IN SEARCH OF AUTHENTICITY: SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP THEORY AS A SOURCE FOR FUTURE THEORY, RESEARCH, AND PRACTICE ON AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the emerging theory of authentic leadership is examined and extended using spiritual leadership theory and legacy leadership theory. Expanding the borders on authentic leadership requires a focus on three key issues: (1) achieving consensus on universal or consensus values that are necessary, though not sufficient, for authentic leadership; (2) the role of authentic leadership in achieving congruent and consistent values, attitudes, and behavior across the individual, group, and organizational levels; and (3) the personal outcomes or rewards of authentic leadership. Together, spiritual and legacy leadership theories address these issues and provide insights for authentic leadership theory, research, and practice.
INTRODUCTION

The latest rash of corporate scandals has awakened our collective consciousness to the fact that self-interest unchecked by moral reasoning and obligation results in a destructive greed. This greed not only destroys the lives of the executives that are driven by it to ethical compromise, but ultimately impacts thousands of innocent individuals as the outcomes trickle down corporate hierarchies, spilling over into communities, and crashing through families.

The tragedies of Enron, WorldCom, Tyco, and Arthur Anderson raised awareness that perhaps the most powerful group in modern society is corporate executives. This realization led May (2001) to include corporate executives among his "beleaguered rulers," the various professionals that wield enormous power in contemporary society. Because they wield such power, he believes that it is imperative that we "examine directly the moral underpinnings of the market place and the moral status of corporate leaders within it" (May, 2001, p. 131). Yet, the call for new standards of integrity and accountability extends beyond those who hold formal positions of leadership. May (2001) extends this call to all modern professionals including medical doctors, lawyers, engineers, politicians, media professionals, ministers, and professors.

The recent headlines have sharpened the outcry for a new standard of integrity and public accountability. Authentic leadership (Luthans & Avolio, 2003) is emerging as one response to this call for higher standards of character and integrity. Authentic leadership is based on the tenets of positive psychology and seeks to find an avenue to move organizations, communities, and societies forward by focusing on what is right with people and building on their strengths. Thus, positive psychology contrasts with individual and organizational interventions that focus on what is wrong with people and their weaknesses (Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

In this chapter, the linkages between the emerging theory of authentic leadership and spiritual leadership theory (SLT) are examined. The central premise or argument is that expanding the borders on authentic leadership perspectives requires a focus on three key issues (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Price, 2003; Singh & Krishnan, 2002): (1) achieving consensus on universal or consensus values that are necessary (but not sufficient) for authentic leadership; (2) the role of authentic leadership in achieving value congruence and consistency of values, attitudes, and behavior across the individual, group, and organizational levels; and (3) the personal outcomes or rewards of authentic leadership. Finally, to enhance...
our understanding of authentic leadership and address the limitations of existing models, legacy leadership is offered as a more specific model within the spiritual leadership paradigm (Fry, 2003, 2005a, b; Malone & Fry, 2003; Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005). Both spiritual leadership and legacy theory (1) speak to the key issues listed above and (2) have the potential for guiding future theory development, research, and practice of authentic leadership.

AUTHENTIC LEADERS DEFINED

Authentic leaders are characterized as hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and transparent. These leaders are described as moral/ethical, future-oriented individuals who make the development of others a priority. By being true to their own values and acting in ways that are consistent with those values, authentic leaders develop their associates into leaders themselves. Luthans and Avolio (2003) have identified several “proactive positive characteristics” that further define authentic leadership. According to Luthans and Avolio (2003), authentic leaders operate from a set of end values that focuses their behavior on doing what they perceive to be right for those they lead.

Because they are value centered, these leaders seek to reduce any existing gaps between their espoused values and their enacted values. This attempt to reduce any existing credibility gaps (Kouzes & Posner, 2003) requires authentic leaders to be aware of potential vulnerabilities and transparent enough to allow discussion of these areas with their followers. Authentic leaders also are willing to be the first mover, taking the lead even when there is great personal risk in doing so. By doing so, these leaders model a hopeful confidence in the future. Finally, authentic leaders have developed the capacity to examine moral dilemmas from several perspectives and make moral judgment calls when confronted with issues that do not have a clear solution.

