

FREER TO BE ME:
THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXECUTIVES AT MID-LIFE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to answer these questions about four women and four men who are executives at mid-life: (1) what was their experience of participating in a character-focused leadership development process; (2) to what extent are they involved in individuation, which is a mid-life developmental opportunity to redefine the Self; (3) how is the process of individuation reflected in their leadership performance; and (4) in what ways did their participation in leadership development address aspects of their individuation. The study took account of participants' gender, age, and role in seeking to understand their experience. Jung's theory of adult development provided the major theoretical framework for the study; behavioral indicators of individuation were created to operationalize Jung's concept and to provide a standard against which to assess participants' behavior. Data were collected primarily through in-depth interviews and the Thematic Apperception Test. The interview findings showed evidence of individuation in participants' self-reports of their thoughts, feelings and behavior, albeit with limitations related to personality and role. However, the TAT indicated that participants experienced a sense of psychological confinement because of their compliance with external demands, which led to feelings of anger, resentment, and overall resignation. Women appeared to be

more aware of their internal conflict and of their desires to live differently. Jung's hypothesis about a mid-life gender cross-over was supported in part. Overall, the study showed that mid-life presented an opportunity for men and women to develop aspects of themselves that had heretofore been undeveloped, whether they be masculine or feminine attributes. The study indicated that participants' involvement in character-focused executive development was a very emotionally intense experience that focused on changes in the self and was likely to contribute to their individuation. The credibility of the feedback used in this executive development process, the role of the consultants, meeting design, and on-going consultation were cited as key elements to the effectiveness of the intervention.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Jane Scott Lyons (1920-1975), my mother. She would have loved to have had such opportunities herself and, surely, to know that I've had them.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to answer these questions about a sample of four women and four men who are executives at mid-life: (1) What was their experience of participating in a character-focused leadership development process? (2) To what extent are they involved in individuation, which is a mid-life developmental opportunity to redefine the Self? (3) How is the process of individuation reflected in their leadership performance? and (4) In what ways did their participation in leadership development address aspects of their individuation? The study took account of the participants' gender, stage of life, and role in seeking to understand their experience.

As researcher, I made two assumptions about the need for and value of this study. First, practitioners of executive development that involves 360-degree feedback and intensive coaching need to learn what happens cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally to the people who participate in this activity. This emergent methodology of executive development is relatively new within the field of organizational psychology, and the research on it has focused on the practice from the perspective of the practitioner. The questions have been: How does the profession define the work? What differentiates this method from other forms of change work? and What level and range of interventions are appropriate for this practice? (Kilburg, 1996).

Another point of inquiry for understanding the phenomenon of executive coaching is from the perspective of the client. From this vantage point, some of the questions are : What is the client's personal experience of executive coaching? How did it affect the way how the client feels and thinks about himself or herself, about leadership, personal relationships, or career? What aspects of the program contributed to the client's learning and which were not helpful? How does the client describe or define this intervention?

Carl Rogers (1951) said, "The best vantage point for understanding behavior is from the internal frame of reference of the individual" (p. 494). This inductive approach to understanding the phenomenon of executive coaching uses the client's concrete experience as a basis for abstracting generalizations about the practice. Understanding executive coaching as it is experienced by the client should allow practitioners to deepen their understanding of their practice and to have better answers for a fundamental question: what is this work?

Second, what leaders need to develop as leaders is influenced by their position in the life cycle. For *executive* development to be effective, it must take account of participants' *psychological* development. That is, executive development hinges on personal development (Kaplan, 1991). Only by addressing the developmental tasks associated with the client's life stage can an intervention aimed at leadership enhancement succeed. Since most executive development is aimed at leaders in their middle years, understanding how to address mid-life tasks through this process will enhance its effectiveness.

Adult development theory argues that adults, like children and adolescents, have the potential to grow psychologically as they age. Adult development theorists regard mid-life, a period spanning the approximate ages

of thirty-eight to fifty, as a critical passage that determines the quality of one's mental well-being in the middle years and beyond (Jung, 1969 a; D. Levinson, 1978). This study focuses particularly on the developmental task of individuation, a process that begins in mid-life to shift the psychic balance of the personality from emphasizing the ego to drawing more on the inner core of the Self (Jung, 1969 a; Singer, 1994).

