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Presencing As A Transformative Strategy For Changing Army Culture

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Presencing As A Transformative Strategy For Changing Army Culture

Abstract

In order for leaders to be the most effective it is beneficial that they be self-aware. Part of being self-aware is to understand how our own bias plays a part in how we frame, view or project information received or transmitted to others. To enable participants of the Organization Dynamics program to become more self-aware, for example, there are several different classes on leadership that use methods like the Hermann Brain Dominance Instrument or the Enneagram. These techniques not only identify traits about ourselves to us, they open the pathway to expanded thought and shift the view of our surroundings. I have used these techniques, as well as my personal experience with mild Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress to examine organizational change within the United States Army in an attempt to demonstrate that the Army's premier program to help Soldiers deal with the stressors of multiple deployments to theaters of war is in jeopardy. It is in jeopardy, I believe, due to the leaders' lack of self-awareness and conscious understanding of the context needed to support such significant shifts in organizational and individual mindsets and behavior. As an analogous example of a major change process, in 2000, the Army embarked on a journey to transform and chose as a symbol the wear of a black beret. In the course of a decade, the Army changed but did not transform and in 2011 discarded that symbol of transformation. The failed attempt to transform is the result of not changing the culture or the belief patterns that produce it and which it in turn cultivates. Soldiers and leaders of today use the same thought processes as those of our predecessors, trapping us, and the organization, in the past. To break this cycle I examine the theory of presencing as a way to break free from processes of the past. Presencing allows leaders to use their self-awareness and trust of their inner feelings in order to develop plans and policies for the future as it is emerging.

Comments

Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics in the Graduate Division of the School of Arts and Sciences in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania

Advisor: John C. Eldred

PRESENCING AS A TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGY FOR CHANGING ARMY

CULTURE

By

Howard L Hostrander, II

Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics in the
Graduate Division of the School of Arts and Sciences in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the
University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

2012

PRESENCING AS A TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGY FOR CHANGING ARMY

CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

In order for leaders to be the most effective it is beneficial that they be self-aware. Part of being self-aware is to understand how our own bias plays a part in how we frame, view or project information received or transmitted to others. To enable participants of the Organization Dynamics program to become more self-aware, for example, there are several different classes on leadership that use methods like the Hermann Brain Dominance Instrument or the Enneagram. These techniques not only identify traits about ourselves to us, they open the pathway to expanded thought and shift the view of our surroundings. I have used these techniques, as well as my personal experience with mild Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress to examine organizational change within the United States Army in an attempt to demonstrate that the Army's premier program to help Soldiers deal with the stressors of multiple deployments to theaters of war is in jeopardy. It is in jeopardy, I believe, due to the leaders' lack of self-awareness and conscious understanding of the context needed to support such significant shifts in organizational and individual mindsets and behavior. As an analogous example of a major change process, in 2000, the Army embarked on a journey to transform and chose as a symbol the wear of a black beret. In the course of a decade, the Army changed but did not transform and in 2011 discarded that symbol of transformation. The failed attempt to transform is the result of not changing the culture or the belief patterns that produce it and which it in turn cultivates. Soldiers and leaders of today use the same thought processes as those of our predecessors, trapping us, and the organization, in the

past. To break this cycle I examine the theory of presencing as a way to break

free from processes of the past. Presencing allows leaders to use their self-

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for the future as it is emerging.

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I have had the opportunity to serve with some of the best Soldiers and leaders the Army has to offer. I will always hold the Soldiers of 3-2/205th Corps ANA ETT (Team Redwolf) in a special place. Were it not for your professionalism and dedication to duty, especially in the face of adversity, I might not have had this wonderful opportunity to experience an Ivy League university.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Life, as I knew it, changed abruptly for me in the early morning hours of Saturday, February 19, 2009. It was not the first significant change that I experienced in life, but in looking back, I think it one of the most humbling and enduring. What caused my life to change that Saturday began two years earlier, during my second deployment to Afghanistan.

While on my second tour, from February 2006 through February 2007, I sustained repeated mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI) in the form of several mild concussions that at the time I did not think were significant. I never lost consciousness; I just saw momentary blackness accompanied by stars and experienced ringing in my ears. In soldier jargon, I had had my bell rung, repeatedly. Having left these concussions untreated for a prolonged period I eventually developed Post Traumatic Stress (PTS)[1].

Over the course of the next two years I developed headaches, sleeplessness, light sensitivity, ringing in my ears, and was in a constant state of hyper-alertness. I denied to my friends, my family, and myself for quite some time that I was in trouble and needed help. As the headaches, light sensitivity and ringing in my ears began to worsen in the summer of 2008 I sought medical care for those symptoms.

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[1] The American Psychiatric Association in their "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders" classifies post Traumatic Stress as a mental disorder. I consider PTS to be an injury and therefore refer to it as PTS and not PTSD.

After several months of working my way through the managed care system, I arrived at the office of a neurologist in mid- December. In a fifteen-minute consultation, I had a diagnosis of migraines and two trial drugs to use. I was to return in 30 days for a follow-up. Upon my return in late January, I informed the doctor that neither of the drugs eased my symptoms. He provided another, more potent, drug. I was heading out of town on work so did not fill the prescription until my return.

It was on day five of the drug therapy that my world as I knew it changed abruptly. Some of what I know of that day I learned after being in therapy for a period and from conversation with those I interacted with that morning. Awakened before 4:00 o'clock on a Saturday morning and informed of a combat casualty in Iraq, my inner reality began to separate from the outer reality and the world of the present. The initial caller, a Master Sergeant, told me that he had been alternately dialing my home telephone and government issued mobile phone for forty-five minutes before I answered. When I did answer, he reported that I sounded disoriented and was mean. He had the Chief of Staff, a Colonel, call me. The Colonel told me I was abrasive and acting uncharacteristically.

What I experienced between the first and second phone calls was a re-vision of an ambush from 2006 in Afghanistan. This was the first time this had ever happened to me. My mind played the event in high definition reality; the sights, the sounds, the smells, the feelings that morning were to me as real as if I were experiencing them on that August day in 2006. When the re-vision ended the hyper-vigilant state of combat that I entered into did not. My mind's inner

reality was beginning to deviate from the outer reality in which I lived and worked. By 8:00 o'clock in the morning my mind was no longer effectively cross lateralizing information between the hemispheres and while reporting to my boss, a General, via telephone I began to shake and sob uncontrollably. Not much longer than an hour later, I was discussing with the General, in person, that I was committed to getting better and would seek treatment. In the two years I had been home, this was the first time I had admitted to someone, or myself, that I had sustained an invisible injury and would require treatment from a mental health provider.

Over the next eighteen months, I continued with therapy. In June of 2009, after serving 24 years on an Active Guard Reserve tour of duty, I made the decision to retire from military service effective in November 2009. I also entered the Masters of Science in Organizational Dynamics (MSOD) program at the University of Pennsylvania. I originally was looking at a program in homeland security offered by another university. A friend suggested that I look at Penn's program and when I did, I knew it was for me. I fully recognized that the military culture that I grew up in, and then lived in as an adult, was quite different from that of the rest of America. I saw what the MSOD program at Penn offered as an opportunity for me to move beyond my comfort zone and explore leadership and behavior from a social science point of view. As I look back I now realize that I was looking to change my lens -- I just did not realize it at the time.

My experience in the MSOD program has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my life, second to none. The faculty, staff, and my fellow students

all share the credit for this. After notification I was accepted, I had a small amount of trepidation about how I would fit in. My trepidation was short-lived as I immersed myself in the program and began my journey into concepts of organizational dynamics. I began my studies on the processes on leadership, systems thinking, story telling, organizational and individual behavior and change management. What I learned from all of this is that to be a more effective leader one must be self-aware and that context matters.

The introduction to a greater understanding of my self-awareness began in Dynamics 501, with two exercises. The first was when Dr. Janet Greco handed out a pair of glasses and instructed us to remove the lenses from them. "The remaining frame allowed for the metaphorical use of lenses to be tried out to help read organizations or behavior with differing mental models, assumptions or focus. The idea was to create the objective recognition that we can change our perspectives intentionally; that we are always using some framework that is often invisibly directing or constricting our attention and not purposefully chosen for its applicable value in a given situation" (Greco, 2011) . The second exercise was the Hermann Brain Dominance Instrument (HDBI). The HBDI system uses a series of 120 questions to measure the thinking preferences of a person based on a "Whole Brain Model" by determining the level of dominance among the four thinking structures of the brain. The four parts of the brain are the left and right hemispheres and the limbic/cerebral cortex processes. HDBI represents the Whole Brain as divided into four equal quadrants represented by colors blue,

green, yellow, and red. The quadrants are representative of Hermann's four

styles of thinking: blue is analytical, green is sequential, yellow is imaginative

and red is interpersonal. My HDBI Whole Brain Profile indicates I am a left-brain

Figure 1, HDBI Whole Brain Model
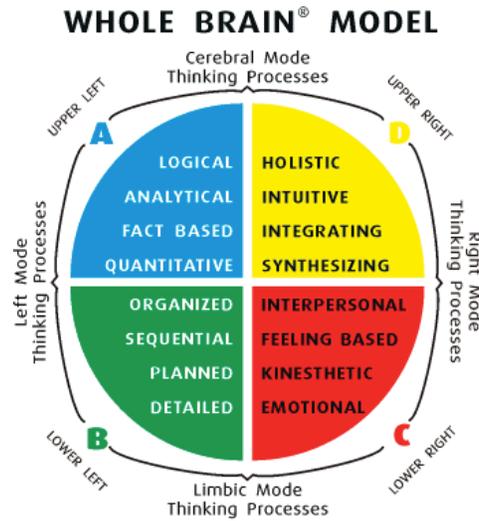
(Herrmann International, 2009)

(blue, green) dominant thinker. My right-brain thinking is red then yellow.[2] The

HDBI Whole Brain Model is depicted in Figure 1(Herrmann International, 2009).

