

Ethics & Decision Making-- Homework Assignments #2 --- Fall 2005

(A) Homework answers should be **brief essays** -- no less than 1/2 page single-spaced/ no more than one page for each question. If you double-space, think of each answer to be about a page.

[Thus, writing three essays will require more than one page!]

ALL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TYPED AND THE PAGES STAPLED TOGETHER. Please invest in a small stapler.

You are free to do constructive critique, comparisons, applications to your own experience, creative extensions of the ideas, etc. You may write in 3rd person or 1st person. Extend yourself; write beyond your first stopping point. Use all that you know and more. Be creative and insightful and interesting!

(B) The homework answers will be **collected at the end of each class**. Each day's homework is worth 1 1/2 points; the 2 assignments for a week are worth THREE points. Over the course of the semester you can earn 30 points -- a full three letter grades! -- just by faithfully doing your daily work. **ASSIGNMENTS HANDED IN LATE WILL GAIN NO CREDIT, unless you have called within 24 hours of missing a class to report that you will be or were absent.** Please hand in **hard copies** of the homework. Only in BIG emergencies will I accept homework as email attachments.

(C) If something is bubbling up in your life that has relevance to our work, you may substitute a "Wild Card" for **one only** of the three questions on a particular homework. Some of the best learning results from such reflection on what you are facing in the moment.

(D) Please title each set of homework questions as below: Assignment 10 (for Mon. Oct. 10th).

Assignment 10: Given Wed. Oct. 5th for Mon. Oct. 10th Read The Art of Possibility, Intro and Chapter 1, "It's all Invented" (pp. 1-15); read Presence, Introduction and chapter 1, pp. 1-26.

(1) On Z&Z, what assumptions are you making that structure the way you see your life? The assumptions are often uncovered in the stories you tell yourself and others that are only one possible way to look at things. What alternate stories might you invent to give you more choices?

(2) How are wholes and parts redefined? How does this link to what is distinctive about living systems? What new perspective does this bring to ethics?

(3) Describe the differences between reactive learning and deeper levels of learning. How can you bring these deeper levels to your study in this class?

Assignment 11: Given Mon. Oct. 10th for Wed. Oct. 12th: (Yom Kippur begins at sunset) Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 2 "Stepping into a Universe of Possibility" (pp. 17-23) and read Presence, chapters 2 & 3, (pp. 41-52). Note: Fall Break is coming up and there is an assignment due on the day we return. **PLAN AHEAD!**

(1) On Z&Z, answer 1a or 1b: (1a): Z&Z contrast a world of measurement with a world of possibility. They also contrast survival-thinking and scarcity thinking with possibility-thinking. Use examples to show where these distinctions show up in your world. **OR** (1b) consider **The "Great Paradox" Chant** (JGS):

Everything **is** quite all right. Our worth, secure and true.

Everything's **not** quite all right. We've worthy work to do.

Are there not things to do that can be measured without undermining our worth? Cannot musicians get better at their craft and brain surgeons at theirs? Yet Z&Z seem to leave little room for any kind of assessment. Discuss creatively.

(2) What do the authors of Presence mean by suspending? In what way does it allow us "to see our seeing?" What is required for groups to suspend? Discuss with examples.

(3) Explain with concrete examples what it means first to suspend and second to redirect – i.e. “turn attention to the source.” How is leadership strengthened if one can see from within an organization (for example, Elon)?

No class on Monday Oct. 17th – Happy Fall Break

Assignment 12: Given Wed. Oct. 12th for Wed. Oct. 19th (the day we return from Fall Break) Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 3 "Giving an A" (pp. 25-53); read Presence, chapter 4, pp.53-68; and read Jack Miles' article "Global Requiem" at www.crosscurrents.org/milesrequiem.htm

(1) On Z&Z. Z&Z believe that we should give everyone an A. In one sense, yes, I agree that we should treat everyone as unique, irreplaceable and of infinite worth. I also have no problem with everyone in a class doing "A" work and gaining an "A." On the other hand, I am unconvinced that this is the end of the story. Surely, there are criteria of excellence in most fields. [Is it correct or just to say that I can "give" someone an "A" or that you can give yourself an "A" regardless of performance?] Musicians go from awkward beginners to competent apprentices to accomplished masters to world-class virtuosos. I doubt that Ben Zander would accept any level of musicianship to his program or recommend any student at all for a first chair at a major orchestra. Discuss from your own point of view these contending views. (Perhaps you may make a case for Zander's view and win me over; perhaps you may make a case and win Zander over.)

(2) What does Joe Jaworski learn from his wilderness work with John Milton? How is this applicable to leadership?

(3) Read Jack Miles' article "Global Requiem" at www.crosscurrents.org/milesrequiem.htm Comment on this powerful scenario.

