

# Complexity Intelligence and Cultural Coaching: Navigating the Gap Between Our Societal Challenges and Our Capacities

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**Abstract:** In this article, we present the term *complexity intelligence* as a useful moniker to describe the reasoning ability, emotional capacity and social cognition necessary to meet the challenges of our prevailing life conditions. We suggest that, as a society and as individuals, we develop *complexity intelligence* as we navigate the gap between our current capacities and the capacities needed to respond to the next stage of complex challenges in our lives. We further suggest that it is possible to stimulate and support the emergence of *complexity intelligence* in a society, but we need a new form of social change agent - a *cultural coach*, to midwife its emergence.

**Key words:** complexity, reasoning ability, emotional capacity, social cognition, adult development, social change, cultural coach.

## Introduction

We are living in complex times and are part of complex systems that our past experiences and training may not have prepared us to understand. In fact, as Kegan (1994/2000) suggests, we may well be “cognitively and emotionally mismatched” to respond to the mental demands of modern life. As we move more fully into a global society, it seems that all our systems are in chaos: our local economies, our health system, the environment, our community life, and often, at times, our own personal lives. We are living in a rapidly changing society. Indeed, as Vaill (1989) suggests, we seem to be living in a state of “permanent white water” and as Toffler (1970) observed nearly 35 years ago, these times are not just like a second Industrial Revolution, but are more like a second great divide in human history – parallel to the movement from barbarism to civilization!

This “great divide in human history,” this monumental shift in life conditions has placed increasing stress on local and global leadership. It is clear that habitual linear thinking is not helping leaders deal with pressing issues such as stimulating the local economy, protecting the aquifer, providing housing choices for our elderly populations or responding to global violence, famine or inequities. Even well-intentioned approaches to governance that include public participation in decision making often fail to grapple with the complexity of issues and end up creating polarized debate and divisiveness. People keep looking for simple approaches to things that are complex.

In using the word *complex*, we are referring to the interconnected and unpredictable nature of issues in a world technologically and thus socially connected across time and space in a way much different than we experienced even 20 years ago. To respond to this complexity, Commons, Danaher-Gilpin, Miller, and Goodheart (2002) suggest that many modern issues require reasoning ability at the metasystematic stage. This stage is broadly similar to Torbert’s (2004) Strategist stage – a stage presently attained by only a small percentage of citizens or

leaders.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, there is a wide gap between the societal challenges facing us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and our collective capacities to effectively respond to them. This gap is severely threatening our survival as a species.

As part of the evolutionary process, humans routinely find themselves faced with challenges that exceed their capacities. This is a natural part of growth and evolution and occurs in all realms of the human experience, whether that is physical, mental, emotional, spiritual or interpersonal. But, what happens when the challenges in our life threaten our very deep-seated perception of “how the world works?”<sup>2</sup> In other words, what happens when there is a gap between our operating beliefs of how the world works and the contradictory evidence presented by what we observe in the world around us? What happens to societies when this manifests as large gaps between existing capacities and the capacities needed to respond to societal challenges? In this paper, we suggest that *complexity intelligence* emerges as we make the transition through these gaps. We also suggest that it is possible to actively stimulate and support the emergence of *complexity intelligence* in our society, but we need a new form of social change agent - a *cultural coach*, to midwife its emergence.

Our intent in defining the term *complexity intelligence* is to offer a simple phrase or moniker for practitioners working in the area of social change. We acknowledge the many inspiring individuals and programs in the field of social change and feel that an accessible concept based on rigorous research and contemporary theory is needed to capture the essence of this work. Our concept of complexity intelligence draws on the interrelated fields of adult development, integral theory, transformational learning, complexity theory, dialogue, deliberation and action research. We suggest that social change agents should be familiar with this body of work in designing public processes to support the emergence of complexity intelligence. These theories do not need to be taught conceptually for complexity intelligence to be developed. In fact, in many cases they should not be taught, but rather should be embedded in experiential learning and application. Complexity intelligence is a natural human capacity that will emerge, given the appropriate balance of challenge and support.

