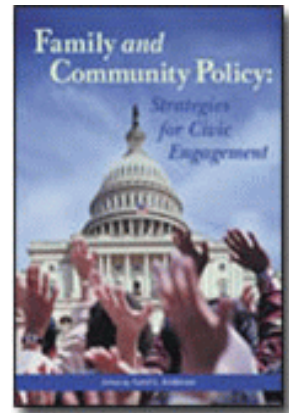


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Chapter 9

Using Transformative Leadership and Critical Science in Public Policy

This chapter will share some preliminary thinking about how the family and consumer science (FCS) profession could change the way it influences public policy if some Transformational (RF) leaders began to share a vision of embracing the critical science approach in the policy arena. Engaging in transformative leadership increases the chances of converting family and consumer science professionals into transformative moral social agents who could use the critical science approach to influence the policy process to improve living conditions for the human family. In 1995, Edith Baldwin eloquently challenged the profession to begin to engage in transformative professional practice. From the transformational leadership perspective, a leader can be anyone, regardless of formal position, who serves as an effective social change agent (Astin & Astin, 2000). In this sense, every single person in the FCS profession has the potential to be a leader in the policy arena. It does not have to be relegated to any one person, committee or working group anymore! One does not have to be a manager to be a leader (Alimo-Metcalf, 2001).

Transactional Leadership Style

The Transactional (TA) leadership style, which has prevailed for many decades, will be examined first. Taking this approach will provide some level of comfort before moving onto a new way of leading - transformational (TF) leadership. Transactional leadership is what we would recognize as good, effective and proper management based upon the techniques of management developed over the last 50 years including: performance appraisals, performance related pay, job descriptions, management by objective (MBO), organizational process analysis and clarification, and job grading and classifications. It also recognizes and uses praise, recognition and the delegation of responsibilities from the top down (Stuart-Kotze, 2003). TA leaders tend to: (a) wait passively for mistakes and then correct them, (b) take no action until a problem occurs and then met out punishment, or (c) avoid leadership all together (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1989; Stockdale, 1999).

Transactional leadership gets its name from the concept *transaction*, meaning an agreement involving an exchange, giving something to obtain something else. This exchange is based on the leader specifying what is expected, and helping followers to clearly understand what they will receive, or avoid, if they fulfill those expectations - "*you do this and I will make sure you receive that, or you do this and I will make sure you do not receive that*" (Bass, 1985). These types of leaders are power wielders. To wield means to have power "over" someone or some process. Power over means directing, regulating, managing and controlling people using influence and authority. Subordinates, when controlled by a transactional boss, are expected to get promotions, raises or positive reinforcement if they do well and criticism and sanctions if they do not do well (Alimo-Metcalf, 2001). Because people will do only what they are rewarded for, or avoid doing what they will be punished for, they begin to avoid taking risks and things become stale, stagnated and static (Burns, 1978).

Transactional leaders accumulate power and continue to use it by getting subordinates to achieve tasks so as to reach manager set goals and to efficiently allocate resources. Under this leadership style,

achieving goals is dependent upon subordinates following a path prescribed by the TA leader, replete with directions and assistance. It is an explicit agreement between manager and subordinate (Hochberg, 1996). Indeed, the methods and results of transactional leaders are primarily associated with management, not leadership. TA leaders do not build on others' need for meaningful work nor do they tap into the subordinate's creativity (Brown, Birnstihl & Wheeler, 1996).

Transformative Leadership

Transformative leaders, on the other hand, succeed in articulating powerful change agendas, getting people to change inside as they embrace this new agenda, accept the idea of power through people instead of power over them, ground people in a moral dimension, get them to challenge the status quo, and to strive to exceed their own expectations. They actually succeed in changing people in their mind and their heart. Each of these traits will be discussed.

Articulate Powerful Change Agendas

As Stokes (2003, p.1) so clearly explained,

Transformational leaders are able to articulate clear, powerful, transformational agendas... They are able to tell us what the current reality they are concerned about or interested in is, and they are able to outline the outcomes of our work should we decide to follow them or join them. Leaders are people who take responsibility for change agendas; transformational leaders take responsibility for very large change agendas, so we hear their agendas for societal transformation with skepticism because they are ambitious, difficult and uncommon. But, we are also excited, inspired, and energized because these agendas draw us back to the centre of our humanness, our deepest moral and ethical concerns.

