CSR and Spirituality at Work: Convergent or Divergent?

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Abstract

This paper reviews the history, meaning, assumptions and expectations ascribed to the respective concepts of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Spirituality at Work (SAW). Although the movement towards integrating spirit into the workplace is more recent than the debate on the social responsibilities of business, both have raised important questions that could challenge the existing economic system and the fundamentals of contemporary business practice. Our aim is to examine those questions and assess whether each concept, as it is now understood, can play the critical role it purported to play. We also explore whether CSR and SAW converge in goals and processes or whether they aim for different outcomes. We discuss recent models that have integrated CSR and SAW and argue that sustainable spiritual and socially aware organisations must start with individual development of the ego-self.

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Introduction

The interest in spirituality in relation to ethics and management has grown significantly over the last several decades. The emerging field of Spirituality at Work (SAW) has hardly discussed CSR as such, but the values and necessary organisational changes brought by a greater awareness at work may contribute to redefining the CSR agenda. In particular, questions are raised about the suitability of the existing neo-liberal paradigm that influences many CSR practices to address employees' increasing needs for meaningfulness and social contribution. A spirituality-based paradigm may offer a viable alternative which promotes holistic responsibility for all social actors.

In this paper, we wish to review each concept and their associated assumptions in order to establish whether CSR and SAW are convergent or divergent trends. An exhaustive review would undoubtedly be valuable but our aims are more modest: we propose to identify what CSR and SAW currently means, what they have meant in the past, what we project them to mean in the future. This will help us discuss whether CSR and SAW aim for the same goal. If they do, then are they interchangeable? If they don't, to what extent do they diverge? More importantly, will focusing on one prevent us from developing the other, and at what cost?

Historical and Definitional Perspective: Corporate Social Responsibility

There is little doubt that CSR has become a mainstream concept. We now count academic journals, ministries, not-for-profit organisations, corporate VPs, international awards and specialised university degrees dedicated to CSR. Corporations must have a dedicated section on their website providing update on their socially responsible achievements and endeavours if they want to stay in the game. So, indeed, CSR has proven to be more than a buzzword. The question remains: is CSR meaningful? Embraced by a wide range of social and economic groups, the term CSR has been ascribed many meanings, not all of which similar or equally progressive. Although the actual concept of social responsibilities of business emerged in the 1960s (the idea of business as a social actor appeared much earlier), and in spite of decades spent debating what and why those responsibilities were, CSR still is contested and controversial (A. Crane, A. McWilliams, D. Matten, J. Moon, & D. Siegel, 2008). We thus need to explore what CSR meant to be and what it has eventually become in order to understand if it can fit comfortably with a spirituality-based worldview.

There is no shortage of publications that purport to review the CSR concept (Carroll, 1999; Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Garriga, 2004; Jones, 1980; Kakabadse, Rozuel, & Lee-Davis, 2005; Klonoski, 2001; Moir, 2001; Takala & Pallab, 2000; van Marrewijk, 2003). Finding its roots in the excesses of the Industrial Revolution regarding the human cost of economic development, the idea that business interests ought to be tamed by social goals only became a scholarly matter post World War 2. The social responsibilities of companies were mostly thought of as philanthropic, and mostly concerned employees, and to a lesser extent the local community. The first decades of the twentieth century marked a growing, if shy, concern for a more systematic approach to business' social influence. Early publications considered the individual as well as collective responsibilities of business organisations. In 1953, the publication of Bowen's *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman* laid out the foundations of what was to become an important scholarly field (Carroll, 2008). Bowen's definition of social responsibility interestingly focuses on businessmen as decision-makers, highlighting implicit

boundaries to the pursuit of profit. Other early works confirmed the idea that business actors were 'public trustees' in charge of managing economic resources in light of society's needs and values (Carroll, 2008).

From the 1960s onwards, the number of publications and derivative concepts grew exponentially. Key authors that helped shape the field include William C. Frederick, Keith Davis, Harold Johnson, S. Prakash Sethi, Archie B. Carroll, R. Edward Freeman and Donna J. Wood (list non exhaustive). Concepts associated with CSR and considered either as complement, replacement, refinement or extension include corporate social performance, corporate social responsiveness, public responsibility of business, corporate citizenship, triple bottom line of 'profits, people and planet', stakeholder management, sustainability or sustainable development/growth, and business ethics (list equally non exhaustive). Although no actual definition exists, common elements suggest that CSR is a process involving multiple stakeholders are potentially conflicting interests, which goes beyond legal requirements, is not mere philanthropy and makes the organisation accountable for its power (Kakabadse, et al., 2005)

If no one really disputes the history of CSR, there exists doubt as to its original intent: what is social responsibility all about? Price (1997) suggests the controversy is based on contradictory views that business should (not), can (not) or will (not) be socially responsible, and that supportive arguments can be found for either stand. Price's classification is a fair picture of the debate in the field: is CSR about challenging the capitalist paradigm, moving away from consumerism, profit-seeking and economic value towards social and environmental justice, human development and spiritual value? Or is it about patching up the economic system as well as we can, hoping that it will make a difference in the long run? Although this dichotomised view may sound overly simplistic, most of the CSR literature falls into either of these two 'camps'.

