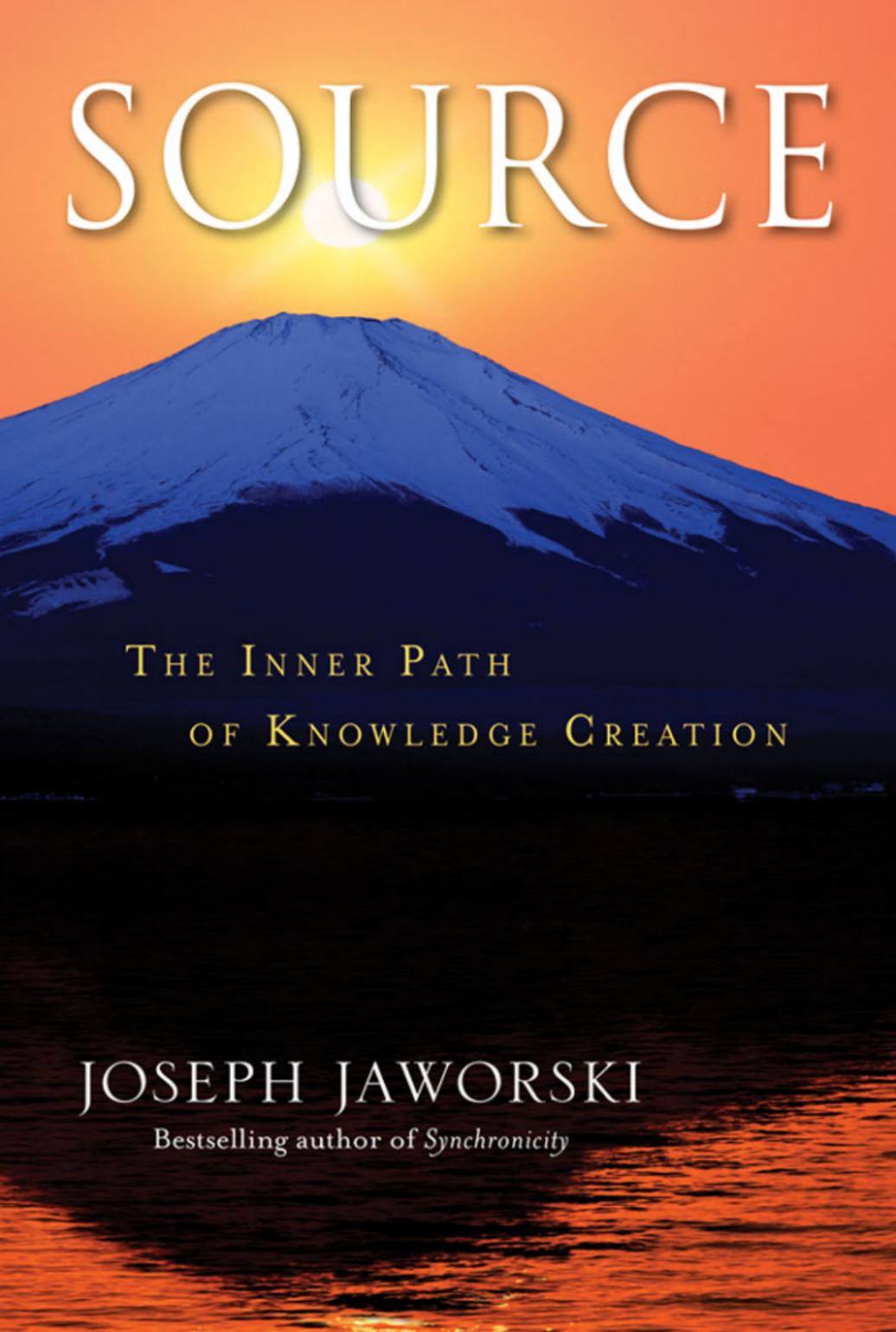


SOURCE



THE INNER PATH
OF KNOWLEDGE CREATION

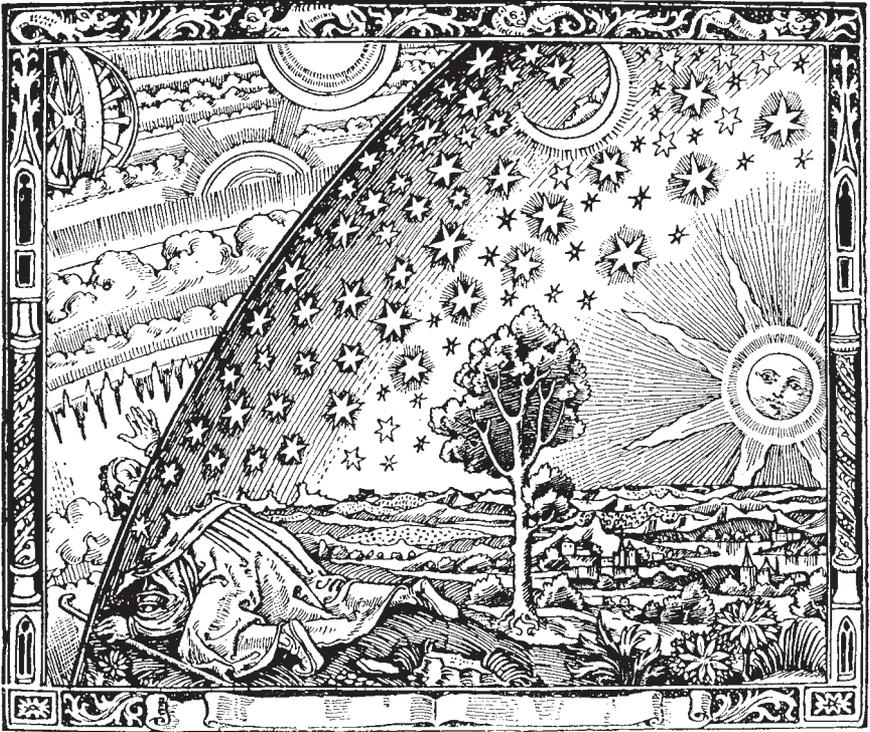
JOSEPH JAWORSKI

Bestselling author of *Synchronicity*

An Excerpt From

Source:
The Inner Path of Knowledge Creation

by Joseph Jaworski
Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers



FOUR PRINCIPLES

1. There is an open and emergent quality to the universe.

A group of simple components can suddenly reemerge at a higher level of self-organization as a new entity with new properties.

We can't find a cause or reason for this emergent quality, but as we experience it again and again, we see that the universe offers infinite possibility.

2. The universe is a domain of undivided wholeness; both the material world and consciousness are parts of the same undivided whole.

The totality of existence is enfolded within each fragment of space and time – whether it is a single object, thought, or event.

Thus, everything in the universe, including human intentions and ways of being, affects everything else, because everything is part of the same unbroken whole.

3. There is a creative Source of infinite potential enfolded in the universe.

Connection to this Source leads to the emergence of new realities – discovery, creation, renewal, and transformation. We are partners in the unfolding of the universe.

