



**Spiritual Principles in
Business Relationships**
SPIBR.org LLC

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26 September 2013

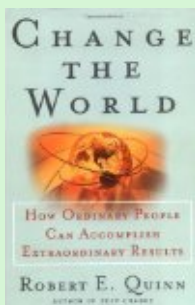
Joe,

[SPiBR.org LLC](#) is focused on you - a strategic alliance manager. Someone who develops long-term value-creating relationships. Someone who:

*Does the impossible
with nothing
in the eye of a hurricane.*

The need for practical spirituality in business relationships is a [strategic imperative](#), otherwise we remain stuck in status quo mediocrity. We remain frustrated knowing there is significant untapped value potential in our alliances.

Transformational Change Agent (4 of 4) Transcend Sanctions and Change Your Self



The following ideas are derived from *Change the World: how ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary results* by Robert E. Quinn (a distinguished MBA professor at the University of Michigan School of Business). In his book he assesses twenty attributes of Jesus, Gandhi and Martin Luther King as transformational change agents.

*If we as strategic alliance managers
are not transformational agents of change*

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what are we doing?

I have recast these attributes from an alliance manager's perspective. Below are the final six attributes of transformational strategic alliance managers.

Transcend Sanctions / Create Healthy Change

Sanction systems are imposed on us by organizations. Their purpose is to reward or punish based on conformity to or violation of traditional norms. Sanctions play an important role in preserving stability. If the status quo is acceptable there is no need to change. However, given over half of all strategic alliances fail to achieve their full value-creating potential, healthy change or the transcendence of some of business' sanctions is long overdue.

However, we must first go within. The greatest sanctions a strategic alliance manager faces are her/his inner-most fears. As these fears are transcended the alliance manager is empowered. She becomes more inner-directed and other-focused; driven to transcend impediments standing in the way of achieving the team's full value-creating vision.

As an alliance manager we can also unconsciously impose limitations on ourselves and our team; these sanctions also need to be transcended. Personal limitations can appear in the form of self-seeking grandiosity, information-hoarding to preserve power, addiction to complexity and drama, and fear-mongering to make your job appear harder than it is. We can also stifle communications via being an information gatekeeper. At times we might dictate and drive too hard, being manically focused *only* on sales or the deal. Or we can rely too heavily on our executives, disempowering ourselves.

As we strive to overcome sanctions we next to go within the team. Just as our greatest personal sanctions come from within us so are the alliance's greatest obstacles often found within the team itself. Typically there is a pervasive fear-based climate of scarcity, where one side's win is seen as the other side's loss. There can be low levels of trust and therefore restricted communication. Sometimes there is unhealthy role-rigidity where "that's not my job" is a value-restrictive response to attempts to "let's just get it done."

As we are increasingly driven by the mind and heart of the collective, we lead the development of a team that inherently transcends sanctions. This team is comfortably living on the edge of chaos, where paradoxically there is both order *and* great creativity. You and the team are persistent and tenacious. You don't give up. You find new ways to overcome value-impediments standing in the way of your value-creating vision for this emerging highly-

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productive community.

*We do what we do out of love.
When we act this way
we are inner-directed and other-focused.*

The alliance's value-driven focus may catalyze healthy change in the surrounding organization. This naturally occurs as the team discovers new and better ways of doing business, like doing the right thing for all concerned, for all stakeholders and all members of an organization. It can be about valuing relationship building as a strategic asset. It can even be about the explicit incorporation of love into business strategies and plans.

Go Beyond Problem Solving to Appreciative Inquiry

In the world of business the traditional mode of inquiry is problem solving. This is the language of deficit. It's focused on what's wrong. Within an organization businesses often focus on what's lacking. Being focused on what's wrong, value-creation gets stifled. This counter-productive problem-oriented mode of inquiry needs to be transcended.

Appreciative inquiry uses language that helps the collective construct its future, bringing forth the positive core of the alliance. As transformational alliance managers we are called to call forth the best in every person and in the alliance community.

To be clear appreciative inquiry isn't about being naively happy and ignoring problems, it's not about "wearing rose-colored glasses" all the time. Value-impeding obstacles (problems) naturally surface via open trust-fill communications and they are transcended, they are dealt with. Appreciative inquiry is about now looking past those things, and focusing collective attention on the untapped value-creating potential that is lying dormant in the alliance. How do we do this?