Change Internal Belief Systems

Transformative leadership is less concerned with exchanges than with *changing* beliefs and values of others, especially in times of change, which seem to be omnipresent (Covey, 2001). Rather than exchanging rewards for performance, TF leaders attempt to build ownership on the part of others by involving them in the process. They are able to move others from external to internal control, meaning that behaviours become internalized and people *want* to do them instead of having to be told to do them, or else. If the desired outcome is valued by people, they will willingly, passionately, strive for that outcome, that vision, leading to a more positive self-concept that is aligned with the mission of the organization, group or profession (Scholl, 2002).

Succinctly, TF leaders change the internal belief systems of others by: (a) becoming a role model which followers want to emulate; (b) providing meaning and challenge so as to motivate and inspire commitment to goals beyond self interest and to a shared vision; (c) encouraging new ways of thinking, new approaches to problems, and learning from mistakes; and (d) paying attention to each individual's particular needs, desires, and capabilities through mentoring (Bass, 1985). These four behaviours are referred to as the "Four I's" of transformational leadership, respectively, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration.

Power Through People

The power of transformational leaders is manifested *through other people* instead of over other people. On a personal level, they appeal to an individual's higher level of morality, ethics and values. At the organizational level, they change the culture by introducing new beliefs and goals and by changing how group members define their roles (Bensimon, 1989; Liontos, 1992). TF leaders help people to: (a) enlarge their vision, insight and understandings, (b) clarify their purpose, (c) make their behaviours congruent with beliefs, principles and values of the envisioned future, and (d) bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating and momentum-building. They do this by being able to adapt their style to suit the ability and maturity (competence and commitment) of other people (Covey, 2001).

To develop power through people, the TF leader must use good diagnostic skills, have a large

repertoire of management styles and the courage and flexibility to use the appropriate one. The TF leader is a developer rather than a hero, a consultant not a commander and a mentor not an order-giver. The TF leader is a value clarifier and exemplar rather than a decision maker and is one who shares power rather than retains it. This type of leader fosters collaborative rather than adversarial relationships, and is focussed on empathy rather than confrontation (Covey, 2001).

Moral Dimension

Basing action on moral principles is the foundation of transformational leadership (Goeglein & Hall, 1997). TF leaders attempt, and succeed in, initiating power relationships with colleagues, subordinates, followers, or clients so they gain a greater awareness about *issues of consequence*. They do this by arguing for what they see as right or good rather than what is popular or acceptable according to the established wisdom of the time. They appeal to an individual's higher level of morality, ethics and values (Alimo-Metcalfe, 200; Bensimon, 1989; Gronn, 1995; Lontos, 1992).

Challenging the Status Quo

TF leaders succeed in cultivating, in others, the ability and determination to challenge established views and to question the leader's opinions as well (Andras & Erdos, 2001). This propensity to transcend the status quo is possible because people undergo a personal change that reflects their acceptance of the envisioned future state communicated by the TF leader (Hochberg, 1996). Transformational leaders find ways to inspire people to *want to lead themselves* so they can become a leader who continually critiques the status quo. These people will be able to deal with uncertainties and ambiguity rather than concentrate their efforts on maintaining the status quo (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2001).

Motivate People to Reach Potential

Instead of expecting people to follow rules and fulfill preestablished expectations, TF leaders design and redesign jobs to make them meaningful and challenging so people can realize their potential (Brighouse, 2003). TF leaders engage and involve others, changing peoples' beliefs about themselves so they have more positive expectations and so they can be more creative (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2001). TF leaders motivate others to do more than they intended, more than they ever thought possible, and to move them beyond self-interest to focus on the larger goals of the group, organization or society (Bass, 1985; Brown et al., 1996).

Critical Science Approach and Transformative Leadership

This section will weave elements of the critical science approach with elements of transformative leadership, illustrating their compatibility as a way to influence policy. Remember that the intent of this chapter is to begin to convert family and consumer science professionals into transformative moral social agents who can use the critical science approach to influence the policy process to improve living conditions for the human family.