4. Humans can learn to draw from the infinite potential of the Source by choosing to follow a disciplined path toward self-realization and love, the most powerful energy in the universe.

The path may include teachings from ancient traditions developed over thousands of years, contemplative practices, and direct exposure to the generative process of nature.

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INTRODUCTION

THE CAPACITY TO SENSE AND ACTUALIZE EMERGING FUTURES

IN DISCOVERING OUR OWN PURPOSE AND MEANING, WE ENRICH MEANING IN THE UNIVERSE – WE CREATE SOMETHING OF SIGNIFICANCE THAT HAS NOT BEEN THERE. WE ARE PART OF IT, AND IT IS PART OF US. WE ARE PARTNERS IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSE.

Beginning in 1973, with my country in the throes of a leadership crisis that came to be known as “Watergate” and with my personal life entering its own crisis, I began a journey of discovery that I chronicled in *Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership*.

Soon after the book was published, readers began asking me questions about fundamental aspects of the lessons I had learned from my direct experiences. The truth is, I couldn’t answer them. At times, as I would conduct workshops and work in client systems, I felt I was like a lawyer “practicing without a license.” There were missing pieces to the “whole” I just couldn’t articulate. Sometimes I felt I was coming close to knowing – I was gaining tacit knowledge, but I couldn’t give voice to it.