My journey to discover my own self-awareness continued with the concepts

contained in Dynamics 669, with Dr. James Larkin and the introduction to the

Enneagram.

The Enneagram is a system based on nine personality types arranged into

three categories, referred to as Triads. The nine personality types are the

Reformer, the Helper, The Motivator, the Individualist, the Investigator, the

Loyalist, The Enthusiast, the Leader, and the Peacemaker. The Triads are

Feeling, Thinking, and Instinctive. The exact origins of the Enneagram are

unknown and "lost to history" (Riso & Hudson, 1996, p. 11). However, the origins

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[2] For more on the Hermann Brain Dominance Instrument visit www.hdbi.com.

of the personality types are not. The basic personality types have their origin in the Judeo-Christian belief of the seven deadly sins (Riso & Hudson, 1996, p. 14).

Using the Enneagram to evaluate myself, I have determined that my basic personality type is the Leader, which is in the Instinctive Triad. To round out my personality in the Feeling Triad my personality type is the Helper and in the Thinking Triad it is the Loyalist. As I understand the Enneagram this means that I tend to over express instinct and feelings, and that I am most out of touch with thinking (as compared to the other two personality types within the thinking Triad).

When I initially read Riso and Hudson (1996) I found it difficult to identify with any of the nine personality types as the one that is my basic type. However, as I read descriptions of healthy, average, and unhealthy types it became clear that the Leader is the best fit as a basic personality type. What led me to that conclusion was the description of the average Leader and the unhealthy Leader. It is here that I most closely related to the Leader, as I do believe I am a pragmatist. What caught my attention was the description of the unhealthy Leader as "hardhearted, immoral, and potentially violent" (Riso & Hudson, 1996, p. 298). This was me as well – the me spiraling out of control as the result of mTBI and PTS. During that time, I was demanding, demeaning, and downright frightening to some of the Soldiers that worked for me if they failed to follow my directives. I know this because after I entered treatment and recovered a good portion of my cognitive abilities I went back and spoke with a few of the Soldiers who worked for me before I was injured in 2006 and then again when I returned

home in 2007. It was through my journey of self-awareness that I rediscovered the importance of context.

I say rediscovered because in the military I had used the memory aid of METT-TC (Mission, Enemy, Terrain and weather, Troops and support available, Time available and Civil considerations) (United States, 2008a, pp. 5-5) during mission planning and execution to keep context firmly in mind, to help me and my Soldiers visualize the desired end state for the task at hand.

This visualization process had allowed for a better understanding and a way to analyze the unrelated factors of the operational environment by framing the circumstances—a skill or habit of thought I seem to have misplaced duringmy life directed by PTS. This framing, or as I used earlier "context", is how I relate or connect complex factors that may not necessarily be related. My rediscovery of context also included learning that context may not be the best method to describe this process.

A better way to describe this process is what Mayo and Nohria (2005) describe as "contextual intelligence"(p. xv). This contextual intelligence allows one to comprehend and connect a series of complex factors that may not necessarily be related. I use the word contextualize to represent the use of contextual intelligence. I believe this contextualization is a significant factor in the subjective or objective lens selection.

Characteristically due to contextual intelligence, our contextualization process is not a fixed process. We continually update our framing process based on the learning or unlearning that we do. Growing up in a military family and for

most of my adult life living the military culture is an example of this framing process. The lens that I looked through was highly influenced by that military culture. The injury to my brain changed my lens, which then changed the way I behaved. As I healed over time, my lens changed again, leading me to conclude that time is another contextual binder.

We change our lens and view things differently over time. Again, an example is my behavior before injury as opposed to my behavior after injury. The same principle applies as we mature, physically, intellectually, and emotionally. Due to the intellectual maturation I have experienced in the MSOD program I look at many things differently, and have the ability to recognize when I should change my lens. It is this perspective about my own perspectives that is helping to guide development of my capstone project.

Upon recovering from my PTS experience, through the assistance of a mental health provider, I thought as a leader openly discussing what happened to me could benefit Soldiers that have yet to acknowledge or seek treatment for PTS. I soon discovered that my peers, as well as leaders at all levels, were uncomfortable discussing the subject of PTS and the Soldiers afflicted by it. I found that reaction to be somewhat strange since the month before my retirement the Army, in an attempt to relieve the stressors on Soldiers and their families, initiated a new program. Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) and it is designed to help prepare Soldiers to "thrive at a cognitive and behavioral level in the face of protracted warfare and everyday challenges of Army life that are common in the 21st century" (United States Army, 2011). Senior Army leaders

hope implementation of the CSF process will serve to inoculate Soldiers against the affects of Post Traumatic Stress, reduce substance abuse often associated with it, while also lowering the suicide rate and other high risk behaviors that have increased during the ten years of conflict associated with war fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In this "aha" moment I asked myself several questions. How can a program like CSF be effective if the members of the organization cannot openly discuss the problem? What learning can facilitate the acceptance of CSF and the removal of the negative bias of seeking mental health services? Will this new learning allow Soldiers and leaders to let go of these old biases or will they need to unlearn what they know?

I chose to examine CSF because it is the program touted to make new Soldiers resilient to the effects of stress and to heal current Soldiers already affected by it. My interest in this topic derives from three additional perspectives as well. First is from exposure to the concepts of servant leadership, systems thinking, power and politics, and individual and organizational behavior while studying for a Masters of Science degree in Organizational Dynamics. The second is from my personal experience of suffering the affects of mild Traumatic Brain Injury and the subsequent onset of Post Traumatic Stress (PTS). The third is that, while serving 24 years in the Active Guard Reserve program of the Army National Guard I observed several instances of senior leaders mandating a change that was unsuccessful due to a lack of bona fide support from lower level leaders and Soldiers. The Army black beret, chosen to symbolize the Army's

transformation, is one such mandate. Another 21st century example is the non-acceptance of the Counter Insurgency (COIN) Strategy. Many leaders believed that nation building or winning the hearts and minds of the civilian populace would degrade the war-fighting proficiency they worked so hard to build in their units. I chose to use only the beret as an example of failed Army change in the remainder of my paper simply due to the explicit nature of the meaning laid out by General Shinseki.

In 2000, Chief of Staff of the Army, General Eric Shinseki, chose the wearing of a black beret "to symbolize the Army's commitment to transforming itself into the Objective Force" (United States, 2001). The Objective Force, although not fully defined in 2000, was the Army's vision of a future force that was more mobile, more lethal, more survivable, and capable of operating across a wide spectrum of operational environments. It was a vision designed to shed the large formations of the cold war era. General Shinseki surprised the Army community in the fall of 2000 with his memorandum announcing his decision to make the black beret the standard Army headwear. In October of 2000 he stated, "Starting next June, the black beret will be symbolic of our commitment to transform this magnificent Army into a new force - a strategically responsive force for the 21st century. It will be a symbol of unity, a symbol of Army excellence, a symbol of our values. When we wear the beret, it will say that we, the soldiers of the world's best army, are committed to making ourselves even better" (Army News Service, 2000). At that time, Army Rangers wore the black beret, with other elite forces of the Army wearing berets. A maroon beret

signifies Airborne Soldiers, and a green beret Army Special Forces Soldiers. The

beret, as a symbol, signified "elite". In choosing the beret, General Shinseki

wanted to symbolize that his vision of the Objective Force saw the entire Army as

elite. The leaders and Soldiers of the elite (Ranger, Airborne, and Special

Forces) community did not share his vision.

In June of 2011, Secretary of the Army, the Honorable John M. McHugh,

directed that on June 14, 2011 the patrol cap would once again become the

standard headgear with the Army Combat Uniform. This directive is the result of

failed support, from multiple levels within the Army, for a mandated change and

brings to an end a not-so-loving, decade-long affair with the black beret.

Purpose

The purpose of my capstone is to proffer the use of presencing, defined in

more detail in Chapter 3, to change Army culture. In order to set forth and

support my premise, I will examine key cultural biases in the United States Army

in an attempt to determine how successful the Army's Comprehensive Soldier

Fitness (CSF) program may be without implementation of an effective process to

un-learn the previous cultural biases associated with mental health issues within

the organization. I think part of the issue preventing change is that learning

models currently in use are circular in nature and begin with observation. I will

describe these learning cycles in more detail in Chapter 2. I will posit here how

two such models, as examples of this type of learning, tend to trap us in the past

as we observe the actions that derive from our a priori thinking and planning.