Let's examine the latter 'camp' first. We'd venture that the majority of CSR scholars belong to this group, as optimists or pragmatists. Optimists believe business people can and will care for others' interests equally, all the while ensuring their company remains profitable (see e.g. Carroll, 1991; Freeman, 2005; Wood, 1991). Pragmatists believe that business is here to stay, so we need to work with business (*read* negotiate in search of a satisfactory compromise) to improve its social influence (see e.g. A. Crane, A. McWilliams, D. Matten, J. Moon, & D. Siegel, 2008; Davis, 1975; Jones, 1980). Both assume that the best we can do is work with what we have, that is a market-based capitalist system that runs on ascribing economic value to anything.

To convince business people that being ethical is good for them, scholars have endeavoured to build a business case for CSR. Kurucz, Colbert, & Wheeler (2008) classify the various arguments supporting the business case under four categories: 'cost and risk reduction', 'competitive advantage', 'reputation and legitimacy', and 'synergistic value creation', before discussing the flaws in the level, logic and grounds of justification for each position. Whitehouse's interviews with corporate representatives of major UK firms suggest that CSR is embraced for its business advantages: being good is good business, but it is a business decision, not a moral one (Whitehouse, 2006). Actually, it *must* be a business decision: managers, it is suggested, have to justify the economic rationale of their socially responsible decisions to the board of directors or the shareholders' assembly. The main driver for CSR-type of corporate initiatives appeared to be reputation to keep up with society's changing expectations, a finding in essence not dissimilar to that of Maignan and Ralston (2002). The commitment may be sincere, but the business logic is unquestioned. A question remains: is this enough to foster moral decision-making respectful of human dignity and environmental integrity?

Vallance (1993) might suggest that this is not a relevant question when discussing business ethics. Instead, she insists that we consider first what business is for (its purpose) so as not to be tempted to ascribe undue responsibilities to business organisations such as 'spiritual fulfilment or even cradle to

grave direction. To suggest that business should encompass these aims is not "ethical" or "socially responsible" but merely confused. Economics – and business – is not all there is to life' (p.49). We obviously agree that life is not just about business, and that there exist non-economics-centred frameworks. However, one could be forgiven to doubt the veracity of such statement if one were to take a hard look at contemporary Western societies. A more accurate description of our world is that although we know that there is more to life than business or economic wealth, and that not everything can and should be measured, compared or forecast, business logic has pervaded most areas of society and most of our daily life is influenced by some form of economic calculus, ranging from our employers to our political leaders. Business 'is not all there is to life' but business does not appear to have received the memo.

The other 'camp' leaves more room for criticism of the wider socio-politico-economic environment. We find both sceptics who question the moral strength of CSR, and scholars who hope to redeem CSR by developing the concept holistically. The first step in the critical appraisal of CSR consists in asking the perennial question: what is business for and under which conditions is it legitimate? Whilst optimistic proponents of CSR concede that business is about profits in that a company that fails to be profitable ceases to exist, this group of scholars adopt a broader view which is both normative and grounded in the underlying principles of the Social Contract tradition. To say that business is a social institution does not solely mean that business affects society, but that society created business. Business is thus naturally a social subject, naturally shaped by society and rightfully chastised if it abuses its position. Mintzberg's review of the case for CSR is still relevant even though published almost thirty years ago (1983). Business decisions are more often than not also social and political decisions, and CSR should be about looking at the economic system, the structure or organisations, the processes of rewards and the individual's discretionary power within the organisation. The implicit values defended by Mintzberg echo the call for a more radical and holistic responsibility of business.

Duska and Ragatz (2008) adopt the view that moral commitment, integrity and worthiness lies in one's soul, individual or collective. Drawing upon Aristotle's causal framework, they remind us of the dangers of the pursuit of wealth for its own sake (a characteristic of contemporary capitalism) and define business's mission as providing goods and services for consumers, not 'pushing products and services to make a profit' (p. 154). Companies corrupt their soul and damage their community when they slip away from the justice ideal Adam Smith envisioned. The recent rediscovery of the profound moral restrictions the so-called 'Father of Capitalism' placed on the pursuit of self-interest is telling of our previous uncritical acceptance that business is meant to have limited social responsibilities (Daianu & Vranceanu, 2005; Kennedy, 2008). To the question 'what is business for?', Duska and Ragatz (2008) answer it is 'to benefit society. When the pursuit of our own interest begins to harm society, and when the pursuit of profit begins to harm society, this pursuit must be checked.' (p. 161).

