

Full Length Research Paper

Motivation and Leadership according to Lao Tzu's 3 Treasures

Prof. Dr. Kim Cheng Patrick Low

Ph.D. and Chartered Marketer, Certified MBTI Administrator and Certified Behavioral Consultant/ *Universiti Brunei* Darussalam; Professor of Management and Marketing/Associate, University of South Australia
E-mail:patrick_low2003@yahoo.com

Abstract

In this paper, the researcher-author relates the applications and benefits of Lao Tzu's three greatest treasures: simplicity, patience and compassion – to motivation and leadership. This paper includes a research model, research methodology and its findings, discussions as well as an analysis with its concluding remarks. The use of the three treasures of Lao Tzu is really useful for a leader in terms of motivating oneself and one's followers as well as those whom one leads and cares for. Here, the university don has, in most ways, turned the Chinese philosophy of Taoism into leadership and management lessons and their applications.

Keywords: Simplicity, patience, compassion, love, leadership, motivation.

INTRODUCTION

"Gain and renown are hindrances to students of the Way; they taint our purity of heart. Uncentered, how can we comprehend Tao?" (Loy, 1990: Prelude xxi). Tao means "the way of life" and individuals who are motivated by pursuing money (profit) and recognition (popularity, power) in life, in fact, should be advised; and should not be encouraged to be the way of motivation in living their life. On the contrary, individuals should be motivated to embrace and practise the three (3) treasures of Lao Tzu's way of life. Here, Lao Tzu speaks of, "simplicity, patience, (and) compassion." (Tao De Ching, Verse 67).

These three are your greatest treasures.
Simple in actions and in thoughts,
you return to the source of being.
Patient with both friends and enemies,
you accord with the way things are.
Compassionate toward yourself,
you reconcile all beings in the world." (Tao De Ching, Verse 67,)

Low (2012; 2009) speaks of Lao Tzu's 3 treasures and connects them to organizational leadership and growth, and here in this paper, the author would relate the applications and relevance of the three treasures to motivation and leadership. In short, to apply an analogy – like wine, leaders simply mellow with patience and age,

and indeed become appealing to their people or followers. When leaders serve and love their people, they really care for them, take care of their needs, and these, in turn, make their people motivated to obey, respect, care for and follow the leaders as well as implement what they have been directed.

The aim and purpose of the paper is thus to relate the applications and benefits of the three treasures in relation to motivation and leadership.

Literature Review

Simplicity

Simplicity is defined as 1. the state, quality, or an instance of being simple. 2. It is the freedom from complexity, intricacy, or division into parts: an organism of great simplicity. 3. Absence of luxury, pretentiousness, ornament, etc.; plainness: a life of simplicity. 4. Freedom from deceit or guile; sincerity; artlessness; naturalness: simplicity of manner (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/simplicity>). Low (2009) in his study highlighted, 'Simplicity means without ego. When there is no ego, one simply gets things done. There is no attachment; one serves and remains detached. Servant leadership is practiced'.

Patience

Patience is defined as 1. the quality of being patient, as the bearing of provocation, annoyance, misfortune, or pain, without complaint, loss of temper, irritation, or the like. 2. It is an ability or willingness to suppress restlessness or annoyance when confronted with delay such as to have patience with a slow learner. 3. Quiet, steady perseverance; even-tempered care; diligence: to work with patience. (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/patience>). Patience (or forbearing) is the state of endurance under difficult circumstances, which can mean persevering in the face of delay or provocation without acting on annoyance/anger in a negative way; or exhibiting forbearance when under strain, especially when faced with longer-term difficulties. Patience is the level of endurance one can take before negativity. When one is impatient, one rushes and glosses things over. One wants quick results, and this perhaps gives stress to ourselves unnecessarily. One may also perhaps be insensitive, not paying attention to people and hurting their feelings. When one is impatient, one even gets angry easily (Low, 2009).

COMPASSION

Compassion is defined as a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/compassion>). Low (2009) highlighted, 'Compassion and love is a powerful influencing tool, and helps win many a heart'.

Leadership

Leadership can be defined as the process of influencing others to facilitate the attainment of organizational relevant goals and this definition is applicable to both formal and informal leadership position in order to exert leadership behavior. (Ivancevich et al., 2008). Literature articles written on leadership styles have shown that effective leaders must be pro-active; must be able to accept change; leading and managing change (Low, 2010a; 2010b and 2010).