"People in organizations find it very difficult to deal effectively with information

that conflicts with their current beliefs and methods. They do not know how to accommodate dissonant information and they find it difficult to change a few elements of their interdependent beliefs and methods" (Starbuck, 1996). The proliferation of electronic mail and messaging in the 21st century serves to compound the ability to deal with dissonant information. The rate at which organizations accumulate, synthesize, and disseminate information that is useful in a changing operational environment is accelerating.

This acceleration only serves to exacerbate the challenges for successful organizational learning and unlearning as well as for the formation of healthy, productive organizational culture, making these challenges worthy of continued review by business leaders and academics alike. "Organizational learning and unlearning is a popular and important topic in business as well as academia. Even though there is a plethora of studies on organizational learning, surprisingly little is known about the conceptualization and operationalization of organizational unlearning" (Akgün, Byrne, Lynn, & Keskin, 2007).

Army senior leadership recognizes that organizations unable to quickly synthesize and disseminate information to the people who make up the organization, and thus allow them to adapt to a changing environment face serious challenges of survival. Without stakeholder buy-in and more importantly the ability of the organization, and the people who comprise it, to un-learn the old culture and embrace the change, the change is doomed to failure. In his forward to *TRADOC PAM 325-8-2, The U.S. Army Learning Concept for 2015*, as Chief of Staff of the Army, General Martin Dempsey, wrote, "We live in a much more

competitive security environment. This means that we have to learn faster and better than our future adversaries do. Stated a bit differently, we must prevail in the competitive learning environment" (United States, 2011b).

Prevailing in the competitive learning environment entails much more than learning. In order for an organization to transform, to move from its current state to a future state, leaders must enact an effective process to manage the change and effect the transition of the individuals within it. Change and transition are not the same, according to Bridges in his work, *Managing Transitions : Making the Most of Change* (2003). "Change is situational: the move to a new site, the retirement of the founder…Transition, on the other hand, is psychological; it is a three-phase process that people go through as they internalize and come to terms with the details of the new situation that change brings about" (2003, p. 4).

In his work, *Theory U: Leading from the Emerging Future*, C. Otto Scharmer (2007), introduces us to another [this reminds me of Ackoff, so I would not want to say new without having to prove it to be new] way of thinking about and facilitating change at both a personal and organizational level.

When I started realizing that the most impressive leaders and master practitioners seem to operate from a different core process, one that pulls them into future possibilities, I asked myself: How can we learn to better sense and connect with a future possibility that is seeking to emerge?

I began to call this operating from the future as it emerges "presencing." Presencing is a blending of the words "presence"

and sensing." It means to sense, tune in, and act from one's highest future potential—the future that depends on us to bring it into being" (2007, p. 8).

What Scharmer describes is transformative leadership; the ability to inspire and motivate people to do something that is radically different in nature from what they would previously consider comfortable doing; and in this case, that something is to let go of the past in order to learn and embrace a new future way of doing things.

For Comprehensive Soldier Fitness to be truly effective the Army, the Soldiers and leaders who comprise it, must change their current beliefs about seeking mental health services. To accomplish this we will need not only transformative (and here I imply self-aware and self-awareness creating) leaders but a change in the Army culture as well. In his work *Organizational Culture and Leadership,* Edgar Schein (2010) writes "When we are influential in shaping the behavior and values of others, we think of that as "leadership" and are creating the conditions for new culture formation" (p. 3). He goes on to define culture as it pertains to a group as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (Schein, p. 18). Within organizations, he analyses culture on three levels, depicted in Table 1, The Three Levels of Culture. I will provide examples of each of the levels in Chapter

Table 1. The Three Levels of Culture

1. **Artifacts**
   - Visible and feelable structures and process
   - Observed behavior
     - Difficult to decipher
2. **Espoused Beliefs and Values**
   - Ideals, goals, values, aspirations
   - Ideologies
   - Rationalizations
     - May or may not be congruent with behavior and other artifacts
3. **Basic Underlying Assumptions**
   - Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values
   - Determine behavior, perception, thought, and feeling

(Schein, 2010, p.23)

2 after introducing how the Army defines culture.

General Casey, former Chief of Staff of the Army, in 2009 wrote "Our Army Values and Warrior Ethos play a significant role in how we see ourselves and, therefore, in how we choose to behave. The prevailing view among many within our ranks is that having problems with stress or seeking help is not only inconsistent with being a warrior but also a sign of weakness. This way of thinking has led to a stigma associated with receiving help and, therefore, an aversion across much of the Army to seeking behavioral health care" (G.W. Casey Jr., 2011, p. 2). To change this there must be learning of new knowledge about both CSF and mental health. More importantly, the Army, along with its Soldiers and leaders, must let go of the old way of thinking; in other words there must be unlearning of the old ways.

Corporate leaders, as well as military leaders within other branches, can make an inference applicable to their own company or branch of service from the examination of cultural biases within the Army. "Individuals alone, no matter how competent or charismatic, never have all the assets needed to overcome

tradition and inertia except in very small organizations" (Kotter, 1996, p. 6)
Organizational change in and of itself is not a singular event. It involves other
aspects of leadership and management to facilitate the change. By focusing on
unlearning and presencing, I am not implying, or stating, that any of these other
aspects are less useful or important. It is my intent only to show that directing a
change as a senior leader while providing limited information as to the need or
permission to discuss does not necessarily provide subordinates with the
knowledge or initiative required for successful implementation.

Methodology

In order for me to best illustrate my concern for the future success of
Comprehensive Soldier Fitness as valid, I will compare CSF against a 21st-
century change initiated by Army leadership considered less than successful.
That change is the decision to use the black beret for all Soldiers as an outward
symbol of transformation. This methodology will allow for articulation of the
problem, identification of means to solve them or for the need to study them
further.

To accomplish this I will introduce concepts of organizational change in
chapter 2 by reviewing literature on the body of knowledge of change
management, unlearning, and presencing. Both unlearning and presencing are
relatively new knowledge areas. In the case of unlearning, not all academics
consider continued pursuit in this area as worthy of an academic investigation. I
will include opposing academic points of view so as to ensure a rounded review
that will help shape the reader's own opinion regarding unlearning.

I will also provide a brief overview of how doctrine, culture, and tradition shape future thinking of Army leadership. I will introduce the literature used for this while conducting a review of literature in chapter 2.

In chapter 3, I will discuss the cultural biases that may prevent full buy in and implementation of CSF from leaders and Soldiers of the Army. I will then compare implementation of the beret to Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, focusing on stakeholder buy in and what it will take for individuals and the organization to successfully implement a transition of behavior and culture to ensure the success of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness.

I will use the following questions to guide the development of my argument.

1. How can a program like CSF be effective if the members of the organization cannot openly recognize or discuss the problem it is designed to address?

2. How can learning help facilitate the acceptance of CSF and the removal of the negative bias of seeking mental health treatment?

3. Will this new learning allow Soldiers and leaders to let go of these old biases or will they need to unlearn what they know?

4. Can unlearning be useful to Army leaders and if so how do we implement it in support of organizational and individual behavior?

5. Are individual changes and transition managed the same way as organizational changes and transition?

6. Are senior leaders capable of letting go of the past in order to bring about the future by using presencing?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Doctrine, Culture and Tradition: Shaping the Future Thinking of Army Leadership

"Doctrine represents a professional army's collective thinking about how it intends to fight, train, equip, and modernize" (United States, 2002, p. iv). The primary method of dissemination is through institutional training and professional development throughout the ranks. Doctrine represents the distillation of learning, often difficult, from previous wars and conflicts. It is equivalent to policy in the government or business sense.

The Vietnam experience of Army senior leaders heavily influenced the development and implementation of Army doctrine throughout the 1980s and 1990s. "The prevailing view among American military officers and defense intellectuals after Vietnam was that counterinsurgency and nation-building activities had been a harmful distraction from the military's pre-eminent mission of deterring and preparing to fight the massed conventional forces of the Soviet Union or its proxies", (Fitzsimmons, 2008, p. 350; United States, 2002, p. iv). This was evident in the Army's development of doctrine throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Known as Air Land Battle, it focused on the use of overwhelming firepower to defeat large enemy formations. The United States used technologically advanced weapon systems to offset what it lacked in numbers of personnel and equipment. With the swift victory over Iraqi forces in 1991, the developers of the doctrine, and those schooled in the art of its use, were convinced beyond a doubt

that years spent training Soldiers to effectively unleash the devastating firepower to overwhelm the enemy was correct.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the Army inculcated Air Land Battle into current and future Army leaders. However, this alone, was not the only influence on how the Army would train, equip, or fight. In our system of government, civilian leadership has control over the military. These leaders also influence doctrine, culture, and future thinking. In 2003, then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, while speaking about operations in Afghanistan stated:

> Afghanistan belongs to the Afghans. The objective is not to engage in what some call nationbuilding. Rather it's to try to help the Afghans so that they can build their own nation. This is an important distinction. In some nationbuilding exercises well-intentioned foreigners arrive on the scene, look at the problems and say let's fix it. This is well motivated to be sure, but it can really be a disservice in some instances because when foreigners come in with international solutions to local problems, if not very careful they can create a dependency (Rumsfeld, 2003).

