Robert E. Quinn's Change the World is an empowering book, which gives leaders—in particular educational leaders—the courage and inspiration to use personal transformation to affect positive impact. Quinn's language is accessible and his style engaging, providing relevant examples to illustrate how we might all become 'inner-directed and outward-focused'. Quinn is adamant that we are all potential change agents, but Quinn is also realistic and acknowledges that most of us are trapped by the fallacious belief that we as individuals cannot make a difference. Each of the book's chapters begins with a 'seed thought' from Jesus, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr.—three of the most successful change agents ever. Each chapter explores how we can move ourselves and others to the highest levels of excellence, changing our schools—and world—for the better!

Some Intriguing Notions To Start:
• 'Simple', 'Simplistic', 'Complex'
• Seed Thoughts
• Incremental Change
• Transformational Change
• Language of Transformation
• Normal Change Theory
• ACT: Advanced Change Theory

If you like ‘Change the World’...

Robert Quinn is Margaret E. Tracy Distinguished Professor of Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management at the University of Michigan's Graduate School of Business.

Robert Quinn is the Director of the University of Michigan's 'Management of Managers Program', and the Director of the Ford—University of Michigan LEAD program.

He is also co-founder of the Center for Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) at the University of Michigan.

He has authored many journal articles in addition to the books listed here, and sits on the editorial board of the Journal of Organizational Behavior and Journal of Management Inquiry.

If you like 'Change the World'...

A Quick Overview: Cover & Contents

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<th>100-word Description</th>
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Appendices: ACT Summaries, Criticisms, References

If you like 'Change the World'...

Other Books by Professor Quinn


If you like ‘Change the World’...

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.” — Margaret Mead
SEEDING

‘Seed’ is the word Quinn selects quite consciously to discuss transformation. ‘Seed’ can be both a noun, (the seed itself), and a verb, as in becoming the catalyst of change. Quinn’s entire book is about ‘seeding’. More specifically, it is about affecting change: real and deep change. Transformation—deep change—awakens strong emotions and is strongly related to a sense of personal achievement, and having made an essential contribution.

BEING A ‘CHANGE AGENT’

As the separate words imply, being a ‘change agent’ refers to any person who seeks to bring about some kind of change. But being a change agent—trying to bring about a change in others—is a process fraught with frustration. Bringing about true change requires not only trust, in and of itself a crucial component, but perhaps more importantly, affecting change requires a person to become introspective and willing to change oneself before one attempts to change others. Quinn illustrates this importance and its potential impact by sharing an anecdote regarding a mother, trying to affect a change in her daughter’s attitude about schoolwork. This anecdote is especially illustrative and relevant to educators! The anecdote, however, takes place within the intimate and trusting environment of a family, and Quinn acknowledges trust-related challenges when moving beyond this setting.

CHANGE

Quinn points to a salient distinction between ‘incremental change’ and ‘transformational change’. Incremental change describes the kinds of changes we usually affect: small predictable changes in patterns or behaviour, whereas transformational changes are profound, important changes. Quinn illustrates the differences between these changes through the quiet, heroic actions taken by Gandhi, in his early protest actions in South Africa.

ACT ~ Advanced Change Theory

PROFOUND CHANGE & ACT

Profound, transformational change lies outside our normal expectations. Gandhi’s actions are illustrative of the kind of change understood by the term ‘Advanced Change Theory’ - or ACT. They are a body of principles based on seed thoughts of masters of transformation that reflect the simplicity from the Other side of complexity—at its most advanced.

NORMAL CHANGE THEORY

Quinn points out how most of us are bound by ‘norms’, routine patterns of behaviour of a particular group; the way we act becomes ‘normalised’ by conformity with standards and expectations.

‘TFP’ Change Strategies

There are 3 general, familiar strategies for change in normal situations, characterized by: Telling, Forcing, Participating. The first two are perhaps the most common, and often co-occur. In the first instance, we tell (explain) rationally why a change makes sense, and people will rationally change. If they don’t accept the need to change, then we conceive of a way to force our targets to change their ways. This two-step process has become so ‘normalised’, that most educational administrators will likely think of a myriad instances from personal experiences that are illustrations of it. Far less common is the third strategy, endorsed by Quinn: Participating Strategy, leading to Transforming Strategy. In participating, emphasis is on communication and co-operation, involving the target in honest dialogue and mutual learning.