Jungian theory's emphasis on unconscious development differs from most other developmental models, which stress the achievement of ego goals (Staudé; 1981). Given that corporate executives, the group being studied here, are highly identified with their drive for mastery (Kaplan, 1991), the choice to focus on individuation presents an interesting problem. What defines executive character may be the antithesis of what is required for the process of individuation. And so, executives may be seen as poor candidates for an investigation of this form of mid-life development. Yet, if one believes, as Jungian theory argues, that human beings are hard-wired for the attainment of balance and wholeness, then executives may be a group with enormous potential for inner development during the middle years of their lives (D. Levinson, 1978; 1996). Of course, whether individuals can be effective in relating their greater individuation to organization objectives is another question.

CHAPTER II.

EXECUTIVE CHARACTER

Psychodynamic Perspectives

Several researchers contended that people who achieve executive status have a similar underlying structure to their psychological make-up (Zaleznik, 1975; Kets de Vries, 1984; Kaplan, 1991). This kind of thinking about executives, which derived from psychodynamic theory, suggested that clues for understanding executive behavior are found in the psyche. Kets de Vries (1984) said leadership style should be understood in terms of character, which he defined as “the patterns of behavior with which an individual relates himself to external reality and to his own internal dispositions” (p. 302). Lapierre (1991) claimed that, “Understanding the nature of an individual’s leadership requires an attempt to understand the core of her inner life” (p. 72). Kaplan (1991) said simply, “the way executives are as people matters greatly to the leadership they offer” (p. 13).

Zaleznik (1975) argued that an executive's orientation to power is characterological, based on his psychoanalytic analysis of the lives of executives he encountered in organizational consultation and through biographical research. His investigation centered on the early-life origins of the need for power and the roots of anxiety and defensiveness in the adult who seeks and holds corporate office. Zaleznik argued,

The orientation to power is a particular way of organizing the legacies of human development that pervade an individual's feelings about himself (whether he is self-loving or self-punitive), his attachments to other people (whether they are realistically based or highly charged with unrealistic and ambivalent reactions), and his attitudes toward work and career. (p. 69)

Disputing the theory of compensatory motivation, which suggested that all drives for power reflect a pathological source, Zaleznik stated that "It is dangerous and misleading to equate the need for power with illness" (p. 51). Rather, he contended that power can be viewed as an innate desire for mastery and that individuals are capable of self-restraint in the expression of their ambitions. However, he cautioned, it is dangerous for executives to "play the game of power without first resolving their unhappy attachment to other people" (p. 8). The state of an executive's adult development and maturation determine his or her orientation to power.

In particular, Zaleznik (1975) examined the interaction of the narcissistic personality and power, a combination that produces leaders who lack empathy to human needs and have a limited sense of conscience or guilt. He described

pathological narcissism as the condition of a fragmented self, which leads to an uncertain sense of identity and serious disturbances in self-esteem. For leaders with this psychological construction, power becomes a means to achieve unity of the self and status provides a front to mask deep feelings of helplessness and insecurity. According to Zaleznik, executives use power defensively, as a way to cast off unacceptable self-images and as a substitute for a sustaining ego ideal. He argued that a new understanding of the *self-made* leader is in order. In this case, self-development would lead to maintaining inner cohesion while moving away from early attachments, integrating past and present identities, and acknowledging grandiose images.

Kernberg (1984) agreed that narcissistic personality features are common among executives, calling this character pathology the most serious of all for leaders, based on his consultation to and study of administrators in psychiatric institutions. He described people who are characterized by excessive self-reference and self-centeredness, and whose overvaluation of themselves coincides with feelings of inferiority. Such executives are “overdependent on external admiration, emotionally shallow, intensely envious, and both deprecatory and exploitative in their relations with others” (Kernberg, 1984, p. 55). Narcissistic executives expect submission and adulation from those around them and see others’ success as either an extension of their own achievements or a threat. Consequently, these leaders are destructive as mentors of junior staff and inordinately rivalrous as peers.

