

Being.  
Genuine  
at the  
Core



G r e e t i n g s

January 2006

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## A time to reflect

*Thanks to the many leaders I have had the privilege to serve over the last thirty years, I had the unique opportunity to think through a range of issues affecting our fragile planet. In view of the momentous times we are living through,*

*I have decided that from this year on, I will put together one or two thoughts that have crystallized in my mind.*

*Two thousand and six marks the first year of this effort, and it is my hope that every year during the Holiday season I will take some time out to reflect on the past and imagine the future. I will share my evolving thoughts with the people whose friendship and goodwill I and my firm & family truly cherish. I hope this first holiday booklet on **“Being Genuine at the Core”** will trigger a few thoughts that might help all of us to work towards a more enlightened future.*

Handwritten signature of Partha S Ghosh in black ink.

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# Being Genuine at the Core



## The challenge of our time

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The triumphs of human endeavor of the last quarter century are indeed significant. The power of technology from intelligent hand held devices, high-speed wireless internet, bioinformatics, nano and opto to space travel have in resonance with each other have opened up new frontiers of human imagination. It is important to realize unlike the previous technological discontinuities triggered by the steam engine and the internal combustion engine which essentially helped mankind to go beyond physical limit of humans there-by change the meaning of space, mass, and time, the developments of the last 25 years today enable us to leverage the power of mind, the power of human spirit, a power which in an ideal world is infinite. If properly purposed we will for the first time in history could harness those hidden powers of nature which could spread goodness and well being across all nations.

However equally significant are the tragedies that we have experienced in the last 25 years; the increasing spread of terrorism, - corporate, societal, and ecological, has not only fractured the most fundamental belief "trust" on which civilization has progressed, but has demonstrated a serious inadequacy in the quality of leadership required of Political, Government and Corporate leaders *to be insightful and intelligent stewards of human progress.*

Even when one only focuses on the regions of the world where capitalism has prospered, as companies' work to gain scale, the large companies seem to continually struggle to survive, again questioning whether the development of leadership capability, - leaders'

ability to make wise judgment calls, have kept up with the scale and complexity of problems and possibilities we are presented with? For example, the continuous erosion of market confidence in US auto, airlines, and so on so forth, only underscore how leaders of the organizations in these sectors are failing to rise to the challenge of our times. The corporate scandals of recent years came about at least in part because leaders began to believe in their own mythical status, in most measures over confident of their own personal leadership skills; vision and trust were replaced by the ability to finesse the numbers and look good on television. We all know how society has been victimized from Detroit to Houston; from New York to San Diego.

As a result today, widening inequalities between different segments of society, deteriorating ecological balance, growing mistrust between different communities and faiths, increasing desire for quick economic gains at the cost of sacrificing long-term possibilities, characterize today's geo-economic and geo-political landscape.

History has repeatedly taught us it takes crisis and failure of existing solutions to set the stage of emerging paradigm. Have we not reached the point in time when we must respond with a more holistic perspective to realign our will with our skills to realize the goodness of humanity? Or if we believe we have not yet reached the critical point, can we not be proactive to avoid a more serious crisis in our development process, as it relates to the governance of the planet, development of regional economies, and corporations.

## Required “Higher Level Expression of Leadership”

Today given the immense power of technology at our disposal, it is my strong conviction that if we could make the fundamental shift in our mind-set, we will be able to trigger the next era of human progress. Time has arrived when we should pause to understand the possibilities we are faced with and repurpose our ethics of thinking, reexamine ways we structure and make choices so that we will be in a better harmony with the forces of nature; in turn, we could perhaps chart a course of progress which is truly sustainable at different echelons of our socio economic process, both at the macro and micro levels.

Should we be able to establish the new dynamics of advancement of civilization, I envision that it will also enrich the natural and the divine capital of our planet. Thus new dynamic must move us beyond the conventional debates of power of the market versus the power of the government, towards debates that must focus on how to realize best the forces of self expression, self determination, in an era which will also require fundamental reconstitution of the shape and form of the market and governance, local and global, - of the planet as a whole. Depending upon the maturity of different societies we will need to evolve processes of governance and markets which are highly local (to solve local, soft and hard issues) and yet global, so that nations in concert with each other facilitate improved governance of the planet.