Difficulties with Participating

Seeding the Transformation

‘This book is about the process of seeding the transformation of human systems.

IT ASSUMES THAT A SMALL PARTICLE, INTRODUCED INTO A HUMAN SYSTEM AT THE RIGHT TIME, MAY DISRUPT THAT SYSTEM IN A POSITIVE WAY.

IT CAN REDUCE STASIS OR ENTROPY AND INCREASE THE ENERGY, LITERALLY BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO IT. ’

Advanced Change Theory

Transforming Strategy

Action from Principle
ACT & Moral Reasoning
ACT & the Freedom Quest
ACT & Action
Transformational Power
Inaccessibility of ACT
Connectedness & Sacred Servants
Being Transformational is a Choice
Four Strategies & Four Levels

APPENDIX A: A SUMMARY OF ADVANCED CHANGE THEORY

THE FOUR STRATEGIES

Level 4. The Transforming Strategy (ACT)
Method: transcend self; emphasis on emergent reality
  Am I envisioning productive community?
  Am I first looking within?
  Am I embracing the hypocritical self?
  Am I transcending the external sanctions?
  Am I embodying a vision of the common good?
  Am I disturbing the system?
  Am I surrendering to the emergent process?
  Am I enticing through moral power?

Level 3. The Participating Strategy
Method: open dialogue; emphasis on relationship
  Is there a focus on human process?
  Is everyone included in an open dialogue?
  Do I model supportive communication?
  Is everyone’s position being clarified?
  Am I surfacing the conflicts?
  Are the decisions being made participatively?
  Is there commitment to a “win-win” strategy?
  Are the people cohesive?

Level 2. The Forcing Strategy
Method: leveraging behavior; emphasis on authority
  Is my authority firmly established?
  Is the legitimacy of my directive clear?
  Do I understand their fears?
  Am I capable and willing to impose sanctions?
  Is there a clear performance-reward linkage?
  Am I controlling the context and flow of information?
  Am I using maximum leverage?
  Are the people complying?

Level 1. The Telling Strategy
Method: rational persuasion; emphasis on facts
  Am I within my expertise?
  Have I gathered all the facts?
  Have I done a good analysis?
  Will my conclusions withstand criticism?
  Are my arguments logical?
  Are my arguments clear?
  Do I have a forum for instruction?
  Am I prepared to argue effectively?
**Four Perspectives on Change**

## Appendix A: A Summary of Advanced Change Theory

### Figure A.1. Four Perspectives on Change

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<th>TRANSFORMATIONAL REALITY</th>
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<td><strong>Toward Win-Win Negotiation and Long-Term Trust</strong></td>
<td><strong>Toward Vision Realization and Moral Courage</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Participating Strategy</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Transforming Strategy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis: relationship</td>
<td>Emphasis: emergent reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method: open dialogue</td>
<td>Method: transcend self</td>
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**Questions:**
- Is there a focus on human process?
- Is everyone included in open dialogue?
- Do I model supportive communication?
- Is everyone’s position being clarified?
- Am I surfacing the conflicts?
- Are the decisions being made participatively?
- Is there commitment to a “win-win” strategy?
- Are the people cohesive?

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<tr>
<th><strong>Toward the Preservation of the System</strong></th>
<th><strong>Toward the Pursuit of Truth</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Forcing Strategy</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Telling Strategy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis: authority</td>
<td>Emphasis: facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method: leveraging behavior</td>
<td>Method: rational persuasion</td>
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</table>

**Questions:**
- Is my authority firmly established?
- Is the legitimacy of my directive clear?
- Do I understand their fears?
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<tr>
<th><strong>Toward Compliance and Personal Survival</strong></th>
<th><strong>Toward Logical Explanation and Immediate Action</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Toward Structure and Control</strong></td>
<td><strong>TECHNICAL REALITY</strong></td>
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<td><strong>POLITICAL REALITY</strong></td>
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## Four Strategies of Change: Dimensions of Differentiation

