

FROM SELF-ACTUALISATION TO SELF-REALISATION: BEYOND THE SELFISH-GENE SYNDROME •

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Self - development is key to social transformation for a better world. The following are the three dimensions of self and thereby self development:

1. Self - actualisation
2. Self - realisation
3. SELF - realisation

Usually distinction between self-actualisation and self-realisation is not brought out sharply. Many times the two terms have been used interchangeably though they are rooted in different ethos.¹ Self-actualisation is essentially a materialistic conceptualisation to actualise values represented by a materialistically oriented culture. As against this self-realisation includes dharma dimension as well as the sattava or the spiritual aspect of oneself. SELF realisation implies seeing divinity in every aspect of life and nature. While self - actualisation represents the manifestation of potential within, self - realisation represents the manifestation of inner potential with a sattavik touch and SELF - realisation refers to higher order manifestation of divinity within. Traditionally Western management concepts have given primacy to self-actualisation or the potential within ignoring the divinity within. As against this Eastern psycho-philosophical concepts have placed greater emphasis on self and SELF-realisation.

The above outlined distinctions between self-actualisation, self-realisation and SELF-realisation, lead us to a framework of self - development. In this framework we also use the metaphors of *selfish gene*, *noble gene* and *altruistic gene*. These metaphors provide us a "theory of change" for self transformation as a basis for a better world. Fig. 1 provides a diagrammatic presentation of the key elements of this framework in the form of a four step model. It may be mentioned that while modern management is rooted in the selfish gene paradigm, "New Age Management" calls for expanding the world views towards noble and altruistic gene paradigms and including them in the social discourse.

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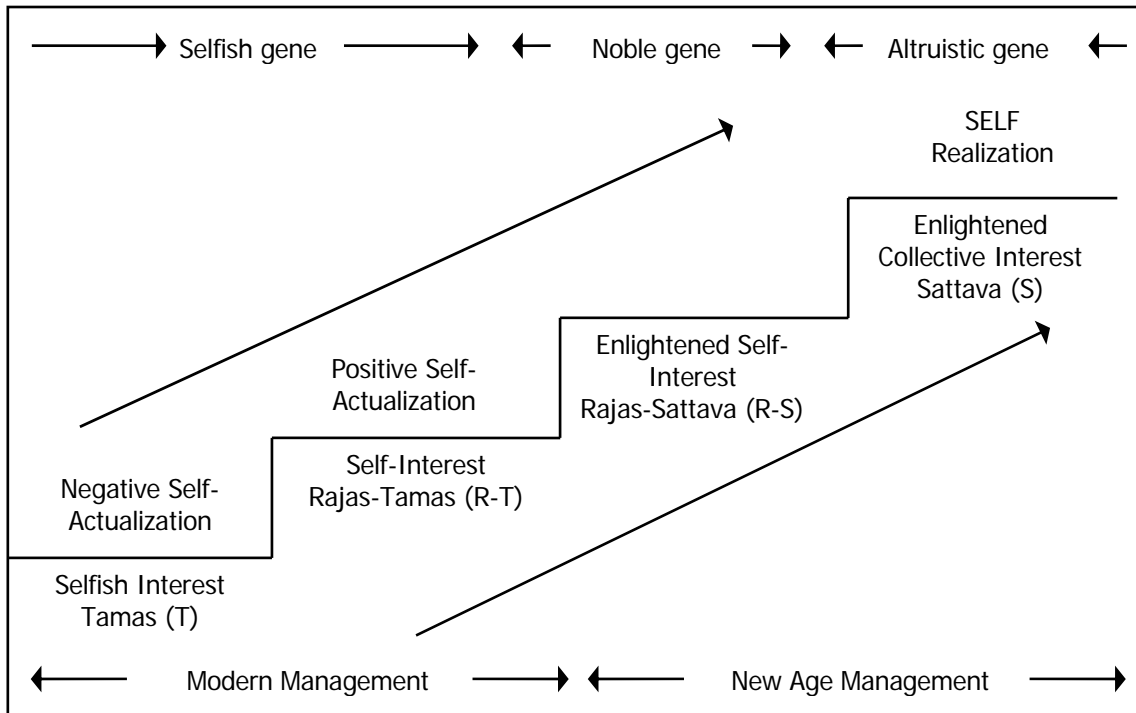


Fig.1: A Four Steps Model of Self-Development

**Selfish Gene: Darwinism
Survival of the fittest or the might is right**

Self - actualisation refers to the manifestation of potential within. This can happen in two ways viz. negatively or positively. Accordingly self-actualisation can be classified in two categories viz. negative self-actualisation and positive self-actualisation. Negative self-actualisation is manifested in extremely self-centered behaviour and is driven by selfish-interest. The negergy (negative-energy or tamas) that we see so much around us in today's world is the consequence effect of negative self-actualisation, manifested through Darwinism. It may be indicated that the folklore concept of might is right acquired a better appeal in its new incarnation in a seemingly neutral language of the survival of the fittest. Indeed the dysfunctional consequences of Darwinism lie in its inherent tamas generating nature leading to unethical and negative competition.