Some of the readers asked me to explore with them the subject of society’s belief systems – our internal image of reality. As I later understood, they were asking me about metaphysics, the philosophy of being and knowing. Metaphysics was far beyond anything I had considered up to that moment. All I knew was that what I was describing

fit my direct experience – and the direct experience of hundreds of readers who were contacting me saying, “Now I know I’m not crazy.”

All of these questions and my own growth eventually led me to embark on a whole new search to understand the fundamental principles underlying these experiences. Ultimately, I came to realize that the drive to learn and know our fundamental nature is a basic human need. Metaphysics formats and enables experience, and, in turn, molds scientific, social, and individual reality. It provides a description of human experience that satisfies a deep longing within us. The mathematician, physicist, and philosopher, H. Dean Brown, in answer to the question, “What is the use of metaphysics?” replied, “We become what we behold.”

The futurist Willis Harman once said to me, “By deliberately changing the internal image of reality, people can change the world. Indeed,” he added, “the real fundamental changes in societies have come about not from dictates of governments and the results of battles, but through vast numbers of people changing their minds.”

Since the publication of the first edition of *Synchronicity*, I’ve been searching for the principles that lie at the heart of what I described there – the capacity we have to sense and actualize emerging futures and to shape the future instead of simply responding to the forces at large. What is the *source* of our capacity to access the knowledge for action we need in the moment? How can we learn to enable that capacity, individually and collectively?

The answers to these questions were slowly revealed to me over a fifteen-year period. Because I now feel adequate to be explicit about what I’ve learned, I’ve written this book: *Source: The Inner Path of Knowledge Creation*. In it, I’ve attempted not only to tell the story of my quest for the principles that form the basis of my experiences as described in *Synchronicity*, but also to understand the nature of what I have called – for lack of a better term – “the Source,” or sometimes, depending on the context, “Source.”

By its very nature, the Source cannot be defined. The physicist David Bohm told me that “the reality which is most immediate to us cannot be stated.” And Robert Jahn and Brenda Dunne, two scientists whom I interviewed for this book, said:

. . . there exists a much deeper and more extensive source of reality, which is largely insulated from direct human experience, representation, or even comprehension. It is a domain that has long been posited and contemplated by metaphysicians and theologians, Jungian and Jamesian psychologists, philosophers of science, and a few contemporary progressive theoretical physicists, all struggling to grasp and to represent its essence and its function. A variety of provincial labels have been applied, such as “Tao,” “Qi,” “prana,” “void,” “Akashic record,” “Unus Mundi,” “unknowable substratum,” “terra incognita,” “archetypal field,” “hidden order,” “aboriginal sensible muchness,” “implicate order,” “zero-point vacuum,” “ontic (or ontological) level,” “undivided timeless primordial reality,” among many others, none of which fully captures the sublimely elusive nature of this domain. In earlier papers we called it the “subliminal seed regime,” but for our present purposes we shall henceforth refer to it as the “Source.”

While it cannot be defined, Source can be experienced. The first time I experienced it was during a tornado I describe in the prologue to this book. My quest since then has not been for a definition but for an understanding of how we can have a connection to it – how we can engage in a deep dialogue with it. Dialogue with the Source leads to the kind of creativity associated with the most successful entrepreneurial undertakings. Action based on such “primary knowing” can be “shockingly effective.”

This fifteen-year journey covered a long and winding path during which a colleague and I were inspired to explore what we later developed as a “U-process” for accessing emerging futures. The exploration of the U-theory led to our writing *Presence: An Exploration of Profound Change in People, Organizations, and Society*.

But the work with the U-process and our thinking about the U-theory left me dissatisfied. Real transformation, it seemed to me, occurred at what I began to call “the bottom of the U” and involved something beyond what we were doing – something we didn’t really understand. I began calling it “the Source.” A leader’s ability to access this Source often made the difference between success and failure, as I learned in a painful way when a large pilot project failed. At this juncture, my road diverged from that of my colleagues, and I began the journey that has led to this book.

At the heart of what I discovered during my journey to understand Source are four principles, which I've described preceding this introduction. While I have attempted to state these principles as simply and succinctly as I can, exploring them and how they were developed is part of the story I tell in this book – and truly understanding them deeply will take me the rest of my lifetime.