These remarks served to bolster the belief of leaders across the Army that lethal engagements must remain the focus, and I believe helped shape the current doctrine of Full Spectrum Operations, as well as the thinking of the future generation of leaders.

Full Spectrum Operations is defined as "The Army's operational concept: Army forces combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support

operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize,

retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to

achieve decisive results. They employ synchronized action—lethal and

nonlethal—proportional to the mission and informed by a thorough understanding

of all variables of the operational environment. Mission command that conveys

intent and an appreciation of all aspects of the situation guides the adaptive use

of Army forces" (United States, 2008a, pp. Glossary-7). Figure 2, Full Spectrum

Operations, is a graphical representation of integrating the four missions across

the spectrum of operations (2008b, p. 3-20). As the Army's main war fighting

doctrine of the 21st century, Full Spectrum Operations will also serve to define the

future culture within the Army.

Figure 2. Full Spectrum Operations
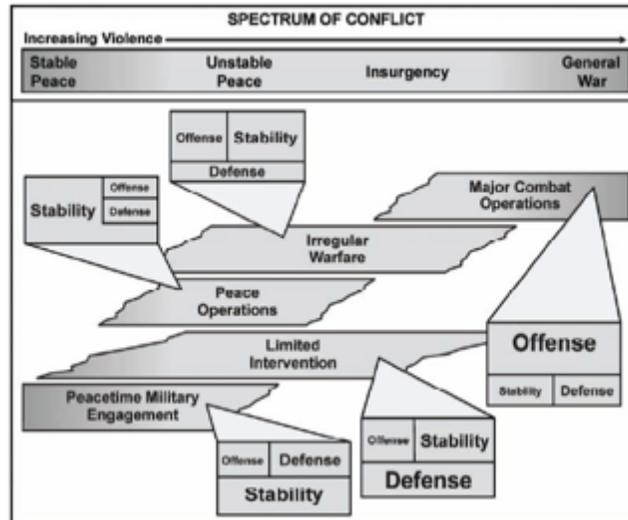
(2008b, p. 3-20)

Culture is another important dynamic within the Army. The Army defines

culture as "A shared set of traditions, belief systems and behaviors shaped by

many factors such as history, religion, ethnic identity, language and nationality

which evolves in response to various pressures and influences. It provides a lens through which one sees and understands the world" (United States, 2008b). Army Culture is the overarching term I will use to describe the artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and the basic underlying assumptions (Schein, 2010) of Soldiers that are not present in civilian society, or possibly other branches of the service, and that affect the way we act, think and behave as Soldiers.

The learning of most Army culture takes place during initial entry training, be it basic training as a private newly enlisted or as a Cadet in the Reserve Officer Training Corps or at the United States Military Academy. Soldiers and leaders introduction to artifacts, the espoused beliefs, values and the underlying assumptions of the Army occurs during initial entry training. Artifacts include, but are not limited to, structure of units within the Army, the unique language, uniforms, and customs and courtesies.

The Army Values and the Warrior Ethos are examples of espoused values and beliefs. An example of the mismatch that exists when actions and behavior do not match the espoused values and beliefs is the non-acceptance of the beret. Those Soldiers and leaders that failed to grasp the symbolism intended by General Shinseki rationalized the non-acceptance of the beret with the belief that not everyone can be elite. Or another example is as I previously mentioned in Chapter 1, some leaders rationalized the non-acceptance of COIN strategy with the belief that winning of hearts and minds would erode the combat effectiveness of Soldiers and units.

An example of a basic underlying assumption within the Army is the belief that being able to cope with the stress of combat or seeking mental health treatment is a sign of individual weakness. The negative bias of seeking mental health treatment holds true for most of society as well.

Through professional development training a Soldier or leader receives training or reinforcement of Army culture. The Army places the responsibility of training on leaders. Leaders train their units regardless of whether they are operational in a war zone, at home station, or participating in an exercise at a combat training center.

Leader development is deliberate, continuous, and progressive, spanning a leader's entire career. Leader development comprises training and education gained in schools; the learning and experiences gained while assigned to organizations and the individual's own self-development.

The Army leader development model (see Figure 3) illustrates how the Army develops competent and confident leaders through three mutually supporting training domains. A training domain is a sphere of learning in which unit training and leader development activities occur. The training domains are institutional, operational, and self-development (United States, 2011a, pp. 2-6).

The institutional Army serves as the knowledge center for the Army. It also develops new doctrine and training requirements for the Army. In addition to

Figure 3. Leader Development Model
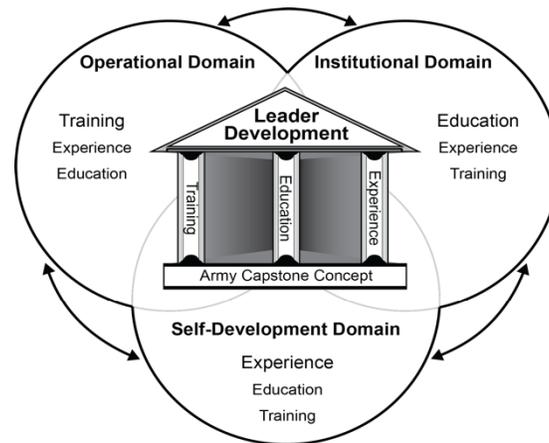
(2011a, p. 2-6)

providing training at formal schools, mobile training packages are available upon request to help commanders and leaders train their Soldiers at home stations via subject matter experts as local instructors or through distance learning.

At the heart of the institutional domain is initial military training. This training provided to all new entrants to the Army is what turns civilians into Soldiers. "Initial military training provides the basic knowledge, skills, and behaviors individuals need to become Soldiers, succeed as members of Army units, contribute to mission accomplishment, and survive and win on the battlefield" (United States, 2011a, pp. 2-6). At the core of this basic knowledge are the Army Values and the Warrior Ethos. The Army Values and Warrior Ethos play a significant role in the individual behavior of Soldiers and the formation of culture, and cultural biases, within the Army.

"The Army Values consist of the principles, standards, and qualities considered essential for successful Army leaders. They are fundamental to helping Soldiers and Army civilians make the right decision in any situation"

(United States, 2006, pp. 4-2). Figure 4, The Army Values, depicts the Army values.

Figure 4. The Army Values
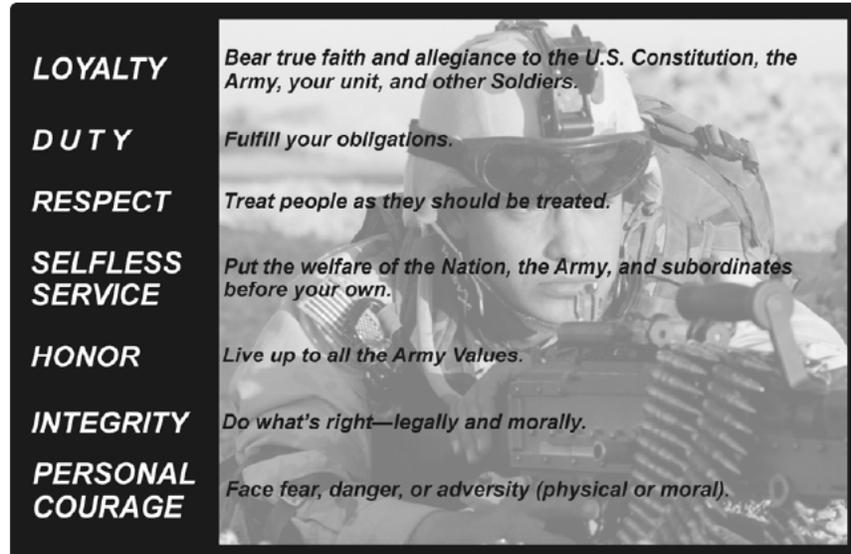
(2006, pp. 2-2)

In support of his Army transformation plan, General Shinseki stated the need for an organizational ethos to bind the spirit of the Army culture and community together.

> Every organization has an internal culture and ethos. A true warrior
> ethos must underpin the Army's enduring traditions and values….
> Soldiers imbued with an ethically grounded warrior ethos clearly
> symbolize the Army's unwavering commitment to the nation we
> serve. The Army has always embraced this ethos but the demands
> of Transformation will require a renewed effort to ensure that all
> Soldiers truly understand and embody this warrior ethos (2006, pp.
> 4-10).

The embodiment of todays Army Creed occurs through the Warrior Ethos, listed

in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Warrior Ethos

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

Warrior
Ethos

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my Warrior tasks and drills.

I will always maintain my arms, my equipment, and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

(United States, 2006)

With the adoption of Full Spectrum Operations as the 21st century war fighting doctrine, nearly ten years of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the transformation to the Objective Force, the Army has changed. Inculcating formal culture through education and training across all three domains will help the Army maintain its war fighting advantage and dispel the incorrect and informal culture. At the same time failure of the Army to change the beliefs of present leaders serves to promulgate old beliefs and impede continued transformation to the Objective Force. Like the black beret, without cultural transformation at all levels the new Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program is likely to share the same fate.

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness is an Army program developed with the help of leading social scientists in America. At the core of CSF is a resiliency program developed at the University of Pennsylvania. Resiliency is the ability of a person to recover from adversity, be it physical or emotional. The goal of

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness is to make Soldiers as mentally tough as they are physically. During a planning meeting to develop CSF, General Casey informed the group of such by saying, "I want to create an army that is just as psychologically fit as it is physically fit. You are all here to advise me how to go about this cultural transformation" (Seligman, 2011, p. 2287).