### Table: Dimensions of Differentiation

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<tr>
<th>Normal Model</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Act Model</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personal survival</td>
<td>Core vision</td>
<td>Productive community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fixed by position</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Spontaneous contribution</td>
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<td>Equilibrium</td>
<td>Desired system state</td>
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<td>Prevent insurgency</td>
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<td>Responsive</td>
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<td>Script driven</td>
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<td>Social expectation</td>
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<td>Respond to sanctions</td>
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<td>Divided-guarded</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Authentic-open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provokes closure</td>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td>Provokes openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exoteric</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Autotelic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses symbols</td>
<td>Symbolic communication</td>
<td>Becomes a symbol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled</td>
<td>Learning</td>
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<td>Imitation</td>
<td>Source of vision</td>
<td>Creation</td>
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<td>Instruction</td>
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<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Mode of inquiry</td>
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<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Cause and effect</td>
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<td>Expertise</td>
<td>Stimulus for change</td>
<td>Improvisation</td>
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<td>Negative force</td>
<td>Resistance and uncertainty</td>
<td>Positive force</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>The target of change</td>
<td>Self</td>
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</table>
The notion of the productive community gives rise to a major shift in our perception, thinking and behaviour, i.e. we can both envision and enact a new form of community in which ordinary people can generate extraordinary results. Members of the community are part of a system of relationships in which we share a common purpose and each one of us works for the benefit of all.

Productive Community & Hierarchy
The productive community does not reject hierarchy. Quinn explains that many, if not most, of us, fall into two camps vis-à-vis hierarchy. We tend to be either utopian, and thus reject the notion out of hand, or pragmatic, shaking our heads at ‘idealistic nonsense’ that will not work in the ‘real world’. Quinn acknowledges that we all have ‘assumptions’ about the ‘social world’. But rejection of hierarchy does not necessarily follow. Quinn points out that many of us have experienced predominantly frozen, inwardly focused, rigid bureaucracies (p. 36), but it would be dangerous to dismiss all hierarchy out of hand.

To lead us toward conceptualising the productive community, that does allow for hierarchy, and then transcends its assumptions, Quinn leads us more deeply into the world of ‘inner-directedness’ and ‘other-focusedness’, via the example of his wife’s Sunday school teaching experience (pp. 30-32).

Certainty & Fear
Status quo hierarchies offer us certainty, quite differently from ‘change’. Incremental change is often exciting, but truly deep change can be quite intimidating, especially when compared with the ‘safety’ of the stifling mediocrity of the status quo. But the notion of the safety of ‘permanence’ is an illusion, and to grow we need to go beyond our usual understanding, and to surrender to the ‘flow of energy’ in the greater flow toward a ‘synergistic collectivity’ (p. 49). In essence, creating a ‘social movement’ in which organisational change ‘facilitates the learning of others’ (p. 54).

Productive Community & The Sunday School Teacher

“Feelings of achievement are often mixed with a sense of awe and humility. I believe the sense of awe stems from experiencing the magnificence of transformation. The humility stems from knowing we are necessary but, alone, are insufficient. The process of transformation is always bigger than we are.” p.3.
Change The World

Robert E. Quinn

3 First Look Within

Reform from Within

Quinn recounts his experiences with an extraordinary woman of resolve, an upper executive at a hospital. When faced with budget and staff cuts, she refuses to compromise on key issues concerning her unit, risking her job. She explains that she was not fired because her boss “knows that I am not doing any of these things for myself. My central concern is the good of the customer. I will do anything he tells me that is good for the system and its capacity to serve the customer. I will not do anything that is not for the good of the system” (pp. 60-61). Quinn describes her as a “woman of commitment and purpose, a heroine on the transformational path. Her power came not from stubbornness or pride, but from an inner truth that she knew she could not compromise.”

Fundamental Choices

Quinn explains that a change agent must look within. Making fundamental choices means not taking into account the “outside world”, rather determining direction from within. It is not so much about finding a purpose, as being open to a purpose finding us. This very fundamental choice process has to do with “our state of being or basic life orientation.” (p. 61) The fundamental choice is supra-primary – it is determining to live in accordance with our highest spiritual truths. These choices are not subject to internal or external circumstances. When we finally do make a fundamental choice, the commitment itself is transformational.