In the process of this search, I gave serious consideration to the Western scientific-materialistic worldview – our underlying belief system, which has prevailed in the West for over two hundred years. I believe that this belief system is no longer adequate for the issues our society is facing; that an historic shift is now occurring; and that a more comprehensive worldview is emerging. Institutions can play a leading role in enabling this emerging worldview.

At the time *Synchronicity* was published, the most admired institutions were led by what Robert Greenleaf described as “servant leaders.” Scott Peck has referred to these as “Stage III” leaders. But I believe that a more advanced generation of institutions must be led by what I call “Stage IV” leaders. Stage IV leaders embody the characteristics and values of servant leaders, but have matured to a more comprehensive and subtle level of development. They exhibit a capacity for extraordinary functioning and performance. At the heart of this kind of performance is a capacity for accessing tacit knowing that can be used for breakthrough thinking, strategy formation, and innovation, including envisioning and creating the kind of institution or society we desire.

Stage IV leaders believe that there is an underlying intelligence within the universe, which is capable of guiding us and preparing us for the futures we must create. They combine their cognitive understanding of the world around them with a strong personal sense of possibility – the possibility of actualizing hidden potentials lying dormant in the universe, a view that carries with it the power to change the world as we know it.

Institutions guided by this quality of leadership, from line leaders to the very top, will, in my view, flourish in the decades to come. Because of their success, these institutions will become living examples of what is possible in the face of accelerating complexity and high turbulence. Operating from this new worldview, these living examples can play a major role in shifting the prevailing belief system.

In discovering our own purpose and meaning – whether of our institutions or of our own personal lives – we enrich meaning in the universe. We create something significant that has not been there. We are part of it, and it is part of us. We are partners in the evolution of the universe.

I hope that *Source* will serve your own path toward higher stages of growth and development – and that it will also serve the leadership of your institution and of society as a whole.

PROLOGUE

*YOU HAVE CAPACITIES WITHIN YOU THAT ARE PHENOMENAL,
IF YOU ONLY KNEW HOW TO RELEASE THEM.*

– David Bohm

It was Monday, May 11, 1953. I was eighteen years old and a freshman at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, which then had a population of 85,000 people. I was in my dormitory room, alone, completing an essay due later that week. By around 4:30 that afternoon, the sky had turned dark. It had been raining hard for a couple of hours, but now the rain was coming down in sheets, and the wind was picking up. All of a sudden it was as if a hundred freight trains were roaring through my room. It lasted only seconds, but I was stunned. “My God – what was that?” Within minutes the rain subsided to a light drizzle.

Without really thinking, I put on a windbreaker and baseball cap and ventured out. I was not making a deliberate decision to go. I just found myself heading in the direction of downtown, not stopping to assess the risk of walking among all the live electrical lines that were strewn across the streets. There was no one on the streets – no cars – no one in sight.

I passed near Katy Park where the local Texas League baseball team played. The park had essentially disappeared, collapsed in on itself. I could see only one wall standing. I noticed a building nearby that was cut in half, as if by a great meat cleaver. I walked directly up to the center of town, the corner of Fifth and Austin, where the six-story R. T. Dennis Building was located. That was a furniture store that covered most of a city block and was across the corner from Chris’s Café, where I often had dinner.

As it turned out, that corner – Fifth and Austin – was the epicenter of a deadly tornado. As I approached the corner, I was astonished to see that the Dennis Building had vanished. In its place was a towering heap of rubble. The vacuum created from the tornado had blown the walls outward, causing all six stories to collapse onto one another, falling into the basement. The walls of bricks had flattened the cars in the street beside the building, and the cars themselves were buried under five-to-six feet of bricks. The café and the Palace Club, the pool hall next door where I had often hung out, had also disappeared. They were just an enormous pile of rubble, fifteen-to-twenty feet high.

I learned later that the destruction I saw was the result of the deadliest tornado in Texas history and one of the ten worst ever recorded in US history. The 300-mile-per-hour winds had left a twenty-three-mile path of destruction, including 114 dead and over 1,200 injured.



