

Altruistic Natural Leaders

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One of the most fundamental and important principles of the Children’s Hospital Public Economy Model (CHPEM)¹ is that positions of leadership and power should be populated by “altruistic natural leaders. What are “altruistic natural leaders” and how do they differ from the leaders who ascend to positions of power under a corporate capitalist economic model (CEM)?

To begin that discussion, bear in mind that the CHPEM is fundamentally based on an understanding of Human Nature that is very different from the understanding of Human Nature promoted by corporate capitalism.²⁻⁴ Corporate capitalism is fundamentally based on a negative and incomplete understanding of Human Nature---an insistence that human beings, by nature, are predominantly selfish, rather hopelessly so, and that any economic model that fails to accept that “reality” is doomed to failure. The CHPEM is based on a positive, more complex and complete understanding of Human Nature that emphasizes the spectrum of human behavioral capacities, a spectrum that includes both altruistic and non-altruistic capacities, and emphasizes how social conditions can up-regulate or down-regulate the expression of those capacities. As explained below and in companion articles, the CHPEM intentionally populates positions of leadership with people who have demonstrated an exemplary inclination and preference to greatly express their altruistic behavioral capacities (to the benefit of the public), rather than their non-altruistic capacities; while corporate capitalism populates its leadership positions with people who are willing to greatly express their non-altruistic behavioral capacities (to the benefit of the corporation and themselves), rather than their altruistic capacities. For a detailed discussion of Human Nature, please see the RELATED ARTICLES²⁻⁴ listed at the end of this essay.)

Altruistic natural leaders are people who have a natural, innate gift of being able to lead in a kind, wise, fair, competent, altruistic, inspiring, and incorruptible way. Altruistic natural leaders are not motivated by a desire for wealth, power, personal gain, fame, or control over others. They are driven by moral incentive, not monetary incentive.⁵ When one considers the spectrum of human behavioral capacities that we all possess, altruistic natural leaders exemplify expression of the altruistic aspects of our Human Nature, regarding both their innate capacities for kind, altruistic behaviors and their ability, inclination, preference, and willingness to generously upregulate the expression of those kind capacities and greatly downregulate expression of their non-altruistic capacities. They highly value, promote, and protect the freedom to enjoy being part of an altruistic collaborative effort to meet the needs of others---the freedom to enjoy up-regulated expression of the kindest aspects of our human nature---

upregulation of this expression in themselves and in society as a whole.⁶ Once in positions of power, they are the least likely among us to be or become corrupt.⁷ Such leaders are known (by people in their community) for these traits, and because of these innate and practiced traits they are asked to assume positions of leadership. Such leaders do not seek positions of leadership and power, they accept requests to serve in such positions.

An additional trait that altruistic natural leaders possess is an ability to recognize others who do or do not have the characteristics, inclinations, values, and motives of altruistic natural leaders. This ability enables altruistic natural leaders who are in positions of power to make good decisions regarding who they recommend (people whose behaviors reflect up-regulated expression of the altruistic aspects of our human nature) or do not recommend (people whose behaviors reflect up-regulated expression of the non-altruistic aspects of our human nature) for other positions of leadership.

This understanding of Human Nature and this principle of filling positions of leadership with altruistic natural leaders minimizes the likelihood that positions of leadership and power will become populated with self-serving people who are primarily interested in power, wealth, control over others, personal gain, and/or fame and are easily corrupted and prone to misuse power.

Other fundamental principles of the CHPEM are to encourage critical thinking, expression of different points of view, respectful dissent, free and open dialogue, and democratic problem solving. Another principle is to emphasize honest, objective, constructive peer review, including careful review of leaders. The altruistic natural leaders of the CHPEM are committed to practicing these principles. They are committed to preserving democracy, preventing “group think,” and avoiding abuse of power by leaders. These commitments minimize the likelihood of autocratic/totalitarian behaviors emerging and prevailing.