Raising Consciousness and Awareness

A critical science approach provides a means to politically deal with broader social issues within the context of communities. It provides a tool for raising personal, professional and public consciousness of conditions impacting family well-being and community life, including the impact of public policies at the local, state and national levels. Because transformational leaders are consciousness raisers, it makes sense to suggest that they advocate for the critical science approach. TF leaders see, in their worlds, large human problems to be solved, problems which, in some deep way, align with their own central, unresolved issues. As they make leadership commitments to those problems facing other people, they make commitments to their own emergence - to that internal change of their belief system. As more leaders transform, in our case, FCS leaders, the world is transformed (Stokes, 2003).

Focussing on Power Relationships

Critical science is concerned with power relationships, especially distorted power relations, that make it easy for the elite to oppress others by controlling knowledge, access to power, meanings and daily

practices. Unpeeling the beliefs, attitudes and actions that contribute to subordination of most people by a very few (elite), reveal the current power relations. Once they are exposed, it is easier to challenge the patterns of domination, and to change the balance of power, so people no longer “buy into” a false consciousness - their awareness can now be continually fed by ongoing exposure of political and economic decisions that keep them down so elite interests can be served (Rehm, 1999). Transformative leaders critically assess the asymmetrical relations of power and those practices that engender solidarity, democracy, liberation and hope (Dantley, 2002). Because influencing public policy is all about managing power relationships, it is crucial that FCS leaders transform their fellow practitioners to see the merit of gaining an understanding of the critical science approach.

Revealing Prevailing Ideologies

The critical science approach reveals hidden power agendas that keep people oppressed. It involves probing beneath the surface meanings to comprehend root causes of problems instead of always treating the symptoms from a technical, quick-fix perspective. To bring about transformative change, TF leaders foster the end values of justice, equality and human rights (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1998; Jahan, 2000), the very values that are usually trampled upon by today’s prevailing ideology and agendas. The critical science approach assumes that, if societal structures and conditions can be altered through debunking ideologies then, human happiness and social autonomy can be attained *within* the community rather than happiness at the expense of the community (Gentzler, 1999). Each society needs critics to idealize a higher order of freedom than that which is currently attained under the prevailing ideology (McGregor, 2003). FCS professionals can be those critics if they become transformational leaders, willing to stand in the centre of this new idea, using a critical science approach to influence policy, and amass energy around it (Dantley, 2002; Stokes, 2003).

Moral Focus

Like the critical science approach, transformational leadership is grounded in moral foundations so as to emancipate individuals from externally imposed forms of authority and control - the status quo and prevailing ideology (Bass, 1997; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1998). Both are concerned with unearthing underlying issues and potentialities of people, in raising the consciousness of people about deep ethical and ideological issues. The critical science approach is very much grounded in the moral reasoning process because the welfare of others is at stake when political decisions are made. FCS is challenged to ask, “what is our duty in relation to a fellow human being, given that there are shades of “good” and rival interpretations of what is “right”? How people understand and respond to moral issues and problems make a difference in the quality of lives (Arcus, 1999). The TF leader’s moral obligations are grounded in the broader conception of individuals within communities rather than oneself interest. When leaders are morally mature, those they lead display higher moral reasoning (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1998).

Respecting Long Term Social Change Agendas

The TF leader’s vision for a better reality is ever present until it becomes a reality. The agenda unfolds over a long period of time. Indeed, the change envisioned by TF leaders is of such magnitude that it may require years to be truly embedded (Stokes, 2003). For this reason, TF leaders know that the ability of the envisioned change to become a reality is hinged on being co-created with like-minded people (Rodriquez & Villarreal, 2001). So, they identify other leaders and potential leaders whose change agendas overlap with theirs and skilfully nurture the growth and development of those leaders. They look for leadership among people already given formal leadership responsibilities and also among people who have not been given formal institutional leadership roles. Transformational leaders want leadership at all levels, so they find ways to invite leadership at the upper level, the line level and at the volunteer level (Stokes, 2003).