I was one of the first few people on the scene. There was an eerie silence pervading that corner. The few people who were standing around were stunned, in shock. Within just minutes, about a half dozen of us self-organized into a team and began the first stages of a search-and-rescue effort. A doctor was nearby, helping to guide us. We worked as a team in that particular area through the night and into the midday Tuesday, doing our best to locate and dig out survivors. Within minutes of arriving, I found one person in the rubble. We dug her out, and as I held her in my arms, taking her to the place the doctor was designating as a field hospital, he examined her and quickly said, “She’s gone. Let’s make this the morgue. Over here will be the field hospital.”

It was a delicate operation. We patiently dismantled the debris piece by piece. We worked as a team in that particular area through the night, using flashlights and gloves that had been brought to the scene. The police, using bullhorns, directed everyone not involved in the search and rescue away from the area.

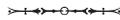
Within an hour or so of my arrival, help from the nearby Connally Air Force Base came. And by 2:30 that morning, heavy equipment had arrived – but where we were working, it was useless, even dangerous. As we found survivors, we had to be exceedingly careful not to allow

the debris to shift and crush them. Eventually, we dug out a number of survivors and recovered twenty-nine bodies from the café and pool hall area.

Our little team stayed intact the entire time. While we worked together, I experienced a palpable energy field surrounding us. My sense of awareness was acute. I possessed an uncanny clarity, a sort of panoramic knowing. Time slowed down. We were able to perform very difficult tasks with apparent ease. We would accomplish something so extraordinary, I would “look over my shoulder,” so as to speak, and wonder “How in the world did we accomplish that?” Yet in the moment, it seemed so natural. It was almost effortless, yet we were exerting a supreme effort. We operated as a “single intelligence” – as one organism – with exceedingly high coherence.

We self-organized from the very beginning. Leadership on the team shifted seamlessly in the moment, as required. I was acting without conscious awareness or control, doing tasks without the sense that I was personally performing them. It was as if we were being used as instruments to accomplish what we must. But most of all, I was struck by the deeper level of knowing that I embodied. My premonitions were consistently correct. During those hours, we had the strength, courage, endurance, and internal resources we needed.

Only when our task was done did exhaustion begin to set in. It was early Tuesday afternoon, and we all paused to say goodbye. Nothing was said about what we had all experienced – it was not necessary. It was clear that we all felt it. The true trust and connection remained palpable.



In the days after the tragedy, I took time to reflect on all that I had experienced. At that stage of my development, I barely knew how to think about it at all. At one level, the whole experience seemed dreamlike. But at another level, I was aware that it would deeply inform the rest of my life.

As I grew and developed over the years, my understanding grew as well. That understanding was heightened by similar experiences, enabling me to glimpse the essence of what had occurred in Waco over those few hours. One experience occurred a few years later when my best

friend saved my life by picking the front of a jeep up off my chest after an accident. The energy field I had felt after the tornado and the sense of deep connection was present at that time. Other instances occurred among our law firm's teams when we were in the midst of trying a difficult lawsuit, particularly one where our client was the underdog, and we were trying to redress a great injustice.

Over time, the feeling grew within me that I needed to search for *the source* of these kinds of collective experiences and to determine how to have access to them without a crisis – how to harness this phenomenon in organizational settings for the benefit of all society. By the time I had practiced as a litigator for twenty years, the need to learn more grew so present within me and the crisis of leadership in the country seemed so acute that I decided to leave the practice of law.

Two days after leaving my law firm, I met the great physicist, David Bohm, who taught me that there is a creative Source of infinite potential – the “implicate order” – enfolded in the explicate order, or manifest universe. What I learned that day altered my worldview forever, creating the opening for all that occurred afterward. Just a week after meeting Dr. Bohm, I flew to Houston to form the American Leadership Forum.

During the Leadership Forum years, I began to realize there is a deep hunger for the experience of oneness and for being used for something greater than ourselves. I began to understand that being used in this way is what it means to be human. This is why the experience of being part of a team that is acting as one consciousness in relation to something larger than the individual members stands out as a singular moment in people's lives. Some – like me – spend the rest of their lives looking for ways to recapture the *spirit* of that experience. And others – also like me – spend years attempting to understand the nature of that experience. What is the *Source* of our capacity to access the knowledge for action we need at the moment?

This book is the story of my quest to answer that question.

