

# Transformational Collaboration: Communities Engaging

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## Abstract

This paper seeks to understand and generate meaning from an emergent way of organising — transformational collaboration. Integral Theory, Spiral Dynamics and Spiritual Capital/Intelligence theories are used to inform the construct 'transformation'. The theory of Change Collaboration is used to inform the construct 'collaboration'. These theories are interwoven, and extrapolated from, for the specific purpose of informing a theory of transformational collaboration. Two empirical studies are also used to inform the construct 'transformational collaboration' — the Mareeba Dimbulah Irrigation Area Community Response Group Collaboration Project and the Cairns Human Services Collaboration Project. The findings of these studies are synthesised with the informing theories to provide a snapshot of an emerging grounded theory of transformational collaboration. The conceptual framework and individual components of this theory are described.

## Keywords

Collaboration, transformation, integral theory, spiritual capital, spiral dynamics

## Introduction

There are ever more demanding calls from theorists to empirically understand and generate meaning from "the new social morphology of our societies" (Castells 1996, p. 469). In response, there is "a need to study multiple forms of organization" (Urry 2004, p. 111) at multiple sites (Henderson and Castells 1987) — "especially investigating systems that are simultaneously robust and fragile, that exhibit order at the edge of chaos, that restructure time and space, that reorder what is present and what is absent" (Urry 2004, p. 127). Methodologically, the emphasis is on cataloguing and understanding emergent behaviour — "analysing events, novelty and creativity, seeing these as organized in and through dynamic systems possessing emergent properties" (Urry 2004, p. 110).

This paper represents one such attempt to understand and generate meaning from an emergent way of organising — *transformational collaboration* — that resonates with current work on developing analyses of the dynamics and processes of complex systems. The paper initially considers selected theories that inform both 'transformation' and 'collaboration'. The purpose is not to compare or contrast the theories but rather interweave them (and extrapolate from them) for the specific purpose of informing a theory of transformational collaboration. Integral Theory, Spiral Dynamics and Spiritual Capital/Intelligence are used to inform the construct transformation (Beck and Cowan 1996; Cacioppe 2000, 2000a, 2004; Zohar and Marshall 2004). The application of Integral Theory and Spiral

Dynamics (both separately and in combination) to individual organisations and as a classificatory tool is growing in organisational development studies (Marrewijk 2004; Marrewijk and Becker 2004). The concepts Spiritual Capital and Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) are also gaining currency within organisational studies as means to develop leadership styles, management frameworks and tools that are transformative (for example, Zohar and Marshall 2004). Himmelman's (1996, 2001) 'change collaboration', also called 'collaborative change practice', is used to inform the construct 'collaboration'. He introduces concepts and practices of community and systems change (or transformation) through collaboration.

The paper then considers the contexts and the processes of grounded theory building focussing on the design aspects and distinct findings of a university/industry research team in Far North Queensland which used action learning to explore collaboration through engagement with two distinct communities: the Mareeba Dimbulah Irrigation Area Community Response Group (James Cook University and Mareeba-Dimbulah Irrigation Area Community Response Group 2002; Earles and Lynn, 2005) and the Cairns Human Services Collaboration Project Team (James Cook University and Queensland Department of Communities 2004; Earles, Lynn and Knell 2004). The findings of these studies have been synthesised with the informing theories to provide a snapshot of an emerging grounded theory of *transformational collaboration*. The conceptual framework and individual components of the theory are then described.

### **Informing theories**

The rationale for (sub)merging, integrating, and transcending theories of transformation (development) and collaboration to facilitate the emergence of a theory of transformational collaboration rests on a critical observation on the human mind — "the modern rational mind makes divisions of non-dual reality into two and then forgets that it has done this. Then it forgets that it forgot! As a result we continue to puzzle on how to put the two back into 'one' again" (Cacioppe 2000, p. 53). Thus, we have a fanatical fascination with 'engagement' or 'engaging' with the other — having conceptually divided the world into 'us' and 'other' and having forgotten we did so.

Huxham (1996) argues that collaboration (as engagement which transcends networking, coordination and cooperation) is happening (albeit under many different terminologies), collaboration is valuable, and collaboration is difficult (with inherent hazards or rather preferably opportunities and inspirations). Volumes are devoted to the 'how to' of the dynamics and processes of multiple inter- and intra-organisational activity variously called networking, coordination, cooperation, collaboration, partnership, alliance-building, coalitions and so on. We are less likely to ask why: why network, why coordinate, why cooperate, why collaborate? If we do ask, we often satisfy ourselves with very pragmatic reasons within existing ways of modernist 'doing': efficiency, seamlessness, pooling of resources; sharing information/learning; and sharing of costs and risks (Vangen and Huxham 2003, pp. S61-S62). Motivations for engaging (collaboration) have thus arisen from self-interest (notions of

collaborative advantage) and in some cases morality (notions of social justice) (Huxham 1996, pp. 3-4), rather than arguments for fundamental 'transformation' in organising and organisation.

In addressing the fascination with engagement we seek to go 'higher not deeper'. Cacioppe (2000, 2000a), in calling for a re-visioning of organisational development (and by association organising and organisation), states "there are challenges to the basic assumptions that underlie business, government and community organising from emerging non-physical models of the universe, concern for the environment and the overemphasis on materialism" (Cacioppe 2000, p. 53). There is growing contention that such revisioning involves a shift from the modernist paradigm of work and organisation to a postmodern or spiritual paradigm with an emphasis on organisational transformation (for example, Biberman and Whitty 1997, pp. 131-2). Cacioppe (2004) intimates that "an important aspect of Integral theory", as a theory of transformation, "that is often overlooked is that it continually points to the unfolding of Spirit" (2004, p. 32).

If transformation is considered to be "a process of building higher and more complex levels of union out of lower order parts" (Cacioppe 2000a, p. 112.), then collaboration (as union or creation of 'one') is central to transformation — "it is possible that collaboration is central to a significant spiritual, cultural and social paradigm shift that is currently underway" (Himmelman 1996, p. 32). Similarly if, spirituality "goes beyond seeing individuals as separate entities who try to reach a mutually satisfactory arrangement" (Cacioppe 2000, p. 52) and "the spiritual in human beings makes us ask why we are doing what we are doing and makes us seek some fundamental better way of doing it" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 29), then spirituality is also central to both collaboration and transformation. Indeed, spirituality has been defined as "the lived transformation of self and community toward what is sacred within any given culture" (Rothberg 1994, p. 3, cited in Cacioppe 2000, p. 51).

