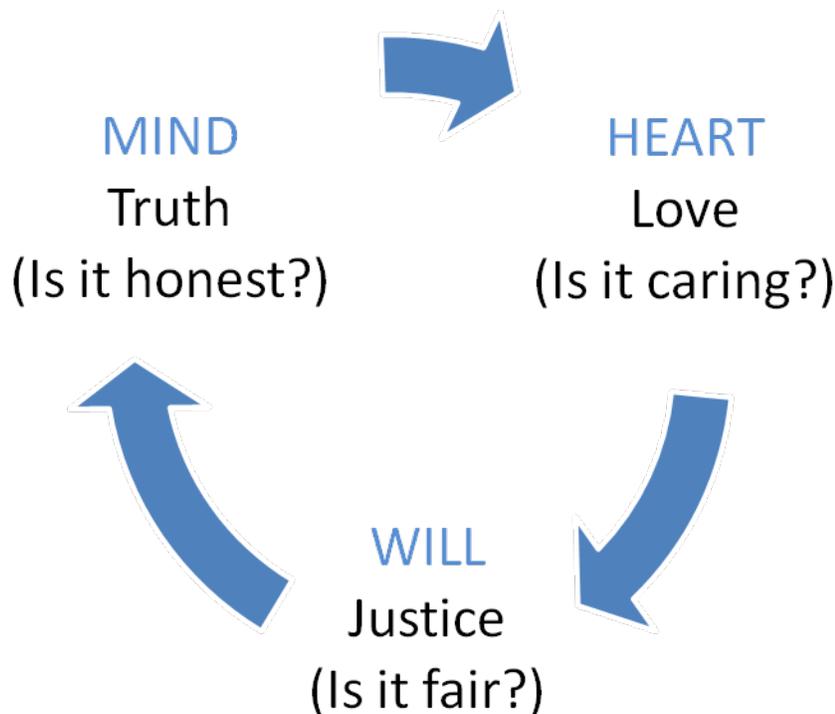


Figure 2. Human Resource Development Capacities, Principles and Questions.

Our thinking, feeling and choosing can be exercised individually, collectively, subjectively and objectively. All four aspects or perspectives should be considered. The importance being guided by truth, love and justice should not be underestimated. Many of the problems in the world can be diagnosed as some imbalance or failure to apply these three human potentialities among individuals, communities and institutions. Dialogue and agreement using all three principles to regulate and apply our lives and to maintain unity is vital.

Whereas truth should guide us in understanding our world and ourselves, love should be the dominant principle in our relationships with one another and justice should be the primary standard of institutions for the maintenance of progress, order and unity in a society. Emotions provide affect for our actions and will commits, directs and energizes our behavior. Our cognitive, emotional and volitional development are greatly affected by our social environments, especially in our early years. Though aspects of each of these faculties are influenced by inherited qualities from genetic endowments, they are shaped and developed through the interactions of our thoughts, feelings and actions with the environment.

As we increasingly learn to reason and develop clear and healthy values by exercising decision-making capacities through loving, fair and respectful engagement with others, we develop our potential for service and happiness. Healthy role models and values inspire and help us become more responsible and service oriented (Damon, 1988). By fostering moral awareness and an emotional vocabulary, enhancing sensitivity to the feelings of others and developing empathy for other points of view, we can create a context for growth using virtues to strengthen conscience, guide behavior and foster moral discipline. By establishing a zero tolerance for meanness, prejudice, gossip, fault finding and backbiting and modeling and prioritizing self-control, courtesy, respect and self-motivation, we can help others control their thinking, feeling and choosing before they act (Borba, 2002).

As we create social and cultural contexts to support the development of intellectually, emotionally and morally mature persons through critical thinking, altruistic feelings and moral decision-making and conduct, we affect the climate and policies around us. Until human resource development

focuses on the cultivation of character and the development of a moral sense of identity and moral imperative, until it begins to purposefully emphasize models of authentic moral authority and to foster moral responsibility and agency, until it makes central the cultivation of expanding levels of empathy, progressively embracing the human race and until it is willing to entertain an explicit spiritual conversation about truth and meaning in life, it cannot really fulfill its responsibility to human potential (Mustakavoa-Possardt, 2004, p. 266).

## **Conclusion**

Developing human resources is an intellectual, emotional and moral endeavor. Mind, heart and will, as well as truth, love and justice have subjective and objective, as well as individual and collective aspects that all need to be considered for a holistic understanding. Utilizing our minds, hearts and wills in pursuit of truth, love and justice, is a powerful contributor to human resource development. These capacities enable and encourage individuals to be capable, conscious and conscientious developers of themselves and their communities. If we fail to address the mind, heart and will and to develop each faculty fully, we will not develop the goals, values and actions essential to making a whole, healthy and balanced person, organization and society. Their development leads to a healthy self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-reliance that can counteract the egotism, narcissism and selfishness that is endemic in modern society.

This is a complex, difficult and lifelong process involving the emotional abilities to perceive, use, understand and manage emotions (Mayer and Salovey, 1997), and of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Goleman, 1998). The moral intelligence capacities of integrity, responsibility, forgiveness and compassion (Lennick and Kiel, 2005) and empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance and fairness (Borba, 2001), along with the spiritual qualities of critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness and conscious state expansion (King & DeCicco, 2009), are important for development. As we attend to these so that human potential and motivation are released, happiness, honor, well-being and security will grow. We currently suffer from a lack and imbalance of these qualities.

Our minds, hearts and wills are challenged by our aggressive and alluring materialistic, consumer-driven and narcissistic culture that has corrupted these faculties and their powers. As we consecrate ourselves in service to the greater good utilizing the creative powers of our natures through the application of truth, love and justice, we develop our human resource and release our potential. It requires the exercise of our minds, hearts and wills, and develops integrity, prosperity and healthy authenticity, altruism and autonomy. As we strive for excellence in the humble spirit of service, physical, psychological and spiritual well-being will follow for the individual, and the communities and institutions of which they are a part.

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