Leadership is the driving force of organizations, playing a crucial role in every profit or nonprofit organization, society, and nation. Leaders' capability and behavior may embody strong ethical values in organizational culture; they change organizational structures by exercising their influence over organizations; they create organizational culture; and they take the initiative for the alteration of organizations. In practice, leadership is not only a core factor for executing administration for management, but also a

significant part for creating a new organizational culture. In other words, leadership is regarded as an essential element or a core value in organizational culture. In this vein, leadership and organizational culture are inseparable (Low and Ang, 2012).

Motivation

Motivation is defined as 1. the act or an instance of motivating or providing with a reason to act in a certain way. 2. the state or condition of being. 3. something that motivates; inducement; incentive. Motivation is derived from human needs (desires); and motivation is made up of at least three distinct components: direction, intensity and persistent. (Ivancevich et.al, 2008. pp. 109-111 cited in Ang and Low, 2012).

RESEARCH MODE

Research Methodology

The paper relies on personal observations of thirty-five Taoist practitioners (leaders and managers) and interviewing with them and their employees/followers. According to business researchers, sample sizes larger than 30 and smaller than 500 are appropriate for most business research. Qualitative studies typically use small sample sizes because of the intensive nature of such studies (Cavana et al, 2001: 279; Sekaran, 2000: 296 – 7 and Roscoe, 1975). The sample size of thirty-five was decided because of various aspects including costs, time accessibility and limited personal resources. The qualitative research interview seeks to describe the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say (Kvale, 1996). Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a respondent's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires such as to further investigate their responses (McNamara, 1999). This interview method is helpful since it enables much qualitative data to be collected from the interviewees. To get more information and data from the various interviewees, open questions were deployed (Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran, 2001); they were worded as follows:

1. What do you think of the Lao Tzu's 3 treasures? What do being simple, being patient and being compassionate mean to you?
2. How do the three treasures help you in leading your life? Or in leading and managing business?
3. Why do you embrace and practise Lao Tzu's three treasures?
4. How or in what ways in which you are motivated or

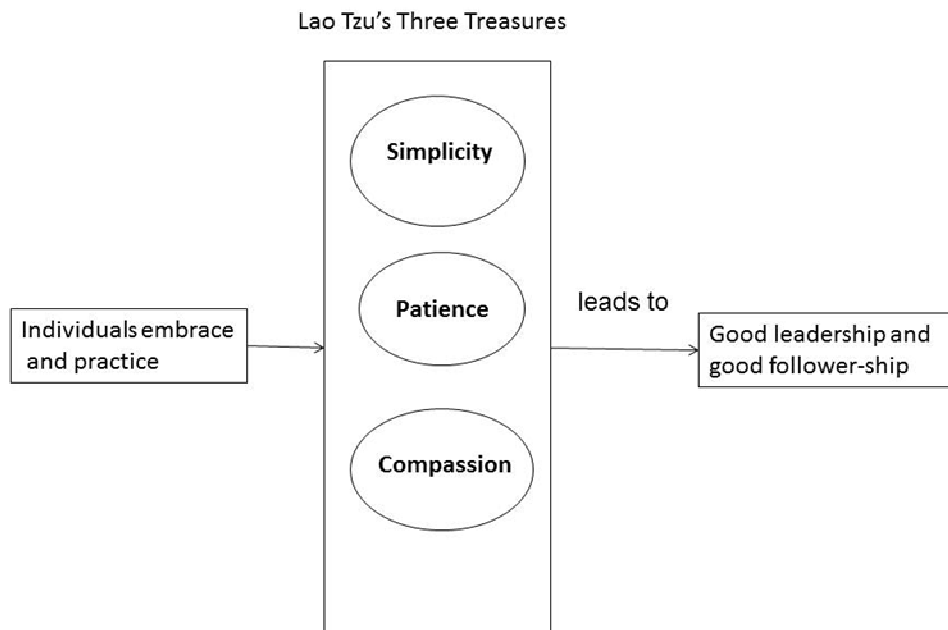


Table 1. A Research Model on Lao Tzu's Three Treasures in Terms of Leading and Motivation

- inspired by the Lao Tzu's three treasures?
- 5. What do you like about Lao Tzu's three treasures?
- 6. What attracts you to the Lao Tzu's three treasures?