### ***Transformation***

Wilbur defines transformation as "an increasing capacity for integrative awareness and behavioural complexity which leads to both increased autonomy and communality" (Cacioppe 2004, p. 28). Such transformation "occurs through differentiation, identification and integration of self toward higher levels of self-awareness and increasingly more complex organization" (Cacioppe 2000a, p. 115). Transformation relies on the personal growth of individuals, a change process and organising (Cacioppe 2000a, p. 114). These have been codified as actors, actions and ways of organising (Earles and Lynn 2005). Organisational transformation involves a radical change in how people think and behave at work; is concerned with the fundamental assumptions underlying how the organisation relates to its environment and functions; is of a magnitude of change that is not only large but that alters the very foundation and mental framework of the organisation; and involves major changes in the culture and learning, as well as developing the ability of the organisation to redesign and transform itself (Cacioppe 2000a, p. 114). This section examines three models of transformation: Spiral Dynamics for the idea of worldview levels; Integral Theory for the constructs levels of consciousness, whole/parts (holons), quadrants and lines of development; and Spiritual Capital for

the exposition of Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) for transformation and characteristics of complex adaptive systems.

### *Spiral Dynamics*

Spiral Dynamics offers a model of growth in worldviews (ideologies) and is considered to be "a biopsychosocial model of human value systems" (Cacioppe 2004, p. 13). Spiral Dynamics (Beck and Cowan 1996) postulates a spectrum of worldviews or value systems, which individuals, groups, organisations and societies can move through. Spiral Dynamics when related to collaboration can be used to map or categorise the values level of collaborative players and tensions arising from interaction from different levels. Transformation implies a change in these horizontal worldviews or value systems to higher order levels involving higher capacities to link back to Wilbur's definition of transformation.

### *Integral Theory*

Integral Theory is "a map, a method and a conceptual framework that may provide direction, but it is not the territory itself" (Cacioppe 2004, p. 32). Integral theory proposes "interior and exterior factors can equally cause or limit development " (Cacioppe 2004, p. 20). There are four major constructs within this conceptual framework.

The *spectrum of consciousness* within Integral Theory highlights different levels of consciousness (similar to Spiral Dynamics levels of worldview). At higher levels of consciousness "there is only an immanent and transcendent reality that has no boundaries and divisions" (Cacioppe 2000a, p. 111). The constructs '*holons*' and '*holarchical nature*' from Integral Theory flag the iterative, spontaneous and momentary nature of form(s) of organising and organisation — "reality is composed neither of things or processes, neither wholes or parts, but whole/parts, or holons — all the way up, all the way down" (Wibur 1996, p. 21 cited in Cacioppe 2000a, p. 111). The unwrapping of the *four quadrants* or views of reality in Integral Theory implies that learning/change is required in all four quadrants for transformation. The four quadrants are derived from juxta-positioning two dimensions: individual-collective and interior-exterior (Cacioppe 2000) — "the quadrants construct requires that any social theory consider not only the collective exteriors of life but also the cultural interiors or, as Integral Theory puts it, the '*interiors of the collective*'" (Cacioppe 2004, pp. 15-16). The '*it*' quadrant (individual and external) is the world that we see — behaviour. The '*IT*' quadrant (collective and external) is the interconnection of '*it's*' into systems. The '*I*' quadrant (individual and internal) is the realm of individual consciousness and experience. The '*WE*' (collective and internal) quadrant is the communication of meaning and interpretation — culture. The recognition of *lines of development* within Integral Theory introduces the multi-dimensional nature of transformation — "in all social organisations there are lines concerned with culture, consciousness, economic factors, physical and human environments, technologies, goals and ambitions, morality and ethics, education, communication, financial, governance and leadership" (Cacioppe 2004, p. 19). Lines of '*vertical*' development (considered here

to represent potential strategy areas for transformation) move through 'horizontal' stages of development.

### *Spiritual Capital*

Spiritual Capital is a new paradigm (albeit identified as Capitalism with moral and social dimensions) for "the philosophical foundations and the practice of business" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 21). Two constructs from Spiritual Capital have meaning and utility for the extension of transformational collaboration theory: spiritual intelligence and characteristics of complex adaptive systems. Zohar and Marshall (2004) argue that *spiritual intelligence* (SQ) is "a transformative intelligence that allows us to break old paradigms and to invent new ones" (2004, p. 67). Zohar and Marshall (2004) explicate principles of transformation (for individuals) available to spiritual intelligence. These principles are derived from the ten *characteristics of complex adaptive systems* with two additional principles based on humanness — "sociological work analysing global processes increasingly deploys the physics and mathematics of complex, non-linear adaptive systems" (Urry 2004, p. 110). Complex adaptive systems by nature can be "radically unstable, their instability allowing them to thrive at the edge of chaos" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 77) and yet have an "orderly disorder" (Urry 2004, p. 111). The ten characteristics of complex adaptive systems are: self-organising; bounded instability; emergent; holistic; adaptive; evolutionary mutations; destroyed by outside control; exploratory; recontextualising; and order out of chaos (Zohar and Marshall 2004).