Assignment 13: Given Wed. Oct. 19th for Mon. Oct. 24th: Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 4 "Being a Contribution" (pp. 55-65) and read Presence, chapters 5 & 6, pp. 71-92.

(1) On Z&Z. Declare yourself to be a contribution. Practice living from this mindset. Notice how the world shows up differently (a) from a success-failure way of relating and (b) from a declaration that "I am a contribution" way of relating. Write an essay on your experience doing this.

(2) Describe Adam Kahane's work, especially the four scenarios for South Africa. What can we as leaders learn from this? Discuss.

(3) Describe Vision Guatemala and what we can learn from this?

Assignment 14: Given Mon. Oct. 24th for Wed. Oct. 26th. Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 5 "Leading from any Chair" (pp. 67-77) and read Presence, chapters 7 & 8, pp. 93-114.

(1) On Z&Z. Pick a class you are in and also pick an organization you are in. What would it mean to "lead from any chair?" What kinds of interventions help us to lead from any chair? Discuss creatively.

(2) Answer either 2a or 2b: (2a) What do the authors understand by letting go and letting come? Is this illustrated by the story of the meeting on pp 94 ff? How is this like and unlike what we studied regarding the Autumn Minister? OR (2b) What do the authors learn from Eleanor Rosch and from either Francisco Varela or Michael Ray?

(3) In chapter 8, Otto Scharmer describes the work he did with his colleague Ursula Versteegen in Germany regarding the health care system. They identified four levels. Explain the four levels and discuss how the participants responded as they identified where they saw the system now and where they hoped to see it.

Assignment 15: Given Wed. Oct. 26th for Mon. Oct. 31st: Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 6 "Rule Number 6" (pp. 79-97) and read Presence, chapters 9 &10, pp. 117-148.

(1) On Z&Z. Z&Z distinguish the calculating self from the central self. Practice Rule #6 (Don't Take Yourself So Damn Seriously -- DTYSDS). Show through examples from your practice how this rule helped you lighten up on your childish demands and supposed entitlements (the calculating self speaking) and allowed more contact with your central self.

(2) Answer either 2a or 2b: (2a) Consider the Marblehead Letter. Imagine you are on Senior Administrative Staff at Elon. Write a letter to President Leo Lambert outlining how three or more items here have impact for Elon's growth and deepening. Make at least two recommendations OR (2b) Discuss how the points in the Marblehead letter can be seen as resulting from the destructive side of the modern worldview – what I called in the Appendices of Living Large “the six seductive S’s.” In this context, how is Otto’s dream related to you and all of us?

(3) Answer either 3a or 3b: (3a) What do Hananer, Rao and White have to say about commitment, intention and transforming vision? How might we use this as a class? OR (3b) Write an essay on Mother Teresa’s quote (p. 143). How might you live that out in one school day at Elon? Try it as an experiment and report.

Assignment 16: Given Mon. Oct. 31st for Wed. Oct. 2nd: Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 7 "The Way Things Are" (pp. 99-111) and read Presence, chapters 11 & 12, pp. 149-180.

(1) On Z&Z. At issue here are several practices -- acknowledging things exactly "the way things are" (remember our Great Paradox chant -- pointing to surface and depth), and stopping "downward spiral talk." Practice these two ways of acting and report on the results.

(2) Chapter 11 takes us from visioning and crystallizing to prototyping. Explain this phase of prototyping. In what ways does it ask us to stay connected with the larger field? In what ways can it manifest as synchronicity?

(3) Dee Hock was instrumental in founding Visa. What did he do that led to a different revisioning of basic assumptions and a new way to employ democratic principles in organizations. Discuss.

Assignment 17: Given Wed. Oct. 2nd for Mon. Nov. 7th: Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 8 "Giving Way to Passion " (pp. 113-121) and read Presence, chapters 13 & 14, pp.183-218

(1) On Z&Z. The practice of this chapter has two steps: Step one is to release those barriers of self that keep you separate and in control and let the vital energy of passion surge through you, connecting you to all beyond. Step two is to participate fully, allowing yourself to be a channel to shape passion into new expressions for the world. Try out this two-step practice in your life and report on the results.

(2) Chapter 13 suggests that becoming a real human being is the prime requisite for leadership and that becoming a real human being involves moral (a.k.a. ethical) development. Yet paradoxically, the chapter argues that effective leadership involves group process. Can groups engage in ethical development? Discuss in light of the work we have done thus far.

(3) answer either 3a or 3b: (3a) Compare the teaching of chapter 14 with my six seductive S’s and correlative five interweavings. Where are they alike? Where might they be different? OR (3b) On pp. 210-215, Peter Senge discusses “shifting the burden” and – in some cases – the creating of addictions. Explain what we means and apply this to something from your own experience.

Assignment 18: Given Mon. Nov. 7th for Wed. Nov. 9th: Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 9 "Lighting a Spark" (pp. 123-139) and read Presence, chapter 15, pp. 219-240 and the Epilogue, pp. 241-253.