FINDINGS

The remarks and statements made by each respondent was captured and recorded immediately during the interview so as to avoid or minimise memory lapse and data loss. After each interview, the authors clarified with the interviewees those statements which were not clear and needed further explanation. In this respect, there were many occasions that repetitive interviews were carried out for one interviewee at different day, time and venue. This is the way the authors established the verification and the validity of the statements/remarks made by the interviewees. The following is the respondents' remarks (see Table 1 below).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Simplicity

"Purifying our self-direction, our emotions and behavior in all endeavors, one grows in understanding of the Way. But individual abilities vary and the exalted Way has many different rules. To students of Tao, this sincere forewarning: Only with a clear, honest spirit can we begin meaningful learning: With an unsullied heart we may

even move the immortals. Debasing the Way, not even heaven forgives us." (Loy, 1990: Prelude xxi).

"A truly great man never puts away the simplicity of a child." (Chinese proverb)

Being simple is good. Simplicity is also a characteristic feature of nature. In Taoism, in life, simple things of nature can be appreciated. Obtaining joy is not in terms of owning (many) things or possessing the riches of the world. Truly, one can simply enjoy or appreciate nature's gift, the sight and beauty of a rose, a case of the universe in a flower; or an eternity in catching glimpses of a sunrise or a sunset. Truly one who knows how to savor the joys of living will understand the true meaning of life and of the Tao.

Simplicity helps and can, in fact, motivate. The best and most simple way to motivate one's people is to follow, learn and emulate those who have motivated oneself. Learn from the great leaders, mentors or masters one once has had. Chandler and Richardson (2009: 68) suggest this, "Channel them, clone them, and incorporate them into who you are all day".

As leaders, to motivate well, we need to communicate, and say in simple terms so as to promote greater understanding between ourselves and our followers. Simply, say what we mean and mean what we say. Interestingly, these match with Low, Mohd. Zain and Ang (2012: 600)'s one of the key principles of managing people, that is, leaders and managers must communicate. In that study, some respondents urged

Table 1. Remarks from the Thirty-one Respondents on Lao Tzu's Three Treasures
<p>1. Simplicity</p> <p>"When I communicate with my employees, I just simply say what I mean and I mean what I say"; "direct communication is vital"; "yes, we always feel inspired and motivated by him when he approach us and just simply talk to us"; "although my boss is an engineer, he alway say in simple terms to make us all understand"; " my boss is very busy all the time and when meet him he usually ask about our families and I feel that he is caring manager"; "my manager is humble and he is liked my all of us"; " I have never seen my manager getting angry or in heated argument; he always say in a soft and kind manner and everybody respect him; and listen to what he says"; " my boss has no ego at all; he is being humble"</p>
<p>2. Patience</p> <p>"My boss is patient in explaining things that we say we don't understand"; "patience is needed when we show our love and compassion to others especially our loved ones"; "not necessarily a leader, but a person needs to be patient with one's loved ones in order to expand one's love for them."; "I thought about this and I think the best gifts we could ever give someone we loved is our patience and our time because we are giving them something that we will never get them back"; "we need patience to being detached"; "one learns to be more objective and able to listen to see another point of view or perspective when one remains detached"; "It is important when serving"; "to serve and satisfy most customers, we need patience"; "care requires patience"; "we need people with patience in this line of activities"; "patience is required when one is waiting"; "in our line of work, we need much patience to work hard and wait for recognition and promotion"; "we need patience to being humble"; "it takes me a lot of patience to stop being egoistic and stay humble when people praise me for my good work" and "I remain as polite and as humble as I can when I encounter angry clients or customers. This to me requires quite a bit of patience to explain, to apologize and sometimes, to calm my clients/customers down; after all, our aim is to do well in business"</p>
<p>3. Compassion</p> <p>'He is a kind hearted person and he always help the poor"; "he is a compassionate leader because he cares about his people"; "a compassionate leader is normally humble, he or she listens"; "my leader is not egotistic... more of being other-centred." "Yes, I'm always motivated by the compassion of my supervisor or leader. If he's compassionate, he is likely to be caring, and shows deep concern. He would also better listen to me. I'll perform better if my team leader is indeed compassionate; it's motivating to have a caring superior"; "If there are any disagreements or conflicts among us, they are easily settled with empathetic concerns by our supervisor, and this is helpful." "Generally-speaking, my leader would look and focus at finding solutions, resolving the problem(s) rather than being fault-finding. Such a caring (loving) attitude helps. And he is also really committed to transferring knowledge and skills, he coaches and trains me."</p>

"We give feedback and we get feedback"; "communication is vital"; "yes, we always feel inspired and motivated by him" and "my boss is patient in explaining things that we say we don't understand."