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration has been defined as "exchanging information, altering activities, sharing resources and enhancing the capacity of another for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose" (Himmelman 1996, p. 28). There are alternative interpretations implied by the term 'collaboration'. Huxham (1996) identifies these alternative meanings as organisational form, structural form and rationale. These three interpretations have utility and relevance for the extension of transformational collaboration theory. Organisational form implies that collaboration (or collaborating) is a distinct mode of *organising* outside and beyond separate organisations (Huxham 1996). Structural form implies that 'a collaboration' can take *a form along a continuum* from independence (wide network) to fusion (partnership) (Huxham 1996). In this paper, we are exploring collaboration between 'communities of interest' that are acting inside, outside, within and between organisations, that is, communities of interest that are acting in an organisational and non-organisational context as part of complex collaborations. Huxham's (1996) work on collaboration emphasised collaboration between organisations, that is, it was "concerned with situations in which individuals in one organisation work with individuals in another" (1996, p. 1). However the notions of collaboration as 'organising' and the use of multiple forms of organisation (more at random, yet purposively, rather than on a continuum) have relevance here. Rationale relates to *the change* that is envisioned as arising from the collaboration (Huxham 1996). Huxham's (1996) focus is on collaboration as a means of tackling social issues while our focus is collaboration as transformative tool. On Huxham's (1996, pp. 8-14) dimensions of rationale we are therefore seeking to theorise about collaboration at the ideological not

instrumental level and beyond participation to working together. We are engaging with collaboration (as transformational collaboration) as a means to change power relations (rather than effect task-based change), advance a shared vision and enhance capacity.

We identified within Himmelman's (1996, 2001) 'change collaboration' a focus on *ownership* and *power* as critical clusters within collaboration. Change collaboration emphasises power sharing and transformation in power relations through and within collaboration. Change collaboration also places emphasis on ownership through ground-up development and democratic principles and practices. Himmelman (1996, pp. 30-1) proposes *principles for a collaborative empowerment model* that we summarise as: community-initiated process; community-led definition of need; shared community mission focus; shared power; responsive governance and administrative structures; accessible community participation; broad definition and valuing of capacities; commitment to user-friendly assessment and evaluation; and community control of resources.

### **Methodology: Grounded theory**

The section outlines the two communities, data collection methods, within-community analysis methods and across-community theoretical synthesis methods.

### ***The communities***

The Mareeba Dimbulah Irrigation Area (MDIA) was experiencing the social and economic impacts of globalisation, specifically the loss of a major crop — tobacco. The MDIA Community Response Group formed as a working model of an information-sharing network with smaller action forums responding to local issues. The MDIACRG had a diverse membership of farmers, businesses, community members, regional development agencies and local practitioners in the community sector. The MDIA CRG Collaboration Project was initiated in February 2001 and set out to explore ways of organising in order to enhance information sharing and enable collective action for social and economic development. The Cairns Human Services Sector, an important local service and employment sector, was experiencing considerable ongoing organisational change. Collaborative ways of organising were increasingly promoted by government as the preferred mode of organising for this sector. The Cairns Human Services Collaboration (CHSC) Project was initiated in February 2002 and set out to undertake an action learning process with local human services practitioners (both government and nonprofit) in order to generate a conceptual framework for collaboration and an action process for improved reflective practice in Cairns. The main contrast between the two projects was that in the MDIACRG Project the participants were examining their own collaboration while in the CHSC Project the participants were reflecting on many different collaborative activities and were abstracting from these. Hence the MDIACRG Project participants had a shared organisational concern and the CHSC Project participants had a shared thematic concern.

### **Data collection**

At both sites, the data collection method was participant observation of an action learning process, and the members of the action learning groups met four or five times over a period of six months (Table 1). Group dialogue was taped and the transcripts and other materials generated in the action learning sessions represented the data.

**Table 1. Research program**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>Community</b>	Mareeba Dimbulah Irrigation Area (MDIA)	Cairns Human Services Sector
<b>Participants</b>	Interested members of the MDIACRG formed an action learning group	Interested members of the CHS Sector joined an action learning group
<b>Focus</b>	Developing a CRG Model	Exploring 'models' of collaboration
<b>Process</b>	Action learning dialogue	Action learning dialogue
<b>Cases/theory used</b>	Australian and international case studies	Local and non-local case studies and theory papers
<b>Data collection</b>	Participant observation	Participant observation
<b>Data analysis</b>	Thematic analysis	Thematic analysis
<b>Dissemination</b>	Model	Emerging grounded theory

### *Within-community analysis*

The researchers used a grounded theory approach (Creswell 1998) in the overall research program. After each action learning group meeting the researchers analysed the transcripts by looking for recurring themes in the dialogue (Table 1). These were compiled as summary transcripts and were circulated to members before the next session and affirmed or enlarged at that session. As a post-field analysis stage in each project, the researchers reviewed all material produced by the action learning group to develop themes. The process was extensive, in-depth and iterative as the researchers entered their own action learning cycle with the data. Each researcher separately reviewed all of the summary transcripts and developed a preliminary list of themes. These themes were linked to specific quotes in the summary transcripts from the participants. The researchers then met to share their lists and dialogue on an initial master list of themes, and identify key points to be made under each theme. In this process some themes collapsed (due to limited evidence to support them) and some themes were reframed under new terminology (as higher order concepts emerged from the grounded analysis). At this point the researchers went back to the participants to ensure the authenticity and trustworthiness of their analysis. A final session was held with participants approximately one year later for both projects. This final session involved a dialogue at the analysis level, beyond the individual case study/theory level. A draft report was prepared for the participants

and circulated prior to the session. The researchers then introduced each theme, provided evidence from the group and opened the forum to discussion. This session was also taped, transcribed and further analysed.

#### *Community-specific findings*

At each site, the findings (themes) were intuitively described as the 'principles' and 'logics' of collaboration (Tables 2 and 3). 'Principles' were defined as the essential qualities of collaboration. Logics were defined as the design elements of collaboration. Understanding collaboration was considered to involve unravelling some of the principles and logics that guide decision-making about the essences and forms of the collaborative relationship.