Respecting Life Long Learning and Internal Belief Changes

Most important, in order for people to embrace the envisioned agenda of the TF leader, they have to unlearn, relearn and become life long learners, with TF leaders creating opportunities for this process to

unfold. Creating and facilitating this drive for learning is important because TF leaders realize that there must be a critical mass of leaders moving any societal transformation, whether in organizations or in larger domains. Combining this leadership approach to change with the critical science approach to problem solving provides a powerful collection of people impassioned about bringing about social change for the betterment of all families and communities. Because TF leaders have the community and the welfare of its families at the core of their responsibility (Rodriquez & Villarreal, 2001), it seems natural that FCS professionals begin to see themselves as TF leaders embracing the critical science approach as they influence policy (see **Appendix**).

Conclusion

Transformational leadership begins with self-development and extends to the coaching and developing of others so they become agents of change in the larger society. Transformative leaders help others clarify their own world, develop a commitment to democracy and emancipation, and have the courage and desire to work for the empowerment of all people (Dantley, 2002). TF leaders engage others in a commitment to long term change. This chapter has fleshed out some preliminary thinking about how the FCS profession could change the way it influences public policy if some TF leaders began to share a vision of embracing the critical science approach in the policy arena.

It is useful for potential FCS transformational leaders to use the Four I's of transformational leadership as they relate to coaching people to embrace the critical science approach to shape public policy. (a) They need to coach people to take on greater responsibility for developing and improving their personal performance. (b) People need to be encouraged to rethink ideas or problems from a fresh perspective, to increase their awareness, and to question the tried-and-true ways and assumptions. (c) TF leaders need to communicate the vision in compelling ways so that people embrace it, and (d) make it their own. TF leaders will give up needing to know everything (they are no longer the expert) and, instead, hunger for the insight and input of others.

TF leaders are pioneers who pave the way for others to make the journey with them. Many will call these leaders troublemakers and rebels, eager to marginalize and isolate them (Townley, 1999). As a counter point, Heifetz and Laurie (1997) tender the term *creative deviants* to capture the courage of transformative leaders as they challenge existing protocol and the status quo and as they help others (superiors, peers or subordinates) become energized and focussed on their shared vision. It bears repeating - engaging in transformative leadership increases the chance of a few family and consumer science professionals converting others into transformative moral social agents who would use the critical science approach to influence the policy process. The few then become the many, resulting in a transformation of FCS practice in the political arena.

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Appendix Case Study Transformative Leadership, the Critical Science Approach, and Consumer Policy

For 15 years, I taught consumer studies and consumer policy from a rights, entitlement perspective. I focused on the consumer interest, the government's role to protect this interest and the deeds of businesses that infringed on consumers' rights as an active member of the marketplace. I did not challenge the status quo from a critical perspective. I did not question the underlying market ideology or the implications of such an unbalanced focus on rights without the corresponding responsibilities. For instance, I helped rewrite the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act in Canada (the Counseling Directive) making it mandatory for bankrupts to have consumer education, then counseling before they are discharged (McGregor, Klingander & Lown, 1997). But, I did not even think to challenge the society and market ideology that perpetuates credit usage in our consumer society. In a consumer society, we are defined by what we own and how much we make (McGregor, 2003). Many people, subconsciously, use credit to achieve that social status. If we cannot get credit, we are seen as a failure in a credit society. If we get it and do not manage it well, we are also seen as a failure. This sense of fail and succeed stems from the competitive paradigm shaping today's society. I just simply did not think about this in the mid 90s when I did this policy work. I had not embraced the critical science approach at that time. I was in the expert mode.

I did not consider, until *years after* the legislation was changed, that bankruptcy legislation is often a response to the deviant behaviour of individuals who need treatment so they can learn the proper norms of credit behaviour (Ramsay, 1997). This response reflects the assumption that the consumer has failed in the system rather than the system failing them. From a transactional leadership perspective, it makes sense to accept this assumption because TA leaders assume that those who fail deserve punishment and those who succeed deserve the praise. TA leaders do not tap into their "subordinate or clients'" creativity. From this uncritical perspective, it should not surprise anyone that I was blind to the fact that I had embraced this notion of failure instead of stepping back to wonder why our legislation was based on the perception of debtors as deviant members of society? In hindsight, this view seems warped, does not serve families or society and leaves me wondering how I could have let this happen so naively. I was the expert, received recognition for my work in this policy area (even received two awards) and I got my quick fix. I had power over something and was seen as the expert.