Norman Bowie (1991) has also been a long-time advocate of 'challenging the egoistic paradigm' which prevails in economics and thereby influences business, social institutions and policy-making. His enquiry on the assumptions behind views of business ethics is particularly informative on for the individual agent and its relationships with the community. Good behaviour starts with individual values, principles, motives and motivations. CSR as a construct does not focus on individual agents, rather integrates it alongside other considerations more specific to business practice. This may explain why CSR policies do not significantly change organisational values and do not guarantee ethical behaviour: if individuals are not convinced – and further, transformed and deeply committed to caring about others, then little will effectively happen. Takala and Pallab (2000) understand that CSR must start at the level of individual actors, and cannot stop at compliance. CSR rather implies developing and fostering employees' moral conscience by giving 'sufficient flexibility and autonomy to avoid "herd mentality", take initiative, responsibility and make a choice about doing the right

thing' (p. 110). The 'mutual process' of raising moral consciousness within the organisation and within individuals strengthens the notion of responsibility which 'should basically stem from altruism' (p. 111). Ethics is about justice and social welfare and does include sacrificing self-interest when the pursuit of self-interest will likely harm or disadvantage others.

Echoing growing interest in virtue-based approaches to responsible management, Takala and Pallab question the extent to which CSR actually goes beyond legal responsibilities if it fails to involve individuals' heart and soul. They argue that 'cultivating a self-regulatory moral conscience is far more important for achievement of high ethical standards' than a punitive or compliance approach (Takala & Pallab, 2000, p. 117). True ethical commitment aligns spirit with body and leads to values-based decisions that are enacted. Yet few CSR scholars or practitioners dare talk about soul when talking about good business practice. William Frederick (1998) is a rare exception, and it is worth noting that his latest contribution in stages of CSR is not often mentioned alongside his first three stages. Reviewing corporate efforts in regards to social issues, Frederick argued that organisations evolve from CSR1 (Corporate Social *Responsibility*) to CSR2 (as Corporate Social *Responsiveness*) to CSR3 Corporate Social *Rectitude*). In 1998, though, Frederick went further and proposed a holistic framework in which business is not the centre but just a part of the cosmos. According to CSR4 (*Cosmos, Science and Religion*), relationships between business and society are multi-dimensional. Management scholars sit alongside scientists, who teach us about human nature and the environment, and spiritual thinkers, who invite us to think about well-being beyond work. When corporations embrace CSR4, they can challenge the quasi-spiritual belief in money as an end-in-itself and focus on more caring ideals instead. Frederick (1998) thus suggests we pay closer attention to the spirit and inherent spirituality of organisations and organisational actors to ensure CSR remains relevant.

It thus seems that CSR must learn to adapt not merely to business context but also to human imperatives. Van Marrewijk (2003) grounds CSR in Abraham Maslow's and Ken Wilber's works, who are definitely not typical management theorists. Kurucz et al. (2008) build upon van Marrewijk's framework, itself inspired by Wilber, to bridge the gap between the Optimists/Pragmatists and the Skeptics/Holists. They conclude that CSR can become more integral if it favours the synergistic value creation rationale, which goes far beyond a simple dialogue with multiple stakeholders. Van Marrewijk focuses on the subtle balance of 'holons' which are both whole and parts. Everything is composed of holons, and holons themselves juggle with sometimes contrary forces that push for agency (self-preservation), wholeness (self-adaptation), communion (self-transcendence) and partness (self-dissolution). The characteristics of holons, therefore the characteristics of human beings and social organisations, make each and every one of us intimately interdependent. When excess is felt in one place, other parts suffer (van Marrewijk, 2003). CSR is thus redefined in terms of maintaining a balance of forces by attending to each caringly and thoughtfully, which will eventually benefit all participating entities. Would it be better then to talk about Corporate *Spiritual* Responsibility? How does spirituality inform work, management, business, responsibility?

Historical and Definitional Perspective: Spirituality At Work

Spirituality at work (SAW) is a recent focus of academic research and writing. Special issues on the subject have appeared in various journals including the *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *The Leadership Quarterly* and the *Journal of Managerial Psychology*. Coupled with the creation of a special interest group for Management, Spirituality and Religion in 2001 by the Academy of Management and various universities around the world offering courses on spiritual management development SAW as an academic discipline appears here to stay. This interest, however, is not limited to scholars alone. Indeed, they only seem to be documenting a practice that has become popular enough both in management practice (Benefiel, 2005b; Labbs, 1996; Marques,

Dhiman, & King, 2007; Milliman, Ferguson, Trickett, & Condemi, 1999) and for broad-based business (e.g. Fortune, Newsweek & NZ Management) and non-business periodicals (e.g. NZ Herald & NZ Listener) to explore similar themes.

The development of SAW can be traced back to the work of Max Weber (1958) who claimed that specific religious beliefs and attitudes characteristic of the protestant work ethic had led to the emergence of capitalism in the Western world. Indeed, Bell & Taylor (2004) contend the current SAW discourse, similar to Weber's protestant work ethic, accepts the structural conditions of capitalism and differs from it only in that it remodels the protestant work ethic to reflect the current new age sensibilities better. Mary Parker Follett (1918) was also a precursor for many current SAW concerns. More than 80 years ago, Follett spoke of shared managerial governance as a 'great spiritual force evolving itself from men, utilizing each, completing his incompleteness by weaving together all in the many-membered community life which is the true theophany' (p. 137). Follett argued for a model of collective responsibility that overcomes extant worker-management antagonism by supporting joint problem-solving leading to a sense of connectedness, a 'power with' against the 'power-over' model of leadership and an emphasis on 'task significance' over monetary compensation (Quatro, 2004). Another early advocate for SAW was Abraham Maslow. A great contributor to humanistic psychology, Maslow is best known for his hierarchy of needs model, a theory of motivation that argues for individual self-actualisation. Maslow's ideas closely relate to the current SAW literature. Complete intellectual, emotional and spiritual fulfilment nurtures an enlightened management style; this consists in seeing the other as a means to accelerate self-actualisation and advance organisational performance, and is 'one way of taking religion seriously, profoundly, deeply and earnestly' (Maslow, 1998, p. 103).