Transformational alliance managers focus collective attention on the value-creating vision of the alliance by reframing reality and disrupting traditional perspectives. We ask questions which drive us to deeper levels of insight and understanding. We tell stories and share our unique perspectives in ways that bring hope to the individuals and draws out commitment; we inspire. We awaken the human spirit that is often "put to sleep" in business settings. We cause the team to consider different ways of relating to their world.

Our goal is to create a collectively-actualized team.

As the alliance's shared vision emerges the team starts becoming self-organized. Just as an individual's highest level of awakening is self-actualization, so too an

organization's highest level of creativity is to be collectively-actualized. As its own positive essence surfaces the team becomes its own agent of change and it is autotelic. As the community embodies a virtuous cycle it builds an ever more productive community, creating tasks worth doing for their own sake and continuously learning, growing and adapting. Such a self-organizing and highly-productive community is indeed virtuous.

Co-Creation Becomes Cause AND Effect

Fundamental transformation cannot be explained with the traditional cause-and-effect paradigm; it is not about this event *now* causing that change *later*. Transformation is about the realization that this event AND that change are inextricably linked, that they occur together, here and now. It is also about the realization that transformation is about the team AND leadership, it is us AND our partner. It is about deeply embracing the essence of AND, here and now.

Co-creation is maximal in an alliance when the alliance manager exhibits purposeful and principle-driven behaviors. This ends up disrupting the alliance AND she then inspires a sense-making process. Greater interdependency emerges in this productive community, in the midst of disruptions AND making sense of those disruptions. The team is trail-blazing (disrupting) and mapping the trail (make sense of the new terrain) as it progresses toward its value-creating vision for itself.

With increased positive feedback loops within the alliance (i.e., when change encourages more change) the team finds itself on the edge of chaos. In this state of bounded instability, small acts end up having disproportionately large impact. This amplification of action can lead to increased effectiveness, so long as the acts align with the alliance's value-creating purpose. And given the self-organizing nature of a transformational alliance, the team naturally keeps behavior aligned with purpose. We end up with amplification AND guided moderation, occurring together, here and now.

Embrace the spirit in the midst of AND.

The alliance manager AND her team AND the strategic context around the team are co-creating a new system - a transformational strategic alliance. It is important that the alliance manager realizes that she is necessary but insufficient for this transformation to occur. The alliance manager needs internal integrity, trust and confidence in order to lead the alliance on its journey. However it is from listening deeply to the voice of the collective that the alliance manager finds the path for the team to traverse. The team is leading itself, with the alliance manager but an inspiring observer. This process actually has sacred

overtones. The power of we (leader AND team AND partner) draws upon the mysteries of the universe as the community find its way to greater value creation, together, here and now.

Improvisation Stimulates Change

The fundamental transformation of an alliance requires improvisation. To attempt to transform is to commit ourselves and our alliance to a future on an unknown path; we are trailblazing. We learn as we go and we learn by doing. This type of learning-as-we-go leadership cannot be done alone. More than ever the alliance manager needs the team to share in decision-making and leadership. Trailblazing like this requires deep collaboration.

Open, trust-filled and authentic dialogue is crucial. The willingness to confront difficult issues is a life-or-death for the transformational process. This is why transformation is impossible to enact in a normalized system, where authority figures are rarely if ever challenged. Bold, clear and immediate feedback from the team is what the alliance manager most needs during these times of deep change.

*"I have no idea where we are going.
Follow me!"*

The transformational alliance manager creates an atmosphere where improvisation gestates, flourishes and actually becomes an invaluable leadership tool. She does this by disturbing status quo; by bringing forth positive feedback loops which encourage more and deeper change; by encouraging the team to higher levels of value-creation. At times the alliance manager literally doesn't know what to do, cause-and-effect theories no longer work, as the future and immediate next steps become increasingly uncertain. There will be times for the leaders when the only thing that can be done is nothing, to stand in place. Be in the eye of the hurricane and observe the controlled chaos and trust that the process that brought you to this point will indeed carry you forward.

A strategic alliance team that becomes self-organizing also becomes increasingly complex. It can only do this with increases in integrity, and this comes by confronting the shadows or issues in the community. The alliance manager has to have the courage to take risk and live on the uncertain edge of chaos. In a sense they have to be willing to die; their ego or self-serving motives need to die in order for higher-good motives to come alive.

Resistance and Uncertain are Positive Forces

In the traditional world of business resistance is seen as a *negative* force that must be *overcome*. In the process of transformation resistance is understood to be a *positive*

force that can be *used*.

