What Leadership for a Fractured World Entails

The world in so many ways is fractured. The fractures in groups and between groups could be wide fractures that divide, hairline fractures that generate a state of susceptibility and vulnerability, or latent fault lines that can crack open when some sudden change erupts due to internal or external pressure. Many groups, institutions, and communities are in a fractured state in varying degrees. Somehow, we seem to hobble along, but the reality is few things quite live up to their promise. In fact, what we repeatedly see are systems breaking down—be they institutional systems, economic systems, political systems, or environmental systems, to name but a few—and we all frustratingly ask, "Where is the leadership?"

To provide leadership for a fractured world, we need a different way to think about leadership. We cannot think of leadership exclusively in terms of the "big man" or the "tribal boss" who

represents the interests of their group alone. We need to distinguish real leadership from formal authority.[1] Leaders today must be agents of change who are willing and able to cross boundaries, connect groups, and orchestrate multidimensional problem solving and change. Without that kind of leadership, the fractures that separate us will only get worse.

Leadership Is Needed to Help Groups Transcend the Tribal Impulse to Solve Interdependent Problems

Most people do not fully appreciate the systemic nature of their problems. We think and act parochially. The cultures of our respective groups and the respective roles we play in these groups often cause us to view problems through the narrow and myopic lens of immediate self- or group interest. Consequently, groups are inclined to see only pieces of a complex problem and end up working on their own small bit without making much headway.

Even though we live in a globalized world, in many ways we are still very tribal. By "tribal," I mean that we affiliate ourselves with groups that inform our identity and from which we derive meaning. These days, many of us belong to multiple tribes—the company tribe, the church tribe, the family tribe, and even many online tribes. Tribal groups since the beginning of time have been important for community and security. When a group gets too big or amorphous, it is easy to get lost and feel uneasy, so for biological, psychological, and cultural reasons we retreat to the safety of some form of an identity group or tribe.

Social science research on group behavior supports the notion of tribalism and explains how it generates in-groups and out-groups. The renowned Harvard biologist and naturalist, E. O. Wilson, has

articulated the tribal impulse by arguing that as human beings, we have innate tendencies, predispositions, and emotional capacities that lead us to identify with a group—or tribe—that provides fellowship, protection, coordinating mechanisms, parameters for action, and frameworks for interpreting the human experience.[2] While tribal by nature, we are willing to create networks of tribes to expand boundaries, colonize territory, engage in trade and agriculture, and go to war and defeat enemies. In his insightful book Moral Tribes, Joshua Greene, who directs the Moral Cognition Lab at Harvard, describes how our brains are designed for tribal life, leading us to make choices to advance our own group's interests at the expense of others and to rationalize such behavior as appropriate and moral.[3] The tribal impulse indicates that we want to be around people who are similar to us in terms of values, looks, language, humor, food, and desires.

The tribal impulse can be seen even in progressive places such as Belgium, the nation whose capital houses the headquarters for the European Union. The EU offices in Brussels may symbolize unity, yet all is not well in Belgium. Some Dutch-speaking people of the Flanders region want to separate from the French-speaking people of the Walloon region. Their tensions are rooted in historical, economic, cultural, linguistic, and political differences. Rather than do the hard work of learning from one another and maintaining a viable and thriving nation, too many people would prefer to call it a day and retreat to what they believe to be the safe confines of their tribal identity.[4]

The tribal impulse is evident in commercial enterprises, too, as it pertains to professions and departments. Conducting research at a major American newspaper, I noticed how the suspicions between the journalists and editors on one side and the business managers and marketing people on the other side kept the

two groups from talking to one another. In fact, they worked on different floors to avoid interaction. What surprised me was the intensity of the contempt each group had for the other. The journalists detested the fact the business people made decisions based on market demographics and advertising revenues. The business people deplored how ignorant or naïve journalists could be about the realities of running a company that had to make money in order to survive.

Being tribally oriented is not a bad thing; in fact, it has many benefits. The problem, however, is that many of the challenges that we face today cannot be resolved if we think parochially and act tribally.

The tribal impulse is reinforced by group boundaries. These boundaries make addressing systemic, interdependent challenges very difficult. There are many kinds of boundaries, including religious, cultural, professional, geographic, economic, class, and ethnic boundaries. Every group has a boundary. Nature has boundaries, and all organisms have boundaries. The boundary protects the space that allows group activity to take place. If a boundary is absent or too permeable, the group or organism is weakened and could die or simply disappear.