The Chinese have a saying, "The heart of the child is like the heart of the Buddha"; and this is to be appreciated in the context of the leader's motivation of his(her) people. Un-trapped by ego or detached from rewards, the leader should simply serve and get the job done. To be a leader is thus to serve. Selfless, the leader, applying the language of the heart, should simply take care of the needs of their people, and this would motivate the people greatly.

When the leader listens to his or her people, he or she appears as being humble to them. There are no selfish designs and scheming or ulterior motives. A good leader simply asks and gets input from the people, and that in itself can be motivating (Chandler and Richardson, 2009). And interesting too, to learn well from others, one should especially listen; listen and understand well. "Listening to employees (*also*) plays a very important role in

maintaining their morale and commitment and support to the managers and the organization." (Low, Mohd. Zain and Ang; 2012: 600; *italics author's*). From the Confucian leadership perspective, the Old Master once said, "One who thinks him(herself)self wise cannot hear any good advice" and "(s)he who talks too much is prone to failure" (*Such a person - though the person thinks he or she is smart - is a fool, silly enough not to hear or listen well*) (Zhou, 2005: 64 and 69 respectively; *italics author's*). By simply listening well, the leader is, in turn, showing that he or she is concerned for the people, and cares for them. Here, the heart shows the way, and the leader follows the *Tao*; Loy (1990: 33) speaks of "desire that has no desire is the Way" or in the author's interpretations, being selflessness or other/follower-centeredness.

When the leader simply cares for his or her people, he or she is likely to be liked by the people. Ta Mo who came from India to preach or transmit Chan (Zen in Japanese) Buddhism in China (during the early 5th century), not using with even a word, he used his heart to communicate, and that is essentially good enough.

Simple yet it is beyond words. [“In motion, there is silence and in silence, there is motion.” Some accounts speak of Ta Mo having told emperor Wudi that meditation, not good deeds, led to enlightenment. He himself was said to have meditated sitting motionless for nine years.] From some Chinese texts and interpretation, it is said that the clarity of the mind and purity of the heart enabled him to do things, and through meditation and spiritual discipline, Ta Mo taught the *Shaolin* monks Buddhism as well as ways to keep themselves healthy; they were weak and sick due to poor blood circulation during their long meditational sessions. These monks were also taught on martial artist techniques and ways, and later, they used them to defend their faith and protected themselves against attacks on their temples.

To motivate the people well, the leader also needs to know them well. In essence, it is good for the leaders to appreciate the people’s goodness and tap their strengths, and these would be motivating for the people. Collins (2001) has highlighted that companies grow from good to great when leaders really know their people’s strengths so that they can help them to express these strengths even more. Their talents or gifts are then better utilized. Indeed it is common these days, managers have spent much time trying to fix what’s wrong when they can better focus on what’s good and positive.

The leader needs to simply let or empower the individual to do what he or she likes to do. Donald Trump once said that “without passion, you don’t have energy; without energy, you have nothing. Nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion”. Passion is indeed a powerful source of energy – akin to rocket fuel. Here, it is worth-noting that jobs that make one happy or satisfied are one’s own calling; and every individual has a fair turn to be as great as he or she pleases. The person-job fit should be in place, and the individual will naturally be motivated or even perhaps inspired. It is indeed interesting when a person likes what he does and does what he likes; then, he is paid for his hobby and interest! How wonderful!

Additionally, a good and simple way to have people in one’s team motivated is to hire self-motivated people. Yes, they are already motivated, and how wonderful! The Human Resource (HR) manager has to uncover this during the recruitment and selection interviews. He or she has to basically talk less, and allow the interviewees to talk. And the HR Manager is to ask questions, and get the feel of their motivations and what makes the applicants tick. Or what energizes them?

Another classical case of simplicity and one that is most appealing and motivating is that of the leader serving as a (role) model. Here, Low (2006: 86) has highlighted that “role models should be assessed in the light of honesty and integrity. If followers question their leaders’ honesty and integrity, leaders cannot be role models. For leaders, it is a matter of face or honor.” It is very motivating and appealing for the followers after all,

they simply emulate their leaders; it’s more or less a situation of ‘monkeys see, monkeys do’ or vicarious learning. To make BIG in Asia – when managing change, Blackman and Butler (2003: 169) highlight “think(ing) about how you yourself can set an example by your personal behavior. Remember an entrenched system is frustrating. It is not easy; no matter what personal energy you have, you can’t do everything yourself. You can only lead by setting an example. And although you can dictate strategy, you cannot implement it. At the end of the day, it is the people in the organization that have to do the work.” You really have to set an example, have your priorities, think how to control the key points, and ensure that the message is continually reinforced to keep the momentum going.