Despite these early developments, only recently has SAW emerged d to the extent discussed above. Why has this occurred? Since the 1970s, a number of broad societal changes have escalated the predominance of SAW. At the socio-cultural level, the rise of SAW reflects a shift from a modernist to a postmodernist worldview (Biberman & Whitty, 1997) and a resultant quest for post-materialist assets of which spirituality is one manifestation (Neal, Lichtenstein, & Banner, 1999; Tischler, 1999). SAW may also be part of a larger socio-cultural trend towards deinstitutionalisation (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; King, 1996; Sweet, 1999). In response to current institutional insufficiency, new movements provide an alternative solution to existentialist and social problems. Recent socio-demographic changes have also encouraged the development of SAW (Kale, 2004; Marques, Dhiman, & King, 2005; Nadesan, 1999; 1999). One of these, a shift towards globally competitive service industries, has seen many organisations downsize, restructure and lay-off staff. Such practices exacerbate feelings of social alienation and fear and compel employees to search for a deeper meaning in life by integrating a spiritual-work identity (Ashar & Lane-Mahar, 2004; Cash & Gray, 2000; Tischler, 1999).

There are good reasons, like CSR before it, to believe that SAW is more than an impermanent trend. Gostis & Kortezi (2008) contend that:

> the concept carries much more substantial meaning and its potential contribution to a more rounded understanding of human work, of the workplace and of organisational reality in general is worthy of examination (p. 575).

So what exactly is SAW and what is it trying to achieve? Defining SAW is a challenging task made further difficult by a commercial context that exacerbates the inherent ambiguity and amorphous nature of spirituality. By itself, spirituality is an incredibly complex and difficult concept to comprehend measure and apply, but the added intricacy of the modern organisation compounds these variables. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that no consensual conceptual definition

exists (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003) and that much of the literature in this area is 'soaring rhetoric' that exhibits more breadth than depth (Sass, 2000).

Broadly speaking SAW is the 'the lived experiences and expressions of one's spirituality in the context of the work' (Sheep, 2006, p. 358). At a more concrete level though, how does a spiritual individual express their spirituality in the workplace? Sheep's recent review of SAW literature from 1994 to 2004 reveals a conceptual convergence (although not yet an acknowledged consensus) has emerged as to what it entails. This convergence occurs in four recurring dimensions throughout the literature. The first of Sheep's dimensions, *self-workplace integration*, is conceptualised as 'a personal desire to bring one's whole being into the workplace' (p. 360). Dehler & Walsh (1994) believe individuals wish to integrate work into their lives and, in doing so, connect to themselves and others in their workplace community. The second dimension, *meaning in work* reflects this desire for integration not merely in the work environment itself, but in the meaning which one imbues the work. As Ashmos and Duchon (2000) write, 'spiritual beings…express inner life needs by seeking meaningful work' (p. 136). Consequently, the meaning of one's life must converge with the meaning one obtains from their work in order for spiritual growth and development to occur. Third, *self-transcendence* has the spiritual person perceive their work and the workplace as connected to something greater than the self. Work is part of a bigger picture which thereof subjugates the workplace ego to one's *ultimate concern* (Rozuel & Kakabadse, 2010). Such a practice allows workers to arise above their differences and naturally look to their organisation as a communal centre (Mirvis, 1997). Finally, *growth and development* of one's inner self connects to the other three dimensions of workplace spirituality, but not independently of a spiritual growth at the collective or organisational level. A maturing process must occur in the workplace if the human life at work is to be integrated and whole. This process is about 'being able to reach one's full potential and to have positive attitudes and relationships with the world' (Neck & Milliman, 1994, p. 10) .

As to its purpose, Adams & Csiernik (2002) summarise:

> *Workplace spirituality [SAW] involves the positive valuation, acknowledgement and respect of employees' innate abilities in a context of meaningful, goal-oriented behaviour that encourages creativeness, belongingness and personal fulfilment.*

Developing an organisational culture that 'promotes employees' experience of the transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy' is the principal method of achieving this (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). When such a culture exists, both the individual and the organisation benefit (see e.g. Biswas & Biswas, 2007; Crawford, Hubbard, Lonis-Shumate, & O'Neill, 2009; Kolodinsky, Giacalone, & Jurkiewicz, 2008; Krishnakumar & Neck, 2002; Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003; Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Nur & Organ, 2006; Trott, 1996).