While boundaries are essential for distinguishing group membership and for coordinating domains of group activity, their function is to keep some people in and others out. They work well in helping groups engage in routine problem solving, but they can be constraining and burdensome when dealing with interdependent problems. Complexity does not honor boundaries but transcends them, as with a global financial crisis, a virus such as Ebola, sectarian warfare, or environmental pollution. If people are unwilling to transcend their boundaries and address an interdependent problem, they put at risk not only their group but the entire system.

Recently I met with some managers from one of the world's leading multinational software companies who were struggling to deal with a complicated challenge where a division overseas was having difficulty in getting its perspectives heard in the head-quarters. By virtue of the reluctance to open the boundary and let the "foreign" perspective be included in the problem-solving and strategy-formulating processes of headquarters, vital data were not being considered, which in turn had an impact on overall company performance. This is a problem every large company struggles with. Boundaries that inhibit performance develop easily.

Managers in such environments can become excessively parochial, operating mostly within their boundaries and seeing no reason to cross boundaries, bust boundaries, or join with others to address a shared challenge. In boundary-laden organizations, silos begin to emerge that become rigid barriers to success. These silos lead people to engage in protective games, petty politics, and turf battles, which are activities that add no value to the organization but actually diminish value.

Globalization is breaking down many boundaries, yet many old fractures persist and new fractures are being generated. Former U.K. prime minister Gordon Brown stated that "globalization has generated opposite gravitational poles of production and consumption, and today the world arrangements look unbalanced and unsustainable." He added that while there are benefits to globalization, "they cannot be secured without a willingness to address, at a global level, the underlying economic, democratic, social and political weaknesses of globalization."5 In other words, the problems generated by globalization are complex, interdependent, and systemic in nature and cannot be resolved by thinking parochially or acting tribally. Before the global financial crisis

of 2008, Brown saw the need to get financial regulators to work together at a global level to understand the true scale of risk and act on it by creating an early-warning system. "I will forever regret my failure to bring other countries on board or persuade them of the urgency of action," he lamented. "I can see with hindsight . . . that it was impossible to build an international consensus."[6]

Leadership Is Needed to Help Groups Generate Shared Progress

While the tribal impulse is natural and brings many benefits, problems arise when groups pursue their goals without concern for the interests of other groups due to very different and often competing notions of progress.

Progress, according to the dictionary, means a move toward a "higher or better state." Any human organizational, social, political, or economic system will contain differences of opinion about what is meant by "higher" or "better" and the pathway for producing progress. For example, the prevailing belief among some groups is that democracy is the essential engine to generate progress throughout the world. But, as we have seen in Iraq and Afghanistan, American-style democracy cannot succeed without deep learning work to modify the values, perceptions, and priorities of multiple groups. And there are some groups that believe that progress can only be achieved by coercively getting other groups to abide by their beliefs, and should they refuse they need to be eradicated, as we have witnessed with radical religious groups in Iraq and Syria. In the context of the United States, the Republicans have one view of progress and the Democrats have another view, and within each of these groups are subfactions with their own particular beliefs about what progress is and how to generate it.

Healthy debate and the exchange of perspectives is a good thing, but when groups demand that their view of progress is the right one and the view of other factions is flawed or outright wrong, then the divisions make shared problem solving impossible. In 2013, for example, the fractured political culture in Washington led to a government shutdown when Congress failed to enact legislation to appropriate funds for the fiscal year.

People's definitions of progress are informed by their cultural heritage, group values, and personal aspirations. It is not enough to say that "we all want the same thing." We do not all want the same thing. As the previous examples indicate, even if our notions of progress are similar, the strategies and actions for producing progress may differ radically.

A leadership challenge is to keep groups from defining progress in narrow, parochial terms such as winning or beating the competition, and to view progress as making things sustainably better for all. In the context of an interdependent world, if you are attaining your goal through destructive competition, then instead of getting practical results, you might be setting the conditions for ongoing conflict and great loss—to your own group and to others.

Leadership Is Needed to Fix a Maladaptive Cultural Drift

Sometimes the impediment to progress lies in the deficient problem-solving processes embedded in the cultural drift of groups. All tribes, groups, and institutions have what I call a "cultural drift." The cultural drift is the group's shared, taken-for-granted values, practices, and priorities. It is the habitual way of operating. Members of the group essentially drift along in its cultural river, without thinking deeply about the implications of their actions

and choices, because the cultural drift provides a set of processes and procedures for solving routine problems and addressing predictable challenges. This patterned behavior might work well in some contexts but be ineffective in others. Unless the group can modify its cultural drift to address complex, interdependent problems, a breakdown in the system could occur.