1. THE SOURCE OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL IMPULSE – THE QUEST BEGINS

*WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL IMPULSE? WHAT
IS THE SOURCE OF OUR CAPACITY TO ACCESS THE KNOWLEDGE FOR
ACTION WE NEED AT THE MOMENT?*

In the spring of 1998, I was sitting in the back row of a large auditorium in the Shell Learning Center at the Woodlands just north of Houston. Eighteen months earlier, Shell Oil Company (the then-autonomous unit of the Royal Dutch Shell Group of Companies), Texaco, Inc., and Saudi Aramco had announced their intention to form an alliance of all their refining, distribution, and marketing (their “downstream” operations) in the United States. The “Alliance” would be the largest downstream organization in the world, with annual revenues approaching \$40 billion. The Alliance hired Generon, a firm I had cofounded, to help develop its senior leadership and to assist in the integration of the units into a cohesive whole.

On that spring day, about 250 senior officers, who were members of the transition team, had gathered for the kickoff of the new venture. The chief operating officer of Texaco, Glenn Tilton, gave the opening remarks. In those remarks, Tilton identified the greatest challenge facing the Alliance – how to compete effectively with the newer and more nimble entrepreneurial downstream operators that had appeared in the marketplace in the last five years.

“We in this room have been operating in major oil companies as ‘elephants.’ But starting next week, we’re going to have to act as ‘gazelles’

– to become true entrepreneurs – or we won't be in the phone book in five years.”

You could have heard a pin drop. Tilton continued, “We've got to rise to the occasion – but, to be honest – I'm not sure how to begin. I'm counting on each of you to help figure this out. We've got our work cut out for us in more ways than we can ever imagine.”

In that instant, the question flashed before me: “What is the *Source* of the entrepreneurial impulse? What is the *Source* of our capacity to access the knowledge for action we need at the moment?”

Although I didn't know the answer, I *absolutely knew* there were important hidden implications I would discover if I stayed committed. In that very instant, my energy completely shifted, as if an internal rheostat had been turned up to the maximum.

I had an utter lack of self-concern, a sense of complete freedom, and a sense of overwhelming urgency. Nothing else mattered to me but to follow this opening, even if I didn't fully understand why.

And that's what I did for the next ten years.

2. A DEEPER REGION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

FOR THE BIG DECISIONS IN LIFE, YOU NEED TO REACH A DEEPER REGION OF
CONSCIOUSNESS. MAKING DECISIONS THEN BECOMES NOT SO MUCH ABOUT
'DECIDING' AS ABOUT LETTING AN INNER WISDOM EMERGE.

– Brian Arthur

As the session broke up, I found the chief learning officer, Gary Jusela, and, over a three-hour lunch, described to him the opening I saw – to develop a process whereby teams could sense the way the future wants to unfold, and to enable that unfolding. I felt that teams could guide this process by their intention, their way of being, and their choices. I told him we would be on a search for the process by which transformational breakthroughs in any field occur, the creation of knowledge that changes the world as we know it. Gary instantly understood what I was talking about.

The next morning, we went to see Jim Morgan, the joint CEO of the Alliance. I reminded Jim of Tilton's remarks and of the challenges he had laid down to the senior leaders. I said, "Jim, I can help you develop the *entrepreneurial impulse* in your people. I need eight months to finish the research, develop the process, and run a pilot. We can create a leadership laboratory, a learning environment that can help these managers 'act like gazelles,' enabling them to create significant new growth platforms for the Alliance and to significantly improve their operational performance." Right there, on the spot, Jim gave Gary and me the green light.

The following day, I flew home to Boston and hired C. Otto Scharmer, who was studying with Peter Senge, with whom I was working at the

MIT Organizational Learning Center, recently reorganized and named The Society of Organizational Learning (SoL). In designing the research agenda, Otto and I decided to seek out and interview at least fifty of the most remarkable thinkers and practitioners in the field of innovation, discovery, high performance, and entrepreneurship. We agreed it would be my responsibility to tap the network I had been building since my founding of the American Leadership Forum at the beginning of the 1980s.

That same week, I developed a list of the first twenty people we would see. At the top of the list was Srikumar Rao, who conceived the pioneering course at Columbia Business School, “Creativity and Personal Mastery,” and Michael Ray, Professor of Creativity and Innovation at Stanford University’s Graduate School of Business. Another was a noted psychologist, Michael Lipson, Chief Psychologist at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, who had recently been designated by the family of Abraham Maslow to be his authorized biographer and in the process had been given sole access to Maslow’s personal diaries.