## The Concept of Complexity Intelligence

### Definition of the Term

We consider *complexity intelligence* to be both a capacity and a process. In general terms, it is the capacity to respond to the demands of current life challenges and it is also the process of developing this capacity. To capture its inherent dynamic evolutionary process, we should be using the verb *intelligencing*, but for ease of reference, we are considering both the capacity and the process to be described by the term *complexity intelligence* or, simply, CI.

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<sup>1</sup> In two samples, Cook-Greuter (2002) reports less than 7% of the adult population in the U.S. and less than 3% of U.S. managers and supervisors operate at this level or higher. In a third sample she reports that 20% of managers and consultants in the U.K. are operating at this level or higher but qualifies this finding by suggesting the higher number is “likely due to self-selection bias” (p. 34).

<sup>2</sup> We are using the phrase “how the world works” to name the habitual lens used to construct, perceive and explain experiences. It has a similar intent to other terms such as: “stage of development” (Wilber, 2001, Beck & Cowan, 1996), “meaning-perspective” (Mezirow, 1991), “meaning-making” (Kegan, 1982/1996), “levels or waves of human existence” (Graves, 1974) etc.

As a capacity, CI is defined to be the integration of the reasoning ability, emotional capacity and social cognition required to function at the level of complexity demanded by current life challenges.

As a process of negotiating transitions, CI includes: (1) recognition that a gap exists between the life conditions currently facing us and our current operating beliefs and assumptions of how the world works (e.g. our practice of enforcing Christmas and Easter as public holidays in areas where large percentages of the population are not Christian); (2) perseverance to stay engaged in the gap with the resulting confusion, contradiction and frustration as we disembody from our familiar operating beliefs; and (3) exposure and openness to a new conceptual framework that helps validate the recognition of this gap.

## Complexity Intelligence and Adult Development

In the literature on positive adult development, there are many references and cross-referenced charts describing the various lines, quadrants and domains of human development.<sup>3</sup> In defining CI, we focus on three of these: reasoning ability, emotional capacity and social cognition, or, in other words, reasoning ability in a social context. By describing CI as “reasoning ability in a social context,” we want to make clear that it is not reasoning ability alone (or reasoning ability of the isolated individual alone) that is the crux of complexity intelligence but it is the combination of this ability along with the emotional maturity to access and apply that ability in an interpersonal context. This definition of CI is consistent with Rosenberg’s (2004) reference to the three domains of cognition, emotional orientation and social context and corresponds to Kegan’s (1994/2000) use of the term *knowing*.<sup>4</sup>

A key notion behind the concept of CI is integration. Individuals may have a very high level of reasoning capacity, e.g. operating at the metasystematic or paradigmatic level identified by Commons et al (2002), but if they have not also developed the necessary emotional capacity and social cognition, they will not have the CI needed to operate at the level demanded by prevailing life conditions. This may then show up as a gap between the ability to talk *about* a belief conceptually and the ability to embody it. This can be confusing to others, unless they are willing to look under the content of *what* someone is saying to the structure of *how* they think and accomplish tasks in the world. People are walking around all the time with this type of “integrity gap” and not quite able to see it enough to name it or remediate it. This is a gap of integration - something we can all experience at our growing edge. An integrity gap is often falsely assumed to be an indication of moral corruption, a static judgment that is not helpful, as it does not inquire into the transitional nature of change. Having an integrity gap creates a tendency to feel off

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<sup>3</sup> Wilber (2000) identifies a minimum of two dozen lines of development in *Integral Psychology*. Kegan (1994/2000) uses three (logical-cognitive, social-cognitive and intrapersonal-affective) and in an interview with Russ Volkmann (<http://www.leadcoach.com/newsletter.html#fresh>), James Flaherty identifies six streams he uses in his work (cognitive, emotional, relational, somatic, spiritual and integrating).