We are now in a time zone in history when we have to rise to the challenge by evolving in us a new spirit of enquiry with as much intensity as perhaps Socrates and Plato did in the western world and as did the rishis and learned men/women in the Indo Gangetic plain did 3500 ~ 5000 years ago; - when the Vedas and Upanishads were written. Although perhaps the knowledge available on the rules of nature was significantly less but they were able to extend their minds beyond the limits of what was physically known and visible in developing the fundamental philosophies of life, which are more valid today than before.



## Call for a Global Movement

So, how must companies and governments develop the leaders we need? Training in communications skills, empathy towards fellow workers are certainly necessary. But much more is needed. Leadership training programs that assume human and social qualities are already present in the leader - all that is required is the development of skills – do not work. That's why in spite of thousands of management schools all over, with billions of dollars spent by companies and governments to build leaders, today we have not been able to develop those leadership qualities, which today's problems and possibilities require. Much what is taught and discussed in the class rooms and executive retreats are essentially extensions of the "command and control" relics which fail to cultivate in people the courage, the greatness of the inner self required to continually seek truth, to make bold decisions, for connecting with the possibilities ahead, beyond the dictums of microeconomics, and/or obvious short term gains.

Furthermore in today's corporate world by the time an executive takes the leadership of a Fortune 500 company his/her thinking habits are highly conditioned to serve the command and control environment which essentially develops a person as a care taker of corporate presuppositions and profits, as opposed to an architect of dynamics which lead to new paradigms. No wonder, most of the CEOs of large companies are continually struggling to navigate through paradigm shifts, while spending excessive time to play with numbers to make their past look good.

In the same spirit Political and Government leaders in nations spend more time thinking through of how to be politically correct to satisfy multiple constituencies with general purpose agenda as opposed to leading a nation or a society with a compelling vision which may not be as apparent to others but truly serves the well being of the society.

History has repeatedly underscored, that most paradigm shifts have occurred outside of the main stream organizations, which at present could well be the formula of rescue of our civilization from the gridlock in thinking and in enabling hard choices. However, we are now faced with those opportunities, which will require large scale coordination between different sectors such as development of ecology friendly Energy & Power of infrastructure where the role of the legacy organizations will be extremely important to enable large scale transitions. They must learn how to cultivate the youthfulness and imaginative spirit of Google while leveraging the wisdom of their own/rich experience similar to that of Vatican or the Vedanta.

Accordingly, the leaderships of corporate, the governmental and political processes must ask a fundamental question as to how they will instill organizational mechanisms which will help people engage with and express the deeper qualities of their inner self and more importantly help nurture leaders who could – inspire imagination, make better choices, be they be at the board rooms or the oval/circular offices of national leaderships. Choices the civilization is faced with will require wider and deeper perspective on behavioral issues, *both human and nature*. We need to open up new vistas in our inner self which will provide us the courage to establish reason beyond conventional logic, and move beyond the limits of the presuppositions of the past.

While the development of the Western Civilization over the last 500 years have been based on deep understanding of the of the forces of nature external to the self, a few leaders in the West like Andrew Carnegie, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Henry Heinz, Pierre du Pont all of whom built up great organizations, were also driven by deep understanding of their inner self so that they could develop and deploy a super ordinate purpose beyond the dictates microeconomics. While they all created enduring brands, they systematically overcame all barriers to growth, at least in part through a sense of personal belief to serve people with safe, affordable solutions inspired by strong philosophical themes.

In fact today we need more of that, perhaps requiring our thought processes to be as much focused on understanding and strengthening our spiritual base at the core of our being, as they are focused on harnessing various technologies to create solutions which serve the requirements of three mega balances – *energy, ecology and equity*.

While programs to help leaders to develop and draw strength from vision, trust, personal belief, ethics, and moral courage are essential, they must also emphasize emotional, ethical and cultural aspects of leadership. We must realize Leaders are social beings with attitudes and actions strongly shaped by those they lead; leadership is no longer stories of those who give orders and those who follow them, but is an interaction between leaders and subordinates towards a super ordinate purpose.