(1) On Z&Z. This is a practice to enroll others in possibility. Its steps are to imagine people are an invitation for enrollment, be ready to participate, offer that which lights you up and have no doubt that others will catch the spark. Engage in this practice of enrollment and report on the results of doing this.

(2) In chapter 15, the authors speak a great deal about the notion of “presencing” – something they claim happens at the bottom of the U. Yet they seem to have different views on this. Flowers also sees some dangers. Explain the differences and how you see the matter.

(3) Answer either 3a or 3b: (3a) The Epilogue of the book is titled: “With Man Gone, Will There be Hope for Gorilla?” Those in the epilogue speak again and again of our discovering our larger self and larger purpose. Write a brief essay on how that project has unfolded for you over this semester. OR (3b) Write a brief essay on the work of Masaru Emoto with water. Surely more needs to be done to see if that work is replicable. But suppose it turns out as Emoto describes it. What would this have to teach you about your own life and how to live it? Discuss.

No homework for Monday Nov. 14th – Service Learning Paper is due.

Assignment 19: Given Wed. Nov. 9th for Wed. Nov. 16th: Read The Art of Possibility, Chapter 10 "Being the Board" (pp. 141-159) and read James Rachels, The Elements of Moral Philosophy, on utilitarianism (similar to our RED of the Traffic Light) Chapters 7 & 8, pp. 91-116.

RED and ORANGE Groups present on Wed. Nov. 16th.

They may hand in homework for the 16th along with homework for the 21st on Mon. the 21st.

(1) On Z&Z. Z&Z call this "our graduate course in possibility." It is the decision to declare that "[you are] the framework for everything that happens in life." It is a way of taking total responsibility for everything as a way of refraining from blaming or being victim in any sense. Graduate work indeed! Z&Z claim that this practice has two parts. How might you explain these two parts? Finally, how do you assess this "graduate course in possibility." What are its strengths? What are its weaknesses?

(2) After getting a sense of utilitarianism and its application in chapter 7, look at how such a system can be stated in three propositions (p.102). Show using your own examples what the three propositions mean.

(3) There are objections to utilitarianism. What are these objections? Can these objections be answered if one includes in an expanded ethical theory the GOLD of fairness to persons and rights (Star of David Model step 4)? Discuss.

Assignment 20: Given Wed. Nov. 16th for Mon. Nov. 21st. Read The Art of Possibility, Chapters 11 & 12 "Creating Frameworks for Possibility" and "Telling the WE Story"(pp. 161-200) and read James Rachels, The Elements of Moral Philosophy,

YELLOW and GREEN Groups present on Mon. Nov. 21st.

They may hand in homework for 21st after Thanksgiving -- on Mon. the 28th or Wed. the 30th.

(1) Answer either 1a or 1b on Z&Z: (1a) On pp.169-170, Z&Z offer characteristics of their notion of "vision." Write a brief version of your vision and show how it can keep you creating frameworks for possibility rather than on a downward spiral of blame and complaint. OR (1b) The steps for the WE practice are presented on pp. 183-184. In a situation in your life, practice this way of thinking and speaking and report on the results. Notice similarities and differences with the work you did on the Ministers in Living Large.

(2) Chapter 9 examines whether moral rules need be understood as absolute. In my Star of David Model, it is clear that one can universalize -- as Kant tends to do -- over an **absolute position** (In ANY situation whatsoever, ANY moral agent whatsoever should do or not do Z. -- an "always or never " absolutism). However, I have argued that one can universalize over a **qualified position** (In certain situations or with

certain exceptions, all or certain agents should do or should not do Z . This allows for ethical position with "built-in" exceptions. E.g. Except in cases of justified self-defense or just war . . . , one ought not kill persons.) Is the new possibility of universalizing over qualified positions an improvement over Kant's absolutism? Why or why not?

(1) Chapter 10 centers on Kant's second formulation of his Categorical Imperative and the issue of punishment. First, explain Kant's reasoning. Second, step back and comment on the reasoning. (I am challenging you to do more careful thinking.)

No Class Wed. Nov. 23rd – Happy Thanksgiving – Practice Gratitude over the holiday.

NOTES:

The BLUE and INDIGO Groups present on the Monday after we return from Thanksgiving Break – Monday November 28th. PLAN AHEAD

The VIOLET and ULTRA-VIOLET Groups present on Wednesday, Nov. 30th. Monday December 5th and Wednesday December 7th are the last two days of classes. We shall use them to consolidate and review for the final.

Thursday, December 8th is READING DAY.

**Best Wishes for a Suffering-reducing, Life-enhancing,
Wonderfully Enlightening Exam Period!**

**MAY YOUR “LIVING LARGE” CONTINUE TO BENEFIT
YOU AND ALL WHO ARE GIVEN TO YOUR CARE.**