<sup>4</sup> “This kind of “knowing,” this work of the mind, is not about “cognition” alone, if what we mean by cognition is thinking divorced from feeling and social relating. It is about the organizing principle we bring to our thinking and our feelings and our relating to others and our relating to parts of ourselves.” (Kegan, 1994/2000, p.29)

centre and a need to hide, avoid, or pretend, making it difficult to be fully present,<sup>5</sup> creative and responsive.

The transition from one understanding of “how the world works” to another is not a smooth linear process, as we know from observing children in their development. We watch them struggle to make meaning of new challenges that exceed their current capacities. For instance, a child is unable to differentiate the letter “d” from the letter “b” in his printing until he has internalized the meaning of the spatial concepts of midline, right and left. As a culture we have anticipated the developmental transitions of childhood and accepted the need for supporting them. This acceptance has allowed us to design learning environments that respect children’s different learning capacities.<sup>6</sup> However, we have not yet offered the same consideration to adults in transition. This is probably because, as a culture, we are still embedded in the belief that human development ends with the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

If we assume that once we reach adulthood, development stops, then we are likely to also assume that all adults have the same capacities to integrate their cognitive, emotional and social domains in order to be able to respond to complex situations in a similar and capable manner. This universal “one brush stroke does all” lens could be the root of much of our personal, social and political frustration. It does not let us see the gaps in our own and others’ capacities and thus we judge the behaviors as purposeful sabotaging, or permanent incompetencies, instead of respecting them as natural developmental challenges common to us all. That which is invisible to us is not available for conscious intervention. As the literature on positive adult development becomes more widespread in the culture and as we begin to understand the nature of what occurs during transitions, we can hope to see an increase in awareness of the need to support us all in our transitions.

While it is our belief that complexity intelligence is a natural human capacity that appears to have no upward limits, in this paper, we confine our focus to the complexity intelligence required to respond to the dilemmas and transitions currently facing us in the Western World. We see the bulk of the population basically in the transition from Piaget’s formal operations to post-formal operations.<sup>7</sup> Of course, the actual transition facing individuals will vary, depending on their life context. Using Torbert’s (2004) action-logic terminology, some will be making the transition from Expert to Achiever, some from Achiever to Individualist and others from Individualist to Strategist and beyond. Each transition requires a different set of capacities and anyone working with social change needs to be aware of this difference.

## **Complexity Intelligence and Societal Development**

So far, we have described complexity intelligence as it relates to individuals, but the term can be readily applied to societies as well. It is important to recognize that it is the interaction between the culture and the individual, not just the individual alone that is the locus of social change. Globally we are sitting in the midst of interconnected societies with unresolved problems

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<sup>5</sup> The authors consider “being present” a core element of complexity intelligence. It means being able to track the interconnected shifts in emotions, meaning-making and physiological reactions in the moment.

<sup>6</sup> This need has become visible to us although it was not as overtly recognized in childhood education 100 years ago.

<sup>7</sup> Piaget’s description of stage change is similar to that described in the transitions from order 3 to order 4 (Kegan, 1982/1996), and the two-step transition from Achiever to Individualist to Strategist (Torbert, 2004), orange to green to yellow (Beck & Cowan, 1996) or abstract to systematic to metacognitive (Commons et al, 2002).

such as homelessness, AIDs, famine, global warming etc. and the complexity intelligence has not yet emerged to meet these challenges. There is a large gap between these types of societal challenges and our collective capacities to respond to them.

We define a society with complexity intelligence as one that has institutionalized structures in place that support the collective reasoning ability, emotional maturity and “inter-societal”<sup>8</sup> capacity to respond to current societal challenges. If enough of the population of a given society could develop complexity intelligence, they would have the capacity to reason and reflect together and commit to a process of public deliberation or generative dialogue out of which adaptive responses to problems could emerge. Such a society would have the emotional maturity to face the enormity of the global challenges facing it without “numbing out” or splitting into reactive camps. And, it would have the “inter-societal” capacity to truly operate from a worldcentric perspective.