CSF begins with the Global Assessment Tool, "a self report questionnaire designed to measure the psychosocial well-being of soldiers of all ranks in four domains: emotional fitness, social fitness, family fitness and spiritual fitness" (Seligman, 2011). Completed on-line a series of questions ask the participant to think back over the last four weeks and indicate how they felt or reacted to questions from each of the domains. Inside the emotional fitness module are questions designed to identify if the respondent is at risk for PTS. Dr. Seligman refers to these as "catastrophization" items, a cognitive thinking trap…If you endorse these items as "very much like me" you are at risk for anxiety, depression and PTSD" (Seligman, 2011, p. 2407). It took me about fifteen minutes to complete the GAT. At the completion of the GAT, I received instant feedback, shown in Figure 6, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Feedback. I am also able to compare myself against others in several categories. Those categories are gender, component status[3], rank, marital status, civilian education level, age, MOS[4], and deployment. An example of where I stand compared to other lieutenant colonels (LTC) is in Figure 7, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Comparison. Based on my score the system then provides me a series of
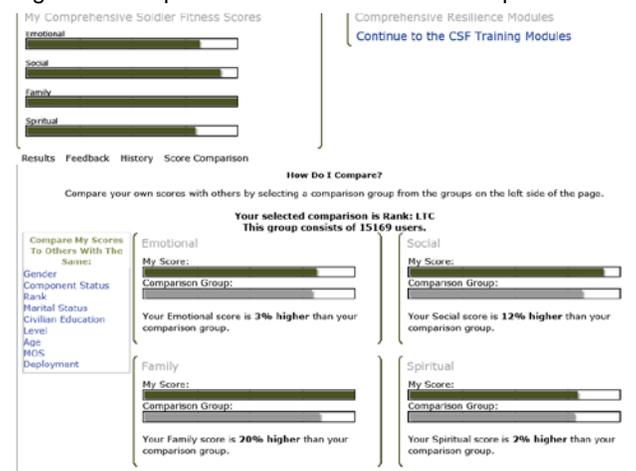
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[3] Component status refers to Active Duty, National Guard, Army Reserve, and Retirees, etc.
[4] MOS refers to Military Occupational Specialty, the job classification within the Army.

Figure 6. Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Feedback

Emotional Fitness

Emotional fitness is an area in which you do well. Emotional fitness reflects a positive mood, satisfaction with life, freedom from depression, optimism, solid character strengths, effective ways of dealing with problems, and personal resilience. You usually approach life's challenges in a positive and optimistic way by showing self-control, stamina, and good character in your choices and actions. You can use your emotional fitness to strengthen yourself in other areas of your life and to help others around you.

Social Fitness

Social fitness is an area in which you do well. Social fitness reflects positive feelings about the Army, your particular unit, and your fellow Soldiers. It means that you trust and get along with your fellow Soldiers and leaders and that your overall morale is high. You have close and supportive friends, and you feel part of a group. You have trusted and valued relationships and friendships that are fulfilling and comfortable. You can use your social fitness to strengthen yourself in other areas of your life and to help others around you.

Family Fitness

Family fitness is an area in which you do well. Family fitness reflects positive feelings about how your family is doing and how you are doing in your relationships with your family members or significant other. On the whole, you are satisfied with your family or your partner, and your family is satisfied with you and the work that you do. Your relationship with your family members or your partner is positive. Overall, you are part of a family unit that is safe, supportive, and loving, with the means to live in a healthy and secure way. You can use your family fitness to strengthen yourself in other areas of your life and to help others around you.

Spiritual Fitness

Spiritual fitness is an area in which you do well. Spiritual fitness reflects a sense of meaning, purpose, and accomplishment in your life that extends beyond yourself to something larger. You feel that your life has a meaning and you feel connected to something bigger than yourself. You have beliefs, principles, or values that guide and sustain you beyond family, institutional, and societal sources of strength. You can use your spiritual fitness to strengthen yourself in other areas of your life and to help others around you.

Figure 7. Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Comparison

training modules that I can complete on-line that are designed to allow me to improve my overall fitness in each of the domains. What is important to note is that my responses remain private and not available to anyone in the chain of command. This practice is to encourage honest participation so that Soldiers can help themselves and thereby reduce the need for medical assistance. It also serves the purpose of helping to remove the stigma that exists from seeking help for behavioral injuries. Like any tool, CSF is only as good as those that operate

it. Leaders at all levels will need to adapt and accept new knowledge and

changing management techniques in support of CSF.

<u>Relevant Concepts of Change Management</u>

Like stories, personal and organizational transformations require a

beginning, middle and an end. However, unlike stories, personal and

organizational transformation begins at the end and ends at a beginning. A

process occurs to get one (be it a person, persons or organization) from a current

state to a future state.

In continuing to describe this process, three words (*change*, *transition*,

and *transformation*) are interchangeable. In going forward, I think it important to

define the words, and discuss how I will use them throughout the remainder of

this work. Definitions from The New Oxford American Dictionary (2008):

> Change
> v.
> 1 make or become different: [trans.] a proposal to change the law |
> [intrans.] a Virginia creeper just beginning to change from green to
> gold.
>
> Transformation
> n.
> a thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance: its
> landscape has undergone a radical transformation.
>
>
> Transition
> n.
> the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to
> another: students in transition from one program to another | a
> transition to multiparty democracy

Change refers to a physical state of being and I intend to use the word in

the situational context, as does Bridges (2003). Transformation, in the context of

personal or organizational transition management, refers to the future state of being (what is to be after change and transition). Transition is the in between process of changing from the past state to the future state. Understanding the terms is important because to use them interchangeably creates a false sense that the process is moving along in the proper direction and the outcome will be successful.

As I introduced in chapter 1, Bridges (2003) defines change as situational and transition as psychological. The three phases of the psychological transition are:

1. Letting go of the old ways and the old identity people had.

2. Going through an in-between time when the old is gone but the new isn't fully operational. We call this time the "neutral zone": it's when the critical psychological realignments and repatternings take place.

3. Coming out of the transition and making a new beginning. (Bridges, 2003, pp. 185-188)

Bridges (2003) psychological transition, I believe, represents the story of personal or organizational transformation. I view the "letting go" as the beginning, the "neutral zone" as the period of transition is the middle, and the "coming out" the future state that is the desired transformation represents the end.

How exactly do we let go of old ways and identities (change) so that we develop a new way of thinking (transition) in order to achieve transformation? Is

it simply achieved by learning something new or is there something else

required? If there is a something else, what might that be?

That something else is unlearning. Just as with change, transition and

transformation, I think it is important to define "unlearn" before moving forward.

From The New Oxford American Dictionary (2008):

> Unlearn
> v.
> [trans.] discard (something learned, esp. a bad habit or false or
> outdated information) from one's memory: teachers are being
> asked to unlearn rigid rules for labeling and placing children.

When it comes to unlearning, I do not think the human brain has the capacity to

"discard" old data in the traditional sense of the word discard. What will happen

is the data will remain stored and during future thought processes be filtered from

the process. The essence of unlearning is when the new learned data takes its

place in order to complete the thought process. There are emerging studies in

the field of neuroscience that support my premise. Specifically, a study focusing

on how the brain works in early language development, states "learning produces

neural commitment to the properties of the stimuli we see and hear. Exposure to

a specific data set alters the brain by establishing neural connections that

"commit" the brain to processing information in an ideal way for that particular

input (e.g., one's first language)" (Bransford, et al., 2006, p. 44). As we develop

these neural commitments later serve as filters and have an effect on the way we

process information. (Bransford, et al., 2006)

I will also argue here to successfully implement a change requires people

to learn from a new reference point. The only way to fully learn from a new point

is to discard the old point of reference by overwriting it with replacement data.

Hedberg (1981) argued "Unlearning is the a process through which learners discard knowledge. Unlearning makes way for new responses and mental maps" (1981, p. 18). Bridges (2003) goes on to assert that a fine line exists between new learning and discarding of the old, and if done incorrectly by leadership an improper ending sets the stage for a non-existent neutral zone. "The leaders forget endings and neutral zones; they try to start with the final stage of transition. And they can't see what went wrong" (2003, pp. 185-188)! So how do organizations learn to unlearn?

Akgün et al (2007) describe four types of unlearning within organizations; *reinventive*, *formative, adjustive* and operative. *Reinventive* unlearning describes changes to the current core beliefs and is a change of the strategic direction of the organization. *Formative* unlearning is using a series of small changes to the routine operations of the organization to create a system of new beliefs. Formative learning is challenged hen members of the organization refuse or deny acceptance of the new beliefs. *Adjustive* unlearning uses a series of small changes to shift the current structure of knowledge within the organization in an effort to change the routines of the organization. *Operative* unlearning takes place over an extended period by using a series of small changes to the beliefs and routines within the organization. Operative unlearning reinforces the current way of thinking within the organization and helps fit the organizational processes to the current external environment (2007, pp. 801-804).