In short, because of the above principles and because of the above-described innate and practiced traits of the altruistic natural leaders of the CHPEM, positions of leadership under the CHPEM are populated by leaders who are not likely to abuse power and are not likely to be or become corrupt or authoritarian.

In contrast, leadership positions under corporate capitalism tend not to be populated by people with the above-described characteristics of altruistic natural leaders. (See **Qualifying NOTE** at the end of this article.) Instead, capitalist corporations tend to assign leadership positions to individuals who are most likely to help the corporation to maximize profits and “beat” the competition---i.e., people who are highly ambitious, have demonstrated clever business savvy, and are exceptionally driven, willing, and excited about maximizing corporate profits and

“increasing market share.” When one considers the spectrum of the altruistic and non-altruistic aspects of our Human Nature, these corporate leaders tend to exhibit non-altruistic aspects of our Human Nature, regarding their capacities for non-altruistic behaviors, and/or their inclination and willingness to upregulate the expression of those non-altruistic capacities, and/or their inclination and willingness to down-regulate expression of their altruistic capacities. Such individuals, like the capitalist corporations they lead, tend to be driven by a desire for wealth, power, control over others, personal gain, and/or fame; and they tend not to be motivated primarily by an altruistic desire to serve the public. Compared to altruistic natural leaders, corporate leaders are far more corruptible and far more autocratic.

Furthermore, these corporate leaders tend to place like-minded individuals in other positions of leadership. This results in most leadership positions within corporations being populated by individuals who tend to exhibit the non-altruistic aspects of our Human Nature.^{8,9}

Moreover, the corporate culture and its reward system tend to transform its leaders (and followers) to become increasingly less altruistic.¹⁰ In contrast, the culture of the CHPEM tends to transform its leaders and participants in a more altruistic, less selfish direction.

Some critics of the CHPEM will likely argue that the CHPEM puts too much faith and trust in its concept of altruistic natural leaders and too much faith and trust in its positive, optimistic view of Human Nature---i.e., too much faith in Human Goodness. These critics might argue that, realistically, the total number of people who fit the CHPEM criteria/description of an altruistic natural leader is too small to fill all positions of leadership in a CHPEM-inspired public economy (including the most powerful positions) with such leaders, and, therefore, most positions of leadership would, in fact, be filled by people who fall far short of being altruistic natural leaders. Furthermore, they might argue that even if there were a sufficient number of altruistic natural leaders to fill all (or the vast majority) of leadership positions in a CHPEM-inspired public economy, it is unrealistic to expect those leaders to remain altruistic and incorruptible. Such critics believe that even the most altruistic natural leaders would likely eventually become corrupt, “because power corrupts” and “power transforms people” in the corrupt direction, “because of Human Nature.”⁷ For these reasons, these critics believe the CHPEM relies too heavily on its notion of altruistic natural leaders. Such critics argue that the altruistic natural leaders will almost surely disappoint the citizenry and eventually betray the CHPEM-inspired economy’s best intentions.

But is the above criticism accurate? Is it really true that there are not enough altruistic natural leaders in this world? Where is the evidence that there is an insufficient number of altruistic natural leaders to make a CHPEM-inspired public economy work? Is it really true that altruistic natural leaders would inevitably become corrupt “because of Human Nature” and “because power corrupts and transforms people?” Where is the evidence for that belief? Granted, there

is good evidence that leaders of corporate capitalist enterprises are prone to corruption and abuse of power and are easily transformed further in the non-altruistic direction. But why is it assumed that that evidence applies to the altruistic natural leaders of a CHPEM-inspired public economy?

The critic's lack of faith in the CHPEM's notion of altruistic natural leaders seems to reflect the critic's excessively negative view of Human Nature and an excessive lack of faith in Humanity. If such critics had had the opportunity and privilege to work in a children's hospital during the altruistic era, they would have noticed the abundance of altruism displayed by the pediatricians, pediatric nurses, and hospital workers throughout the hospital, and they would have witnessed incorruptible altruistic natural leaders in leadership positions, such as the Chief of Pediatrics and the Chiefs of each pediatric division.¹¹ Later, during the corporate era, they would have witnessed how these altruistic natural leaders were replaced with corporate leaders and how corruption followed. Such critics would be surprised by how many altruistic leaders and followers there have been, not only in children's hospitals throughout the world, but also in schools and factories throughout the world. Such critics may not have been introduced to the more positive, more complex, and more accurate understanding of Human Nature upon which the CHPEM is based.