In contrast to these qualities, many leaders who are driven to achieve, often skip or short cut the hard work of character development and the cultivation of self-awareness that characterizes authentic leaders. By doing so, these leaders can be very destructive (George, 2004). While they may manifest similar external behaviors, these leaders are not operating from the same value-centered foundation that authentic leaders operate from. These leaders are inauthentic or pseudo-authentic leaders. They attempt to mask their inadequacies, concentrate on cultivating an image or persona and
close themselves off from, rather than opening up to others (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Price, 2003). In the long run, this serves to foster mistrust and a sense of disconnection with followers and, ultimately, has a negative impact on personal, team, and organizational outcomes. Contrastingly, authentic leadership requires one to constantly reduce the gap between intended and perceived communication as the leader communicates his or her values as well as the organization’s values every day in personal interaction with customers, employees and other key stakeholders. This requires that you know yourself authentically, listen authentically, express yourself authentically, appreciate authentically, and serve authentically (Cashman, 1998).

To date, it appears that there are still differing perspectives around the conception of authentic leadership. This is to be expected during the early phases of construct definition and theory development (Hunt, 1999). If authentic leadership is to provide an explicitly moral model for leaders, it must transcend the self and be anchored in a set of universal values. In order to do this, the borders of existing authentic leadership perspectives may need to be revised.

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP THEORY

Authentic leadership requires leaders to act from a set of internal values that are consistent with their attitudes and behavior (Fry, 2005a). Although recent formulations of authentic leadership theory certainly articulate that such leaders are centered on moral values, a deeper examination of the values underlying authentic leadership is worthwhile at this early stage in the theory development. To be truly authentic, leaders must act from a normative set of values and attitudes that are anchored in a set of universally accepted principles. The emerging spiritual leadership paradigm offers an alternative for the development of authentic leadership theory and practice (Fry, 2005b).

Fry (2003) developed a causal theory of spiritual leadership based on vision, altruistic love and hope/faith that is grounded in an intrinsic motivation theory. Spiritual leadership taps into the fundamental needs of both leader and follower for spiritual survival through calling – a sense that one’s life has meaning and makes a difference – and membership – a sense that one is understood, appreciated, and accepted unconditionally (Fleischman, 1994; Maddock & Fulton, 1998). The purpose of spiritual leadership is to create vision and value congruence across the individual, empowered
team, and organization levels and, ultimately, foster higher levels of both organizational commitment and productivity. This entails:

1. Creating a vision where organization members experience a sense of calling in that their life has meaning and makes a difference;
2. Establishing a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others, have a sense of membership, and feel understood and appreciated.

To summarize the posited relationships among the variables of the causal model of spiritual leadership (see Figs. 1 and 2), “doing what it takes” through faith in a clear, compelling vision produces a sense of calling – that part of spiritual survival that gives one a sense of making a difference and, therefore, that one’s life has meaning. Hope/faith adds belief, conviction, trust, and action for performance of the work to achieve the vision. SLT proposes that hope/faith in the organization’s vision keeps followers looking forward to the future and provides the desire and positive expectation that fuels effort through intrinsic motivation.

Altruistic love is given unconditionally upon entry into the organization and is received in turn from followers in pursuit of a common vision that drives out and removes fears associated with worry, anger, jealousy, selfishness, failure, and guilt and gives one a sense of membership – that part of spiritual survival that results in an awareness of being understood and appreciated. Thus, spiritual leadership is an intrinsic motivation cycle based on vision (performance), altruistic love (reward), and hope/faith (effort) that

![Diagram of the causal model of spiritual leadership theory](image-url)

*Fig. 1.* Causal Model of Spiritual Leadership Theory (Fry, 2003, 2005a).
results in an increase in one’s sense of spiritual survival (e.g., calling and membership). Ultimately, positive organizational outcomes are posited to arise from spiritual leadership, such as increased:

1. Organizational commitment – People with a sense of calling and membership will become attached, loyal to, and want to stay in organizations that have cultures based on the values of altruistic love, and

2. Productivity and continuous improvement (Fairholm, 1998) – People who have hope/faith in the organization’s vision and who experience calling and membership will “Do what it takes” in pursuit of the vision to continuously improve and be more productive.

Fry (2005a) extended SLT by exploring the concept of positive human health and psychological well-being through recent developments and scientific research on workplace spirituality, character ethics, positive psychology, and spiritual leadership. These areas provide a consensus on the values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for positive human health
and psychological well-being (Fry, 2005a). Ethical well-being is defined as authentically living one’s values, attitudes, and behavior from the inside-out in creating a principled center congruent with the universal, consensus values inherent in SLT (Cashman, 1998; Covey, 1991; Fry, 2003). Because SLT anchors the leader’s individual values to a set of universal values around which there is an emerging scientific consensus, SLT, through the concept of ethical well-being, addresses the congruence deficiency seen in the existing discussions of authentic leadership.