To illustrate the power of the drift in shaping and constraining action, consider what happened when an earthquake and tsunami struck the east coast of Japan on March 11, 2011, leading also to a nuclear disaster at the Fukushima nuclear power plant. After the tsunami hit the plant, a meltdown occurred at three of the six nuclear reactors, releasing substantial amounts of radioactive materials into the environment, and causing a mass evacuation of two hundred thousand people. An analysis by an independent commission concluded that while the tsunami triggered the event, it was also a man-made disaster that was the product of cultural, managerial, and regulatory deficiencies in the company, in the government, and between agencies. The chairman of the committee, Kiyoshi Kurokawa, stated:

What this report cannot fully convey—especially to a global audience—is the mindset that supported the negligence behind this disaster. What must be admitted—very painfully—is that this was a disaster *Made in Japan*. Its fundamental causes are to be found in the ingrained conventions of Japanese culture: our reflexive obedience; our reluctance to question authority; our devotion to "sticking with the program"; our groupism; and our insularity.[7]

Chairman Kurokawa was particularly critical of the company that owned and ran the power plant, TEPCO. The report highlighted that management had a "disregard for global trends and a disregard

for public safety," and the company was a business that "prioritized benefits to the organization at the expense of the public."[8] His report was also tough on the government, pointing out that the breakdown was made worse because the agency responsible for promoting nuclear power was also the agency charged with regulating the industry. The conflict in interest resulted in the lack of best-practice procedures and protocols needed to maximize safeguards and minimize the possibility of a disaster.

The report also drew attention to the fact that Japan's democratic processes were deficient in that the people's dissenting voices were not heard in a robust public discussion. Greater community participation and a strong civil society might have served as a watchdog to cast light on the flaws in government, industry, and energy. But Japanese political authorities have never encouraged or valued groups agitating from the sidelines or raising potentially embarrassing or threatening questions. The report illustrates that the cultural drift that had served the country and its institutions well for generations—and still does for many challenges—had some maladaptive features that exacerbated the calamity.

Japan and TEPCO are not unusual. Authority figures in all groups, institutions, and cultures generally protect and promote the prevailing cultural drift as it pertains to problem solving and decision making, even if it has maladaptive features.

Groups, governments, and companies need adaptive and responsive cultural drifts. Given that it is a high-velocity world with extraordinary opportunities suddenly appearing and just as quickly disappearing, groups must be able to respond with speed and precision. For corporations, it is the age of hypercompetition. The abundance of new knowledge and technologies generates rich possibilities, yet human nature, the fractures that divide us, and

the flawed features of the cultural drift of institutions make it difficult to capitalize on these advances to produce advantage for all.

There Is Too Much Prominence, Dominance, and Tribalizing—and Too Little Leadership

Where is the leadership to address the problems of a fractured world? What is leadership? If a Martian were to say, "Take me to your leader!" most people would probably take them to the dominant authority figure of a group, organization, or community. They would not necessarily take them to the provocative change agent who may have little status but is courageously crossing boundaries, asking tough questions, and seeking to mobilize diverse groups to face reality and tackle messy, shared problems that endanger a group or community. They would think the direction-setting, charismatic harmonizer who gets everyone marching in the same direction is the leader.

Indeed, most people generally think of the traditional, strong, boundary-reinforcing boss as the leader. It might be an expression of leadership, but it is what I term *big man leadership*, and it has both strengths and weaknesses. At its essence, big man leadership is about power, position, and formal authority. The conventional notion of leadership in most institutions and societies places the burden of direction setting, problem solving, and decision making on a dominant individual or elite group. The so-called leader is expected to show the way forward, protect the group, maintain group boundaries, and solve problems with minimal disruption to people's lives. His or her role is to be a symbol of the group's ideals and to act in ways that advance the group's interests, even if it is at the expense of other groups or the broader system. For many problems, big man leadership and the expression of formal

authority is adequate to drive disparate groups to focus on the right set of tasks to achieve shared objectives. Today, however, power is dispersed and the world is too complex to rely exclusively on big man leadership. Leadership depth and breadth is needed.