Becoming a Creative Force

“...it is importance to recognize, however, that making a fundamental choice is not a gimmick or a technique. The choice to be the predominant creative force in your own life does not mean forcing yourself into a different view of reality, nor is it a form of self-manipulation through willpower, a change of ‘attitude’, a motto to recite, an affirmation to make, or a posture to assume. It is a choice. It comes from a desire to be the predominant creative force in your own life.”

Dangers of the Normalised World: Socialisation & Emergent Reality

Anticipating his reader, Quinn asks: “If experiencing ourselves as a creative force is such an essential drive, how is it that we get so far off course?” Quinn reveals the dangers that occur when the hierarchy imposes its values, indicating how this insulates the group from emergent reality, a phenomenon common to all human organisations: “We are continually taught to engage secondary reality, that is, reality already interpreted and defined by others.”

Social Order & Standardisation

Socialisation and standardisation are hardly new concepts for the teacher, and most teachers would agree when Quinn asserts that they are necessary, since they provide “order, equilibrium, predictability, and efficiency” (p. 68). But Quinn cautions us of the ‘trade-off’

“Socialisation and standardisation keep us from examining emergent reality.” This is of particular danger in the educational setting. It is ‘easier’ to ‘go by the book’, rather than ‘doing any research on [one’s] own” (p. 68).

Soul Force

Looking within when making fundamental choices is important not only because of purpose and ensuring we know ‘who we are’. Looking within is crucial to “Revisiting our fundamental choices and continuously realigning our behaviour accordingly. By honouring and acting in alignment with our ideals, we grow within and increase what Gandhi called ‘soul force’...The clearer we are about ourselves, the greater is our capacity for change. Instead of responding in expected ways, we can step outside our routines.” (p. 68)

Boxed In

Many of us feel ‘boxed in’, i.e. we do not see alternatives in given situations, and see others, at least partially, at fault or as the problem, for example, a difficult principal or department head. But it is of far greater help to understand that: “The world creates us and we create the world” (p. 70). We can make choices & influence others!
ADDIS APU SUPPLEMENT

Change The World

Robert E. Quinn

4 Embrace the Hypocritical Self

Hypocritical Change Agent
Quinn shares the story of a change agent, a young consultant, trying to affect change in a large corporation. He has been stressing honesty and forthrightness to the corporation’s staff. When he himself is faced with an awkward request from the corporation’s powerful, angry CEO, he becomes fearful and sees serious potential repercussions in not doing the CEO’s bidding. Quinn points to the fact that the consultant, when training others, tells his ‘dark story’. In so doing, he is not only acknowledging the ‘dangers’ of the world, he is also confirming that we are all driven toward hypocrisy in the transactional world.

Hypocrisy & Choice of Slow Death
Quinn cites Chris Argyris concerning the ubiquity of hypocrisy in collective settings (p. 73). Each one of us has an ‘espoused’ theory of how we behave—how we believe we act, and a ‘theory in action’—how we actually do behave. Moreover, we are for the most part utterly unaware of our behaviour and this discrepancy. The implications of our hypocrisy are serious. Our hypocrisy causes “miscommunication, self-fulfilling prophecies, and escalating errors” (p. 73). Because of our hypocrisy we fail to establish or maintain productive community. Instead, we create “relationships of distrust and succumb to living in a community that prevents virtually every member from achieving [her/his] potential.”

Dissociation
Quinn provides very vivid personal anecdotes of instances of ‘the process of dissociation’. In keeping with Argyris’ theory, we strive to:
1. remain in control;
2. Win;
3. Suppress negative feelings;
4. Pursue rational objectives.
As long as ‘we’ win, ‘we’ win together, but when ‘we’ lose, ‘they’ lose, ‘you’ lose, s/he loses—but we do not lose together. The relational impact of this hypocrisy is overwhelming.