Late one night at the office, I created the prioritized list. When I had finished, I packed my briefcase and was on my way out the door when I glanced over at a table in the hallway and noticed a magazine. Its title read *Fast Company*. On pure impulse, I picked it up and flipped it open. There was a sidebar article about a brief conversation the editor Anna Muoio had had with W. Brian Arthur, a pioneer of the new science of complexity. Arthur had also played an instrumental role in establishing the Santa Fe Institute in 1987, when he was teaching at Stanford. The institute was founded by several of the major figures of twentieth-century science, including Kenneth Arrow (economics), Murray Gell-Mann (physics), and Phillip Anderson (physics), all Nobel laureates, along with George A. Cowan, the former head of research at Los Alamos who had worked in the bomb laboratory until, at age sixty-three, he set out to forge “the sciences of the twenty-first century.” In Arthur’s own words, the mission of the Santa Fe Institute was for science as a whole to achieve a kind of “redemption and rebirth.” Brian was invited by Arrow and Anderson to be the first director of the interdisciplinary economics program at the institute in 1988.

The article in *Fast Company* recounted Arthur's early training in operations research, which is a highly scientific, mathematical method of strategy formation and decision making. "I once thought," Arthur was quoted as saying, "that I could make any decisions, whether professional or personal, by using decision trees, game theory, and optimization. Over time, I've changed my mind."

Arthur said that for the day-to-day work of running a business – scheduling a fleet of oil tankers, choosing where to open a new factory – scientific decision theory works pretty well. But "for the big decisions in life, you need to reach a deeper region of consciousness. Making decisions then becomes not so much about 'deciding' as about letting an *inner wisdom* emerge." [Emphasis added.] He concluded the interview by noting, "This approach to decision making requires time, patience, and another key ingredient: courage. It takes courage to listen to your inner wisdom. But once you hear that wisdom, making a decision becomes fairly easy."

The words "deeper region of consciousness" and "inner wisdom" leapt out at me. Brian Arthur had rocketed to the very top of my list. In that moment, I knew that I needed to start with the Santa Fe Institute and proceed from there.

3. BIRTH OF THE U-THEORY

IN A SENSE, THERE IS NO DECISION-MAKING. WHAT YOU DO JUST BECOMES OBVIOUS. A TOTALLY DIFFERENT SET OF RULES APPLIES.

– Brian Arthur

A week later, Otto and I were in New York, seeing Professor Rao and Dr. Lipson, and the following week, we were in Palo Alto, meeting with Professor Ray. We were in a car near Menlo Park when my business partner, Susan Taylor, called me. She had located Brian Arthur at Xerox PARC and learned that he was writing a book and wasn't taking any meetings. Susan informed me that I was going to have to call Brian directly.

I called immediately and managed to get through to him, introducing myself and explaining our project. When I said that we needed two hours of his time for an interview, he politely declined, explaining he was working on a new book and wasn't taking appointments. I pressed him, telling him of the others who had agreed to see us. There was silence on the other end for a moment – then he said, “Okay, you can come by this afternoon for a couple of hours at two o'clock.”

I immediately called Gary Jusela and told him of the importance of this meeting. To this day, I don't completely understand why I did that, except to say I was operating spontaneously from a deeper source, without conscious thought or control.

Gary, to his credit, said, “If it's that important, I'm going to be there. Postpone the meeting until tomorrow morning. I'll catch the red-eye and meet you at Xerox PARC.”

That next morning, Dr. Arthur was extremely cordial. He introduced us to John Seely Brown, the director of Xerox PARC, showed us all

around, and took us to the large conference room. We set up the recorder and explained to Dr. Arthur that I would lead the interview.

He settled back in his chair and said, “Good. Now, what can I tell you about increasing returns?”

I hesitated for a moment and said, “No, Dr. Arthur. We’re here to talk about the source of the entrepreneurial impulse – how to sense and actualize emerging futures.” I showed him the *Fast Company* article and said, “This is what led us to you.”

He glanced at it, and then there was a long silence in the room. He grew quiet. Finally, Arthur said, “This is not what I expected – it’s going to take much longer than we had planned.” He then asked us to be extremely protective of the audiotape – that this conversation would involve personal reflections he had shared with no one else.