Many conceptual frameworks address the implementation of SAW. Although it is beyond the purview of this paper to discuss these in any detail, Pawar (2009) provides a useful summary of several models by segmenting them into individual-focused, group-focused, organisation-focused and leadership-focused approaches. Individual-focused approaches reflect the view that spiritual development occurs within an individual employee, effecting change that then benefits the organisation (see e.g. Heaton, Schmidt-Wilk, & Travis, 2004; Marques, et al., 2005). These focus on providing 'various forms of inputs to individual employees, including experiential inputs, with a view to facilitating spiritual transformation in them' (p. 378). Group-focused approaches such as that of Mirvis (1997) and Pandey & Gupta (2008) endeavour to build community in the workplace while tapping into group transcendence. As Mirvis notes, the development of a sense of community in the group occurs in four concurrent ways: consciousness of the self, consciousness of others, group consciousness and 'organizing in harmony with…unseen order of things' (p. 196). Organisation-

focused approaches assess organisational characteristics (e.g. culture, structure & processes) and through them seek to induce employee experiences of SAW (see e.g. Gull & Doh, 2004; Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004; Milliman, et al., 1999; Pfeffer, 2003). Finally, a leadership-based approach of SAW advocates a central role for leaders in the facilitation of workplace spirituality. Spiritual leadership is a process or a mechanism that induces changes in certain organisational aspects which in turn facilitate employee experiences of workplace spirituality (see e.g. Duchon & Plowman, 2005; Fry, 2003; Fry, 2005).

Although we may approach SAW in multiple ways, each of these discussed enhance the spiritual development and experiences of the individual in the workplace. This is essentially an 'inward-to-outward' rationale. By developing and enhancing the individual's experience of spirituality at work, organisations generate positive outcomes not only for themselves but for their employees and society at large. In many instances, it is also a 'bottom-up' rationale. Instead of imposing managerial control from the top down, organisations allow the lived experience of spirituality throughout the workplace. The resulting transformation in organisational culture comes from employees and works its way through and up the organisation.

Despite agreement within the SAW literature that enhancing spirituality within workplace contexts benefits individuals and organisations, several authors have questioned the controlling and instrumental nature of such argument (see e.g. Bell & Taylor, 2003; Driscol & Wiebe, 2007; Lips-Wiersma, Dean, & Fornaciari, 2009; Nadesan, 1999; Polley, Vor, & SubbaNarasimha, 2005; Pratt, 2000; Tourish & Tourish, 2010). According to Lips-Wiersma, et al. (2009), much of the existing SAW scholarship does not question or explore the "role of social, political and power processes and the degrees of freedom that shape identities" (p. 289). At worst, the management literature assumes a neutral orientation towards talks of spirituality but more often than not, its stance is enthusiastic since managers view SAW as a panacea for all that ails business. Unfortunately, spirituality and its link to organisational transformation can become another means of controlling and manipulating meaning at work while pushing the acceptance of perhaps questionable organisational goals and practices.

In this purview, there are real concerns that SAW becomes a means to increase productivity and to improve the bottom line instead of representing a genuine attempt to improve employees' overall well-being. In his work *La Technique* (1954), the French philosopher Jacques Ellul observed that the workplace was increasingly dominated by technique and a consequent 'production and consumption' orientation. He described the 'new spiritual situation' in the 20th century as one where people are encouraged to prioritise the economic and to find happiness and meaning in a life of producing and consuming. His analysis was pertinent as many contemporary organisations view SAW simply as a technique, a means to an instrumental end. Unfortunately, wherever technique reigns, states Ellul, human values are threatened and humanity's critical faculties are suppressed. For example, technique removes morality from economics and replaces it with a focus on the quantitative. Moreover, technique defines what is good (or moral) as what works whereas what is bad (or immoral) is what fails to work. When used this way SAW, similarly to CSR, becomes counter-intuitive; it fails to realize its core premise of providing meaningful work and enhanced human creativeness, belongingness and personal fulfilment. This line of argument echoes Mintzberg's thoughtful yet little-quoted analysis of CSR's downfalls caused by the efficiency-based bureaucratic structure that stiffens many large organisations (1983).

## Compatible Frameworks or…?

Surprisingly few publications have directly addressed the links between spirituality and CSR. As stated earlier, most research studies assume that applied spirituality significantly improves the moral

climate and moral behaviour of organisational members, and occasionally offer conclusions on how this sustains social responsibility. Yet the link between the two concepts may not be so obvious at first. At their roots, both concepts tend to pursue a different purpose: spirituality consists in an inner, personal process of self-enquiry and development as one strives for an Ultimate Concern involving Humanity, Nature, God, the Self, the Good or any combination or declension of the above; CSR involves managing an organisation in accordance with the needs and rights of all stakeholders, taking into account the long-term implications of organisational activity on the social and natural environment. Thus spirituality is primarily inward-looking, personal and relational, whilst CSR is outward-looking and organisational. Thus CSR and SAW are primarily different, but not necessarily divergent.