Hypocrisy & Emergent Reality

Engaging Emergent Reality
Engaging emergent reality requires confidence. ‘It can mean leaving the comfort of our present knowledge base. For example, we might be working within a well-established hierarchy, where we know exactly what is expected of us. How we are to relate to others who are also participating in that hierarchy, and what we need to deliver to be accepted and valued. But to engage emergent reality often means that we won’t have all the answers. We will have to learn as we go. In the midst of uncertainty, we have to come up with creative solutions’ (p. 79).

There is no doubt that this is challenging in the educational organization. Wouldn’t it be easier for a teacher to ‘stick to the curriculum’, or for a professor to stick to last year’s safe & tried syllabus?

Action Learning & Unconditional confidence
Molding the potential solution through trial & error. In the midst of uncertainty is often referred to as ‘action learning’ or ‘action inquiry’. Essentially, this is the confidence of knowing that we can learn our way through virtually any situation.

Transcendence: ‘Getting out of the Envelope’
Transcendence is energy shifting. “We are conscious of some things and react to them in predictable ways, because previous learning and experience organizes and directs our consciousness. We might say that we have developed scripts” (p. 85) which tell us what to say and how to react in different situations. Our scripts are our envelopes. As long as we hold those scripts they define who we are. They give us comfort, but they also limit our growth...” (p. 85).

Transcending Hypocrisy requires Surrender

“We cannot change, we cannot move away from what we are, until we thoroughly accept what we are. Then change seems to come about almost unnoticed.” Rogers, 1961, as cited by Quinn, p. 83.

Honest engagement of emergent reality leads to new meanings, and new meanings lead to transformation...With the acceptance of our hypocrisy we begin to close our integrity gaps.
**Transcending Fear**

Not much unlike a circus elephant, our lives are constrained and conditioned. Even when we are no longer ‘physically’ shackled by a chain, like the elephant, we do not stray from the teachings of the ‘normalised world’.

**Shackling Conformity**

We are, all of us, conformists. We all seek a certain level of ‘social approval’. In order to have a ‘self’, we must interact with others.

“Our sense of self arises out of our interactions with others. We instinctively seek acceptance by the group to which we belong.”

This point is especially relevant in the school setting, when this is so, even when a teacher is dealing with a ‘negative’ group, such as a destructive gang. We often bandy the term ‘peer pressure’ about in this regard.

**Conformity in Organisations**

Fear is often the operative force behind conformity in organizations, and it has an incredibly stifling effect in terms of avoidance of emergent reality. Creativity is stifled, nobody ‘dares’ to execute a ‘risky’ decision, nobody wants to find her/himself on ‘the edge’. Our fear-driven behaviours corrosively undermine our potential progress.

...AND THEN THINGS REALLY GET BAD...

We become increasingly insecure and defensive. Honesty disappears. Quinn enumerates a long list of spiraling, destructive behaviours, which begin to move into the level of the unconscious. Solutions to problems cannot be investigated, since problems are no longer discussed. Anger at our increasing inauthenticity festers. Ultimately, the ‘real’ self, the self that encapsulates our potential for greatness, begins to suffocate and die.

**Toxic Content**

At its worst, this situation spirals downward toward one in which people seek to ‘get even’, which ironically does nothing to help the atmosphere in the organization. Eventually people grow complacent in the toxicity, and may resign themselves to the dysfunctional situation.

**Fears, Impressions, Authority**

Quinn makes a few comforting observations at this point. He shares personal anecdotes in which he reveals his own ‘failures’ and fears as a result of ‘not measuring up’. The stigma of ‘mental health’ code words and his insecurities during his graduate studies reveal him as vulnerable. He then illustrates how he was surprised when his professor confessed the same insecurities. Rather than discussing our fears and insecurities, though, we remain silent and internalize them. We are concerned with being rated less ‘effective’, not competent, not in control.

**Fears In & Out of the Classroom**

How much do we as educators honestly enter into this dialogue? Quinn raises a point that we are all wise to reflect on. Perhaps, as educators who are graduate students in education, we are best positioned to consider this question. We are, or can be, at once both the ‘target’ of fear and its source in the classroom.