Like Zaleznik, Kernberg differentiated between pathological and normal narcissism, which involves the healthy ego gratification associated with achievement, responsibility and leadership. He argued that under optimal circumstances narcissistic needs become integrated with mature ego goals. Then, leadership becomes an expression of constructive idealism and altruism that allow one to make valuable contributions to organizations.

Kernberg (1984) said that obsessive personality features are also quite common among top leadership; yet, he argued, such tendencies often can be used to serve the organization. Their focus on orderliness, precision, clarity, and control allows leaders with an obsessive orientation to function effectively from an organizational standpoint. In particular, Kernberg contended, organizations benefit from their clear stand on issues and commitment to values. In times of stress, these leaders may become obsessive perfectionists and overly controlling, creating chronic passivity and pseudodependency among direct reports.

Some researchers contended that an assessment of executive character must take account of the interaction of role and character. Kanter (1993) wrote that "...organizational roles carry characteristic images of the kinds of people that should occupy them, thus encouraging incumbents to turn into those kinds of people" (p. 251). She argued that the executive role inculcates loyalty, conformity, and acceptance of authority and discourages their opposites.

H. Levinson (1994) argued that organizational factors enhance

narcissistic tendencies in executives, based on his many years of consultation to such leaders. He described how enhanced status inflates a person's occupational self-esteem and decreases the amount of supervision he or she receives. These conditions, according to H. Levinson, give rise to executive overconfidence and a sense of entitlement. Such ego expansion leads executives to deny realities that threaten their inflated self-image, resist changing behaviors that heretofore yielded success, and insert themselves in organizational decisions that might rightly be handled by others.

Maccoby's (1984) study of 250 managers, ranging from chief executives to lower-level professionals, uncovered a common executive character profile that he termed the "gamesman." This type of leader is

cooperative but competitive, detached and playful but compulsively driven to succeed, a team player but a would-be superstar, a team leader but often a rebel against bureaucratic hierarchy, fair and unprejudiced but contemptuous of weakness, tough and dominating but not destructive. (Maccoby, 1984, p. 100)

The gamesman disdains emotion and admires intellect, which limits his ability to evaluate decisions in terms of their human impact.

Maccoby traced this emotional detachment in executives to "careerism," a condition that links a person's self-worth to his or her market value. He argued that this attitude toward self can begin in early school years when a child is evaluated solely on achievement. To succeed in school, the child detaches himself from a fear of failure, and to compete, he detaches himself from compassion for losers. As an adult, this person succeeds at work by

detaching himself from family. Maccoby commented that “the process of bending one’s will to corporate goals and moving up the hierarchy leads to meanness and emotional stinginess” (p. 104). Such emotionally impoverished executives are interpersonally cautious and protect themselves from any kind of intense experiences with others. Gamesmen lack the capacity to invest in anything beyond winning the game.

From Kaplan’s (1991) action-research project with thirty-nine executives, a similar character-type emerged: the expansive executive. Kaplan described expansiveness as being “...all about the drive to mastery--the ambition for it, the willingness to expend great energy in its pursuit, the willingness to push other people hard to attain it, and the hunger for rewards that come with it” (p. 51). Consistent with other leadership character traits, expansiveness can be used productively--as the force of personality that moves organizations to change--or destructively--in the form of excessive ambition. Frequently, executive character becomes lopsided as executives overemphasize their expansive tendencies to the exclusion of other behaviors, such as interdependence and inclusion. Kaplan (1990) said about executives, “They operate in accordance with the ‘masculine principle’ (which is not restricted to the male gender) because of its strong outward push” (p. 465).

Kaplan, like H. Levinson (1994), argued that organizational conditions exacerbate executive expansiveness. He says that high positions bring with them prestige, power, privilege, and protection. Executives are prone to

internalize this sense of being special and develop an inflated belief in their own importance. Kaplan concluded that, "...elevation can easily blow expansive tendencies out of proportion" (p. 56).

Echoing Kaplan's (1990) association of the "masculine principle" with executive character, Paulus, Nasby and Easton (1990) named psychological *agency* as the defining characteristic of executive identity, based on their biographical case study of Dodge Morgan, an executive who sailed nonstop and alone around the world in 1986. Citing Bakan (1966), the authors defined agency as a "fundamental human motivation in the direction of individual differentiation, as manifested in strivings for mastery, power, achievement, and self-assertion, all of which enhance and protect the differentiated self" (p. 502). Agency is distinguished from its opposite or complement, *communion*, which entails a subsuming of the self within a shared identity. Paulus, Nasby and Easton concluded that agency is prototypical of executive behavior and that communion is the goal for potential development of executives.