Bubna-Litic (2009) concurs that CSR and SAW are 'interpenetrating worlds' that share a rejection of a rationalistic, modernist, technology-based ideology to embrace a more sensitive, sensible and relationship-based worldview. As such, CSR approaches markets and business as 'a web of human relationships' which relies on 'our trust in the integrity of the other players'. Bubna-Litic argues that this is enough to conclude that CSR and SAW are convergent: both concepts 'extend the horizons beyond what is "good for the organization"', inviting reflection on the subtle connections of a multi-layered world: individual, organisational, social, and natural. Although some elements of Bubna-Litic's position are shared in the field, this view is somewhat limited when it comes to the complex relation between CSR and SAW. We shall therefore look in greater details at existing models integrating both concepts.

Very few SAW models postulate a connection with CSR; however Fry's (2003) spiritual leadership model is the exception. Fry's spiritual leadership model is three-fold: firstly, the leader creates a vision that gives organisational members a sense of meaning and purpose. Secondly, he or she establishes an organisational culture based on the value of altruistic love whereby leaders genuinely care for others and endeavour to create a sense of community where individuals feel understood and appreciated. This, in turn, encourages hope and faith. In an organisational context, hope/faith is the source of absolute belief that the vision articulated by the leader will happen as will reward/victories accompanying this outcome. By summarising the hypothesised relationships between these components, Fry (2003) constructs a intrinsic motivational causal model of spiritual leadership. In this model, the leader articulates a compelling vision that produces a sense of calling, that is, gives followers a feeling of making a difference and a life that has meaning beyond the ego-self. Hope/faith adds conviction that the vision, and any corresponding rewards, is attainable regardless of setbacks and results in action/performance by followers to achieve the vision. Altruistic love, given from the organisation and received from followers pursuing a common vision removes fears, anger, a sense of failure and pride, and creates a culture where individuals have a sense of communal membership.

Ultimately, the purpose of spiritual leadership is to create vision and value congruence across the individual, empowered team and organisational levels to foster both higher levels of organisational commitment and productivity. In a 2005 article, Fry advanced the notion that spiritual leadership is also a predictor of CSR (see Figure 1). The spiritual leadership transformation process from formalised and standardised bureaucracy utilises a vision and values driven approach that should ultimately foster CSR. This shift is facilitated, states Fry, by developing a vision whereby leaders and/or followers can initiate actions that serve key stakeholders, all of whom have a legitimate strategic and moral stake in the organisation's performance. This is opposed to a 'shareholder value' approach that measures outcomes based on share price alone. Fry contends that spiritual leadership is a necessary but incomplete solution for organisations in today's changing world.
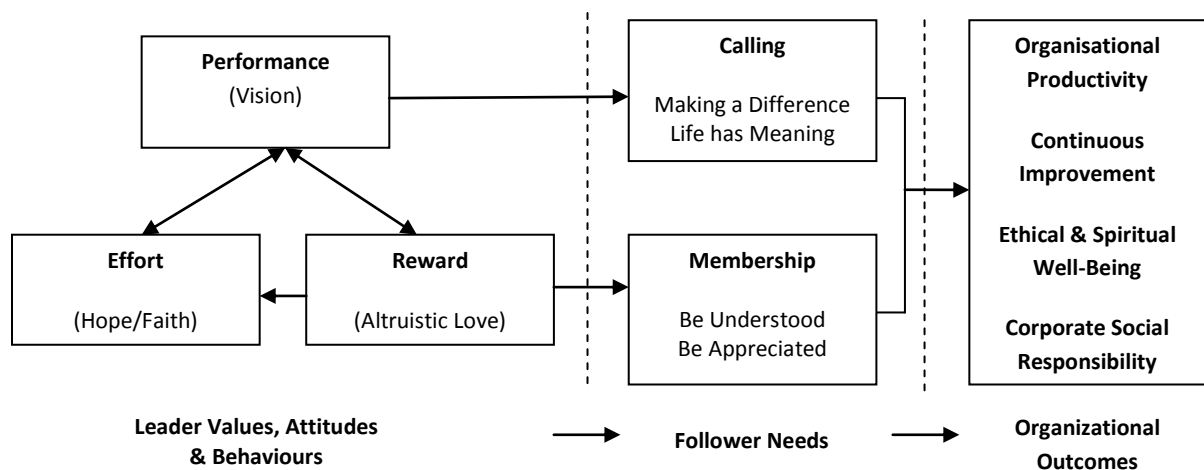
Figure 1: Fry's Causal Model of Spiritual Leadership (2003, 2005)

While useful, Fry's (2003, 2005) model is not without its limits. Benefiel (2005a) contends Fry's work is positivistic in nature, yet it addresses concepts like 'hope/faith', 'calling', and 'altruistic love' that resist such quantifying classifications. Benefiel also denounces the instrumental take on workplace spirituality as if it were panacea for all the organisation's problems and ultimately its profits. Certainly, Fry views spiritual leadership a means to improve organisational commitment, productivity and ultimately financial performance. As we discussed earlier, this approach to spirituality is counter-intuitive (Lips-Wiersma, 2003) and seen as yet another attempt by business to control and exploit employees. Fry's (2003, 2005) model also assumes that leaders are willing to undergo the process of spiritual transformation but offers no clue as to how this occurs. Given the neo-liberal assumptions and beliefs that underpin much of business, such change seems unlikely. Moreover, the top down nature of the model imposes the leader's supposed spirituality on his or her employees. This counters our view that spirituality is about an inward transformation of the self that works its way out through our relationships with and practice towards others.