Leaders should cut down the red-tape and bureaucratic paperwork within their organizations. They should thus overall make things simple and easy – as easy as ABC – for their followers. Simplify, simplify; simplify the forms and do away with as many procedures or steps as possible. Don’t forget the ends, but rectify and simplify the means.

And essentially keep the people informed. Don’t keep them in the dark; keeping in the dark is good for growing mushrooms. However, leaders – if they are not running a secret police or mafia organization – should share information with their people; they should not keep them in the dark (Low, 2001). To promote company’s growth, Martin and Schmidt (2010) have, in fact, highlighted the vital importance of sharing the company’s future strategies even with young talents and rising stars – and emphasize their role in making them real. Besides, when all levels of the organization know the true bigger-picture through reliable information, as happened in a transparent culture, they can make better-informed decisions for the organization and for themselves (Baldoni, 2003: 94, 124; also cited in Low and Ang, 2011).

Another basic and simple thing to do is to let the people know the purpose. Once they know the whys, it is easier to get them to do the job or task(s). Once they know the purpose, they feel right about doing the goal (job) and they get naturally motivated. After all, they know that they are doing a priority, some purposeful or meaningful work.

This researcher-author observes that many a corporation has a list of many values as their core values when instead they should choose and stick to three or four values as their core values. Besides, a few are easier to remember, and most people would then have no trouble keeping them in mind, and in action, working them out. Most employees would really want to work for company whose values and priorities coincide with theirs. Such value congruence would spur them on.

If a leader has a simple slogan, that slogan can be her war-cry and it can be very motivating to not only to her, but also to her people.

Yet another simple thing the leader can do to motivate the people is just to give; be generous. Give praises. Simply give praises. It is simple to give praises, and praises are a form of giving. And indeed praises are motivating. Praises and compliments are powerful drug; they work wonder or create miracles.

In each of us, there lies this deepest principle in human nature, the craving to be appreciated, liked or even admired; so also our followers too have this craving to be praised. [In fact, all of us wear this sign saying, "We want to be appreciated". Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, verse 33, speaks of "mastering others is strength", meaning knowing men is clever.] When we praise our followers, they are pleased. Even a child who is praised for his ability and intelligence is likely to perform well in his studies. And when you praise your business associates, they are likely to cooperate and work well with you. Why? Because you give them what they want. When you praise your business associate, you give her confidence and make her feel secured, if not good, to do business with you. She then returns you what you want: support, cooperation and collaboration.

The author next wish to highlight that patience, a virtue, is the second great treasure that was valued by Lao Tzu.

Patience

"The greatest prayer is patience." (The Buddha)

God, the Ultimate Reality or the *Tao* did not create hurry. Blackman and Butler (2003) have indicated that to succeed in Asia, the leader or manager needs to be patient and not to make one's employees lose face by his or her actions. They should, in fact, think long-term (Low, 2009a; Blackman and Butler; 2003). Note that this, in some ways, ties-in with the fact that patience can be and is self-suffering, and to some extent, it entails some amount of sacrifices that have to be borne or stomachied by the patient person. It is really not an ordinary feat but rather an extraordinary act on the part of the patient person or leader; and interestingly, to him or her, it appears as an ordinary act, a usual deed to be done.

Patience or staying power is a good quality that all leaders should possess; the Chinese usually say that patience and mulberry leaves will make a silk gown.

Although at times, patience can be mistaken as sloth or laziness more so in this modern rush, rush world, this quality is very noble and can indeed be helpful in growing our followers. Patient people are not thrown off by unexpected delays or momentary difficulty (ies). They usually use idle time rather than be frustrated by the delay; they have mind games, listen to audio tapes or read books while queuing up or doing other tasks while on a hold.

It is said that patience is a bitter plant, but it has sweet

fruit. A person leads better when she slows down; indeed, she needs to slow down to be motivated and win, and very interestingly, she also, in fact, gets more done. When a person slows down, as she reviews and reflects, she learns and understands better. Accordingly when every day she experiments with slowing down, she will understand and realize the real meaning behind the legend of the tortoise and the hare. Here, this author would also suggest another definite area in which slowing down helps, and, that is, that of taking more time to talk and listen to one's people. One should engage with one's people; one then makes one's relationships with one's people more relaxed, involved and stronger. The point here is that "the more patient one is, the more understanding one becomes" (one interviewee's inputs), and one bonds with others and vice-versa.