Men are in the majority among executives and studies of executive character are based almost exclusively on research about men. An exception is the work of Hennig and Jardim (1977), who reported on their investigation of twenty-five women in top management positions in business and industry. When assessing early-life patterns for these women, Hennig and Jardim found that, as girls, each of the women had a very special relationship with her father. These fathers and daughters shared interests and activities regarded as

appropriate only for fathers and sons, and these girls won fatherly approval for their ability to succeed or win. Yet, even though they rewarded their daughters for being like boys, these fathers also reinforced them for being girls. Hennig and Jardim concluded,

Fundamental requirements for succeeding at *anything* include the drive to achieve, an orientation to task, the desire to be respected for one's abilities, the enjoyment of competition, a capacity to take risk. These are qualities as much sought after in business executives as in administrators of non-profit organizations. They are qualities which are widely regarded as masculine and thus as appropriate only for men. In this case, they are qualities which twenty-five little girls demonstrably possessed and which they regarded as high in value to them, rewarding in themselves and capable of earning them the confirmation and esteem of their parents and in particular, the esteem of their fathers. (p. 92)

These women had few memories of their mothers that were as rich in detail as those of their fathers, and they were less able to say how their mothers had shaped their self-images. Yet, the women reported no active resistance from their mothers when they, as girls, challenged the confines of traditional gender roles; rather, the women remembered being given tacit permission from their mothers to take up their burgeoning self-authority.

Hennig and Jardim reported that these executive women, because of their minority status at the top of male-dominated organizations and their socialization as women, experienced their role very differently than their male counterparts. However, despite these gender differences, their research suggests there is a similar orientation toward achievement at the base of character in male and female executives.

Interpreting Hennig and Jardim's findings, Gilligan (1982), suggested that behavior that may appear similar for men and women is actually different when understood in a gender context. Gilligan cited McClelland's (1975) research on male and female orientations to power, in which he concluded that "the modes of expressing power have been sex-typed--women traditionally showing more interest in *being* strong (having resources and sharing them) and men in *acting* powerfully" (p. 78). Of the twenty-five women studied by Hennig and Jardim, Gilligan said, "the descriptions of these careers, however, bears a distinctively female stamp....their identity remained relationally defined; they knew themselves not through societal recognition but as they were known by the men in their lives" (p. 107). Gilligan argued that there are differences in women's fantasies of power and in their modes of expressing power that corroborate sex differences found in other areas of psychological literature, such as observations that women are "more embedded in lives of relationship than men" (p. 106).

Eagly and Johnson's (1990) meta-analysis of gender and leadership did not support the idea that women leaders are more interpersonally oriented than task-oriented, or that men are more focused on task over relationship. The only significant difference between male and female leaders revealed by their research was that women tend to lead more democratically and less autocratically than men. Eagly and Johnson explained this difference with two hypotheses: One, that women's enhanced social skills allow them to perform

managerial roles differently than men; and two, that women feel obliged to be more participative because they feel less organizationally secure than men, based on gender bias against their leadership capabilities. Overall, Eagly and Johnson weighted the influence of organizational role over gender role in assessing leadership behavior. They argued that for women this is especially true when they are in the extreme minority at an organizational level, which is the case for executive women. According to Eagly and Johnson, "...women may tend to lose authority if they adopt distinctively feminine styles of leadership in extremely male-dominated roles. Women who survive in such roles probably have to adopt the styles typical of male role occupants" (p. 248).

Archetypal Perspectives

Introduction to Archetypal Psychology: Jung said that to understand individual psychology one must explore the relationship between the personal psyche and the archetypes of the collective unconscious. Archetypes are universal, instinctive, inherited and timeless patterns to which the human psyche is hard-wired (Jung, 1969 b). Although there are differences in the psychology of women and men--if for no other reason than the interaction of brain function and biochemistry--both men and women have access to the same archetypes. Jung considered the feminine and masculine archetypes as two of the most fundamental aspects of male and female psyches. He argued that to attain psychological maturity men and women must incorporate the

fullness of the feminine and masculine archetypes into their psyche and express these archetypal attributes in their behavior (Singer, 1994).