Lips-Wiersma and Nilakant (2008) point out that SAW transcends the shortcomings of the predominant economic paradigm. In their view, CSR aims 'to mitigate the negative consequences of economic theories of organisations' (p.??) predominant in a neo-liberal framework; however it is not sufficient to challenge the underlying assumptions derived from self-interest and shareholder value maximization, which have led to serious economic, social and environmental dysfunctions. In other words, CSR remains prisoner of a narrow view of enlightened self-interest that makes ethics dependent upon its economic returns. Spirituality-based views, in contrast, seem to offer a viable alternative to the neo-liberal ideology since they focus on transcending the egotistic state and moving towards a more holistic and communitarian understanding of the individual and society. CSR without SAW fails to deliver on its promises.

Lips-Wiersma & Nilakant further argue SAW needs to 'work with and give meaning to the tensions that arise from acting in accordance with a purpose beyond profit in a neo-liberal business climate' (2008, p. 61). Spirituality requires that we help and not harm others, and that we further their ends even if at the expense of our own. Ultimate spiritual freedom is a result of transcending our self-interests whereas economic freedom is, at best, enlightened self-interest. The contribution of SAW to the CSR debate is that it shifts the focus from self-interest through enlightened self to what Lips-Wiersma & Nilakant label *practical compassion* (see Figure 2), a state 'where organisations are willing to forego their self-interest in order to commit to goals that benefit humanity as a whole' (p. 62). In

their paper, Lips-Wiersma & Nilakant offer several management strategies to facilitate this shift. Unfortunately, each of these is organisational in nature and managerially imposed from the top-down. While in agreement with the move towards practical compassion, <mark>we posit that a sustainable spiritual framework needs to start with individual spirituality, that is, from the bottom up</mark>.
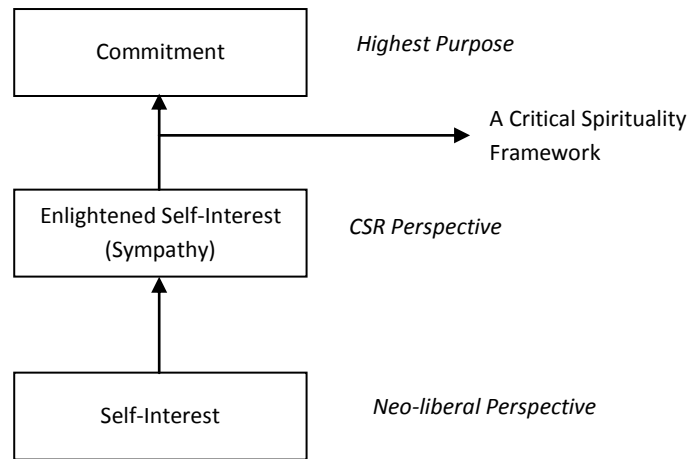
**Figure 2: Lips-Wiersma and Nilakant's Movement towards Practical Compassion (2008)**

We concur that a non-challenging approach to CSR is conducive to compromise that will not serve society's interests. Vallance (1993, p.51) believes that: 'Businesses, as businesses, do not need to be concerned with the spiritual status of their employees, but they must be very concerned about their actions. Business's interest is in good conduct more than in clear consciences.' She fails to see that the two are intimately related: greater consciousness of one's interconnectedness to all things and people strengthens moral values and moral commitment, thereby allowing for more consistent and sincere moral conduct. It is dangerous, if not counter-productive, for companies to ignore the spiritual and moral conscience of their employees to focus on mere compliance.

The ongoing project to standardise CSR by the world's premier standards body, the International Organisation of Standardisation (ISO 26000) is a classic case in point. Citing neo-liberalism as standardisation's philosophical source, Higgins (2009) contends these commodified rules bought off the shelf allow organisations the accolade of certified compliance. Whether this is true or not is open to conjecture – after all, Enron had a well-developed set of standards and had won several awards for being 'socially responsible'. Unfortunately, neo-liberalism by nature eschews social processes and any attempt to ameliorate them. Consequently, any standardisation of CSR without considering the interconnectedness of individuals, business and society is doomed to fail. Moreover, any organisation that imposes CSR without generating a moral view and course of action internally amongst its employees will also fall short. SAW with its emphasis on interconnectedness and self-transcendence bridges this divide, providing it is understood in its pure form. Instead of starting from the premise of deregulation and standardisation, it starts with the socially embedded individual.

How does CSR connect with SAW on a practical level? How does SAW redeem CSR for the benefits of organisations and society? We wish to propose some elements of an answer to these two critical questions. Building upon Vallance's comment, we argue that no true ethical or spiritual commitment can exist without an individual will. Organisations should pay much closer attention than they currently do to their employees' morale because individuals have significant effects on collectives. Spiritual awakening can take place in groups but is always an individual experience which connects the individual to the whole. In agreement with the SAW literature, spiritual development requires a

raise in self-consciousness which leads to a disengagement from the tight control of the ego. In other words, the individual starts to learn that he or she is more than what he or she believes they are, uncovering hidden potential and slowly surrendering to the idea that one is an inherent part of a whole that one's mind will never control. Spirituality thus consists in making sense of that discovery in all aspects of one's life, developing the self as opposed to the limited ego-consciousness.