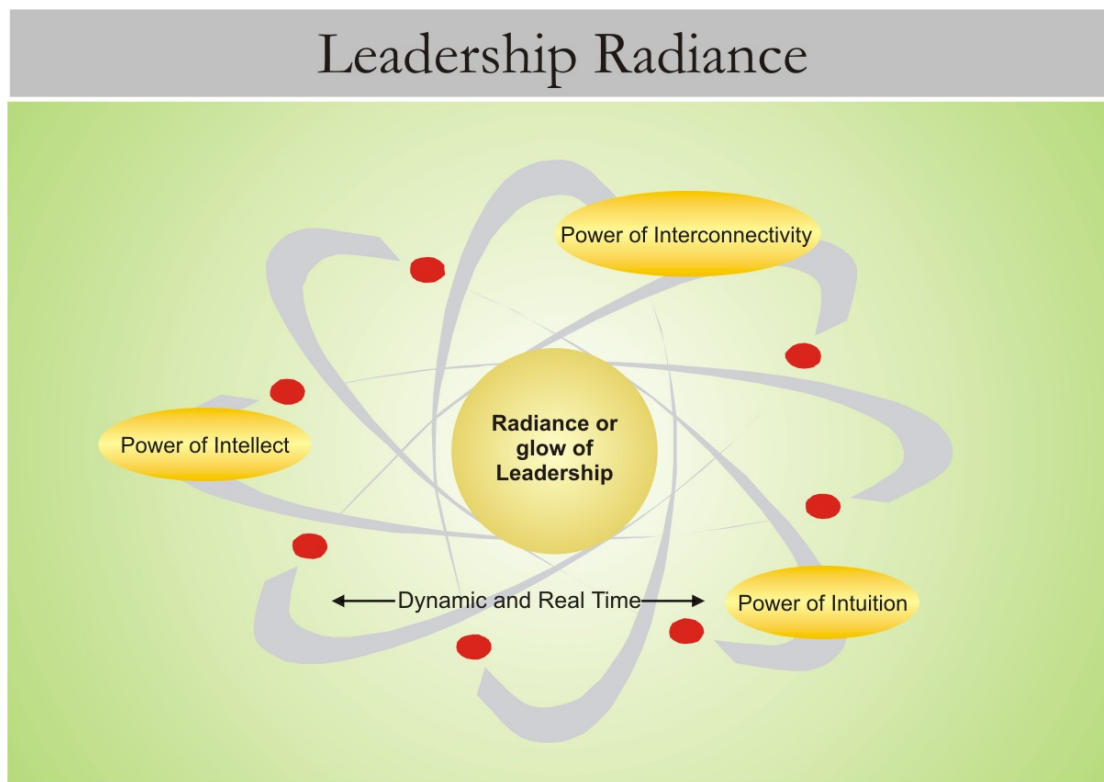
Leadership that we are talking are not necessarily skills that can be taught by the classical approach to education; they are personal qualities that must be nurtured and developed, in a continuum from the early years when one enters the class room of a Kindergarten to when he/she enters the board room of a Company,

Education system will need to be reformed with holistic perspective of the nature of problems society will face and the nature of decisions that will need to be made. Significant emphasis have to put on the integrative capacity building so that young fertile minds while they deepen their understanding on *a line of specific enquiry* along a scientific or engineering discipline, they also develop the *intellectual fluency and spiritual resiliency* to

embrace diversity of thoughts and expressions, to conceive and commercialize large scale solutions.

# The Essential Requirement

“**Genuineness**”, I think, whether an individual is the CEO or general manager of a company, or a political leader of a party or a head of a nation, is what is required to make the most out of the gift that we have in our inner self. The leadership development programs in tandem with our education system should be so structured that it enables the crystallization and/or purification process of an individual’s personality along three critical “*power dimensions*”, - *power of intellect*, *the power of interconnectivity*, the power of intuition. At the core is the power of inner self which I term “the power of genuineness”.



While through sustained efforts one could sharpen power of intellect and the power of interconnectivity but at the “core of inner self” one must develop the habit of searching the genuineness in oneself, which in turn drive the creativity required in making decisions which could well chart the new course of the civilization.

We are indeed entering an interesting time zone, when every company large and small, every University private and public, and every government organization irrespective of their philosophical bias could begin the transition by instilling programs which will cultivate in each person the power of intellect, the power of interconnectivity and power of intuition with fundamental emphasis on realization of the genuineness in each person. As simple as it may sound, it is indeed simple, if only we put our mind to this challenge, collective and individual faith in our selves will increase and great possibilities will emerge. As we step into a New Year let this be our shared resolve.

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*Warm and sincere  
Season's Greetings*

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Happy New Year



Partha S Ghosh