**Table 2. Principles and Logics of Collaboration from Mareeba-Dimbulah Community Response Group Project**

<p><b>Principles</b></p> <p><i>Catalytic</i>: is a catalyst to collaborative and innovative action but not necessarily the appropriate vehicle for action in many cases.</p> <p><i>Supportive</i>: is committed to supporting existing mechanisms for action and not duplicating the role of other organisations or relationships.</p> <p><i>Responsive</i>: a response mechanism not an organisation with its own agenda for action.</p> <p><i>Reflective</i>: is positioned through its wide membership (and developing communication structures and processes) to provide a vehicle for community reflection on local issues and responses.</p> <p><i>Legitimate</i>: is legitimated within the community by the active membership and their actions.</p> <p><b>Logics</b></p> <p><i>Network-based</i>: is network-based and network-building with both visible and less visible aspects.</p> <p><i>People-driven</i>: is people-focused and more important people-driven at all times.</p> <p><i>Community-enabled</i>: is dependent on enabling resources to sustain its key roles.</p> <p><i>Minimalist</i>: does not focus on organisational infrastructure development beyond that required to sustain the catalytic, supportive, responsive and reflective roles.</p> <p><i>(Organisationally) Innovative</i>: is innovative and willing to utilise a range of existing organisations and relationships, establish a range of organisational relationships and change its own organisational form.</p>
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#### ***Across-communities theoretical synthesis***

The theoretical synthesis proceeded through four distinct activities: sorting; linking; identification and positioning; and comparison. These activities represented a combination of meta-stacking of theories (or aspects of theories) in an evolutionary context and empirical testing of each intuitive leap. In essence 'what' did not 'fit' with existing theoretical frameworks indicated 'what' was coming from the groundedness of the studies. These distinct analysis activities provided triangulation in this theory-building exercise.

Sorting of grounded principles and logics of collaboration proceeded on the basis that the individual principles and logics might form groups under higher order constructs. Integral Theory's four quadrants as espoused by Cacioppe (2004) — organisational culture, systems, behaviour and consciousness — were the primary sorting frame with an 'other' category to ensure we were not forcing the grounded findings into the frame and to stimulate debate. The process used involved each researcher separately sorting both sets of principles and logics (without identifying them as either principle or logics in this process). The group then considered one researcher's groups and informed that with their groups in an iterative process. This discussion was taped and transcribed.

**Table 3. Principles and logics of collaboration from Cairns Human Services Project**

**Principles**

*State of Equanimity:* is the balance between engagement, negotiation, planning, action and reflection processes required for beneficial outcomes. It assumes the use of emotional, intellectual, worldly and spiritual intelligences — the ability to work with head, hands, heart and spirit.

*Fractality:* is an abstract oneness that exists conceptually and intellectually in the mind. Fractals do not exist in our shared, external reality, which are defined by time and space. Fractals inspire independent and interdependent temporal and spatial actions that each operate as if it were the 'whole', a 'oneness' in connection and aspiration that allows collaborations to manifest and self-organise according to the individualistic dynamics of time and space. Fractals have a unity of purpose with diversity in action at different scales of focus according to the specific temporal and spatial circumstances (Levick 2002).

*Relational Synergy:* is an epiphanic connection that is generated through the 'stock' of trust, identity and resources that exists between individuals, local organisations and groups and the energy that draws people together. These combine to form connectedness with others to work together on a project of interest.

*Groundedness:* is strategies and activities well-rooted in the communal and cultural soils of local groups, recognising the local context, local ownership/power and control, and local leadership.

*Conscious Sustainability:* is a conscious ability and process of continually reading the dynamics of a complex world and frequently reframing and reorganising the corporational components according to the changes in those dynamics in order to form, grow, evolve, reproduce, flourish or die according to its life cycle.

**Logics**

*Liminal State:* is open, unfinished, decentred — a mental, emotional, spiritual, physical state of possibility and transition where the participants are in transition from one place of meaning and action to another. It is a state of "fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities", a state of movement and difference, "striving after new forms and structure, a gestation process" where the established order of service delivery can be turned upside down so that new possibilities can emerge (Turner 1990, p. 12).

*Edge Space:* is the living space between various entities and bodies. These spaces are the interfaces. The edges are not lines of separation but 'zones of interaction, transformation, transgression and possibility' between the overlapping organisational systems. They are sites of greater diversity, productivity, interaction and exchange than either of the overlapping systems alone. It is the site where form/action is manifested and the edges themselves change (Mollison 1991).

*Synergistic Goals:* is an open and honest combining of goals to affect greater than the sum of the parts. Goals are implementable ideas that may be different but must not be in conflict.

*Transformational capabilities:* is dependent on energy, and wider capabilities and infrastructure that can activate and sustain organisations and their collaborative endeavours.

*Authentic Power:* is a multi-directional and multi-level flow of power that is diffused/expressed through multiple sites to enable shared power with rather than power over. It is local decision-making that is non-pyramidal and people driven — the power coming from, the doing together.

Linking the MDIA CRG's and the CHS Project Team's grounded principles and logics proceeded on the basis that we needed to also work without a predefined sorting frame. As the projects were sequential the model-specific principles and logics from the MDIA CRG project might indeed be embedded within the more abstract principles and logics derived from the CHSC Project. Again the process involved each researcher separately embedding the sets of principles and logics. The group then considered one researcher's results and informed that with theirs in an iterative process. This discussion was also taped and transcribed.

Identification of refined groupings of principles and logics and the positioning of them primarily within the culture and systems quadrants of Integral Theory represented a melding of the results of the two previous analysis activities and a reflection on the analysis experiences. As collaboration was a collective activity by nature it was logical that the collective quadrants of culture and systems might provide a frame more than the individual quadrants. The grouped sets of principles and logics (still not categorised as either principle or logic) were positioned on the Integral theory quadrant diagram while simultaneously the diagram itself was challenged by attempted construction of our grounded diagrams. This dual process reflected the ongoing tension in trying to fit the grounded evidence into any one pre-existing theory.

Comparison of the refined set of principles and logics with both the principles of Himmelman's (1996) 'empowerment collaboration' model and the characteristics of complex adaptive systems (Zohar and Marshall 2004) represented a different analysis approach aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the individual principles and logics from the empirical studies. The process involved each researcher in a separate comparison and then a taped group discussion of each principle and characteristic. This session was also transcribed. Himmelman's (1996) principles appeared to be about the process of developing collaboration (the 'how to') as opposed to an attempt to describe the nature of collaboration. Himmelman's principles also appeared to relate to only the systems quadrant

(collective-exterior) of Integral Theory (Cacioppe 2004). The characteristics of complex adaptive systems (CAS) linked more readily to the empirical principles and logics. Our participants were viewing 'a collaboration' as a complex adaptive system.