Patience enables leaders to be good coaches and trainers, listening patiently and patiently giving feedback and inputs to the coached. Leaders breed leaders. The French have a proverb that goes, "Drop by drop fills the tub"; patience is gold. Patience can build and grow great things and great people. Patience also reflects or works out prudence; and prudence is to be valued. Saving bit by bit, great wealth is accumulated. [The Chinese has this saying, "Wealth begins with saving bit by bit; poverty comes from misspending."] Heaped up earth becomes a mountain, accumulated water becomes a river. The future belongs to those who generally know how to wait, sharpen their saw and grow professionally. Skills, competences and expertise can be built and improved upon. Shaolin Kung Fu fighters and other martial artists, in particular, are very disciplined and patient; they persevere, growing their internal strength while practicing and developing their art forms and skills.

When one is patient with another, one gives life and love. On the other hand, when one is impatient, one can become easily angry. And holding onto anger, as the Buddha once said, is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.

Fundamentally, when one likes or loves someone, one is patient with the person. Calmly and without being easily annoyed or even irritated, the patient leader points to the coached his or her mistakes and allows the latter to gather lessons and learning points; the coach guides the coached forbearingly or enduringly plus endearingly. And in this way, the coached pick up things faster and learn better. Perhaps, patience is love without getting tired or fed up; instead, the leader often attempts and in fact, makes continuous efforts to energize or give life to others.

It is good to be patient, adopt serenity or simply slow down. Also teach others to be quiet, serene; and enduring while attaining equanimity. To add further, patience can breed or encourage prudence as seen in this way; the safest or coolest way of doubling one's money is to quietly fold it and put it into one's pocket, meaning, one quietly save one's money; one is also

careful with one's money.

(How can we be cool and patient? So often, one should perhaps just stay in bed until the alarm goes off. Or sit quietly in the car for a few minutes before entering the house and relax before turning on the TV set. Take many sips from a cup of hot tea, savoring the nice setting of the coffeehouse while being aware of the surrounding or ambience. Take a longer, more scenic route to work, walk up the stairs instead of taking the elevator and spend a few minutes greeting other members of the staff before looking at the email or tackling those voice mail messages. In other words, slow down. One needs to change one's routines. O yes, this author wishes to clarify that he is not moralizing or preaching, he writes these so as to remind himself to adopt such a practice.)

Let us next examine the advantages and benefits of the third treasure, that is, compassion.

Compassion

"Everything in heart should be as one: Emptiness; Emptiness." (*On Enlightenment*; Loy, 1990: 49)

"Without love, we court destruction of everything beautiful." (Rumi cited in Mascetti, 1999:14). Leadership without compassion is indeed like a violet without scent or salt that has lost its taste or flavor. On the other hand, love is the game that both can play and both win.

In the Chinese tradition, it is said that "legendary emperors – 'San Huang's' are leaders who cared and worked for the people. In fact, they were also called 'Emperor Gods' and their reigns were associated with phoenixes and unicorns which were never seen ever again" (Ong, 1994: 77). To this author, the modern day equivalent and applications here are that leaders must love their people. And if business leaders and companies really love their (people) customers, they should be green. They should love nature. Green, not greed, is good. And leaders and businesses alike should be fulfilling their corporate social responsibilities.

One has to be aware of oneself, knowing and loving oneself [– loving the Universe] and extending that love to others. Having a loving and compassionate nature enables leaders to pay attention to people, the very purpose or reason for their existence. Leaders, in fact, should possess or display effective interpersonal skills and that's where they become more charming or charismatic. Compassion, like rainbow, has many colors and ways. Being empathetic and patient, humane, they smile, laugh, forgive and forget, lend an ear and get on with helping and serving others. What more, their followers and others see such leaders as part of them and as part of their family or group.

Compassion can also be taken as love or great service to others. When one has high interest, loves one's job and has the critical passion, one does one's job

smoothly and well. One becomes selflessly devoted and satisfied, and this is similar to the common Japanese saying, "He, who travels for love, finds a thousand miles only one mile."

And as the proverb goes, "true love never grows old." And love is wonderful, and love conquers all! Or to paraphrase the words of Rupert Brooke, love is a flame – and it beamed the world's night. On the other hand, picture this. Imagine the very opposite of "relate well, be compassionate, love and help others": "I know a planet where there is a certain red-faced gentleman. He had never smelled a flower. He has never looked at a star. He has never loved any one. He has never done anything in his life but add up figures." (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*). And what a sterile world a person, let alone a leader, would live as such!