Unlearning is not merely the opposite of learning; it is an intentional replacement of knowledge or information intended to change the beliefs or routines within an organization and is necessary in order to learn new things.

Not all academics recognize unlearning as an independent knowledge area. At the 2009 Danish Leadership Conference, J. Howells, N. Mitev and J. Scholderer presented a paper, *Forget Organisational Unlearning: A Sceptical Look At The Use Of The Concept Of 'Unlearning' In Organisational Analysis*, in which they argued "Management and organizational research would benefit if unlearning were forgotten", (Howells, Mitev, & Scholderer, 2009, p. 13).

Their contention is that "organisational unlearning is a simple phenomenon compared to organisational learning because there is no empirical evidence to show that individual unlearning occurs", (2009, p. 2). Hedberg (1981) posited that learning in an organization differs from other learning. I contend this also applies to unlearning.

> The experimental relationships between organizations and their environments differ from scientific experiments in at least three important ways. Firstly, organizations' environments change frequently, so different experimental situations replace each other over time…Secondly, in contrast to many scientists who, as experimenters, consider the environment as given and attempt to explore reality without influencing it, organizations as experimenters blend adaptive adjustment with manipulative enactment…Thirdly, although the paradigm of scientific experimenting assumes that

> stimuli precede responses and that knowledge and beliefs follow
>
> from observations of the results of actions…. organizational
>
> learning may well occur also in situations where beliefs and realities
>
> are little, if at all, connected,(Hedberg, 1981, pp. 3-4).

I believe Howells et al have focused their energies on reviewing and demonstrating a lack of explicit knowledge. I contend that a review of the tacit knowledge associated with unlearning, although not empirical, will begin to provide a necessary framework to support continued study of unlearning, both individual and organizational.

By not continuing to study and observe unlearning, Howells et al can continue to assert their claim. If however there is a continued study of unlearning from a perspective of tacit knowledge, then empirical evidence may well be established. Learning and unlearning, as psychodynamic processes, tend to be more subjective than objective. To counter the assertion by Howells and others that unlearning is unworthy of continued scientific study, I offer the words of the psychiatrist John Nemiah, "Those who reject psychodynamic theory refuse to take subjective human psychological experiences as phenomena worthy of serious attention and study, and consequently they cannot or will not allow themselves to observe them", (Nemiah, 1990).

Presencing

"Most change and learning methods are based on the Kolb Learning Cycle, which suggests a version of the following sequence: observe, reflect, plan, act" (Scharmer, 2007, p. 30). As with unlearning, I think it is important to

include alternatives for learning. An alternative to the Kolb Learning Cycle is the Recognition –Primed Decision Model proffered by Gary Klein in his work *Sources of Power: How People Make Decisions* (Klein, 1998). "The recognition-primed decision (RPD) model fuses two processes: the way decision makers size up the situation to recognize which course of action makes sense, and the way they evaluate that course of action by imagining it" (1998, p. 24).

Different as they may be both methodologies trap us in the past by using our experience (learned from the past) as the basis for our planning and action. In order to move past this trap we must become aware, and Scharmer describes three gestures to the process: "They are: suspension, redirection, letting –go" (2007, p.35).

In order to not operate from the past it is imperative to overcome the old internal patterns of thinking and remove the resistance to the process. "Resistance is the force that keeps our current state distant and separate from our highest future potential" (Scharmer, 2007, p. 245). Scharmer goes on to describe the resistance as enemies and calls them voices: the Voice of Judgment (VoJ), the Voice of Cynicism (VoC) and the Voice of Fear (VoF). I view Scharmer's use of the voices as expanding on the theories of Robert Kegan (1994) and Michael Ray (1986).

Before moving forward with an explanation of the voices, I think it useful to provide background on Kegan's Subject-Object Theory (1994) to better understand Scharmer's (2007) use of the voices to flow through Theory U. Berger, Hasegawa, Hammerman & Kegan maintain there is more to

transformation than learning new knowledge or skills. "New information may add to the *things* a person knows, but *transformation* changes the *way* he or she knows those things" (2007, p. 1). A key element in the way Kegan (1994) discusses transformation is the way in which he distinguishes between what is Subject and what is Object.

What is Subject, like tacit knowledge, is highly internalized and not easily described. Kegan (1994) wrote "We cannot be responsible for, in control of, or reflect upon that which is subject" (p. 32). What is Object is like explicit knowledge, with Kegan writing, "those elements of our knowing or organizing that we can reflect on, handle, look at, be responsible for, relate to each other, take control of, internalize, assimilate, or otherwise operate upon… We *have* object; we *are* subject" (p. 32). Our inability to acknowledge the Subject within each of us may tacitly make it more difficult to recognize an emerging inner voice holding us back.

Michael Ray in his book *Creativity in Business* (1986) describes the VoJ as that inner voice that dampens our confidence, dissuades us from taking risk and from being able to tap into our creative nature by limiting our curiosity. He goes on to write, " It has been estimated that a normal individual uses only five percent of his total capability. We blame that on VOJ. If, by silencing the VOJ even a bit, you reclaim only an additional five percent of your mental capacity, you will *double* your present efficiency and creativity" (p. 40). This importance that Ray places upon the affect of the VoJ may explain why Scharmer refers to it as "the first enemy… that blocks the gate to the open mind" (Scharmer, 2007, p.

42). Suppressing the VoJ begins to unchain our thought process from the past.

As human beings, we are creatures of habit, relying on what worked in the past to formulate our actions in the present. To transform we must suspend our old habits so that we do not remain trapped by our experiences and make judgments based solely from this point of view. To be able to embody the new culture or behavior and function through an open mind, we must overcome the *Voice of Judgment (VoJ)*. Failing to overcome the VoJ keeps us trapped in the mental processes of the old ways, which in turn prevents us from moving forward in ways that are more creative. It is also important that we view the process as a process by taking a systemic view that allows us to see how our own actions affect the problem as well as the solution. We can accomplish this by redirecting our attention from the Object to the Subject by beginning to believe in and to trust our inner self. In doing so we may be taking a first step in objectively changing our lens and become more aware of our own cynicism.

VoC is the enemy that blocks the gate to the open heart. The VoC is the internal process, which prevents an emotional connection or attachment. Driven by our want to be invulnerable prevents us from moving towards the bottom of the U. The VoC stops us from moving to the surrounding fields through arrogance or callousness; the emotions of disconnection (Scharmer, 2007). Overcoming the VoC opens our heart and allows our emotions to influence our creativity.

In order to begin to let-go and see an emerging future we must face the enemy blocking the gate to the open will, our VoF. From here, one must

transition through the letting-go to the letting-come. This is the space that

Scharmer labels presencing. The VoF prevents us from letting go of the old,

comfortable thoughts and patterns of action. It also is a fear of the unknown, and

that prevents us from moving toward the emerging future (Scharmer, 2007).

To aid in this transition Scharmer identifies seven cognitive spaces of

attention:

> Downloading: reenacting patterns of the past—viewing the world through one's habits of thought

> Seeing: suspending judgment and seeing reality with fresh eyes—the observed system is separate from those who observe

> Sensing: connecting to the field and attending to the situation from the whole—the boundary between observer and observed collapses, the system begins to see itself

> Presencing: connecting to the deepest source, from which the field of the future begins to arise—viewing from source

> Crystallizing vision and intention—envisioning the new from the future that wants to emerge

> Prototyping living microcosms in order to explore the future by doing—enacting the new through" being in dialogue with the universe"

> Performing and embodying the new in practices and infrastructures—embedding the new in the context of the larger co-evolving ecosystems, (2007, p.39).

The cognitive spaces of downloading, seeing and sensing help to clarify

the suspending, redirecting and letting-go process that takes place on the left

side of the U. Rising along the right side of the U are the corresponding

processes of letting-come, enacting and embodying.

Letting go on the down side of the U turns into letting-come on the right

side (rising side of the U) and serves to clarify the cognitive space of crystallizing

vision and intention. Redirecting from the left corresponds to enacting on the right where prototyping of the thoughts to action begins to take shape. Suspending on the left corresponds to embodying on the right where the cognitive space allows the new behaviors to become part of the culture resulting in a transformed self or organization.

Visualizing this process may help make it easier to understand. Figure 8, Theory U *(Scharmer, 2011)* helps achieve that visualization. "In many ways

Figure 8. Theory U
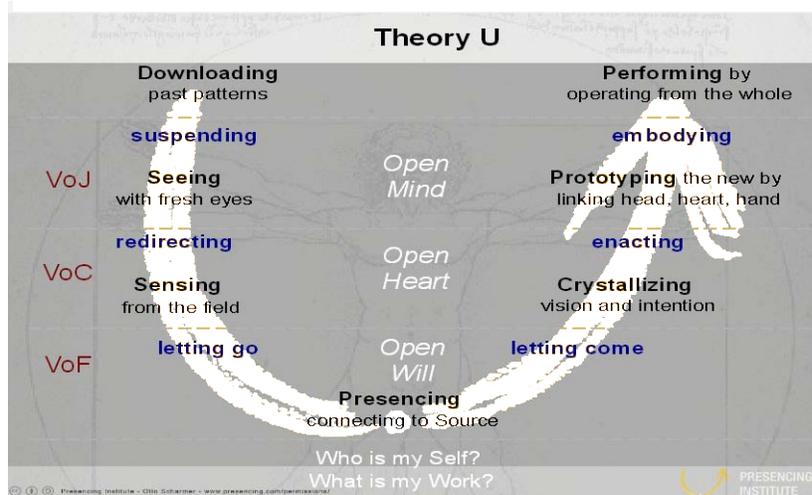
This work is licensed by the Presencing Institute - Otto Scharmer, www.presencing.com/permissions. Used with permission.

presencing resembles sensing. Both involve shifting the place of perception from the interior to the exterior of one's (physical) organization. The key difference is that sensing shifts the place of perception to the current whole while presencing shifts the place of perception to the *source* of an emerging future whole – to a future possibility that is seeking to emerge" (Scharmer, 2007, p. 30). "When such a process of profound innovation and change happens, you can watch a group going through some version of the following subtle shifts of the social field" (Scharmer, 2007, p. 39).