### **Emerging theory of Transformational Collaboration**

*Transformational collaboration* is about 'engagement' of 'communities of interest' in new spaces of organising through nebulous collaborative action around multiple (and diverse) issues and for multiple (and sometimes non-consensual) goals. *Transformational collaboration* involves communal organising through both traditional and increasingly hybrid organisational forms by various communities of interest. The rationale for such engagement is the need for fundamental change (transformation) in both the ways we organise and the use we make of organisational forms for connecting, planning, action and reflection. As such, *transformational collaboration* as a construct moves us beyond the focus of collaboration as an instrumental act between (organisational or individual) players: government-community collaboration, business-community collaboration, government-business collaboration or tri-partite collaboration. Such acts that assume a dominant partner who then coopts in other partners; are not a true coming together to achieve goals that are similar; occur under an ideology of doing more with less; and do not generally recognise that you actually need substantial new resources to achieve higher order organising for engagement. *Transformational collaboration* moves us towards conceptualising collaboration as a 'space-in-between' at the 'place of organising' that has a life of its own (Earles and Lynn 2005). Community, government and private sector players all move into a new communal space rather than one player being coopted into another's sphere. Thus players must move from their spheres, and the new space is not owned or dominated by any particular entity. Initiation of such spaces can arise from any player, others 'sign-up' at their own level of 'buy-in'.

*Transformational collaboration* as theorised to this point involves communal activity (or "collective communion") in both the culture (the collective being) and systems (collective doing or collective organising) quadrants of Integral Theory (Cacioppe 2004, p. 8) (Figure 1). As collaboration is a collective activity and involves a collective identity, this had an intuitive fit and was empirically supported by the more comfortable positioning of our principles and logics in these two quadrants. This does not preclude further exploration of individual characteristics of consciousness and behaviour that would enable and facilitate active engagement by individuals in transformational collaboration.

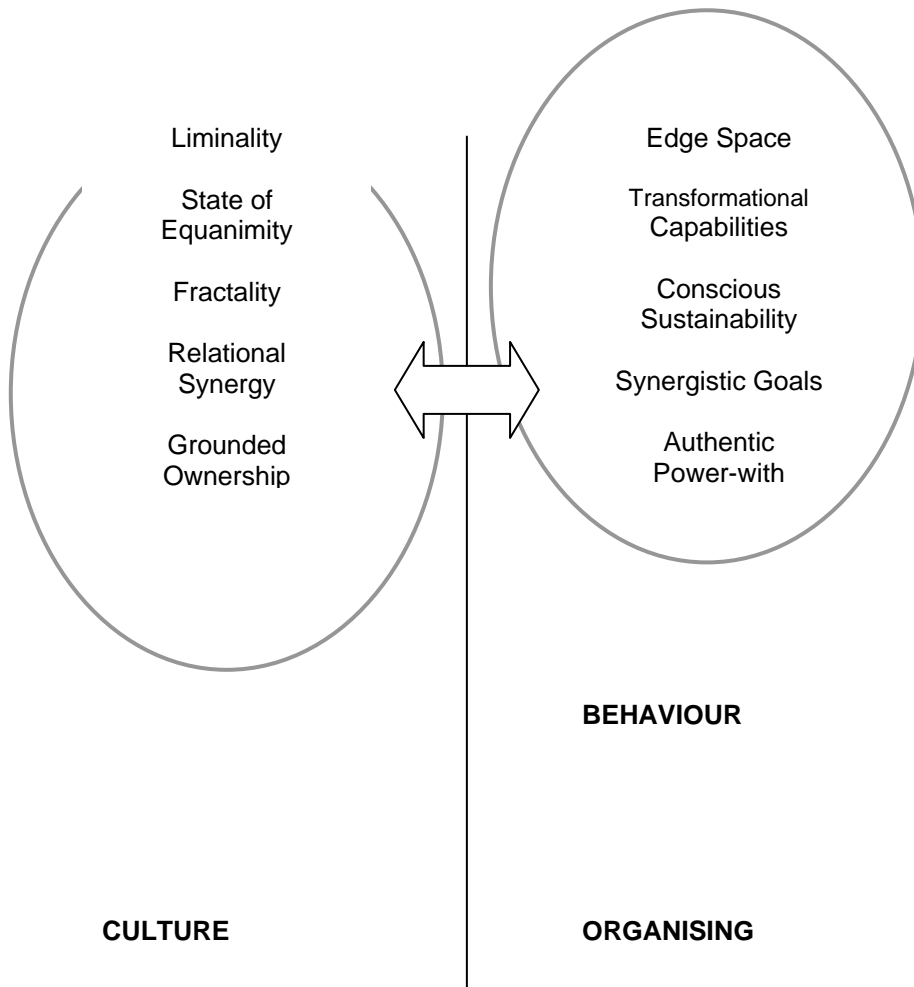
**Principles**

*THE  
BEING*

**Logics**

*THE DOING*

**Communal**



*Interior*

*Exterior*

**CONSCIOUSNESS**

**Individual**

**Figure 1. Principles and logics of Transformational Collaboration**

*Transformational collaboration* involves both principles (the being) and logics (the doing) of (dis)order (Figure 1). To theoretically refine our intuitive empirical principles and logics, principles are the guiding

sense or essential quality of the collective culture of organising and organisation for transformation, while logics refer to the basic design aspects of the systems of organising (and organisation) for transformation. The concept of principles and logics could equally apply in the individual consciousness and behaviour quadrants but this has not been explored here. One of the main contributions of our work is the unravelling of the characteristics of transformational collaboration into principles and logics, with principles relating to the interior and logics relating to the exterior dimensions of an integral approach. This distinction also conveys the being (the values) and the doing (the physical) of Spirituality. This broadening of our concepts of principles and logics has meant that in refining a theory of transformational collaboration some principles have become logics and vice versa (as the past only informs the present, it does not dictate it).

### ***Clearly emerging principles and logics of transformational collaboration***

From our analysis, the principles of *transformational collaboration* clearly included *liminality*, and a *state of equanimity*, while the logics clearly included *edge space* and *transformational capabilities* (see definitions and discussions later in paper). This aligns with an intuitive expectation that any transformation requires a mind set, process, space and means. Thus, *transformational collaboration* requires a culture of *liminality*, an *edge space* (system) for organising, a process that is in a *state of equanimity*, and a full range of *transformational capabilities*.