The default strategy of big man leadership as it pertains to dealing with problems is generally through the expression of *prominence* ("Look to me—I'll fix the problem"), *dominance* ("Listen to me—Do what I say"), and *tribalizing* ("Follow me—I'll advance your interests"). Libya's Muammar Gaddafi is an extreme example, but the essence of his behavior illustrates the way many big man leaders operate as they go about the work of problem solving and change.

I once sat next to Colonel Gaddafi and his team for three days at an African Union meeting in Ghana. He was a surreal character in his extravagant flowing robes. When Gaddafi stood to address his fellow African heads of state, he received a standing ovation—for different reasons. One was the novelty factor. He looked unique and his flamboyant style of dress was a bold statement of grandiosity, sending a signal that he considered himself a force to be reckoned with. He was also seen as someone who stood up to the West and took a stand for Africa. Then he started speaking. While every other head of state spoke only for the allocated fifteen minutes, Gaddafi spoke for an hour. By the end of his speech, which was a rambling and erratic soliloquy on the threats of neo-imperialism and the need for Africa to be united in order to fight its Western opponents, most people were bored, chatting, or asleep. Even with his glorious outfit he could not hold their attention, and polite but weak applause was given as he concluded. What began with a bang ended with a fizzle.

Gaddafi was trying to be the agent of change by convincing his fellow African leaders that they should create a united Africa,

something like the European Union or the United States. He failed because he did not understand that most Africans were resonating to different priorities than his. Gaddafi was still acting as the revolutionary zealot, while other leaders had practical concerns pertaining to building healthy economies and regional networks that would lift their people out of poverty by promoting trade relations for global competitiveness.

On October 20, 2011, three years after the Ghana speech, Gaddafi was killed by his own people. He was a tragic character who had the potential and resources to do great things in his own country and the region. His grandiose delusions and political ineptness, however, led him to pursue strategies that did little to generate the transformations that he publicly espoused. Instead, his actions perpetuated the divisions that had already existed while generating new ones.

It is not just wild dictators that provide big man leadership. Talented managers in all institutions can be guilty of such behavior. Their approach might succeed in generating results in a relatively stable and bounded environment, but when confronted with a novel or complex challenge their approach might manifest serious deficiencies. Consider the case of Lehman Brothers.

Lehman Brothers, one of the world's largest and oldest investment banks, collapsed in 2007 because of flaws in its corporate strategy and notions of leadership. Even as the U.S. housing market was faltering, CEO Richard Fuld pursued a highly aggressive, leveraged business model, putting the firm at even greater risk. Unlike some competitors that had had the foresight to sense the pending collapse and make a midcourse correction, Fuld refused to rethink his strategy or listen to those inside and outside the company who raised serious questions. He was too confident in his own answers—after all, he had been relatively successful at

Lehman Brothers for eighteen years. When he realized how bad the situation was, rather than be entirely truthful with investors, he presented an upbeat message regarding the company's strategy and financial well-being. Had he put reality in front of his management team and investors early enough, solutions might have been generated that saved the company.[9]

Before the collapse of Lehman Brothers, Richard Fuld explained his ideas on leadership to the students at the Wharton Business School.[10] His first principle was that "leaders earn the right to lead because they know more than others." His second principle was to "build a strong team around you" by promoting collaboration and harmony and discouraging conflict and open disagreement. "What I need," he said, "is peace in the family." His third principle was to "pick a strategy and stick with it." I suggest that Fuld's leadership principles contributed to the collapse of Lehman Brothers. His leadership challenge was to create the conditions that allowed, even encouraged, people to question the prevailing strategy when they anticipated danger, even if it generated internal conflict. Fuld was a talented big man leader, but his leadership was insufficient to save his company from collapse,

Big man leadership is really about authority, formal or informal. It is about one individual managing the group boundaries, showing the way forward, and articulating what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior. It can be expressed though benevolence and paternalism, and it can also be expressed through the aggressive assertion of power. Either way, there are limitations to what can be accomplished by relying exclusively on formal authority or prominence, dominance, and tribalizing.