Whitmont (1991) said that we can profit from thinking about the concepts of masculine and feminine in terms of their Eastern counterparts--yin and yang--that are not tied explicitly to gender. Yin is analogous to the feminine qualities of wholeness, circularity, internalization, instinct, and being. Yang represents separateness, linearity, externalization, law, and doing. Similarly, von Franz (1993) wrote about the feminine as eros and the masculine as logos.

Scholars and practitioners of archetypal psychology have drawn on the deep cultural reservoir of myths and fairy tales to operationalize otherwise abstract archetypes. Because such stories are so psychologically rich and emotionally complex, they help to bring archetypes to life. Von Franz (1993) said that fairy tales, which are products of the unconscious, help to compensate for the lopsidedness of our conscious view and, thus, have a healing function. Myths and fairy tales teach about the balanced psyche in which the ego is informed by a healthy relationship to the instinctual Self. They offer the benefit of regarding human character, with all its strengths and frailties, as normal. According to von Franz,

It is obvious that gods represent archetypal contents in the unconscious, or collective complexes--normal complexes which everybody has, not pathological complexes. (p. 29)

Mythological characters depict psychological aspects of men and women, sometimes in very gender-specific ways that reflect cultural artifacts. In general, it is important to read these tales with the understanding that women and men have equal access to the same archetypal energies--although factors such as socialization, culture, life circumstances, hormones, early history, and developmental stage--may influence how a man or woman relates to these different energies at a given time.

Bolen (1984) explained the benefits of using myths to inform one's understanding of contemporary human behavior in saying:

Myths evoke feeling and imagination and touch on themes that are part of the human collective inheritance. The Greek myths...remain current and personally relevant because there is a ring of truth in them about shared human experience. (p. 6)

She also cautioned that mythology must be viewed in light of restrictive gender roles, which were present in ancient Greece as they are today. She said,

The Jungian perspective has made me aware that women are influenced by powerful inner forces, or archetypes, which can be personified by Greek goddesses. And the feminist perspective has given me an understanding of how outer forces, or *stereotypes*--the roles to which society expects women to conform--reinforce some goddess patterns and repress others. (p.4)^{1 2}

In his study of women's development, D. Levinson (1996) explored two archetypes that figure in women's psychology: the "Traditional Homemaker" and the "Anti-Traditional Homemaker." For both men and women, D.

Levinson (1978;1996) discussed the importance at mid-life of exploring one's

relationship to the feminine and masculine archetypes. D. Levinson's work on these archetypes and their importance in mid-life development is discussed more fully below (See Chapter IV). However, in addition to D. Levinson's work, there are other archetypes that are important to explore because of their particular relevance to the development of executive women and men.

Women's Psychology: When writing about contemporary women, especially those who have been highly successful in careers, scholars and practitioners of archetypal psychology focus on the challenge such women face in maintaining a lively connection with their feminine spirit while competing in hyper-masculine workplaces. They speak about the price women pay for pursuing perfectionism through work, for losing themselves in compulsive activity, and for demanding too much from their bodies, either through neglect or obsession. And these writers describe the emotional condition of women who lead such lives: their boredom, emptiness, loneliness, depression. Executive women, because of an interaction of personality and environment, are vulnerable to developing these tendencies. Thus, it is relevant to this study to explore what archetypal psychologists have said about women who suffer alienation from their deeper Self.

Bolen (1984) used Greek mythology to identify seven archetypal goddesses or personality types that women manifest. Bolen's perspective is helpful in understanding executive women because she described three goddess patterns--Artemis, Athena, Hestia--that are associated with the active

feminine; of these, Artemis and Athena are most illustrative of personality types associated with executive women. Bolen emphasized the importance of not pathologizing the assertive inclination in women or seeing it as a manifestation of a distorted masculine. However, in Bolen's scheme the key for healthy development among women who identify with these patterns is to allow other aspects of themselves--for instance their more nurturing or playful sides--to be expressed, especially at mid-life. She argued that although women may naturally prefer some types over others, they must have a balance of different patterns to achieve psychological wholeness.