Liminality: open, unfinished, decentred — a mental, emotional, and spiritual culture of possibility where the participants are in transition from one place of meaning to another. It is a culture of "fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities", movement and difference, "striving after new forms and structure, a gestation process" where the established order can be turned upside down so that new possibilities can emerge (Turner 1990, p. 12).

Liminality is a principle, an aspect of the 'culture of being' required for transformational collaboration. The construct was adapted for our purposes from the work of Turner (1982, 1990) and originates from Anthropology — "the liminal period is that time and space betwixt and between one context of meaning and action and another. It is when the initiand is neither what he has been nor what he will be" (Turner 1982, p. 113).

While the CHSC Project Team agreed Liminality was needed, it seemed unobtainable. There was a perception of exhaustion around (and lack of space for) collaborative activities. Yet there was a longing for a 'state of liminality' (Table 3) — "it can be something that continues to be there even though all the actions are going on as well ... it might be a space that you create for a particular moment ... " (CHSC Project Team Member). There was a different representation of the principle of Liminality in deliberations of the MDIACRG Project Team. This may have been a consequence of a basic assumption that the CRG by nature had a culture of liminality in its desire to have principles related to being catalytic, responsive and minimalist (Table 2). There was a culture of being of

service, not having its own needs or its own priorities. In the team's dialogue about minimalist there was a desire for more fluidness, non-organisation, disorganisation, and movement and flow.

There were no direct links between the transformational collaboration principle of Liminality and the principles for a collaborative empowerment model but there were some links between Liminality and the characteristics of complex adaptive systems. The combination of the 'exploratory' and the 'recontextualising' characteristics where systems are "constantly exploring their own possible futures", "reframe their own inner development" and "recontextualise (relearn) the boundaries" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 79) resonated with liminality's sense of being open to transcending and traversing the boundaries to where dialogue is possible.

Edge Space: the living space between various communities of interest. These spaces are the interfaces. The edges are not lines of separation but 'zones of interaction, transformation, transgression and possibility' between the overlapping systems. They are sites of greater diversity, productivity, interaction and exchange than either of the overlapping systems alone. It is the site where form/action is manifested and the edges themselves change.

Edge Space is a logic, an aspect of the organisational systems and organising methodologies needed for transformational collaboration. There is simultaneously an emergent order and a latent disorder in any Edge Space aligned with the tenets of Spiral Dynamics that to transform from order requires a movement to disorder and vice versa. Edge Space developed as a construct from the notion of "edge effects" (Mollison 1991, p. 26). Mollison notes that "we walk at the edge and we pause there" and he describes edges as "an interface between two mediums" and "places of varied ecology" where the "edge (boundary) acts as a net or sieve: energies or materials accumulate at edges" (Mollison 1991, pp. 26-7).

The Edge Space within the CHSC Project (Table 3) was considered to contain the actors and to be the space where core infrastructure becomes apparent, critical enablers engage, resources and transformational capabilities meet and there is creation and co-option in order to transform — "a zone where different forms can evolve so a bit of this and a bit of that but not stuck in the old structures" (CHSC Project Team Member). On reflection on the MDIACRG Project, the CRG was by nature an Edge Space, which was uniquely to this place (organisationally) innovative, minimalist, catalytic, responsive and at the same time supportive of existing structures and mechanisms (Table 2).

There were no direct links between the transformational collaboration principle of Edge Space and the principles for a collaborative empowerment model but there was a direct link with the 'bounded instability' characteristic of complex adaptive systems — "systems exist only at the edge of chaos, in a zone of instability that falls just between order and chaos" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 78). There was also a link with the characteristic of 'evolutionary mutations' through a sense of freezing and unfreezing periods of 'structure' within Edge Space.

State of Equanimity: the balance between engagement, negotiation, planning, action and reflection processes required for beneficial outcomes. It assumes the use of emotional, intellectual, worldly and spiritual intelligences — the ability to work with head, hands, heart and spirit.

State of Equanimity is a principle, an aspect of the cultural processes needed for transformational collaboration. The need for a state of balance between goal, action and reflection was evident in the CHSC Project in the frequent dialogue about the lack of time for reflection and the continual focus on action (Table 3). The imbalance was experienced as a tension about these processes (or lack of processes) and a strong recognition of the need for a balanced cycle — "it is too easy to jump to tasky projects and lose the wider project of a more holistic reason for the collaboration ... it is about who is doing what—when as opposed to all that other building of where are we actually trying to go" (CHSC Project Team Member). In the MDIACRG project, this principle emerged as 'reflective' (Table 2). A culture of reflection was deemed to be missing within the CRG.

There were direct links between the transformational collaboration principle of State of Equanimity and the 'community-led definition of need' and the 'commitment to user-friendly assessment and evaluation' principles for a collaborative empowerment model (Himmelamn 1996, pp. 30-1). These principles draw on elements of a balanced action learning cycle, which is the basis of a State of Equanimity. There were also some links between State of Equanimity and the 'adaptive' and 'exploratory' characteristic of complex adaptive systems — "systems not only learn as they go, they create themselves" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 79).

Transformational Capabilities: dependent on and enabled by energy and wider capabilities and infrastructure that can activate and sustain organising and organization and collaborative endeavours.

Transformational Capabilities is a logic, an aspect of the organising and organisational resources needed for transformational collaboration. This logic manifested differently within the two different projects. The necessity for Transformational Capabilities was a significant component of the dialogue of the CHHS Project (Table 3). There was also clear recognition of existing dependencies: government or private funding, and volunteers. The lack of energy was a major focus in the dialogue, it was apparent that energy was a critical Transformational Capability. Continuity of players and the availability of accessible infrastructure were also critical. The 'community-enabled' nature of the MDIA CRG was the place-specific rendition of the more abstract construct of Transformational Capabilities (Table 2).

There were possible links between the transformational collaboration principle of Transformational Capabilities and the 'responsive governance and administrative structures', 'accessible community participation' and 'broad definition and valuing of capacities' principles for a collaborative

empowerment model. These three principles related to structures, capacity, assets and resources necessary for change through collaboration (Himmelman 1996, p. 30). Transformational Capabilities did not link directly to any of the characteristics of complex adaptive systems. This may arise from an underlying assumption of complex adaptive systems that the capabilities for transformation are inherent in the very systems.