Prominence is about status, and by virtue of having status, the group looks to you. Prominence leads to enormous burdens being placed on select individuals to be the problem solvers and experts,

Certainly expertise in a particular domain of knowledge can give you status and prominence, but experts acting alone cannot solve today's problems. Expertise is about depth of knowledge, but complex problems span boundaries and require diverse perspectives and integrated sources of knowledge. All individuals, no matter how prominent or talented they might be, are subject to error, and there can be dire consequences when they act alone, get it wrong, or fail to mobilize different perspectives to be included in the problem-solving process. For example, during a congressional hearing on the financial crisis of 2008, Congressman Henry Waxman asked the former head of the U.S. Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, "Do you feel that your ideology pushed you to make decisions that you wish you had not made?"[11] Greenspan conceded, "Yes, I've found a flaw. . . . I've been very distressed by that fact."[12] Greenspan thought that the free market would generate its own corrective mechanism and cause banks to take responsible action to fix flawed strategies before things got out of hand. Such was not the case. Fifteen banks collapsed in 2008, others were bailed out, and on one day alone, more than $1.2 trillion vanished from the U.S. stock market.[13]

We all have flaws in our reasoning and blind spots in our understanding that make it difficult to consistently provide successful leadership; therefore, on some challenges, it is easy for anyone to unwittingly become the source of counterfeit leadership—whether you are the chairman of the Federal Reserve, the manager of a nuclear power plant in Japan, the head of an NGO in Madagascar, or the CEO of a Wall Street investment bank with an MBA from Harvard.

Dominance is different from prominence. Prominence emphasizes "look to me, because I am the expert," while dominance

emphasizes "listen to me, because I am the boss." Dominance is the expression of power and a form of control to get people to "do it my way." We see it expressed by the alpha chimp in chimpanzee communities, and we see it in human communities. Dominance is not necessarily negative as it does play an important role in maintaining order for a group and also in orienting people during times of distress. Any parent can attest to the need for displays of dominance from time to time, not that it always works. Dominance becomes problematic when it tries to solve problems for which the tools of command and control do not apply. To get people to face interdependent challenges, the exercise of leadership requires stimulating imagination and creativity, and the promotion of learning. Dominance is often used to suppress multiple perspectives, thwart creativity, and demand compliance—all in the name of maintaining the prevailing order and ensuring predictability and stability.

Tribalizing is the advancement of your group's interests at the expense of other groups. It is a very primal dynamic that leads a group to bestow authority on someone to fight their battles, protect their well-being, and be the gatekeeper of the group's boundaries. But oftentimes, if a group is to make progress by dealing with threats and taking advantage of new opportunities, the group must change some cherished values and practices. For many groups, protecting tribal interests and practices becomes more important than facing reality and addressing interdependent problems that can make life better for all groups.

Creating or perpetuating fractures often occurs through the words and actions of tribalizing authority figures and big man leaders. Fracturing actions give preference to your own group over another and trivialize, marginalize, or harm another group.

Fracturing words include disparaging comments about other groups, and speeches that appeal to your own group's narcissism and sense of superiority. Fracturing speech is divisive and exclusive, rather than uniting and inclusive. It perpetuates the myth that "We are good and the other is bad." It exploits the group's noble traditions and cultural pride to promote a sense of preeminence or uniqueness. It assigns all the bad stuff to an outside group and the good stuff to one's own group, and thereby allows people to avoid dealing with their own group's deficiencies and maladaptive values.

Fracturing tribalizing dynamics are common in politics. For example, the outspoken rock star Ted Nugent threw his celebrity weight behind a Republican candidate in Texas and, during an interview in 2014, he called President Obama a "subhuman mongrel." Not only were his comments fracturing, but they were offensive—not just to the president but to most Americans. Many members of the Republican Party quickly condemned Nugent's comments, but one powerful voice in the party, a former presidential candidate and media personality, Newt Gingrich, was glib. When pushed on the subject in a CNN interview, he agreed that what Nugent said was stupid, but he added to the fracture by turning it into a political fight, arguing that it was the Hollywood types and liberal media that were making all the fuss and that they had double standards.[14] Gingrich missed a unique opportunity to do important bridge-building leadership work and in that moment acted in ways that trivialized others' concerns. He might have intervened to promote the debate on media bias at another time and used that special moment on CNN, where he had the attention of the entire country, to do some important work around race and tolerance, particularly at a time when people felt that political fractures and social tensions were harming the country.

Given the Problems We Face, Leaders Must Cross Boundaries, Build Bridges, and Lead Change

To provide leadership for a fractured world, leaders must be change agents, even global change agents. Even if you are exercising leadership at the local level in an NGO, a school, or a company, you need a global orientation to appreciate how global or systemic forces impact what is happening at the local level that generate the demand for change. You need to appreciate both the strengths and constraining aspects of culture and, when the problem calls for it, transcend cultural constraints and group boundaries to mobilize diverse factions to tackle shared problems.