Mother Teresa once said, "There is a terrible hunger for love. We all experience that in our lives – the pain, the loneliness. We must have the courage to recognize it. The poor you may have right in your own family. Find them. Love them." She added that, "(and) even the rich are hungry for love, for being cared for, for being wanted, for having someone to call their own."

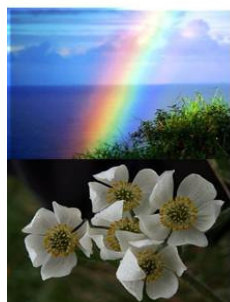
Leaders should have the spirit of love as their own conviction or sense of purpose; they must care and extend help to others. To love is to give, do we give enough? Success in leadership is indeed in giving (Low, 2012a). Even sales and business must be accompanied by love and servant leadership; one should indeed be giving and willingly serving both one's followers and customers. Interestingly, the late Konosuke Matsushita (1991) speaks of after-sales service which is the key to keeping one's customers. No matter how good the product one puts on the market, if one does not provide equally good after-sales service, the customer will not come back. He will shower one with complaints and then go elsewhere.

Interestingly, one respondent intimated incisively to this researcher-author that "when love runs thin, whatever the other person does would be wrong or incorrect. One can then become impatient or very intolerant of the other person." Conversely, if there's love and if one lives in another's heart, one lives rent-free. We need to love and treat our other party, colleagues or all with love and love just multiplies. And grow. Yes, love them. Perhaps these are better explained with inputs gathered from several interviewees.

"My leader is not egotistic... more of being other-centred." "Yes, I'm always motivated by the compassion of my supervisor or leader. If he's compassionate, he is likely to be caring, and shows deep concern. He would also better listen to me. I'll perform better if my team leader is indeed compassionate; it's motivating to have a caring superior." intimated one interviewee to this researcher.

Several other interviewees added that, "If there are any disagreements or conflicts among us, they are easily

Lao Tzu's 3 Treasures



1. Simplicity

2. Patience

3. Compassion



Figure 1. illustrates Lao Tzu's 3 greatest treasures which should be embraced by leaders and managers alike – they set example and develop and grow their people as leaders in an empowering, free-of-fear or compassionate setting.

settled with empathetic concerns by our supervisor, and this is helpful.” “Generally-speaking, my leader would look and focus at finding solutions, resolving the problem(s) rather than being fault-finding. Such a caring (loving) attitude helps. And he is also really committed to transferring knowledge and skills, he coaches and trains me.” Overall then, leaders must embrace and be devoted to service or servant leadership and compassion.

On the reverse side, fear, worry or anxiety can simply cripple, reduce or immobilize us. We may not do things for various reasons but perhaps, it is the fear of making mistakes or at times, it may stem from the negative outcomes of the mind. To motivate and inspire people, a leader needs to be positive, seeing things from positive viewpoints while encouraging people to make a try, learn and/ or resolve problems. Leaders should also encourage their people to be positive-minded. And overall, as the leader shows more care and compassion, the people will dare to try, learn from their mistakes (they know that they are not punished when they make mistakes) and, in fact, when they feel psychologically safe, they learn better. And they grow. The coaching, empowering cum caring or loving attitude takes the power out of fear or worry; the people then experience successes and build their confidence and self-esteem. Indeed this compassion attitude can be very motivating and inspiring.

“Love makes us fly, without wings but in spirit, to this other realm; we feel uplifted, transformed, blessed when we fall in love” (Rumi, cited in Mascetti, 1999: 39). In Low (2010: 50), he rightly speaks of: “There should not be fear; rather, love should prevail. And even in religion, there should be love for God and people rather fear of

punishments and what others may say so of us. Leaders should assist to reduce, minimize or conquer fear while promoting love; and that is the beginning of wisdom and the first step towards greater leadership and organizational success”. (Figure 1)

CONCLUSIONS

“Worries, doubts, illusions – cast them out forthrightly. The road to the precious capital is not for the inattentive” (Cultivating the Heart; Loy, 1990: 11). Agreeably, one should be detached from worldly possession and follow the way of simple life as what Lao Tzu has expounded; one needs to be simple in living; patient in relationship with others and compassionate to the poor and needy.

It is good to conclude this article by paraphrasing Loy's (1990) words, asking ourselves: why the root of wisdom is so deep? Indeed it is because it must be planted, nurtured and applied in our lives. This author wishes to emphasize that the three treasures are good values; and we must cultivate our hearts.

For the leader, Lao Tzu's three greatest treasures are certainly beneficial and helpful in motivating oneself and one's followers as well as those whom one leads and cares for.