**Engaging our Fears**

Negative emotions as the Engine of Growth

Advanced Change Theory means that change allows us to become not only more effective people, but also more in alignment with our true selves, and this necessarily means experiencing some kinds of negative emotions, too. On one level we know this, but on another we try to deny this to ourselves, not wanting to let any ‘cracks show’. We are focused on how others see us, and delude ourselves into believing that this mirrored self is our ‘real self’. We strive for power and objects of status.

**Transcendence...**

Practising Transcendence by letting go gradually of our object reference conditioning is no small feat. Quinn suggests that for most of us this is not practical until we have found a ‘unique mission’, when we are able to resist ‘external sanctions’. The courageous example of Viktor Frankl is given, who stresses that we always have choice, and that having a purpose provides power. Quinn cites Parker Palmer in recognizing that “no punishment could possibly be worse than the one you lay on yourself by conspiring in your own diminishment” (p. 111).
Quinn begins the chapter stating that if a change agent wishes to bring about productive community, then s/he must necessarily embody the core values and common good of the productive community. Drawing on previous chapters to this point, Quinn elucidates: Productive community is “synergistic community, made up of groups of people who are becoming more inner directed and other focused” (p. 119). The concepts of Common Good and individual good will have a lot ‘in common’ at this point. There will be “clear purpose and structure...high cohesion and responsiveness.”

Embodying the Common Good
Quinn argues that others are inspired when they actually experience the personification of vision. This embodiment sets off an entire chain of consequences. Others draw courage from ours, and begin to emulate our behaviours. And once they begin to engage in new patterns of behaviours, momentum and a new community build. It is the embodiment of the vision by change agents that invites productive community into being.

Anyone can be transformational
One attractive feature of Quinn’s approach, certainly for the classroom teacher, is that despite ‘appearances’, this is not a ‘top-down’ approach, at least not in the way we usually attach connotations to the phrase ‘top-down’. It is more a case of what I might re-cast as ‘emanating towards others’. Quinn insists that anyone in the organisation who chooses to be transformational can become a transformative figure.

Common Good vs. Personal Interest
In organisations, individuals make choices that may be in the interests of their personal good or in the interests of the collective good, sometimes both coincide together, sometimes one must be chosen over another. Beware the danger of selecting personal over common good!

Journeys, Potential & Listening

Direction & Focus
Quinn presents four different kinds of journeys to which we may be drawn, revealing how each particular journey reveals other or inner direction, as well as other or inner focus. It is the Journey of Collective Fulfillment which is inner directed and other focused, from which Quinn says we ought to derive our script.

Actual & Potential
Quinn quotes one of Gandhi’s most quoted statements: “I must first be the change I wish to see in the world”. Many of us are familiar with Gandhi’s assertion, but Quinn asks us why this must be so. He states that self-changing people go outside the boundaries of the normal and expected experience. They “think outside the box”, not just in cliché terms. “They recognise the difference between their actual and potential selves and they are motivated toward fulfilling the latter” (pp. 130-131). “To be a transformational change agent, I must see my circumstances in a transformational way” (p. 134).

For the teacher’s consideration...
In the ensuing discussion, Quinn gives an example from teaching teen-agers. This is quite à propos for many school teachers. Children are able to sense authenticity, as opposed to the platitudes or ‘sound bites’ they hear when adults lecture to them. But someone who embodies the actual aspiration to fulfilling potential can inspire reverence. Reverence is the feeling we get in the presence of greatness. But how often, and in what ways, do our actions inspire our students? How often do we “hear the unheard?”
Understanding & Disturbing
Quinn cites Lewin who argued that “we cannot really begin to understand a system, until we try to change it” (p. 145).
It strikes me that many teachers understand this statement, and have likely experienced it first-hand, albeit perhaps unwittingly. When teaching, it is often when an anomalous student has difficulty understanding, and we are forced to approach things unconventionally, that we begin to develop added insights, which may well cause us to disturb our (teaching) system.

Being a ‘radical’ teacher
Quinn uses the square root symbol to illustrate that being radical is actually getting to the root of things, re-examining at a profound level. Many of us here in Canada will be able to think back to lessons in French and different word forms and remember the underlying associations of ‘radical’.