We therefore propose that (1) ethical well-being forms the essence of authentic leadership and (2) authentic leadership is a necessary component of spiritual leadership. Furthermore, ethical well-being and authentic leadership are viewed as necessary but not sufficient for spiritual well-being. To achieve spiritual well-being, in addition to ethical well-being, requires transcendence of self as one pursues a vision/purpose/mission in service to key stakeholders that satisfies one’s need for spiritual survival.

Fry (2005a) proposed that individuals practicing spiritual leadership at the personal level will experience spiritual well-being and score high on both life satisfaction in terms of joy, peace, and serenity and the Ryff and Singer (2001) dimensions of well-being. In other words, they will experience greater psychological well-being and have fewer problems related to physical health in terms of allostatic load (cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment, declines in physical functioning, and mortality). In addition, authentic leaders will have a high regard for one’s self and one’s past life, good-quality relationships with others, a sense that life is purposeful and meaningful, the capacity to effectively manage their surrounding world, the ability to follow inner convictions, and a sense of continuing growth and self-realization.

**Spiritual Leadership and Vision and Value Congruence Across Levels**

As described earlier, the spiritual leadership process is initiated by developing a vision/mission whereby strategic leaders and/or followers can meet or exceed the expectations of key stakeholders. This vision must vividly portray a journey which, when undertaken, will give one a sense of calling – of one’s life having meaning and making a difference. The vision then forms the basis for the social construction of the organization’s culture as a learning organization and the ethical system and values underlying it. In spiritual leadership, these values are prescribed and form the basis for altruistic love (see Fig. 2). Strategic leaders then embody and abide by these values through their everyday attitudes and behavior. In doing so, they create empowered
teams where participants are challenged to persevere, be tenacious, do what it
takes, and pursue excellence and challenging goals through hope and faith in
the vision, their leaders and themselves. Supporting activities that foster the
congruence process include: (1) behavior consistent with values; (2) creating a
climate where morality and ethics are truly important; (3) legitimizing dif-
ferent viewpoints, values, and beliefs; (4) developing imagination, inspiration,
and mindfulness; (5) letting go of expectations that are unrealistic; (6)
acknowledgement of the efforts and accomplishments of others; (7) creating
organizational processes that develop the whole person – not just exploiting
current talents and strengths (Kriger & Hanson, 1999).

Empowerment is power sharing in the delegation of both power and
authority and all but symbolic responsibility to organizational followers
(Spreitzer, 1996). Empowered employees commit more of themselves to do
the job through trust in the strategic leaders and the hope and faith that
ensues from this trust. By providing employees with the knowledge to con-
tribute to the organization, the power to make consequential decisions, and
the necessary resources to do their jobs, strategic leaders provide the context
for all organizational participants to receive altruistic love. This, in turn,
forms the basis for intrinsic motivation through hope/faith in pursuit and
implementation of the organization’s vision and values in socially respon-
sible service to internal and external stakeholders. By participating in these
teams, followers gain recognition and celebration, experience a sense of
membership, and feel understood and appreciated.

Additionally, strategic leaders must provide followers with the knowledge
of how their jobs are relevant to the organization’s performance and vision/
mission. This understanding is necessary to create the cross level connection
between team and individual jobs and the organization’s vision/mission.
Through this experience, followers, too, can begin to develop, refine and
practice their own personal spiritual leadership that fosters value congru-
ence in social interaction with internal and external stakeholders and, ul-
timately, ethical and spiritual well-being.

**Personal Spiritual Leadership and Authentic Leadership**

At a personal level for both leaders and followers, it is especially impor-
tant to adhere to and practice five key spiritual practices in a continual quest
for ethical and spiritual well-being, and professional development and
effectiveness: (1) know one’s self; (2) respect and honor the beliefs of others;
(3) be as trusting as you can be; and (4) maintain a spiritual practice (e.g.,
spending time in nature, prayer, mediation, reading inspirational literature, yoga, shamanistic practices, writing in a journal) (Kurth, 2003). These spiritual practices are also necessary for development of personal spiritual leadership and, we propose, authentic leadership.