Is Great faith in Human Goodness justified?¹²

Granted, current events and behaviors in the world today (wars, racism, hateful intolerance, etc.)¹³ raise doubts that much faith should be placed in Human Goodness. Indeed, many readers have probably lost faith in the altruistic aspects of our Human Nature and thereby seriously doubt that an altruistic social and economic model like the Children's Hospital Public Economy Model (CHPEM) is realistic.

But it is important to appreciate that the current disappointing and worrisome social behavior (at both an individual and population level) has occurred while the corporate capitalist model, its leaders, and its culture have dominated and prevailed. Much of that disappointing behavior is a reflection of the capitalist culture and its leadership---a culture and leadership that predictably up-regulates expression of our non-altruistic capacities and down-regulates expression of our altruistic capacities.

But this disappointing behavior, considering the circumstances that promote it and escalate it, does not mean that we should lose faith in all of Humanity and conclude that we cannot count upon Human Goodness. Human Goodness just needs to be unleashed, given opportunity, given oxygen. Expression of the altruistic capacities of our Human Nature need to be up-regulated, and expression of our non-altruistic capacities need to be down-regulated. The CHPEM and the

CHPEM-inspired public economy that it could create provides that opportunity; it creates opportunity for our Human Goodness to be expressed, unleashed, and become free.

The CHPEM could markedly increase the percentage of people who are up-regulating expression of the kind, altruistic aspects of our Human Nature, and could markedly reduce the percentage of people who are up-regulating expression of the non-altruistic aspects of our Human Nature, thereby restoring and justifying faith in Human Goodness---a faith that has become severely shaken during the reign of corporate capitalism. So, yes, faith in human goodness seems unwarranted when one looks at social behaviors occurring in the current corporate capitalist culture. But that does not mean that individual and collective behaviors cannot change and does not mean that faith in Human Goodness could not rightly be warranted in a CHPEM-inspired culture. Culture matters. The choice of social and economic model matters.

Conclusion: There are plenty of altruistic natural leaders available to make a CHPEM-inspired public economy work. Unlike people who ascend to positions of leadership and power under the corporate capitalist system, altruistic natural leaders of the CHPEM are far less likely to become corrupted or transformed in a selfish direction. Loss of faith in Human Goodness is not justified. The economic model that a society chooses matters.

Qualifying NOTE: Capitalist Leaders-By-Default⁹---More on Human Nature and Capitalist Leadership:

Human Nature is composed of a spectrum of behavioral capacities, ranging from great innate capacity for altruism at one end of the spectrum to great innate capacity for non-altruistic behaviors at the other end, with a range of capacities in-between. All of us have at least some innate capacity for altruistic behaviors and at least some innate capacity for non-altruistic behaviors. Some people may have above-average innate capacity for altruistic behaviors, while others may have above-average innate capacity for non-altruistic behaviors. Some people may have above-average capacity for both altruistic behaviors and non-altruistic behaviors.

But innate capacity is one thing; expression of capacities is another thing. We are all capable of either up-regulating expression of our altruistic behavioral capacities or up-regulating expression of our non-altruistic behavioral capacities, and we are all capable of either down-regulating expression of our non-altruistic capacities or down-regulating expression of our capacities for altruistic behavior. This is similar to the fact that humans are able to up-regulate or down-regulate the expression of certain genes. (Genes are analogous to innate capacities. Expression of genes can be either up-regulated or down-regulated.) People differ regarding the ease with which they are able to up-regulate or down-regulate an innate behavioral capacity.