From that moment, the atmosphere in the conference room shifted in an unmistakable way. We were together in dialogue with Arthur almost five hours, and over this time, the energy field became palpable, just as it had during the crisis in Waco. I felt completely connected to Arthur, as if we were joined together by the same umbilical cord.

Since that day, Brian Arthur and I have spoken about this phenomenon many times, even using the word “sacred” – a time when all of us felt deeply committed to one another in a singular way. It was as if we were acting together as agents to deliver important new knowledge into the world. For me, it was the fulfillment of the promise I had made in the back of the auditorium at the Woodlands – an important moment in a decade-long journey that ended with the writing of this book, *Source*.

Then Arthur began to outline the *process* for tapping into this source – what he called “knowing.” He said, “This inner knowing comes from here,” pointing to his heart. “In a sense, there is no decision making,” he said. “What you do just becomes obvious. A totally different set of rules applies. You hang back. You’re more like a surfer or a really good racecar driver. You don’t act out of deduction, you act out of an inner feeling; you’re not even thinking.”

Arthur described the process to us in unmistakable terms, explaining that it entails three major stages or “elements.” The first thing you do, he said, is “observe, observe, observe.” This kind of intense observation “might take days, or hours, or fractions of a second as in martial arts

or sports”; then you “reflect and retreat – allow the inner knowing to emerge.” Finally, he said, you “act swiftly, with a natural flow.”

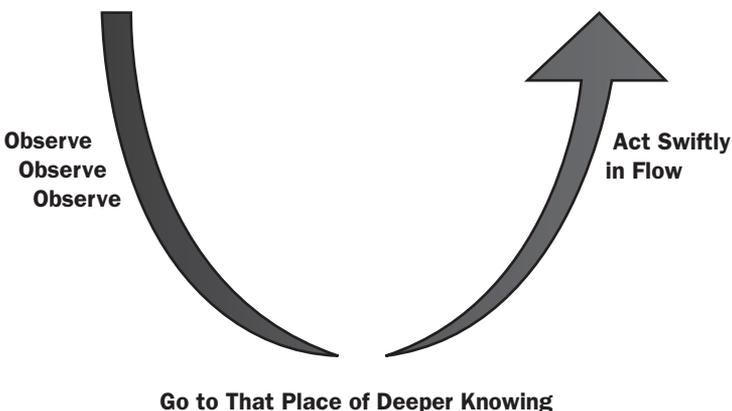
The conversation around each of these three elements went deeper and deeper as the hours passed. There were long periods of silence where we all four sat absorbed in the moment – experiencing the depth of the field surrounding us. We were communicating on a different plane. It was unmistakable, powerful, and deeply moving.

Arthur spent a good part of the final two hours of our dialogue describing in great detail the daily work he did with his Taoist teacher in Hong Kong from 1988 to 1992. He went back and forth to Hong Kong during those years, learning and perfecting the practices that helped him gain access to that “place of deeper knowing.” He had then returned to his home in northern California and continued his study with the pioneering ecologist, explorer, and educator, John Milton. Milton himself had trained for decades with Tibetan Buddhist and Taoist masters. As it turned out, both Arthur and John became two of my closest friends and guides, and both played key roles in my life in the following years.

The dialogue at Xerox PARC ended with my committing to reconnect with Brian as soon as reasonably possible.

When we walked from the building and got into our car, we all three sat in silence. I was in the driver’s seat, and finally looked to Otto who sat next to me. “This is the Holy Grail,” I said. “Brian just gave us the very essence of what we’ve been seeking!”

Brian Arthur’s U-Process



Then with a sense of high excitement, Otto pulled a tablet from his briefcase and said, “Look – we can model Brian’s three elements along a ‘U.’”

We drew the first U-process model right there in the parking lot of Xerox PARC, a three-stage sequence around a big “U” on the tablet. On the left side of the U, we wrote “Observe, observe, observe.” At the bottom of the U, we wrote “Go to that place of deeper knowing.” And on the right side of the U: “Act swiftly in flow.”

And with that, we had a preliminary understanding of the core process we had promised Jim Morgan – a process by which transformational breakthroughs in any field occur, the creation of knowledge that changes the world as we know it.

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