Personal spiritual leadership, by tapping into the fundamental spiritual survival dimensions of calling and membership, creates an intrinsic motivating force that elicits spontaneous, cooperative effort from people. Such leadership also makes it more likely for employees to learn, develop and use their skills and knowledge to benefit both themselves and their organizations. Through participation in self-directed, empowered teams, both leaders and followers begin to develop, refine, and practice their own personal leadership. Most importantly, it is necessary for the source of personal leadership to spring from the values underlying altruistic love that reflect a genuine care and concern for both self and others. Through visualization and positive affirmation of the values of hope/faith and altruistic love, leaders and followers at all levels in empowered teams practice personal spiritual leadership. By authentically pursuing a personal vision for their own lives through a self-motivated intrinsic process that creates a sense of calling and membership, both leaders and followers can achieve ethical and spiritual well-being and high levels of organizational commitment and productivity (see Fig. 2).

Thus, SLT specifically addresses the three critical issues raised earlier for authentic leadership in that it: (1) explicitly identifies and incorporates universal consensus values of altruistic love that are necessary for authentic leadership; (2) provides a process for achieving value congruence across the personal, empowered team, and organizational levels (see Fig. 2); and (3) predicts that authentic leaders will experience ethical well-being and, when coupled with a transcendent vision, spiritual well-being manifested as joy, peace, serenity, positive human health, and psychological well-being.

**LEGACY LEADERSHIP: A MODEL OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP**

Recently, Whittington and his associates (Whittington, Kageler, & Pitts, 2002; Whittington, Pitts, Kageler, & Goodwin, 2005) developed a model of spiritual leadership referred to as legacy leadership. We believe this model has useful implications for authentic leadership, and we consider these implications below. These qualities are integrated into a causal model presented in Fig. 3.
Four basic motives are posited to drive legacy leadership: (1) a pure motive to achieve personal integrity and high standards of moral excellence; (2) a desire to be authentic and sincere; (3) a follower – as opposed to self-centered orientation; and (4) affectionate/emotional motives that reflect caring and altruistic love for others. These motives underlie five methods used by a legacy leader to influence his/her followers: (1) being worthy of imitation; (2) demonstrating boldness amidst opposition; (3) exerting influence without asserting authority; (4) staying active as opposed to passive; and (5) demonstrating vulnerability and transparency. Whittington et al. (2005) see the methods (leadership behaviors) of a legacy leader as a reflection of the leader’s motives. That is, the leader’s methods are rooted in his/her motives. Furthermore, the motives of the legacy leader are anchored to an external standard of universally accepted values. This point provides the most basic premise of our approach to authentic leadership: the behavior of a legacy leader is consistent with his/her internal motivation – and these motives are in turn anchored to an

Fig. 3. Legacy Leadership: A Spiritual Model of Leadership.

Motives and Methods
external standard. Thus, legacy leaders are seen as operating from an altruistic orientation that is self-transcendent (Michie & Gooty, 2005).

Follower Perceptions of the Legacy Leader’s Motives and Methods

The true measure of the impact a leader has on others is represented by the degree to which the followers have incorporated the leader’s qualities into their own lives (Avolio, 1999; Lord & Brown, 2004). In order for a leader to leave his or her legacy with a follower, however, the follower must perceive the leader as one with pure motives who is worthy of imitation. Only under these circumstances, will legacy leadership be perpetuated in the follower through his or her changed life. Thus, the legacy leader’s motives and methods and the follower outcomes are mediated by followers’ perceptions of the leader (see Fig. 3). The mediating mechanism of follower perceptions has been emphasized by Lord and his associates (Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord & Maher, 1993).

According to this perspective, leadership is not located solely in the leader or the follower, rather it involves the interpretation of behaviors, traits, and outcomes produced as interpreted by the followers (Lord & Maher, 1993). In fact, Lord and Maher (1993) define leadership as the process of being perceived as a leader. Yammarino and Dubinsky (1994) and Avolio and Yammarino (1990) also have examined the role of perceptions within the context of transformational leadership, suggesting it is “in the eyes of the beholder” (p. 193).

The interpretation of leader motives and behaviors by followers is crucial to the process of both spiritual and legacy leadership. Dasborough and Ashkanasay (2002) suggest that followers’ perceptions of a leader’s behavior will be influenced by: (1) characteristics of previous interactions between the leader and follower; (2) follower attributions regarding the leader’s intentions; and (3) follower characteristics such as mood, experience, and role in the interaction (as a target or as a bystander). While acknowledging these situational influences on information processing, the focus of legacy leadership is on the importance of the role the leader plays in eliciting accurate perceptions of his/her motives and methods.