Internal Resources & Chaos
Internal fortitude correlates with the ability to cope with chaos. Quinn argues that this is true for both individuals and organisations.
Quinn then makes a case for healthy people as being better positioned to initiate chaos. There is a distinct irony here, in that many individuals that are unhealthy and most in need of creative chaos, are the least willing to engage in it, the most reluctant to deal with reality and the least willing to seek help.

The Edge of Chaos
Bounded instability, or the Edge of Chaos, is the state in which a system (or organisation) has moved far from equilibrium, but not all the way to total chaos. Negative feedback loops ensure stability, while positive loops introduce innovation into the system, and the entire system is then moving back and forth between the two.

Self-Organisation
Bounded instability, or the Edge of Chaos, is the state in which a system (or organisation) is ‘living on the edge’, and is best situated to optimize creative forces and engage in transformation. The impetus for transformation in an organisation may come from a seemingly minor source, and is unpredictable. Quinn says that the unpredictable act might come in the form of “a statement, a question, or a symbolic movement” (p. 151).

Unpredictability, Creativity & Learning
Many teachers will likely find the notion of ‘Edge of Chaos’ as confirming their in-class experiences. Often, an unforeseeable act (question, comment) can spur incredible debate and actions amongst students, that will extend well beyond the bell at the end of the lesson and beyond the walls of the classroom.
What examples do you know of in which this has occurred? What would have been lost had the ‘unpredictable’ remained ‘unembracable’?

Control & Emergence
That being said, learning to trust the emergent process is hardly an easy task, but has the incredible benefit of creativity and moving toward our potential.

Two Worlds at Once
One of life’s fascinating mysteries concerns the inner workings of the human mind when creativity is being forged, what is truly taking place when an organisation experiences innovation. In recent years we have learnt that rather than this being a linear process, the innovation journey is actually about convergent and divergent processes within processes.

Disturbance
Jazz music is an excellent example of the ‘provocative competence’ in creative innovation, and points out that disruptions must be challenging, but not overwhelming. In organisations, we are well to strive toward ‘masterful’ disruption, in facilitating adaptive work. Again, this sounds fine on paper, but is difficult to inculcate. Here ACT assists in overcoming resistance, as it recognises tension.

“A system based on bounded instability has the capacity to self-organise, and thus to respond to the changing environment and move naturally to higher levels of complexity and integration. Self-organizing processes tend to be transformational” (p. 150)
Figure 7.1. Cycling the Innovation Journey.

Constraining Factors
- External rules and mandates
- Internal focus and self-organizing

Divergent Behavior
- A branching and expanding process of exploring new directions
  — a random or chaotic pattern
- Creating ideas and strategies
  — inspiration, negotiation
- Learning by discovery
  — exploratory search
- Pluralistic leadership
  — encouraging and balancing diverse views
- Building relationships and porous networks
- Creative infrastructure for collective advantage
  — running in packs

Convergent Behavior
- An integrating and narrowing process of exploiting a given direction
  — a linear periodic pattern
- Implementing ideas and strategies
  — push ideas into currency
- Learning by testing
  — trial and error
- Unitary leadership
  — encouraging unity and goal consensus
- Executing relationships in establishing networks
- Operating within infrastructure for competitive advantage

Enabling Factors
- Resource investments
- Unit restructuring

Improvement, Growth & Pain

Improvement can emerge only from the interplay of oppositions. This being the case, growth emerges from the struggle and pain of the disturbed system in the emergent process. As our normal (conditioned?) reflex is to avoid pain, we sometimes also avoid the path to growth. Surrendering to pain and trusting the emergent process seem at first incomprehensible to us, as we go about our lives and teaching in a normalised, transactional reality.

Bold-Stroke Capacity

Inviting others to transcend their scripts in a transformational state. People in this state have a view of the system that Quinn describes as profoundly deep and profoundly — elegantly—simple. Those who understand deeply can move a group from one reality to another. Christ, when entrapped by the Pharisees releases the adulteress: ‘sin no more’. The hypocrites, however, are admonished. Only the one who is without sin may cast the first stone.