REFERENCES

- Ang SL, Low KCP (2012). 'The Chinese and their motivation - The Brunei case study', J. Res. Int. Bus. Manage. (ISSN: 2251-0028) Vol. 2(2) pp. 039-050, February, 2012. Available online

- @<http://www.interestjournals.org/JRIBM>
- Baldoni J (2003). *Great communication secrets of great leaders*, McGraw-Hill: USA.
- Blackman M, Butler C (2003). *Big in Asia*, Palgrave-Macmillan: Great Britain.
- Cavana RY, Delahaye BL, Sekaran U (2001). *Applied business research, qualitative and quantitative methods*, John Wiley and Sons: Australia, pp. 142; 134-135.
- Chandler S, Richardson S (2009). *100 ways to motivate others*, The McGraw-Hill Companies: Singapore.
- Ivancevich JM, Konopaske R, Matteson MT (2008). *Organisational behaviour and management*, 8th ed., McGraw-Hill International Edition. pp. 413.
- Kvale S (1996). *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, Sage Publications, 1996.
- Lao Tzu *Tao te Ching* (2007). From a translation by S. Mitchell. Website: <http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/taote-v3.html> Accessed on 22 May
- Low KCP (2001). *The power of relationships*, BusinesscrAFT™ Consultancy: Singapore.
- Low KCP (2006). 'Motivation, the Chinese leadership way in Singapore's small and medium companies', *The Icfai journal of organizational behavior*, Vol. V No.1, January, 2006, p. 80 - 90.
- Low KCP (2009). 'Lao Tzu's 3 treasures, leadership and organizational growth', *Leadership and organizational manage. J.* volume 2009, issue 3, p. 27 – 36.
- Low KCP (2009a). 'The way of the dragon: Some strategic leadership ways', *Leadership and organizational manage. J.* Volume 2009 Issue 2, p. 40 – 59.
- Low KCP (2010). 'Leadership thoughts to build on – Leading the Rumi way, the path of love', *Leadership and organizational manage. J.* Volume 2010 Issue 4, p 43 – 53.
- Low KCP (2010b). 'Proactive leading, the Buddhist way', *Country: Thailand – Business Environment/ Living*, GLOBALTRADE.net
- Low KCP (2010c). 'Leading the Mahatma Gandhi Way', *Leadership and Organizational Manage. J.* Vol. 2010 Issue 2, pp. 110 - 117.
- Low KCP (2010d). 'Values make a leader, the Confucian perspective', *Insights to A Changing World*, Volume 2010 Issue 2, p. 13 – 28.
- Low KCP (2012). *Leading successfully in Asia*, Springer: Heidelberg, Germany.
- Low KCP (2012a). 'Success in leadership is in giving [Are leaders giving enough?]', *Glo. Edu. J.* Volume 2012, Issue 1, p. 1 - 10.
- Low KCP, Ang SL (2011). 'Information Communication Technology (ICT) for Negotiations', *J. Res. Int. Bus. Manage.* Vol. 1(6), August 2011, p. 183-196. Available online @<http://www.interestjournals.org/JRIBM>.
- Low KCP, Ang SL (2012). 'Confucian leadership and corporate social responsibility (CSR), the way forward', *Asian J. Bus. Res. (AJBR)*, New Zealand. ISSN: 11788933. Volume 2 Number 1 2012, pp. 85-108.
- Low KCP, Mohd Zain AY, Ang SL (2012). 'The key principles of managing people: The Brunei Perspective', *Educational Research*, (ISSN: 2141-5161) Vol. 3(7), July 2012, p. 594-602.
- Loy CY (1990). *The book of heart, embracing the Tao*, Shambhala: Boston and London.
- Martin J, Schmidt C (2010). 'How to keep your top talent', *Harvard business review*, May 2010, p. 53 - 61.
- Mascetti MD (1999). *Rumi, the path of love*, Elements Book Limited: Australia.
- McNamara C (1999). *General guidelines for conducting Interviews*, Minnesota, 1999.
- Ong HT (1994). *Secrets of ancient Chinese art of motivation*, Pelanduk Publication (M) Sdn Bhd. Malaysia.
- PHP Institute (1991). *Not for bread alone*, PHP Institute, Inc.: USA.
- Roscoe JR (1975). *Fundamental research statistic for the behavioural sciences*, 2nd Edition, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Sekaran, U. (2000) *Research methods for bBusiness*, John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Zhou K (2005). *A Basic Confucius*, Long River Press: USA.