When followers accurately perceive congruence between the motives and methods of the leader, they are more likely to act in a way that emulates the leader, or in a way that reflects their internalization of the leader’s motives and methods. Furthermore, followers must perceive that the leader’s motives are congruent with universally accepted values. When the leader’s
values are seen as being consistent with universally accepted values, the leader is perceived to be authentic. Only when there is congruence between a leader’s behaviors and perceived motives that are anchored in a universal set of values will followers be willing to internalize the leader’s espoused values and seek to emulate that leader. This process is consistent with the personal and social identification processes used by followers who come to identify with authentic leaders and their values (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

Changed Lives: The Real Measure of Leader Effectiveness

How is the effectiveness of leadership to be measured? Contemporary leadership scholars often measure the impact of leadership on individual dimensions such as in-role (i.e., job requirements) and extra-role (i.e., organizational citizenship behaviors) performance, satisfaction, and commitment, or organizational level performance (e.g., market share or profitability). Avolio (1999) has challenged these approaches to the measurement of leader effectiveness. Specifically, he argues that transformational leadership only has an indirect effect on these outcomes. The impact of a leader comes through building trust, identification, and a willingness to support the leader and the organization. More recently, the traditional approach to understanding leader effectiveness has also been challenged by Lord and Brown (2004). They content that “ultimately, leadership is a process of influence … and the effectiveness of a leader depends on his or her ability to change subordinates” [italics added] (p. 7).

In the legacy leadership framework, “changed lives” provides a measure of the leader’s influence on the lives of their followers (see Fig. 3). The lives of the followers change because they are able to see the authenticity of the legacy leader who walks the talk. This makes the legacy leader’s message legitimate, personal, and attainable. Thus, they are willing to believe the leader and live their lives as evidence of that belief. From the perspective of legacy leadership, the changes in followers’ lives will be internal first. Followers of legacy leaders internalize the motives and values they perceive in the leader. This internalization may result in a shift along the proposed continuum of egotistical to altruistic motives, or a strengthening of already existing altruistic motives.

Values also may shift such that leaders are not viewed as providing only instrumental value to followers’ lives, but also as having intrinsic value
These internal changes in motives and values will result in changed attitudes toward the organization (e.g., job satisfaction, commitment), and in outward behaviors such as increased performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, and other pro-social behaviors. Koestenbaum (2002) advocates the position that leadership is not about what one does, but who one is. Thus, a leader's behavior should provide evidence for his/her motives and values regardless of the setting, and the leader's influence should likewise be demonstrated in the followers' lives as they assume the leader's motives and values as their own.

The legacy leadership model incorporates and extends the characteristics of authentic leadership as identified by Luthans and Avolio (2003) and is consistent with the principles of SLT (Fry, 2003). Legacy leadership is rooted in an altruistic motive pattern that is consistent with the follower concerns advocated by Luthans and Avolio (2003). Legacy leaders demonstrate boldness amid opposition that is consistent with the risk-taking and first-mover characteristics of authentic leadership. Legacy leaders also demonstrate congruence between their espoused and enacted values. Yet, legacy leadership transcends the current definitions of authentic leadership because the values espoused by legacy leaders are anchored to universal or consensus values.

The motives of a legacy leader influence the leader's choice of influence tactics and leadership methods. By observing these methods, the followers of a legacy leader infer the motives of the legacy leader. When followers perceive this connection, they internalize the legacy leader's motives and seek to emulate his or her behavior. Through this process legacy leaders also develop the next generation of leaders. The followers of legacy leaders become legacy leaders themselves who manifest the motives and methods of a legacy leader. Thus, legacy leadership is a process of not only leading authentically, but of developing authentic leaders (Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Spiritual leadership, legacy leadership, and authentic leadership can be viewed as theories that are in the initial concept/elaboration stage of development (Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Hunt, 1999). At this stage it is important that initial theories meet the four components that provide the necessary and sufficient conditions for the development of any theoretical model. They must identify: (1) the units or variables of interest; (2)
congruence as defined by the laws of relationship among units of the model that specify how these units are associated; (3) boundaries within which the laws of relationship are expected to operate; and (4) contingency effects that specify system states within which the units of the theory take on characteristic values that are deterministic and have a persistence through time (Dubin, 1978; Fry & Smith, 1987).