According to Bolen, Artemis, the goddess of the hunt, represents an attitude of "I can take care of myself." She symbolizes women's achievement, competence, goal-orientation, and independence. Under the influence of this archetype, women have an ability to concentrate intensely on whatever is important and to be undistracted from their course. Artemis women feel equal to men and are comfortable competing with them. In the extreme, this pattern can lead women to be emotionally distant and cruel toward others. It can also cause women to disown their own neediness and passivity. At mid-life, a woman with an Artemis-oriented personality is likely to become more introspective and, perhaps, seek spiritual pursuits with the same passion that guided her external achievement. To become more whole, a woman with these tendencies must develop a stronger capacity for loving relationship with others and more appreciation for her own vulnerability.

Bolen described Athena as the archetype of the “father’s daughter,” one who gravitates naturally toward powerful men who fit the archetype of the patriarchal father or “boss man.” According to Bolen, Athena predisposes women to form mentor relationships with strong men. As a father’s daughter, such a woman may be a defender of patriarchal rights and values, which emphasize tradition and the legitimacy of male power. This kind of woman is hard-working, accepts reality as it is, and adapts to her circumstances. A woman with this personality orientation may find it difficult to relate to her mother, especially if her mother is more aligned with traditionally female roles. Compared to Artemis, Athena is armored emotionally and uses intellectual defenses to keep from feeling pain--her own and others. She has an ability to be disciplined, objective, and dispassionate. Bolen allowed that circumstances such as an abusive home may encourage the development of Athena qualities in women who must defend themselves.

Also writing about the “father’s daughter,” Leonard (1983) identified two archetypes in the psyche of women who have had a wounded relationship with their father: the “armored Amazon” and the “eternal girl.” Leonard spoke about several ways in which the personal relationship between a woman and her father can have damaging effects on the daughter’s development: when a father abandons his daughter physically or psychologically; loves his daughter “too much,” thereby making her a real or surrogate lover; expects his

daughter to live out unfulfilled aspects of himself; or controls his daughter through highly authoritarian and punitive behavior.

Moreover, Leonard argued that the father-daughter wound is a cultural condition as well as an event produced by the circumstances of individual lives. About the wounded relationship between a woman and the collective father Leonard said,

Whenever there is a patriarchal authoritarian attitude which devalues the feminine by reducing it to a number of roles or qualities which come, not from woman's experience, but from an abstract view of her--there one finds the collective overpowering the daughter, not allowing her to grow creatively from her own essence. (p. 10)

Leonard explained that women deal with the effects of these personal or cultural wounds in several ways. Some women deny the problem by blaming their fathers and/or men in general. Others avoid the conflict by living out traditionally accepted feminine roles. Leonard concluded, "...both these routes result in [women] giving up responsibility for their own transformation, the one via blame, the other via adaptation" (p. 11).

Leonard's "armored Amazon," which she described as a protective identity that women use to compensate for inadequate fathering, is reminiscent of Bolen's (1984) Athena. The unconscious psychological stance of a woman influenced by the Amazon complex is: "my father didn't give me what I need so I have to do it for myself." According to Leonard, such women "build a strong masculine ego identity through achievement or fighting for a cause or

being in control and laying down the law themselves, perhaps as a mother who rules the family as though it were a business firm" (p. 17). Yet, this masculine identity is often "a protective shell, an armor against the pain of abandonment or rejection by their fathers, an armor against their own softness, weakness, and vulnerability" (p. 17). The several forms of the "armored amazon" reflect behavior associated with executive women and, thus, will be described in some detail.

One example of the Amazon archetype is the "super star." This pattern may lead a woman to over-achievement and "workaholism" to compensate for a father who was unsuccessful in areas of work and achievement. Or a woman may develop a "super star" psychology from identification with a hyper-masculine mother, who herself was making up for an absent husband. Either way, Leonard found that "workaholic" behavior leaves a woman "dry" and cut off from her feelings and instinctive sources.