## Navigating the Gap

In much of the popular literature on human development, there is a lot of attention given to identifying the stages of development. We want to focus on the space in between these stages. In defining complexity intelligence as a process of negotiating transitions from one stage to the next, we have identified three characteristics of this process: (1) there is a recognition that a gap exists between our operating beliefs and the current conditions facing us; (2) there is the perseverance to stay engaged in the resulting confusion, contradiction and frustration as we disembody from familiar operating beliefs and navigate the gap; and (3) there is exposure and openness to a new conceptual framework that validates our recognition of the gap.

The navigation itself is a natural process. Pushed and pulled by an evolutionary imperative, what Freire (1993) refers to as “the ontological vocation to be more fully human,” humans naturally navigate the gap that arises when current operating beliefs no longer make sense of contradictory life conditions. This happens routinely throughout the human lifespan, as illustrated by the following examples. A child initially believes all her attempts at speaking are encouraged, but then realizes that some speaking is considered “swears” and she is punished. An adolescent has to negotiate the transition from a belief that parental routines create comfort and stability to a belief that some parents’ routines are also suffocating them. Adults grapple with shifts of meaning from believing their investments in retirement savings plans will support them in their old age through watching investment funds collapse as some of these companies are exposed as fraudulent. They begin to question if security can come from financial investments alone or if the human bonds of a strong community may offer greater protection in old age or debility.

In all these examples, the transition from the old way of understanding “how the world works” to a more complex way of understanding begins with the recognition of a gap. This recognition is supported by the awareness that there is another way of looking at things – i.e. a new conceptual framework. One cannot ignore the contradictions but it takes great perseverance to stay in this place of confusion and frustration until a new way of understanding emerges. Even though the new view eventually “transcends and includes” the earlier view, to use Wilber’s (2000) phrase, the transition process is not an easy or simple one.

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<sup>8</sup> “Inter-societal” is a term used to expand on the interpersonal domain for individuals. Societies also must develop the capacity to deliberate together at a global level to respond to complex global issues.

Often, we may not even recognize that a gap exists. For example, a person who operates from an assumption that social problems are due to those with power oppressing those without power may blame the “system” as it must be perpetuating this imbalance. With this operating belief firmly in place, such a person does not see the history of interconnected social structures that underlie complex issues such as homelessness. Instead, she seeks solutions to problems of human suffering by righting the wrong through “aid to victims.” What happens then to a person who holds this belief when, after years of fighting for more shelters for the homeless, she sees those shelters going unused while homeless people still remain sleeping under bridges and on park benches? Perhaps she will continue to hold onto the belief, continuing to blame the system for not providing enough in the form of aid to victims. If the gap between what she believes and what she sees happening is not too great, she may simply ignore it, defend it or make slight adjustments without challenging the assumptions of the familiar lens of “how the world works.” She may infer that it is not the view that is limited but she just needs to advocate harder or in a different way to ensure aid to victims. On the other hand, if the gap is large enough that it becomes visible and difficult to live with, the recognition of the gap will ignite the evolutionary imperative and the individual will be forced to deal with the dialectical challenge of resolving contradictory awarenesses. This could lead to a shift in worldview to allow an awareness that effective action requires more from government policy than simply providing “aid to victims.” It may also require working with a wide variety of approaches related to housing and health as well as other interconnected systems such as economic development and employment.