SLT was initially developed as a universal theory. Relative to Dubin’s model of theory building, SLT satisfies these four conditions. It identifies units or variables in a causal model whose linkages are hypothesized to be positively related. Subject to further testing, it is currently proposed to be a universal (e.g., no contingency effects) theory that holds across the individual, team, and organizational levels. SLT prescribes a set of consensus values and motives that, when combined with hope/faith in a compelling vision, produces intrinsic motivation to satisfy needs for spiritual survival and, ultimately, positively influence human health and psychological well-being. In addition, SLT proposes that: (1) certain qualities must be inherent in the organization’s vision; and (2) a specific leadership process is also necessary to achieve authenticity and value congruence across the individual, team, and organizational levels. This congruence across levels will positively impact organizational commitment and productivity and employee well-being. Furthermore, SLT theory proposes that this is true regardless of the characteristics of the organization’s environment, its employees or jobs.

Science is beginning to do what philosophical inquiry and debate could not accomplish for three thousand years – establish a prescriptive domain of consensus values derived from research on religion, workplace spirituality, positive psychology, character education, and the new spiritual leadership paradigm. Given emerging scientific research (much of it from positive psychology) values are not relative. There is an emerging consensus that authentically living these values will lead to positive human health and psychological well-being (Fry, 2004). This is the essence of ethical well-being.

We have also proposed that: (1) ethical well-being is essential for authentic leadership; (2) authentic leadership is a necessary component of spiritual leadership; and (3) SLT addresses three key issues that must be resolved if theory and research on authentic leadership is to advance. Furthermore, legacy leadership has been discussed, within the context of SLT, as a model of authentic leadership that integrates the leader’s motives and behaviors into the leadership process.

Because our approach to authentic leadership explicitly identifies leader motives, there is a need to investigate the motives – particularly the power orientation – of leaders. Moreover, future research should examine the
degree to which a leader’s espoused values are consistent with the universal consensus values of altruistic love that are critical for authentic leadership. The assessment of leader motives is an important dimension for future research. Of particular interest would be the relationship between the leader’s motives and followers’ perceptions of the leader’s motives. Do followers make accurate attributions of the leader’s motives? This approach to authentic leadership would be strengthened by integrating research on impression management (Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1995) and self-monitoring (Snyder, 1987).

Nichols (2004) suggests that self-monitoring may help explain differences between authentic and inauthentic leaders. Authentic leaders would be expected to be low self-monitors because their methods (behaviors) are consistent with their internal motives, beliefs, and values. Authentic leaders would be less likely to be high self-monitors who change their behaviors to match the situation. Followers should be able to ascertain whether their leaders are low or high self-monitors, and with this information, improve upon the accuracy of their perceptions about the correspondence between the leader’s motives and methods. Authenticity may lead to lower use of impression management techniques (Nichols, 2004).

The real measure of authentic leadership, according to Fry (2005a) and Whittington et al. (2005), is “changed lives,” in terms of a transformation to the universal values and the subsequent attitudes and behavior that reflect them. Hence, research on these values and their relationship to attitudes and behavior is crucial for identifying the influence of a legacy leader on followers. Because change is advocated as the dependent variable, longitudinal research is the best approach.

This type of research will require a baseline measure of followers on a variety of constructs that might be influenced by the leader, such as ethical values, stage of moral development (Kohlberg, 1976), emotional intelligence, and motive pattern. These measures would need to be obtained prior to followers’ exposure to a new leader. Then, attributes of the leader could be assessed to determine to what degree they exhibited the qualities associated with legacy leadership. Over time, the influence of legacy leaders on followers’ behavior and attitudes could be determined. Moreover, cross-sectional research could be conducted to determine if followers actually begin to emulate the behaviors and attitudes of their leaders as advocated by legacy leadership (Whittington et al., 2005). This emulation, or self-perpetuation, is a key to the tenets of the legacy leadership model.

Research on several fronts is necessary to establish the validity of SLT and any theory of authentic leadership before they are widely applied as
models of organizational/professional development to foster personal and systemic change and transformation. Empirical research is just beginning on the relationship between the qualities of spiritual leadership and organizational outcomes (see Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2003; Giacalone, Jurkiewicz, & Fry, 2005; Malone & Fry, 2003; Townsend, 1984). Other individual outcomes (e.g., joy, peace, and serenity) hypothesized to be affected by spiritual leadership need to be validated for SLT. Finally, the conceptual distinction between SLT constructs and other leadership theories and constructs needs to be refined. In particular, this chapter, as Fry (2003) demonstrated for motivation leadership theories – argues for the inclusiveness of authentic leadership within the spiritual leadership paradigm.

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Burns (1978); French & Raven (1959); Kanungo & Mendonca (1996).

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