Knowledge and Information

Key aspects linking learning, unlearning and presencing are information and knowledge and how people and organizations create and process it. "Deeply ingrained in the traditions of Western management, from Frederick Taylor to Herbert Simon, is a view of the organization as a machine for *information processing*. According to this view, the only useful knowledge is formal and systematic – hard (read: quantifiable) data, codified procedures, and universal principles. And the key metrics for measuring the value of new knowledge are similarly hard and quantifiable – increased efficiency, lower costs, improved return on investment" (Nonaka, 2007, p. 163).

Understanding how the creation and management of knowledge in an organization is crucial to understanding the transformative power of unlearning and presencing. "New knowledge always begins with the individual", (2007, p. 164). "Although organizational learning occurs through individuals, it would be a mistake to conclude that organizational learning is nothing but the cumulative result of their members' learning" (Hedberg, 1981, p. 6). For an organization to learn, leaders within the organization must create an environment that allows the individual to develop the knowledge as well as a framework for the sharing of that knowledge throughout the organization.

There are two types of knowledge, explicit and tacit. Explicit knowledge is knowledge that we can prove; quantifiable data, codified procedures or universal principles. "Tacit knowledge is highly personal. It is hard to formalize and, therefore, difficult to communicate to others" (2007, p. 165). Tacit

knowledge may well be the key element responsible for modifying culture and behavior that is so essential in the transformation process.

Summary

In Chapter 2, I have provided information on several seemingly unrelated topics and will now try to relate these concepts, to contextualize for you my purpose in providing them. Taken together they are viewed as either a set of complicated data points or a complex intertwined system. It is my hope that you recognize them as a complex intertwined system.

The United States Army inculcates Soldiers and leaders with knowledge of the doctrine, artifacts and espoused beliefs unique to the organization of. This knowledge shapes not only the individual beliefs but also serves to effect the culture of the organization as a whole. Also inherent within the organization of the Army are underlying assumptions on how a Soldier or leader is to think, act or behave. It is the underlying assumptions related to CSF, like those related to General Shinseki's vision of transformation and the wearing of the black beret, that I see will prevent success.

In order to overcome these underlying assumptions the Soldiers, leaders and the Army as an organization will need to do more than change, they will need to transform. I believe that for an individual or an organization to transform there must be transformative leadership, and that requires the teaching and development of transformative leaders. I see transformative leadership as a radical departure from the current Army culture. By providing the information on

concepts of management I am attempting to lay the framework to demonstrate that presencing is a solution for the development of transformative leaders.

I believe we are already using presencing. As leaders, we rely on more than our experience. We have all developed intuition or a sixth sense and experience them as a gut feeling or an inner voice. These inner voices derived from our cultural development are reflective of our own moral compass. I think presencing is a process that helps think through the complexity of intertwined concepts and will bring the use of these voices to an open and acceptable part of our decision and learning cycles.

In Chapter 3, I provide examples of these concepts[5] in action.

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[5] Will the use of presencing enable us to anticipate future war and recognize lessons learned but not yet experienced? This is a concept that has emerged from my review of the literature that is worthy of further pursuit. To fully explore this subject, I think, requires a work all its own and I will not pursue it further in this paper.

CHAPTER 3

DISCUSSION

Cultural Biases

  I agree with General Casey's comments that there is a stigma in the Army associated with seeking mental health services and that stigma has created a barrier for many Soldiers and leaders to seek treatment. I disagree however with his implication that the "prevailing view" is a result of the Army Values or Warrior Ethos. The Army Values and Warrior ethos provide Soldiers with the ideology of what it means to be a Soldier, which Schein categorizes as Espoused Beliefs and Values.

  I think the prevailing view represents an improper rationalization of the Army's espoused beliefs and values making them incongruent with the organizational behavior. They are the informal cultural biases that have flourished about the meaning of the Army Values and the Warrior Ethos. This rationalization is nothing more than a lens used by us to view non-conforming behavior. Most of these biases become ingrained before Army service. Our American culture as a whole has issues with seeking mental health services or dealing with those that do. Specifically on PTS and the possible biases within both our civil and Army cultures I have previously written:

    If we do consider PTS purely as a disorder of the mind, then
  centuries of cultural bias weigh us down in attempts to treat it
  among those who are and still wish to be seen as brave, strong,
  and competent. As a culture we have a negative mind set towards

mental illness for several reasons. First, before the age of enlightenment, mental illness was looked upon as possession by the devil. Second, during the mid-to-late 1800s, gentlemen of culture were being cloistered away in back rooms of mental hospitals around the world, suffering the late-term effects of syphilitic insanity, referred to at the time as "the pox" -- Italian, French, or English depending on country of origin (Seligman, 1995). Society came to associate the mental condition with the character flaw of being with women of ill repute. Even after science proved the cause of the disease was an invading microorganism, society did not let go of this puritanical view. PTS is not the result of a character flaw or of having low moral values. Trauma, be it physical or emotional, causes a reaction in the brain that alters it from the norm (Hostrander, 2011, p. 3)*.

Immersion into the Army culture only serves to amplify these preconceived biases in relationship to the Army Values and the Warrior Ethos. Continued improper rationalization of the espoused values and behavior manifested by leaders also continues to amplify these informal biases. I have witnessed this improper rationalization take place several times while deployed to Afghanistan. A Soldier suffering the effects of stress presents to leadership and identifies himself as having trouble and in need of help. The leader promptly relieves the Soldier of his weapon and then segregates him from his squad. This approach serves to not only publicly identify this Soldier is in need of help, but also serves

to ostracize him from those he is closet to that can be of the most help. This act of segregating the Soldier and relieving him of his weapon is just one example of the improper rationalization that not only prevents Soldiers from asking for help but also is what I see as preventing the total acceptance of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program within the ranks of the Army. The failure of CSF, much as the failure of the beret, will in my opinion take years. How then can this program be effective?

For CSF to become an effective program there must be a combination of unlearning of the old biases and learning of the new, replacement culture -- a transformation of individual and organizational behavior. An effective method to accomplish this transformation may be the use of reinventive unlearning where by the senior Army leaders describe the current beliefs and then announce changes they believe are necessary to those current core beliefs in order to set a new strategic direction for the Army.

To realize this vision of change an additional series of small changes to the routine operations that support the creation of the new core beliefs, the use of the formative learning process is required. In the case of CSF, implementation of the Global Assessment Tool, which requires each Soldier and leader to complete an on-line questionnaire on an annual basis, is one of the small changes to the routine of the Army to aide in the creation of the new belief system. The GAT assesses the psychological health of the individual and even provides feedback to help the individual Soldier or leader improve. It is during this period that

resistance to the change may occur when Soldiers or leaders refuse or deny acceptance of the new belief system.

This refusal or denial may manifest itself in something as simple as failing to complete the GAT until directed by an immediate supervisor or speaking negatively of having to tolerate an assessment based on emotions more than actions. These small things done by large numbers of the Army may serve to continue the informal cultural biases of seeking mental health services by Soldiers and leaders in need of such services. Leaders openly discussing, in a positive way, the benefits of being mentally fit for the individual, the unit, and the Army, may overcome this bias. Implementing an adjustive unlearning process in the Army's institutional domain can counter the resistance of formative unlearning. By formalizing the new knowledge in the individual development process, the Army could have inculcated the new knowledge across a broad spectrum of Soldiers and leaders.

For new Soldiers and leaders this inculcation of new knowledge would take place during initial entry training. For non commissioned officers and officers, this learning would take place during professional development courses. Teaching the new knowledge formally through the institutional domain, each of the Soldiers and leaders that completed the training and returned to the unit would be implementing an operative unlearning process implementing the processes learned in training. It is my belief that failing to effectively counter the resistance that surfaced during the formative unlearning process is where the implementation of the beret failed.

General Shinseki was looking to transform the strategic direction as well as the core beliefs, the culture, of the Army. In an effort to provide an outwardly visible sign of this transformation process, he chose the date of June 14, the Army's birthday, as the date to hold a ceremony to switch to the beret.

