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METANARRATIVE OF VALUES

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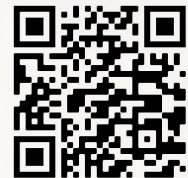
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From the
Editorial Desk

Metamorphosis

“Metá!” is a common word used every day in Greece. The translation: ‘later’ or ‘after’. Added to morphosis (the mode of development of an organism) it gives it a very powerful new meaning.

The caterpillar that turns into a butterfly undergoes a metamorphosis. In other words, a complete non-linear transformation. From living depending on walking, this living organism will ‘later’/‘after’ fly for the rest of its life. The transformation is not just structural but in its core movement mechanism.

Taking this concept into a human analogy, any word we decide to add ‘meta’ to will then be projected into a very over-reaching, more comprehensive, more transcendental dimension. Yet there is a slight fact that is attached to adding the word ‘meta’: it only relates to all that is linked to the past of the added segment, not to its future, its unrealized definition, its next purpose nor meaning.

If the butterfly would transform itself further into a flower, then a second metamorphosis would have taken place but strictly and directly related to the butterfly, not to its preceding caterpillar metamorphosis.

If a story, a narrative would be written about any ‘meta’ word, its content would have to encompass its understanding by all those reading it and it would have to apply to all caterpillars. The meta narrative of the butterfly would require us to present how its forerunner, the caterpillar, was part of the blueprint, the big picture within the larger scheme of the world of butterflies.

What would META-INTEGRITY have as its narrative? How can we bring one concept found in nature to start re-thinking, re-feeling, re-positioning one of the most critical values between people?

Imagine you are to produce a movie on integrity. Whilst its content including the script, the selection of a filming location, the props, etc. is being defined, the process of selecting the actors, negotiating with venue owners, paying the bills on time for filming materials, expert subject-matter consultants, etc. in itself will also showcase integrity – or not. Therefore, two separate

‘integrity worlds’ (realities on integrity) are running in parallel. One is in the narrative of the movie, the other, the underlying platform of the narrative itself.

If integrity (including honesty, trustworthiness, accountability, transparency, fairness and justice) is present as a powerful message for the viewers of the movie, then we have level one of integrity covered. But when all the activities, all the feelings, thoughts, communications and actions towards the production of the movie also have integrity as their underlying characteristic or behaviour (just like the movie on it), can we say that integrity has a meta narrative. The entire integrity ‘deal’: the movie and everything that lead to it and made it possible to make it happen (the behind-the-scenes stuff), is an example of Meta Integrity.

Bringing this into a leadership environment is about focusing on the act and the actions. It is about defining an expectation of integrity prior to it by how we uphold, uplift and ensure its elements to have their own ‘metaness’.

If Integrity is the glue for trust, then the elements, the chemistry of the glue’s components (their integrity), are the points of reference to assess integrity as a whole.

And so, we may want to not let integrity walk alone as a transferrable shadow to everybody but assess it in our material, emotional, psychological and natural world separately as independent meta-narratives. When integrity is true to all, then we have complete integrity. It is then when it has mattered to all in comparison to an individual narrative where the ego, the ‘for me’ standard may predominate and become the mockery of it all.

“

Walk your talk without
stumbling over words
that we haven’t practised
walking with!