Resistance is actually a very necessary ingredient; it is the starting point for transformation, a sign that new ideas are being gestated, a positive sign that new ways of doing business are starting to emerge. When resistance surfaces in the alliance the transformational alliance manager is being called to adapt, to first go within and be mindful, to imagine alternative paths toward value-creation, and to positively reframe reality for the team.

In order for the alliance to use resistance as a positive force, that will take the alliance to higher levels of value-creation, the connection between leader and team has to deepen. This will naturally occur as the collective confronts the resistance from a positively-reframed perspective and the level of trust in the environment increases. Out of this process a new alliance is born.

It's great being the eye of the hurricane.

This is all a turbulent process. The alliance manager needs to be comfortable being the "eye of the hurricane." She doesn't prescribe the change, but merely observes it and actually encourages it. She endures the pain of resistance and the even deeper pain of uncertainty. As the leader of the alliance, how is that she doesn't know the details of its path? At these times she's called to trust the process, to trust the emerging reality of the team, to trust the voice of the collective in this increasingly productive community, and to trust her Self (the core truth of who she is - a creator). She realizes ever more deeply that she both drives and is driven by the transformation of her alliance.

Change Your Self

We are all always embodying and exhibiting our own vision, even when we don't have one.

Our vision is grounded in how we see the world. This fundamental perspective molds our behaviors which then influence the world around us, especially our strategic alliance. The world around us then adapts to our behaviors in ways which encourage more of the same type of behavior. Life is a self-fulfilling prophesy as our past behaviors are encouraged by the environment we have created. Over time we might feel like we're stuck in a rut, life has become routine. How do we change?

We all embody the vision for our future.

We change by making fundamental choices, by disrupting normalcy in positive and healthy ways. We embrace the idea of growth, then new behaviors will follow and a new context will emerge in our world.

Identity is fundamental.

Ultimately we are in control of who we think we are. Identity is the most fundamental choice we have. As we are increasingly inner-directed and other-focused we are changed, we grow. This progressive awakening draws us ever more closely to the realization that we are creators. We were created by our Creator to create. This is not about grandiosity; this is not about one of us being better than the other. This is about grandeur; this is about being great, together. Grandeur is a collective endeavor, we cannot do it alone.

*As a transformational strategic alliance manager
I am the creator over my alliance
AND
the entire team is too.*

Ref: click [here](#) for Appendix A from the book *Change the World*.

[What do you think?](#)

Conscious Change Agent Video Interview (4 of 4) - Confrontation as a Spiritual Practice



I was recently interviewed for the [Conscious Change Agent Web Show](#) by Jack Butler, in Boulder, CO.

[Part IV - Confrontation as a Spiritual Practice](#) (13 min 55 sec)

Whenever I perceive the behavior of another as signs of deviousness, incompetency or lunacy we have divergent perspectives. In strategic alliances this is due to unacknowledge or undealt with corporate cultures. The solution, they way to bridge divergent cultures is by deeply and honestly sharing perspectives - of each other and of self.

With this we illuminate and clear up the cloud that's between us. This is how we clean things up so we can deepen our relationships and bring greater trust into the alliance.

Use confrontation to create a situation that calls for trust, and trust that trust will come. Confrontation is co-fronting or co-facing an issue in a relationship. This differs from conflict which is attacking the other.

We awaken the most in our most intimate and challenging relationships. In the world of business these are strategic alliances - crucibles for greater consciousness in capitalism.

These are my first video interviews. I am interested in [your critique](#).

Introductory Offer: Your First Two Hours of Coaching for the Price of One



As a strategic alliance manager with over 16 years of experience developing alliances for Hewlett-Packard and nearly 10 years as a consultant and coach I am focused on you, the strategic alliance manager. Someone who regularly:

*Does the impossible with nothing
in the eye of a hurricane.*

No one better understands what it means to be a strategic alliance manager than another alliance manager; I get it. My focus is on fundamental change, for you and your alliance.

I am willing to provide your first two hours of coaching for the price of one (\$100 USD). We can start off with a free 30 minute introductory call, ideally via Skype with video.

Ref: [resume](#) and [endorsements](#). Also checkout my whitepaper on the [role of alliance manager](#) (a unique, holistic and empowering perspective).

[I'm interested.](#)

Welcome

Be part of our productive [community](#). Participate in our LinkedIn group [Spiritual Principles in Strategic Alliances](#). We currently have 170 members.

[Love,](#)



Joe Kittel

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9/26/13

We are agents of change - be confrontational, transcend sanctions, change your self

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