We also differ regarding our inclination and/or willingness to down-regulate or up-regulate expression of one innate behavioral capacity or another. Some people are very willing to up-regulate the expression of certain capacities and down-regulate the expression of other capacities; while others are very unwilling to up-regulate or down-regulate certain capacities.

The bottom-line is that Human Nature, in all of us, has both altruistic and non-altruistic aspects. There is a spectrum regarding the size of various innate behavioral capacities; a spectrum regarding the ease and extent of expression of those capacities; and a spectrum regarding the inclination and/or willingness to express certain capacities.

A major problem in a capitalist society is that positions of high leadership tend to be populated with individuals who either have above-average capacity for non-altruistic behaviors, or above-average tendency/willingness/ability to express their capacity for non-altruistic behaviors, or have below-average capacity for altruistic behaviors, or have below-average tendency/willingness/ability to express altruistic capacities---or some combination of these variables. This is particularly true of many of the most powerful leaders within the capitalist system, for example the leaders of giant transnational corporate capitalist entities and key leaders who attend the World Economic Forum (WEF). Such individuals are a “good fit” for leadership positions in corporate capitalist enterprises, because their behavioral capacities, inclinations, abilities, and willingness enable them to help the corporation become more profitable, wealthy, and powerful. Such individuals are not a good fit for leadership in an altruistic public economy, and a public economy should avoid placing such individuals in positions of leadership.

However, it is important to clarify that many current leaders within the capitalist system do not have above-average capacity for non-altruistic behaviors (self-interest-oriented behaviors), or below-average capacity for altruistic behaviors, or above-average inclination or willingness to express non-altruistic behaviors, or below-average inclination or willingness to express altruistic capacities. In fact, many capitalist leaders have great capacity for altruistic behaviors and would greatly express that capacity if they lived in a social milieu that encouraged such expression (e.g., in a public economy). **They are capitalist leaders only by default.**

In other words, if these “capitalist leaders-by-default,” who are currently leaders within the capitalist economy, were, instead, participating in a CHP-EM-inspired public economy, many of them would likely upregulate expression of their capacity for altruism and could, thereby, become excellent leaders within the public economy. But, since their main opportunity, and often only opportunity, to provide for their family is to participate in the capitalist economy,

they have needed to upregulate expression of their capacity for non-altruistic behaviors in order to secure employment and optimally provide for their family. That is, they are expressing (often very reluctantly) their capacities for capitalist behaviors by default. In today's current world, they have had little or no choice.

So, an important and careful distinction should be made between "capitalist leaders-by-default" and the considerably selfish "hard core capitalist leaders." There is a huge difference between the two. A goal should be to warmly welcome the "capitalist leaders-by-default" to participate in the public economy---while avoiding placement of hard core capitalist leaders into positions of power. Some, even many, of the capitalist leaders-by-default" may be excellent "natural leaders," once freed from the grip of corporate capitalism.

Unfortunately, in our current world, the majority of the leaders that occupy the highest and most powerful positions of leadership, have the capacities, inclinations, abilities, and willingness that are characteristic of the "hard core capitalist leaders." In addition, those leaders have populated lower positions of leadership with like-minded, like-behaving individuals. The result is that leadership positions throughout the world, including leaders within government institutions, have been a "good fit" for the corporate world but a "poor fit" for Humanity. It is no wonder that poor decisions are being made. It is no wonder that "Mean Arrangements of Man" have been created and have prevailed. It is no wonder that altruism has been so sidelined and Social Beauty has been so spotty.

RELATED ARTICLES:

The Footnotes refer to the following companion articles, which are posted (or will soon be posted) on the *Notes From The Social Clinic* Website: www.notesfromthesocialclinic.org These articles are listed, by title, in the Table of Contents (TOC) of the website.

1. The Children's Hospital Public Economy Model (CHPEM)
2. On Human Nature
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5. Moral Incentive vs Monetary Incentive
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8. Key Problem: Under Corporate Capitalism, Leadership Positions Are Populated With People Who Are Inclined to Express Non-Altruistic Capacities of Our Human Nature
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