While negative self-actualisation is rooted in the selfish-interest driven view of individuals, the positive self-actualisation is rooted in the self-interest driven view of individuals. Though positive self - actualisation advocates positive and honest competition, it is also rooted in the utilitarian world view. It is basically "body"-centric and promotes ego-driven sense satisfaction and takes a utilisation view of 'survival of others'. Though the metaphor of "selfish gene" captures the essence of self - actualisation both in its negative and positive aspects with a tilt towards negative self - actualisation, an "extremely selfish gene" tends to display high degree of negative self - actualisation.

Noble gene: Ecotarianism
From survival of the fittest to the empowerment of the weakest

Self-realisation represents the ecotarian view in which concern for others and ecology are given an important place. Harm minimisation is its guiding principle as harm to others becomes harm to self. In its sense satisfaction is eco-driven, hence there is greater self-control. Dharma driven artha or the "ethically guided materialism" represents the ecotarian view.² "Empowerment of the weakest" could be considered as a key note of the *noble gene* perspective. Eco sensitive development falls within this framework.

Self-realisation is indicative of the state in which every one else is OK, hence I am OK. In its underlying assumption is that an individual's OKness comes from OKness of others. The expression ecotarianism captures the above indicated qualities of a *noble gene*. The metaphor of *noble gene* is indicative of a higher degree of enlightened self-interest.

Altruistic gene : Cosmonism
From survival of the fittest to the survival of all

At the level of SELF-realisation, fundamental question of "Kaun-tvam"; Who are you? is posed.³ At this level circle of consciousness expands to the entire cosmos and the world view becomes cosmoterian and soul-centric. ECHO - Expanded Consciousness in Harmony and Oneness is at the root of this world view. "Live and let live" was the mantra given by Mahavir as a basis for survival of all. "Sarve bhavantu sukhina, serve santu niramaya" i.e. welfare of all, represents the keynote of this paradigm. Hence it could be referred to as cosmonism. Its essence lies in the Indian concept of loksangrah or the "enlightened collective interest". It also includes the humanistic principle of the protection of the oppressed. This concept provides a basis for humanistic and holistic perspective of development guided by the mantra of "survival of all".

Beyond Darwinism:
Towards New Age Management

We have identified negative self - actualisation, positive self - actualisation, self - realisation and SELF realisation as four "driving forces". We can also compare these driving forces with the Indian guna concepts.

Guna theory identifies three types of qualities viz. Tamas (T), Rajas (R) and Sattava (S) metaphorically represented by darkness, drive and illumination. The theory further postulates four types of personalities viz. Tamas (T), Rajas - Tamas (R - T) , Rajas - Sattava (R - S) and Sattava (S). It is interesting that Tamas (T) has its equivalence in selfish interest, Rajas - Tamas (R - T) in self-interest, Rajas - Sattava (R - S) in enlightened self interest and Sattava (S) in enlightened collective interest. It may be indicated that the four driving forces of negative self actualisation, positive self - actualisation, self and SELF - realisation are also correlated to selfish interest, self interest, enlightened self interest and enlightened collective interest respectively. Individuals could differ in the intensity of these driving forces in their personality mix. This accounts for variations in their behaviour. Table 1 presents a comparison of the driving forces with the guna theory and related concepts. This calls for a paradigm shift towards "New Age Management" wherein ecotarianism and cosmonism are given due emphasis.

Table 1: A Comparison of the Driving Forces Framework and the Guna Concepts

Driving force	Nature of Interest	Equivalent guna concept	Underlying psycho-philosophy
Negative Self-Actualisation	Selfish Interest	Tamasik (T-guna)	Darwinism Survival of the Fittest
Positive Self - Actualisation	Self Interest	Rajasik-Tamasik (R-T)	Utilitarianism - Utilisation View of Survival of Others
Self-Realisation	Enlightened Self Interest	Rajasik-Sattavik (R-S)	Ecotarianism Empowerment of the Weakest
SELF-Realisation	Enlightened Collective Interest	Sattavik (S) and Beyond	Cosmonism Survival of All

Negative self-actualisation represents the tamasik (T) or the violent qualities. Positive self-actualisation represents the rajasik-tamasik (R-T) qualities in which rajas is afflicted by tamas. Self-realisation represents the sattavik-rajasik (S-R) qualities in which sattava is moderated by rajas, thereby creating betterness. SELF-realisation represents the sattavik or the silent and beyond guna qualities state. Dominance of negative self - actualisation or Tamas creates bitterness and dominance of self and SELF realisation leads to betterness.