Not realistic?

For the cynic or doubter who might wonder whether this approach is practicable, Quinn provides a very real example from the Coca-Cola company. Clearly not only realistic, Coke is iconic as far as ‘real’ businesses in the transactional world go. “A healthy organisation is a growing organisation” (p. 173). After walking us through the ‘corporate CEO’ example of Coke, Quinn then invokes the image of Norma Rae to show that one needn’t be a CEO or consultant to be a change agent.

Journeys & Heroes

“History is filled with destructive people who took the hero’s journey and then became obsessed with self-interested and destructive domination of others. The journey is complex and it is never over.” (p. 181)

Failure is a high probability...

Taking Risks

Many people take risks—and fail. Failure is a high probability and, yes, this path is dangerous. But for a transformational person, this is not an issue relevant to a cause for which one is happy to sacrifice, or even die.

Self-organisation & Shared Vision

ACT suggests that when a critical mass of people internalizes a shared mindset, centralized leadership becomes unnecessary. “The system will self-organize. This is difficult to comprehend and threatening in its implication. Yet understanding this notion can greatly increase our capacity to facilitate transformation” (p. 184).

To illustrate his point, Quinn uses the famous example of Gandhi & ‘making salt’. This sounds deceptively insignificant. But although salt comes from the sea, poor colonial Indians had to buy salt from their British colonizers. Gandhi walks 200 miles to the sea to make salt. Although the British have arrested over 100,000 people, the process of protest continues. When the enraged viceroy asks: “who is leading them?” a baffled general shakes his head and says he does not know. “At this point the British are experiencing but cannot comprehend the phenomenon of self-organisation.

Surrendering to the Process

Surrendering oneself to this process is a difficult concept. It violates a fundamental norm of our transactional world. But the more vulnerable we become, the more the group buoys us.
9 Entice through Moral Power

Becoming Perfect
Gandhi advocated perfection, and there is no doubt that this seems on the surface unattainable and unrealistic. But Quinn points out that Gandhi was an incredibly realistic and pragmatic. So what does Gandhi’s perfection mean if it is not an abstract unattainable standard?

Perfection as a State of Being
Perfection is a state we attain whenever we close in on one of our hypocrisy gaps, according to Quinn. It is a dynamic state, a state of becoming. As did Gandhi, Quinn advocates perfection: “If we want society to perform at a higher standard, the change agent must become a model... We must be perfect” (p. 192). In so doing, we become more aligned with some higher standard, we actually become “a living symbol of that standard and are able to attract others toward it.” But we must also realise that there is “a critical perfection, hard fought but easily lost.

Moral Power & Transcendence of Moral Scripts
Quinn shares his experiences coaching a basketball team, that was incredibly talented but inwardly driven and assess her/himself against internal standards for accomplishment.

200+ Word Critical Evaluation

Quinn exposes his reader to a number of theories and authorities, but his writing is at all times easily accessible. The book sends an optimistic, energising and galvanising message to the reader, as its ideas are both idealistic and realistically practicable. It is difficult for me to be ‘objective’, as I read a resoundingly strong endorsement of this work by Professor Cooperrider, of the ‘Appreciative Inquiry’ fame. Also, I would not want to succumb to the cynical shackles of the transactional world, by which we have all been so imprinted.

Two points to Ponder...
Having said that, I would offer the following points not so much as ‘criticisms’, rather as points for consideration, were Professor Quinn to release a 2nd, revised edition. While Quinn does offer many ‘normal’ women as exceptional change agents, I cannot help but wonder if he couldn’t add a woman’s voice and example to the company of his 3 sages. Mother Theresa, Golda Meir, Corazon Aquino, Elizabeth I, Queen Christina of Sweden—there is an impressive list for Quinn to consider.

Along these same lines, I would also ask that Professor Quinn expand his 3 sages and, in the same spirit of inclusiveness, Quinn might cite ‘seed thoughts’ in the words of other notables, such as Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, Maimonides, and many others. In closing, I would cite Professor Walker in stating that Change the World is a Read! work!
Figure 9.1. Finding the Flow: The Psychology of Engagement with Everyday Life.