### ***Subsequent emergent principles and logics***

The principles also included *fractality* and *relational synergy* while the logics included *conscious sustainability* and *synergistic goals*. There was a sense of the need to understand that the decisions 'we' make are in the context of the bigger whole, not just about 'us'; that connection must be made; that relevant and appropriate morphing needs to occur rather than creation for creation's sake; and that compatible and non-conflicting goals are needed.

Fractality: an abstract oneness that exists conceptually and intellectually in the mind. Fractals do not exist in our shared, external reality, which are defined by time and space. Fractals inspire independent and interdependent temporal and spatial actions that each operate as if it were the 'whole', a 'oneness' in connection and aspiration that allows collaborations to manifest and self-organise according to the individualistic dynamics of time and space. Fractals have a unity of purpose with diversity in action at different scales of focus according to the specific temporal and spatial circumstances.

Fractality is a principle, an aspect of the holistic (holonic) nature of transformational collaboration. The concept fractality was adapted from the work of Levick (2002) — "fractality cannot be grasped other than by the human mind simultaneously holding to the notion of the individual being fractally both himself, his family, community, city, state, nation and humankind in its global entirety" (2002, p. 171).

Within the CHSC Project Team there was an experience of overload, disempowerment, and a discontinuity of action, alongside a search for oneness and wholeness. Participants expressed a sense of isolation despite valuing networks and networking, but acknowledged that there were times for individualism/isolation and times for collectivism/community. Fractality was represented in the MDIACRG Project as the principles of 'supportive' and 'catalytic' (Table 2). Together they indicated clear desires to respect and not duplicate and reproduce organising and organisation.

There were no direct links between the transformational collaboration principle of Fractality and the ... principles for a collaborative empowerment model. There were connections between Fractality and the 'emergent' and 'holistic' characteristics of complex adaptive systems — "systems are larger than the sum of their parts" and "each part entangles with and impinges upon every other part" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 78). The characteristics of emergent and holistic expand our principle of Fractality.

Relational Synergy: an epiphanic connection that is generated through the 'stock' of trust, identity and resources that exists between individuals, organisations and groups and the energy that draws people together. These combine to form connectedness with others to work together on a project of interest.

Relational Synergy is a principle, an aspect of the connection and connectedness required for transformational collaboration. In the CHSC Project there was recognition of a need for Relational Synergy because people were basically disconnected despite the acknowledgement of historic high levels of trust and quality relationships (Table 3) — "even though I am working with people all the time I still feel quite isolated" (CHSC Project Team Member). The development of Relational Synergy appeared to hinge on the recognition of 'epiphanic moments'. That is, the recognition of the moment of beginning and movement outside boundaries. Relational Synergy also hinged on a readiness to engage — "you have to assemble people that are ready to make a leap of faith and that is incredibly important because we don't do things as they were done before" (CHSC Project Team Member). The CRG by design was a network. Hence the Relational Synergy principle within the MDIACRG Project was linked to the logic 'network-based' (Table 2). The Relational Synergy of the CRG was derived from the network, not a single point/position/person.

There was a link between the transformational collaboration principle of Relational Synergy and the 'shared community mission focus' principle for a collaborative empowerment model. Relations were strategically invited within the empowerment model around the synergy of the "mission statement of the community" (Himmelman 1996, p. 30). There were some links between the Relational Synergy principle and the 'emergent' and 'adaptive' characteristics of complex adaptive systems. In essence, Relational synergy, the "whole emerges only as the system adapts to and evolves within its environment" through "mutually self-creative dialogue" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 78-9).

Conscious Sustainability: a conscious ability and process of continually reading the dynamics of a complex world and frequently reframing and reorganising according to the changes in those dynamics in order to form, grow, evolve, reproduce, flourish or die according to a life cycle.

Conscious Sustainability is a logic, an aspect of the ecological nature of organising and organisation required for of transformational collaboration. Dialogue about sustainability within the CHSC Project was focused on conscious sustainability of purpose, activity, and innovation rather than conscious sustainability of an organization (Table 3). The dialogue raised questions about what needs to be sustained and whether the phase/stage of a project/group was part of its lifecycle or a way of being. If a 'way of being' became entrenched, 'a collaboration' could lose its momentum — "they had achieved something and there was this flailing about why are we still here and what is it all about" (CHSC Project Team Member). There was considerable dialogue about the need for or necessity of conscious extinction — recognition that maybe the job has been done and there is no need to be

together anymore. There was considerable reflection on the ongoing existence of particular collaborations and their inherent worth. There was also a strong consciousness about not creating organisations, not incorporating, not institutionalising and in preference developing a sustainable model — a recognition of using what exists not unlike an epiphyte, not being a burden on an organisation but using their infrastructure and connections. However it was acknowledged that collaboration did require infrastructure. The logic of '(organisationally) innovative' from the MDIA Project clearly fits with Conscious Sustainability. The place-specific minimalist logic (Table 2) could also be relevant here although Conscious Sustainability is not necessarily always about being minimalist.

There were no links between the transformational collaboration principle of Conscious Sustainability and the principles for a collaborative empowerment model other than a sense of the need for community control of ongoing resources for sustainability of the collaboration. There were considerable links however with a range of characteristics of complex adaptive systems. Conscious Sustainability involves self-organising and adaptive characteristics "in dialogue with the environment" and exploratory and recontextualising characteristics — "creating themselves as they go" and "reframe their own inner development" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, pp. 78-9).

Synergistic Goals: an open and honest combining of goals to affect greater than the sum of the parts. Goals are implementable ideas that may be different but must not be in conflict.