Change agents are attention managers—they intervene to get and keep the spotlight on interdependent problems. Big man leaders put the spotlight on themselves. They use prominence and dominance to get the group to follow them, because they believe that they know what needs to be done. As attention managers, change agents want people to see the systemic nature of the challenge and appreciate what progress is at risk if it is not actively addressed. They are interested not in getting people to follow them but in getting people to face the complexity of the problem.

The rock star Bono exercised leadership as a change agent by getting President George Bush's secretary of the treasury, Paul O'Neill, to visit Africa with him and call attention to issues of HIV, rampant poverty, educational deficiencies, and disease. The two were branded the "odd couple" because they were diametrically opposites in style, politics, and professions. But for two weeks they conversed, debated, shared stories, and explored options for addressing some of the most intractable problems.[15] The creative partnership of Bono and O'Neill served—for a moment, at least—to get many people thinking about Africa and the plight of the poor,

the sick, and the disenfranchised. It put the spotlight on issues that many people in the developed world prefer to ignore. One reporter noted that Bono "opened up new frontiers . . . by leaving the protestors of Seattle and Genoa behind him for the deep corridors of power, in particular the White House. The argument is that real change comes from influencing those in power, not throwing stones at them."16

Many interdependent problems are adaptive problems. In our leadership classes at Harvard, my colleagues and I teach students to distinguish between adaptive and technical problems. Technical problems are clear-cut problems. The application of expertise or the accumulated knowledge of the group is generally sufficient to reach resolution. Even if the technical challenge is complicated, if you get enough smart people to address the problem and provide them with sufficient time and resources, they can fix it. Moreover, technical problems can often be solved within the current structures of an organization that are designed to process them with efficiency and routine. In contrast, adaptive challenges do not fall neatly into current structures. They fall across boundaries and require diverse perspectives. They demand questioning of each group's assumptions; experimenting with novel strategies; and adjusting people's values, habits, and priorities in order to make progress on the challenge.

When I worked for the government in Madagascar, governmental leaders clearly faced the adaptive challenge of halting the country's exponential population growth. The population had doubled over the previous twenty-five years, generating an enormous strain on the environment and resources of local communities. When a young couple married, they were given the blessing by their elders "May you have seven sons and seven daughters." This kind of practice, however, was not sustainable,

and it posed an adaptive challenge for people to modify the value for large families. The practice had become maladaptive in the context of a changed world and threatened the sustainability of the already fragile economy and ecosystem.

But even outwardly simple, technical problems can have an adaptive component. When working in Madagascar, I saw a development project fail because of the lack of understanding for adaptive work. In this situation, NGO personnel had built a well and provided a water pump to the village because they thought it would solve a routine technical problem. The women in the village would spend considerable time daily fetching water from a distant river, and the intention of the well was to "fix the problem." The NGO believed the villagers would appreciate the well. However, some did not. After two weeks, the well and the water pump were destroyed. It was later discovered that it was the village women—the intended beneficiaries of the project—who had destroyed the well. Why? Because the well was an unwelcome disruption to their traditional pattern of living that included walking with their sisters and daughters in a daily ritual to fetch water. The new arrangement also meant that they had to spend more time in the village around their annoying men. No one had asked whether they wanted the well. Also, even if someone had asked, they might not have fully understood at that time how the change would impact the villagers' lives. Such is the nature of adaptive challenges: they have layers of complexity and often generate unpredictable surprises.

To mobilize people to address interdependent challenges and to do the adaptive work of change, you must work at the boundaries. You must be aware of visible and invisible boundaries that impede change and thwart shared progress. You must be able to cross boundaries to engage diverse groups in the work of

problem solving and change. Sometimes, you must intervene to bust internal boundaries within your own group to open up the flow of information and get people to engage the outside world. For some problems, the leadership challenge is to help groups transcend their boundaries—to leave the safety of the known and to venture into the great unknown in pursuit of creativity and innovation. And there will be times when the leadership work is to help multiple groups bridge boundaries over deep divides in order to resolve conflicts, heal wounds, and reduce the mystery of the other in order to generate a mutually beneficial future.