In our modern society, we often find ourselves face to face with those who hold different beliefs and values. When we add to this, the confusion and contradictions brought on by rapid changes in technology, we truly do find ourselves in a state of “permanent white water.” In such fast moving waters, there is understandable confusion, vulnerability and exhaustion as we feel ourselves losing our footing in our old way of understanding before there is any solid ground emerging to form the foundation of a new comprehension. One of our journal entries describes it this way:

Part of what I know I need is to be able to process that gap that I am sensing, in order to unfreeze my responses. So I need to sort it, chew on it, make meaning of it, validate my intuitions and then the next time I am much less fumble-minded about it, less reactive and take it less personally. I can then see through the whole matrix of it and respond effectively at the time. It is like a new neurological pathway has been made.<sup>9</sup>

This journal entry illustrates how the reasoning capacity is struggling to make sense of what is occurring, the emotional capacity is stuck in a feeling of “fumble-mindedness” and the social cognition is “frozen” until some integration happens. If the reasoning ability begins to make sense of the situation without integrating the emotional and social aspects, there could be inconsistency between espoused theory and theory in use.

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<sup>9</sup> Author’s personal journal entry

## Supporting the Emergence of Complexity Intelligence Through Cultural Coaching

### Providing Support to Navigate the Gap

If we are saying that complexity intelligence naturally emerges as an adaptive response to complex conditions, why has it not emerged in response to the undeniably complex conditions of our modern world? Could it be that the gap between our current understanding of how the world works and the challenges we are facing is too big of a gap to navigate? While it is healthy for a challenge to be slightly greater than current capacities as it motivates us to grow, if a challenge is too great, it can overwhelm us and retard our development. If this is our current societal dilemma and if we are, as Kegan suggests “in over our heads,” what, if anything, can we do to stimulate the emergence of complexity intelligence to disclose this gap and support the navigation through it? Indeed, can its emergence be stimulated, nurtured and supported? Questions such as these are drawing much interest and attention by theorists and action researchers committed to public issues work. Rosenberg (2004) and Ross (2002) both suggest that designed pedagogical approaches to public processes can lead to an increase in the capacities we are defining as complexity intelligence. These pedagogical approaches can be a way of supporting openness and exposure to new conceptual frameworks.

There must be an appropriate balance between challenge and support. If the challenge is perceived as too great, there needs to be an increase in support to allow growth to occur. How do we provide that support and what form would it take? Could we stimulate the emergence of complexity intelligence with a designed process following what Kegan describes as “life’s natural curriculum” offering the right amount of challenge and support?

When individuals experience a gap, they have a variety of sources to turn to for help – personal therapists, life coaches etc., all of which could be called “gap specialists.” Many of these professionals specialize in supporting individuals to navigate the gap between formal operational and post-formal operational although they may not formally name their work as such. Through assessment and appropriately designed interventions, these professionals support individuals to adjust to their life situations or co-create more fulfilling circumstances. The shortcoming of this work is that it is done in the privacy of a therapist’s office, as if each individual’s issues existed separately from their culture.<sup>10</sup> The work of individuation from a specific clients’ pathology or “dysfunctional” family could, from a broader lens, often be viewed as the normal evolution from one cultural worldview of how the world works to another one more appropriate for the current situation. For example, is a client’s lack of identity and confidence to compete in a highly entrepreneurial market after being laid off, due to an unhealthy relationship with a dominant conservative father who did not allow much self-expression? Possibly, as of course all individuals must become conscious of their own path and influences. At the same time, however, this client is also an example of a culture struggling with a shift in worldview from one that values loyalty to tradition, morality and group standards to one that values personal initiative, practical efficiency and change.

For many individuals, personal therapy has been a great source for improving individual capacities for personal awareness, emotional bonding, sense of belonging, authentic expression, adequate body-mind integration to stay present and the ability to understand and empathize with

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<sup>10</sup> The book entitled *We’ve had a hundred years of psychotherapy and the world’s getting worse* by Hillman and Ventura (1992) challenges the hope that has been held that individual transformation would have been enough to change the world.

others who are different. These capacities are essential conditions for complexity intelligence to emerge and for engaging effectively in public processes. However, personal therapy, working as it does mainly at the level of the individual or family, cannot, by itself, effect social change. This is because the locus of change must include the culture.