General Shinseki used the ceremony and the beret to mark, as the physical state of being, the beginning of the transformation process to take Soldiers into the transitional phase by providing a new identity. After ten years, it is clear that the organization did not come out of the transition with the new identity envisioned by General Shinseki. From my own observation and perspective, having served from 2001 through 2009, I am uncertain if there was enough letting go and acceptance of the new identity within the Army to allow entry into the neutral zone. I posit here that the breakdown was a result of doctrine and culture. I will also put forth that events of September 11, 2001 may play a part in the development of doctrine and culture through out this period. To what extent I will leave to others, as that is a subject worthy of an entire paper; I will stop at it has played a part. I will say that I do not think the outcome for the beret would be different had we not engaged in a war on terror.

The current senior leadership of the Army recognizes the need to learn and that change is critical to future success. The stated purpose in the recently published *U.S. Army Learning Concept 2015 (United States, 2011b)* is

The U.S. Army's competitive advantage directly relates to its

capacity to learn faster and adapt more quickly than its adversaries.

The current pace of technological change increases the Army's

challenge to maintain the edge over potential adversaries. In the

highly competitive global learning environment where technology

provides all players nearly ubiquitous access to information, the

Army cannot risk failure through complacency, lack of imagination,

or resistance to change. Outpacing adversaries is essential to

maintain the Army's global status and to fulfill its responsibilities to

the nation. The current Army individual learning model is

inadequate to meet this challenge. The Army must take immediate

action to develop a capacity for accelerated learning that extends

from organizational levels of learning to the individual Soldier

whose knowledge, skills, and abilities are tested in the most

unforgiving environments (p. 5).

This approach focuses on the change but not the transition process necessary to

bring about a shift in organizational behavior or culture that achieves

transformation.

A process to shift the strategic direction and core beliefs must include a

process designed to change the behavior of individuals as well as the

organization to which they belong by providing new knowledge and beliefs as

well as an unlearning of the old knowledge and beliefs to achieve the

transformation. Bridges (2003) process produces organizational change and I

believe works at the organizational level but not on an individual level. It also

relies on a clear vision from the beginning of the transformation process. As

Kegan (Berger, et al., 2007) asserts, it is necessary to not only change what we

know, but our understanding of how we know it. Scharmer's Theory U is a dynamic process that will unlock our mind, our heart, and our will allowing us to see and experience an emerging future.

In order to accomplish this transformative change in the most expeditious manner, a change in the institutional training domain would seem to be the way to garner the largest shift to knowledge in the shortest amount of time. To shift knowledge, a combination of learning and unlearning would need to take place. By using the institutional domain, the newest entrants to the Army would learn this new way without having to unlearn any of the old ways within the Army. They would only be subjected to the Army cultural bias of their trainers and, once assigned to a unit, the Army cultural biases of their fellow Soldiers and leaders.

For Soldiers and leaders attending the continuing development courses within the institutional domain the focus would be more towards unlearning the old way in order to learn the knowledge of the new way. By implementing the changes via the institutional domain and on those Soldiers and leaders attending development courses the formative unlearning process can begin to take shape.

The developers of the continuing education courses will need to ensure that as they develop and implement the small changes intended to transform the routine operations within the Army that ways to recognize the refusal or denial of the acceptance of the new knew knowledge is present. As these Soldiers and leaders exit the institutional training domain and return to units, the operative unlearning process will begin to take root, instituting change within the Army.

Since the time of the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, man has recognized that change is the only constant in life. We like to think we embrace it, yet we so often find ourselves resisting it. In looking deeper into change, both personal and organizational, I have come to refine my thinking on this subject. I think we embrace change and resist transformation, and this is the cause of so many failed attempts to move people or organizations forward. Our resistance to transformation lies in the neutral zone or at the bottom of the U. Our inability to "let go" inhibits our ability to "let come" hence, we never step into the future state of being. To transform an organization requires a leader using a transformative leadership style; *Theory U* is one such style.

Transforming Leadership, Making a Case for Theory U

I think in making my case for teaching presencing in the Army it is important to define what I do not intend presencing to be. I do not intend it to be a problem solving or decision-making rubric to replace the current seven-step problem solving process or the eleven-step Military Decision Making Process that are currently in use. I view presencing as a critical thinking process. A process that when used will enhance the problem solving and decision making rubrics currently in use in todays Army by removing the barriers within us; our Voices of Judgment, Cynicism and Fear. It can serve to modify the behavior of individuals and the organization as a whole, which is truly transformational.

It will take more than changing the equipment, formations, or fighting doctrine to change the way people think, act, or behave. This is why reliance on either the Kolb Learning Cycle or Recognition-Primed Decision Making

processes, which trap us in the past by relying on our experiences as we formulate future action, will not be sufficient to change the organization. It will take a new way of thinking, and I submit that one way of thinking is presencing.

Presencing will allow the Army to transform to meet the demands of the 21st century and beyond by teaching acceptance, belief and reliance on ones emotional, intellectual and spiritual intelligence. It will change our focus from what is the Object to what is the Subject and allow us to not only know something new, but also understand how we know it.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

General Shinseki set out to transform the Army in 2000. In looking at the changes in the Army over the last decade it is clear the Army has changed. Army culture has not changed. Soldiers and leaders still think and act in much the same way as they did before transformation. As I was reading over my notes from a meeting with my advisor, Professor John Eldred, something he stated jumped out at me. "Any model for change in the Army has to be judged by two things. One, how effective instrumentally is it; does it get the change done in the future? Two, is it appreciatively effective; does the model build on the current value system of the organization" (Eldred, 2011)? How does this apply to the example of the beret or CSF?

In examining General Shinseki's vision of transformation, I concluded it was partially effective both instrumentally and appreciatively. Today's Army is smaller, more mobile, and more lethal. Doctrine on war fighting now includes tactics, techniques, and procedures applicable to operations conducted under Full Spectrum Operations and the Army culture is now inclusive of seven values as well as a warrior ethos. However, a large part of Army culture remains unchanged. This, in my opinion, is the result of the inability to counter the resistance to formative unlearning that is inherent in transformation, as well as to counter the underlying assumptions found in the informal cultural training or reinforcement of the bias that takes place in organizations. Much of this

accomplishment occurred as the result of change and transition; transformation did not fully occur.

In the case of CSF I believe it is too early in the program to determine if it succeeds or fails. Like the beret, it may take ten years to determine if todays leaders (the leaders of tomorrow) really buy into the program. Unlike the beret, CSF requires a change to the way Soldiers, leaders and the organization think and behave towards those with non-visible wounds to the physical brain or to our emotions. I do think that training leaders in presencing will increase the probability of success.

Senior leaders must reinforce this training through their demonstrated behavior. This will require senior leaders, especially those suffering from PTS, to set an example and speak out publicly. This will serve to diminish the stigma of public shame of dealing with a behavioral issue, which may serve to eventually bring acceptance that injury to our emotions during war is just as real and in need of treatment as our physical injuries. It may help those speaking openly of their PTS experience to speak about it indirectly, using a metaphor.

I have used the metaphor of the lens in my paper to describe a filtering process that we use to view, filter, and process information. We also use it to determine how we choose to view ourselves. The lens is not only for viewing how we see things, but also projects outwardly how we want others to perceive, or view, us; like the lens of a movie projector. Just as the projector pushes the picture out onto the big screen, we project out our ideas and biases onto others.

They remove our projected biases through how they choose to use their lens to filter our output.

In going a step further, I can call three of the filters Sharmer's (2007) Voices: Voices of Judgment, Cynicism, and Fear. We use these filters to process what we view through our lens, how we internalize our self-view, and how we project ourselves onto others. In addition to the lens metaphor I also mentioned in my introduction that as part of the MSOD program I have learned that context also matters. We not only have the lens to view and project through; we have to understand the contextualization of how we use it. In the case of Army culture the contextualization may include things such as the Army Values, Warrior Ethos, or the political, economic, and social factors of the time. When we combine our Voices, the Army Values and the Warrior Ethos to re-examine General Shinseki's vision for transformation I think we may get a better understanding for the need to develop transformative leaders.

Our Voices, the Army Values, and the Warrior Ethos together form a complex system in which to operate. Presencing can help most in dealing with this complexity. By overcoming our Voices, we are less judgmental, cynical, and fearful of our own internal vision of our self as well as of our projection of our self and our ideas to others. This allows us to see more than a complicated view of the process of dealing with our Voices, Values, Ethos, and environment as a set of many connected parts. It allows us to view the complexity of the system and the interconnectedness of the parts to the whole. Dealing with complexity is what sets presencing apart from the Kolb Learning Cycle or the Recognition-Primed

Decision Model. As applied to General Shinseki's vision of transformation, the Army spent ten years focusing on the complicated process of changing the individual pieces of doctrine, formation, equipment and size of the organization instead of the complex task of transforming the culture. Without changing the way Soldiers and leaders think the Army will never transform, only continue to change. "He was changing what was on the head but not in the head…or the heart" (Greco, 2012)!

Continued learning under the Kolb Learning Cycle and thinking with the Recognition-Primed Decision Model will not allow Soldiers and leaders to expose and conquer their inner voices. The future cannot emerge while we remain in the past. Changing the way Soldiers and Leaders think and behave, the Army culture, is vital to the success of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness. To have transformative leadership means we must develop transformative leaders and presencing is a mechanism to do just that. Unless there is a change to the Army Culture, the Army, as an organization, will always be in transition with transformation a temporary vision of a future state achieved only fleetingly on the way to the next vision.

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