To exercise leadership as a global change agent, you need to think about power differently. Even if you have considerable formal power, it will probably be insufficient to produce the change that you seek. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the former president of Brazil, expressed the limitations of his power this way:

> I was always surprised at how powerful people thought I was. Even well-informed, politically sophisticated individuals would come to my office and ask me to do things that showed they assumed I had far more power than I really did. I always thought to myself, if only they knew how limited the power of any president is nowadays.[17]

You do not need formal, positional power to exercise leadership. Anyone can be a change agent, although in varying degrees and in varying ways, whether from the center or from the sidelines. Of course, some people have considerable power and can get attention easily and do big things. Some people have little power but can use what power they have to stand and be counted. They can raise an issue, challenge an assumption, and reach out to someone who is different, marginalized, or being harmed. They can support

others in their leadership work. Even small interventions can sow seeds that may trigger dynamic change processes if the problem is ripe and the window of opportunity is seen and exploited. Consider Rosa Parks, whose refusal to move to the back of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955 was a catalyzing action for the civil rights movement.[18] Her example underscores that what is critical is not how much power you have but the courageous, strategic, and creative use of your power.

Courage is needed to tap the internal strength to cross a boundary, raise an issue, and challenge a group. It is the willingness to make an intervention, to stand and be counted, and to engage in the work of change, particularly when others are hesitating, resisting, or fleeing. Strategy is needed to have a sense of when to intervene and where to intervene. It is needed to figure out when to provoke and when to evoke; to know when to move forward and when to be still; and to figure out who to partner with and who to avoid. And, creativity is needed to get attention. People are overwhelmed with so many activities and obligations. The change agent must intervene into a sea of competing concerns and often conflicting priorities to generate engagement and trigger a positive reaction and interest.

Are there people today providing effective leadership for a fractured world? Absolutely. Many people—with and without formal positional authority—are helping groups, companies, and communities address deep fissures, transcend differences, and tackle their toughest challenges.

Consider the fearless leadership of Malala Yousafzai, the teenager who was shot by the Taliban for promoting girls' right to go to school in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Today she is a powerful advocate for the education of girls all over the world.

In Barranquilla, Colombia, Manuel María Márquez, an ordinary citizen, is crossing boundaries to mobilize the civil society and the business community to work together to reduce government corruption; to build an educated, responsible citizenry; and to create a globally competitive city that provides equal opportunity for all and not just for the elites.

Some outstanding CEOs also personify this new form of leadership—men and women who are reinventing what it means to be in business and ensuring their companies are global in mindset and practice and can still create "delightful experiences" for the consumer in whatever part of the world they might be. Jeff Bezos at Amazon and Hiroshi Mikitani at Rakuten in Japan are examples of such change agent CEOs.

As a UN diplomat, Sérgio Vieira de Mello was the embodiment of the global change agent in his work rebuilding Lebanon, Cambodia, Kosovo, East Timor, and assisting a broken Iraq until his untimely death at the hands of terrorists in 2003. In terms of wielding faith and spirituality to help people cross deep divides, Pope Francis and the Dalai Lama are nothing short of remarkable.

Some of the most dynamic leadership, however, can be seen by mayors in cities and towns throughout the world who must be local change agents to create more cosmopolitan and globally oriented cities. One example is Joko Widodo, the former mayor of Surakarta, Indonesia. Rather than try to force change, as many other mayors had done, Widodo worked tirelessly with diverse groups to resolve practical problems the city faced. For one challenge, the city had a plan to relocate thousands of street vendors—some of the city's poorest residents—to designated locations. Widodo had more than 150 meetings with community members, city officials, bankers, and the street vendors themselves over four

years, to learn about the complexity of the challenge, discover the aspirations of the varied groups, and to co-generate a workable solution. By virtue of Widodo's leadership in transitioning the initially resistant vendors successfully into the urban economic system, they now have government-provided carts and kiosks, free business licenses, sanitation training and support, and easy access to banks and lending cooperatives for finance to grow their businesses. The solution also resulted in a cleaner city, a reduction in traffic congestion and sanitation problems, and satisfied street vendors who now enjoyed better facilities and greater profits.[19] In 2014, Widodo, the former furniture businessman and mayor, was elected president of Indonesia. The hope is that he can do for his country what he did for his city.

In the following chapters, I will present the principles for exercising leadership and being a global change agent—principles derived from my interviews with or observations of the change agents just mentioned, and many more. Before you can fully engage in boundary work, however, you must diagnose the nature of the adaptive challenge and determine where groups are stuck—the topic of the next chapter.