## Coaching Societies Through the Gap

Clearly, there are plenty of resources for an individual in distress to access. But where does a society or a culture turn when it needs “therapy?” There is a need for a body of practitioners who can, as Kegan says “throw a sympathetic arm of disciplined friendliness across the burdened shoulders of contemporary culture.”<sup>11</sup> Such practitioners, we are calling *cultural coaches* - change agents who support the transformation of dysfunctional societal issues. This is not easy work and requires deep commitment, personal maturity and a thorough understanding of adult development, social systems and the process of public deliberation and dialogue. Individuals interested in cultural coaching should participate in a developmental learning process that is designed to stimulate the large perspective and capacities needed to meet complex 21<sup>st</sup> century issues. Well-trained, experienced cultural coaches would create carefully designed processes with the right mix of challenge and support to encourage public awareness, inquiry and reflection. Over time, a cadre of cultural coaches could stimulate and support the culture to evolve to the next stage in its development. This work needs to be approached with deep integrity. Personal therapists are aware of the power they hold in relationship with their clients. Their capacities are built and evaluated based on principles and professional codes of ethics. This must also apply if one is to be a coach of cultural transformation with the acknowledgement that this is life work with no endpoint in the learning/evolving process.

In our culture, the locus of change has been identified very much with the individual and it needs to shift to include both the individual and the culture and the relationship between them. By supporting the emergence of complexity intelligence in individuals, we are supporting the evolution of the organizations and communities where they work and live. Of equal, if not more importance, by supporting complexity intelligence of the culture we are also supporting the evolution of individuals, as the culture is the holding environment for development.

We have defined a society with complexity intelligence as one that has institutionalized structures that support the collective reasoning ability, emotional maturity and “inter-societal” capacity to respond to existing complex societal challenges. A society with complexity intelligence as its centre of gravity has social infrastructures in place that develop and support the collective capacity to reason and reflect together; to be emotionally responsible in facing the enormity of our local and global challenges without splitting into reactive camps; and to truly operate from a worldcentric perspective.

How do we support the emergence of complexity intelligence in our culture and how do we institutionalize it in our society? First, as one approach, we suggest that cultural coaching must become institutionalized as a recognized profession, just as personal coaching and personal therapy have become recognized professions in the individual domain. Secondly, we suggest that processes intended to support the emergence of complexity intelligence must be well designed. Too often, we expect that simply by gathering people in one room to talk about some complex issue that these collective capacities for dealing with the task at hand will just appear.

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<sup>11</sup> Kegan (1994/2000, p. 3)



## The Importance of Designed Processes

Our concept of complexity intelligence draws on the interrelated fields of adult development, integral theory, transformational learning, complexity theory, dialogue, deliberation and action research and inquiry. In designing public interventions, cultural coaches would draw on their knowledge of this theoretical framework. For example, program design can be informed by complexity theory. Public processes can be designed to support the process of self-organizing inherent in complex adaptive systems. Eoyang and Olsen (2001) suggest there are three conditions which, in their interrelationship, influence a system to self-organize: (1) creating a container i.e. the intent and support for dialogue and deliberation; (2) surfacing diversity and differences which allows creativity to flow; and (3) increasing the frequency of transforming exchanges so feedback loops can reveal the consequences of our choices and also inform us as to who “we” are.

In our opinion, the design of public processes should also be informed by recent work by Torbert (2004), Ross (2002) and Rosenberg (2004). Torbert’s approach to action inquiry provides an effective structure for aligning outward effectiveness with inner integrity in real time by increasing awareness of our inner process, building mutuality through how we speak to others and developing sustainability through how we organize. Ross (2002) has done extensive work in designing a developmental approach to complex public issues based on a framework of deliberative democracy, integral theory, human development, transformation theory, timely action inquiry and consciousness studies. In a recent paper on public deliberation,<sup>12</sup> Rosenberg advocates for public processes that develop the “cognitive capacities, emotional orientation and social context” for democratic deliberation.