In the late 90s, many things happened in my life that led me down another path, away from the transactional leadership approach. I began to envision a different future for the role of family and consumer scientists (FCS) in the consumer policy arena. Exposure to the peace and social justice literature, citizenship, global education, human rights and human responsibility literature changed me profoundly. Related to the area of consumer policy, I now "sing a different tune." Instead of focusing solely on rights, I now stir up the water with the notion of holding consumers responsible for their consumption behaviours. I have written recent think pieces about consumer accountability, consumer narcissism and entitlement, consumerism in a culture of peace, postmodernism and consumerism, and consumerism as a form of structural violence. I have totally shifted my focus, from rights to responsibility and accountability (See www.kon.org for most of these papers).

My new stance is that rampant consumerism has created injustice in society and in nature, an injustice that is unconscionable and unsustainable. I now pose the very uncomfortable questions, "Who is holding the consumer accountable for their actions in the marketplace?" Accountability is necessary when *responsibility* is assigned and *authority* is delegated. "Who assigns the responsibility to be a consumer?" My answer is that society (the authority) gave people the responsibility to consume when

markets were first created as a way for people to meet their basic needs - it was a right that implied responsibilities to the society. However, in the last few centuries, the values of the market have pervaded all aspects of society leading to a market society. I often have to deal with the backlash from taking this stance. Those who have issues with it fall back on the consumer rights and entitlement stance, the transactional leader approach. They argue that I am expecting far too much from consumers who cannot financially afford to make morally just, ethical consumer decisions.

Putting on my critical science hat, I counter this resistance with the notion that people are in that compromised situation because of the structural violence in society that keeps them marginalized, exploited, poor, homeless, unemployed, on social assistance, oppressed and excluded. I suggest that if we change the structure of society, we change the power relationships that keep people oppressed. Empowered people create a free, peaceful and just society. I receive blank faces, perplexed faces, angry faces - because people are comfortable in their transactional leadership garb. Such leaders wait for something to happen and then fix it (e.g., ecological destruction). Or, they take no action until something bad happens, and then punish someone for it (e.g., consumer debt). Or, they avoid leading all together (e.g., they do not advocate for bankruptcy legislation to hold businesses accountable for irresponsible lending practices). These three stances do not bode well for advancing the human condition and moving us away from disempowered consumers to accountable citizens in their consuming role.

I came to this transformational juncture of my policy and professional path because I embraced the critical science approach. I now approach policy with a focus on power relationships, especially distorted power relations, that make it easy for the elite to oppress others by controlling knowledge, access to power, meanings and daily practices. I now urge people to strive to reveal the hidden power agendas. Whose interest is being served, for example, if bankrupts are perceived as failures instead of victims of systemic structural violence? I now press FCS to probe beneath the surface meanings to comprehend the root causes of problems. The roots are always related to the end values of justice, equality, freedom and human rights. But, we miss this level of insight if we focus on the symptoms of the problem and call it a consumer rights issue. Because I believe that accountability measures are needed wherever there are concentrations of power in society, I now feel comfortable advocating that FCS need to call for consumers to be accountable. After all, collectively, they spend two-thirds of the Gross Domestic Product. I have had people strongly resist this position, saying that no particular consumer has that much power. Taking this stance indicates to me that the person is falling into the transactional leadership trap again by assuming that consumers are subordinate to the other market power players, government and business. This standpoint allows us to say they are entitled to consumer *rights*. Taking the moral stand, that people have to be responsible for their actions, means FCS can bring the accountability principle to the consumer policy arena.

As with all transformational leaders, I know I will encounter resistance and fear. I also know that like-minded people are starting to listen and embrace this vision, appreciating that what we are calling for in the policy arena will take many years to achieve. The movement away from consumer rights towards *morally responsible consumer behaviour as a global citizen* is, indeed, a long term social agenda. Continued debunking of the principles of the neoliberal agenda is a key role for us (McGregor, 2001). I also really believe that every single person on this planet can be a leader in the policy arena. From this stance, FCS do not have to feel isolated, alone at the top because they are not at the top, they are in the midst of a social movement for a better world for everyone.

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