To practice spiritual awakening at home is a start, to practice spiritual awakening at work is the next stage. The benefits involve both a deeper appreciation of the uniqueness of each and a greater understanding of one's interconnectedness with all, transcending the tension of opposites between self and other(s). From an organisational viewpoint, we would expect a change in behaviours and a redesigning of the norms and expectations towards more holistic values. This new appreciation of self and others can be integrated into strategic thinking and translate into a more inspiring organisational culture which values integrity, authenticity and community. This we call 'spirited CSR' and align ourselves with Takala and Pallab (2000) in arguing that CSR consists first and foremost in raising moral consciousness of individual agents by fostering a culture embracing self-other connectedness. Spirited CSR thus defined can more reasonably claim to contribute to an ultimate good for society, transcending the pettiness of short-term profitability imperatives to demonstrate actual care for society. Figure 3 below summarises the process, which starts with and involves fully each individual agent.
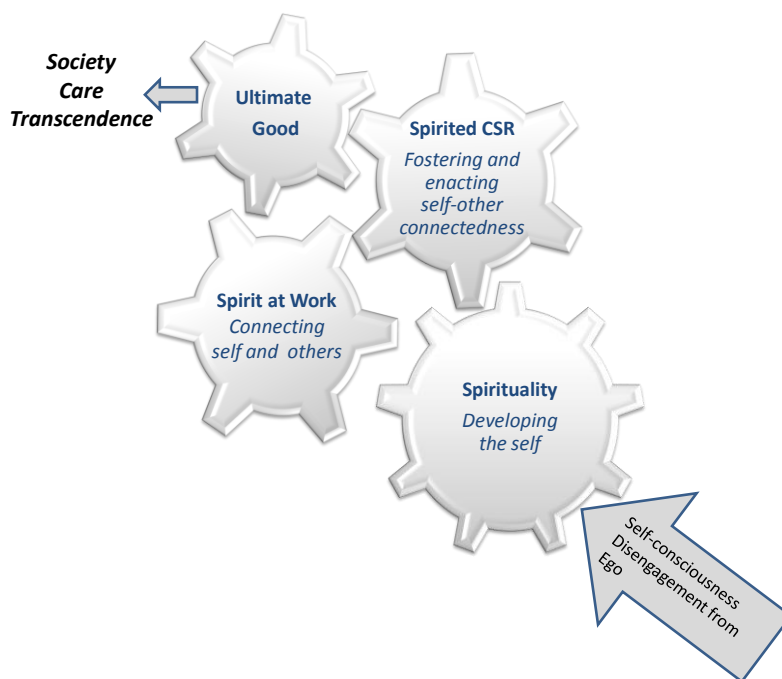
Figure 3. A CSR-SAW Individual-based Model

Conclusion

We purported to analyse in this paper two significant concepts in organisational literature: organisations' social responsibilities and the role of spirituality in the workplace. Upon reviewing the history and recent developments of CSR and SAW, we propose that these concepts are convergent and complementary providing their critical and inspirational qualities are fully acknowledged. It is worth remembering, as Anita Roddick pointed out, that CSR started as a movement to change the way business is done by identifying social responsibilities that were not corporate-centred (Roddick,

2006). CSR nowadays still aims to do some good, but cannot do as much good as it would if it were addressing more radically its economic foundations. SAW is equally corruptible if its adoption is justified in terms of productivity gains and its implementation is a managerial decision.

We've proposed a model that allows each organisational agent their individual space so that the transition from individual consciousness to group consciousness occurs naturally and remains authentic. Both Fry (2003, 2005) and Lips-Wiersma and Nilakant (2008) have proposed frameworks that pose SAW as preceding and expanding CSR outcomes towards society. However, we've highlighted how these frameworks give priority to the organisational level, rely on good-willing leaders to implement change and concede an instrumental value of SAW to justify its relevance to business. We believe that change ought to take place within the heart of individuals first, and that individual agents in turn must be supported by caring organisations which will redefine the rules of the business game. Without an effective, conscious disengagement from ego-concerns, spirituality will be instrumental and SAW will share CSR's fate as a good idea that did not prove up to expectations.

The difficult task is to accept that there is no actual model for implementing spirited CSR or endorse authentic SAW, and search within oneself and with other colleagues or partners what this means for our specific organisation. Exposure to inspiring life stories and wise tales is always a good thing but reproduction is neither possible nor desirable. To adopt a holistic and spiritual viewpoint does not mean we embrace a 'one-size-fit-all' approach; rather our individualities are celebrated whilst consciousness of our common nature is respectfully acknowledged. Moral dilemmas will change in nature because the role and agenda of business organisations will change under the impulse of business actors. Of course, we expect this process to take time, but we trust that individual agents, if given a voice, aspire to something more than material wealth and are capable of more than caring for the egotistic self. Leaders have a role to play, but the task falls on each one of us.

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