If attempts to bring citizens together to grapple with complex social issues are not designed to consider the diverse worldviews, capacities and complexities, the best in people will not be brought forward, and participatory projects will flounder, leaving people frustrated and eventually apathetic. Rosenberg indicates that most citizens do not have the capacity to engage in deliberative democracy as they lack many of the cognitive, emotional and communicative capacities to participate effectively in this work:

A good deal of research on small group behavior and communications provides evidence of people’s evident inability to understand and fairly consider other people’s perspectives, to think critically about their own position or the social conventions to which they adhere, or think about problems creatively and generate novel alternatives.<sup>13</sup>

Rosenberg also suggests many citizens lack the ability for empathy and bonding with their community to allow for the commitment required for deliberative democracy. If adults differ in these essential components of complexity intelligence then there is a lack of autonomy and equality, necessary ingredients according to Rosenberg for democracy. As the complexities of our public issues increase, we will have to address the fact that we need to develop complexity intelligence to respond, understand and engage with these issues and with each other.

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<sup>12</sup> Rosenberg (2004).

<sup>13</sup> Rosenberg (2004, p. 4)

## Concluding Remarks and Suggestions for Ongoing Inquiry

In concluding this paper, we want to emphasize that human beings and societies are naturally adaptable. With the right combination of challenges and support, they will naturally evolve the capacities to meet the demands of existential conditions. However, in times of rapid change and in the absence of adequate support, large gaps can occur between the capacities needed to respond to life's demands and the actual capacities that have developed. Such is the case today where we seem to be living, as Vaill (1989) suggests, in a state of "permanent white water" and there is a large gap between the capacities needed to respond to our societal challenges and the capacities we have developed.

In this paper, we present the idea of *complexity intelligence* as a useful concept to frame our current global situation and our efforts to remediate it. We define complexity intelligence as the capacity to respond to the demands of life challenges and also the process of developing this capacity. In individuals, we consider complexity intelligence to be the integrated reasoning ability, emotional maturity and social cognition necessary to meet the demands of life. We define a society with complexity intelligence as one that has institutionalized structures in place that support the collective reasoning ability, emotional maturity and inter-societal capacity to respond to existing complex societal challenges. We suggest that complexity intelligence emerges as we navigate the transition from one set of operating beliefs about how the world works to a more expanded set of operating beliefs transcending and including the former. This process begins with the recognition of a gap between our beliefs of how the world works and the life conditions we observe around us. Perseverance is required to stay engaged in this gap along with the resulting confusion, contradiction and frustration as we disembed from our familiar beliefs. Also, there must be exposure to a new conceptual framework that helps validate the recognition that a gap exists.

We believe it is possible and, indeed, necessary, to stimulate the emergence of complexity intelligence in society, but we believe a new form of social change agent is needed to midwife its emergence. We call this new change agent a *cultural coach* and recognize this work requires deep commitment, personal maturity and a thorough understanding of the parameters of social change. Well-trained and experienced cultural coaches could design processes of public dialogue and deliberation that would support the transformation of dysfunctional societal issues. Over time, a cadre of cultural coaches could stimulate and support the culture to evolve to the next stage in its development. For social change to be lasting, we believe that it is imperative that cultural coaching becomes institutionalized as a recognized profession, just as personal coaching and personal therapy have become recognized professions in the individual domain.

## Questions for On-going Inquiry

There are several big questions threaded through this article. Some partial answers have been posited and yet many questions remain. How prevalent is the awareness that there is a gap between the challenges facing us as global citizens and our capacities to respond to them? If we are aware of the gap, how willing are we to stay engaged with the resulting confusion, contradiction and frustration to allow complexity intelligence to emerge? Do we have enough time? In fact, the largest question of all may well be will we, as a species, continue to evolve in a healthy adaptive manner? What are the conditions that will support that evolvment? How will we know whether an adaptation is advantageous or not? Will there be a threshold or limit to the amount and speed of complexity that we are experiencing as some suggest? Can posing and

pondering these questions be done with vitality and inspiration? We look forward to continuing this exploration and invite comments and feedback on this article.

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