Synergistic Goals is a logic, an aspect of the purpose or drive behind transformational collaboration. Essential to the form of collaborative practice within the CHSC project was the existence of goals but the goals had to be beyond information sharing and more action oriented — "but now that the group hasn't got a common goal but is still meeting, it is sort of a bit lost ... and my feeling when I am part of that group or when I sit back and look at this group is that it needs a new mission" (CHSC Project Team Member). There was a clear notion that the aspect of synergy sometimes meant the acceptance of the ambiguity of goals. There had to be enough commonality to keep people together but also recognising that there could be diversity as well. Within the process of goal agreement existed the tension/possibility that sometimes you exhaust people's energies. This logic therefore could be considered to involve synergistic actions alongside synergistic goals (Table 3) — "we didn't necessarily have to have the final dialogue of what our goal is ... we could actually start doing stuff even if the goals were quite ambiguous at this point" (CHSC Project Team Member). The MDIACRG Project Team had come together around a shared mission and refined that mission as part of the project so their principles and logics did not reflect the separate logic of Synergistic Goals.

There were no direct links between the transformational collaboration principle of Synergistic Goals and the principles for a collaborative empowerment model and the characteristics of complex adaptive systems. This was not a surprise as a "common purpose" is an aspect of the very definition of collaboration (Himmelman 1996, p. 28) and complex adaptive system thinking assumes the very

existence of a system (a set of parts that have combined for some reason). The clear identification of a logic of Synergistic Goals therefore places purpose centre stage in Transformational Collaboration.

***Principles and logics still emerging from the primal mud***

The principles and logics of transformational collaboration also included a cluster around *ownership-power*. This was an aspect within Transformational Collaboration not unlike Himmelman's (1996) emphasis on power and ownership in change collaboration. In this cluster were the principles *Groundedness* from the CHHS Project and *Legitimacy* from the MDIACRG Project and the logics *Authentic Power* from the CHSC Project and *People-driven* from the MDIACRG Project. These have been theorised here as Grounded Ownership and Authentic Power-with.

Grounded Ownership: strategies and activities well-rooted in the communal and cultural soils of local groups, recognising the local context, local ownership/power and control, and local leadership.

Grounded ownership is a principle, an aspect of the power and control locus within transformational collaboration. Power appears to sit across both the internal and external quadrants from Integral Theory, which intimates that there is a cultural aspect to power and a systems aspect. Within the CHSC project strong importance and emphasis was given to local community control of decision-making. There was a considerable feeling that strategies and activities should be grounded in historical obligations and relationships. Grounded Ownership or groundedness (Table 3) was contrasted with mandate in the dialogue. This shifted (or widened) the lens for group members and enabled the group to acknowledge grounded activity outside and often in spite of government intervention. This aspect of groundedness recognised the different sources of creativity that lead to collaborations. The manifestation of Grounded Ownership within the MDIACRG project was 'people-driven' (Table 2).

There were many direct links between the transformational collaboration principle of Grounded Ownership and principles for a collaborative empowerment model. This was also not surprising as the collaborative empowerment model is a very specific community development model. The 'community-initiated process', 'community-led definition of need', 'shared community mission focus' and 'community control of ongoing resources' principles were all aspects of Grounded Ownership. There were also links between the Grounded Ownership principle and the 'destroyed by outside control' characteristic of complex adaptive systems — "the delicately poised internal order and balance of these systems is destroyed if we try to impose control from the outside" (Zohar and Marshall 2004, p. 79).

Authentic Power-with: a multi-directional and multi-level flow of power that is diffused/expressed through multiple sites to enable shared power with rather than power over. It is local decision-making that is non-pyramidal and people driven — the power coming from, the doing together.

Authentic power-with is a logic, an aspect of the 'power with' rather than 'power over' nature of organising and organisation within transformational collaboration. In the CHSC project there was recognition that the whole policy environment was setting up situations where there was limited opportunity for authentic power (Table 3). However, there was a common value around the necessity for power sharing and a style of leadership that was not controlling. There was also a debate around mandate and its link to authentic power — "on the other hand having a mandate could be a positive thing, it has empowered you ... to be the decision-maker ... take some responsibility for the outcomes and some ownership" (CHSC Project Team Member). At another level there was a real concern about the risk of collaboration, of sharing power and responsibility. Authentic power not only came through collaboration but also through action — the action authenticated the power. Countenancing, ratification or authentication of decisions seemed to be heavily dependent not on the making of a decision to do something but whether someone was willing to do it. A decision to undertake an action can be made by a group but it holds no authenticity if nobody is going to carry it out. The representation of the logic of Authentic Power-with within the MDIACRG project was the principle of legitimate (Table 2). Legitimacy was derived from 'the doing' of the active membership.

The links between the transformational collaboration principle Authentic Power-with, the principles for a collaborative empowerment model and the characteristics of complex adaptive systems were similar to those for Grounded Ownership.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has contributed a frame (the cultural and organising quadrants) and content (the elaboration of the principles and logics) for discussion and debate. Transformational collaborations are complex adaptive systems, which involve different levels of consciousness and worldviews; generate higher order holons (whole/parts); occur across the four quadrants of consciousness, culture, behaviour and systems (both the being and the doing of the organisation of the holon); and require Spiritual Intelligence (SQ).

Our struggle within and beyond this paper is with 'what' the principles and logics of transformational collaboration are describing. We feel we are attempting to look at what is unseen, the social physics of transformational collaboration — the 'stuff' we intuitively know is there because we have seen the same ingredients and recipes for collaboration work and not work. Could the principles and logics relate to Integral Theory's 'lines of development' and intuitively Informational Capitalism's 'spaces of flows' (Castells 1998)?

The main tension within our empirical work has been between the uniqueness of place/community and the desire for analytical generalisation and theorising. The context-specific nature of place/community determines the unique principles and logics while comparison across places/communities allows us to find contributions to the theory of transformational collaboration.

What will be transferable between places/communities — quadrants, principles, logics, all or none?  
Are principles more transferable and logics more context-specific, or vice versa?

This 'local' work contains all the essences of new ways of thinking, new paradigms. We need to continue to apply collective intelligence (drawing on more than the individuals) in a transformative learning dialogue. Areas that need field authentication/challenge/enhancement through future research and practice include possible principles and logics within the individual (interior and exterior) quadrants; the nature of principles and logics at different levels of Spiral Dynamics' worldviews and Integral Theory's consciousness; and the spiritual intelligences needed by individuals as change agents/stimulus/foundation/catalyst for collective change. Practice tools also need development and testing.

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