It may also be observed that while tamas and rajas are more materialistic oriented, sattava and beyond represent the spiritual dimension of life. Realising the limits of tamas and rajas or the purely materialistic view of life, guna theory emphasises the need to transcend the tamas and rajas in order to ascend towards sattava. It may be indicated that guna theory is essentially an energy-band concept wherein tamas represents the neergy or negative energy and sattava represents synergy or channelling of positive energy. Since inherent nature of Darwinism is to generate tamas or violence, it creates conditions for its own limits. As the tamas increases, the need to move beyond it is felt more strongly in order to make the organisations and society a better place to live.

Appendix-I provides a summary chart of the above discussion presented in the form of a transformational matrix. This matrix could serve as a framework for initiating change processes for a shift from bitterness to betterness in organisational and social contexts.

Towards Enlightened Leadership and Enlightened Organisations

Managers, administrators and leaders have been for long guided by self-actualisation paradigm which has promoted either pure tamas or rajas-tamas qualities. This in turn has found expression in high levels of neergy and bitterness in organisations and society. A need for paradigm shift has been felt to make organisations better work places. "Spirituality at work - place" is a new keynote in the management thought in the Western world.⁴ Because of its rootedness in the concepts of self and SELF-realisation, Eastern thought provides a strong conceptual basis for infusion of spirituality at work place. It is in this context that the four steps model presented here could help us in initiating appropriate OD processes in modern organisations to make them better work places. This model can also provide the necessary

intellectual foundations for development of enlightened leadership and enlightened organisations based on an ecotarian view of life and human development leading to a better world.

To sum up, our analysis indicates that in order to move towards a better state of existence, it is important to move away from negergy to synergy. It implies a thought and action paradigm shift from tamas to sattava and from Darwinism to Cosmonism. This in turn implies taking necessary steps towards the paradigms of self and SELF-realisation. In these paradigms, the foundational principles of positive management are represented by "astoma sadgamyā" (from asat style to sat style), and "tamasoma jyotirgamyā" (from darkness to light / from negergy to synergy). These foundational principles also provide the essence of self-development process and are therefore useful to individuals in their capacities as workers, managers, administrators and enlightened leaders.

P.S: This paper presents a four steps model of self-development. Indeed there is a fifth step wherein SELF stands for Soul Eternal Longing for Freedom. Indian spiritual thought and mystical literature deals largely with this step which is beyond the scope of the management gurus.

Appendix-I: Summary Chart

A Transformational Matrix for a Better World: Beyond the Selfish - gene Syndrome

Perspective	Paradigm of Selfish Gene	Paradigm of Noble Gene	Paradigm of Altruistic Gene
Guiding Concept	Self-Actualisation	Self-Realisation	SELF-Realisation
World View	Utilitarian Utilitarianism & Darwinism	Ecotarian Ecotarianism	Cosmoterian Cosmonism
View of Life and Values Orientation	Materialistic (artha only) Ego-driven Selfish-interest/ Self-Interest Survival of the Fittest or Might is Right	Ethically guided materialism (Dharma driven artha) Eco-driven Enlightened Self-Interest Empowerment of the Weakest	Holistic Development through Spirituality & Ethically Guided Materialism Harmony & Oneness driven Enlightened Collective Interest (Loksangrah) Protection of the oppressed & survival of all/live and let live
Development Perspective	Unidimensional Development	Eco Sensitive Development	Humanistic and Holistic Development
Viewpoint	Mechanistic	Quantum	"Kaun-tvam"
Guna Concept	Tamas & Rajas	Rajas-sattava	Sattava

Notes & References:

- 1) Chakraborty S.K. emphasises the need to appreciate the vital distinction between self-actualisation and SELF realisation. See his book, *Management by Values: Towards Cultural Congruence*, Oxford University Press, 1991, p.160.
- 2) For a discussion on Spiritually Guided Materialism and Ecotarian view, see *Management in New Age: Western Windows Eastern Doors*, Sharma Subhash, New Age International Publishers, 1996.
- 3) The concept of "Kaun-tvam" is under development in this author's work, *Quantum Rope: Science, Mysticism and Management*.
- 4) Srinivas M Kalburgi (1997), "Spirituality-at-Work in the Land of Dollar God". This article describes the new spirituality-at-work movement in Corporate America and speculates its future.