The "dutiful daughter," another example of the Amazon, gives the illusion of goodness and virtue, but, as a consequence, she denies her own life and creativity. According to Leonard, the major developmental task for women who have fallen into this pattern is to recognize that duty has been imposed on them by someone else. Leonard said this psychological pattern separates the woman from the Self, leaving her exhausted and without meaning. The "dutiful daughter" is a woman who "tends to live behind a

persona modeled in an image that is really not her own, an image that is duty-bound and usually to a very strict authoritarian structure" (p. 70).

Another form of the Amazon is the "martyr," whose life is bound by limitation and passive resentment, which is often masked by a long-suffering attitude. Common to this pattern is stoic self-denial in areas of sexuality and creativity. Leonard advised that the martyr needs to "get angry at her own self-denial and to recognize that the shadow side of her strong, virtuous self-denial is the 'waif'..." (p. 74). The martyr, whose aggression is turned directly inward or passively outward, needs to take up her own power and to live her life with exuberance.

Still another manifestation of the Amazon is the "warrior queen," who resembles the extreme version of Bolen's (1984) Artemis. Leonard says that for such a woman, life is a "chore and a series of battles to be won" (p. 77). This woman may become grim, sober, and disconnected from her body and feelings. Rather than being able to use the strength of her feminine receptivity, she regards it as weak passivity. Her only association with the feminine is with the "darling doll." To develop, the "warrior queen" must learn to value and incorporate the strong feminine as a balance to her masculine attributes.

Leonard described the second archetype of the wounded daughter as the "eternal girl," who is the polar complement to the "armored Amazon." The "eternal girl" is a woman who has remained a young girl psychologically, even though she is an adult chronologically. This girl/woman accepts the

identity others impress upon her and relinquishes her strength and responsibility for shaping her identity. This pattern can take several forms: the “darling doll,” whose identity is completely defined by her association with others; the “glass girl,” whose fragility keeps her cloistered from the real world; the “high flyer” whose impulsivity keeps her constantly off-balance; and the “misfit,” whose passivity makes her prey to destructive activities or people. According to Leonard, all manifestations of the “eternal girl” share a “clinging to either absolutized innocence or absolutized guilt which are two sides of the same coin and which foster dependence on another for affirming or condemning” (p. 53). Behavioral consequences of this psychology are avoidance of responsibility for one’s own existence, lack of decision-making, and inadequate discrimination.

Woodman (1982) used an archetypal perspective to explore the problem of perfectionism among high-achieving women. Like Bolen (1984), Woodman drew upon the story of the goddess Athena to describe women who are driven to succeed in the world, sometimes at the cost of their emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being. According to the Greek myth, Athena sprung from Zeus’s head as a full-grown woman, wearing her armor and emitting a war cry.

Referring to this story, Woodman said,

If we look at the modern Athenas sprung from their father’s foreheads, we do not necessarily see liberated women. Many of them have proven beyond question that they are equal to or better than men: excellent doctors, excellent mechanics, excellent business consultants. But they are also, in many cases, unhappy

women. 'I have everything,' they say. 'Perfect job, perfect house, perfect clothes, so what? What does it all add up to?'" (p. 9)

Athena wore on her breastplate the symbol of Medusa, the female monster with snakes on her head instead of hair, who possesses the power to petrify anyone who gazes upon her. This "monster" side of Athena has the capacity to destroy her own and others' energy and creativity. By being hyper-rational and obsessed with logic and facts, this kind of woman can demean others' subjective experience and take the life out of any or endeavor. She can present a cold heart capable of turning others to stone (Bolen, 1984).

Woodman (1982) argued that a cultural obsession with perfection, which drives everyone to "do our best in every corner of our lives" causes people to "make themselves into works of art...and forget that we are human beings" (p.10). She said,

On the one side we try to be the efficient, disciplined goddess Athena, on the other we are forced into the voracious repressed energy of Medusa. We are trapped in the extremes of the gods, territory that doesn't belong to us. Meanwhile the one who is forgotten is the maiden Andromeda, chained to the rock, in danger of being sacrificed to a monster from the unconscious. She is the forgotten one--the 'still unravished bride' in our culture. So long as she is chained to a rock she must remain still and unravished. (p. 10)

As Woodman sees it, the problem with perfectionism is that "To move toward perfection is to move out of life, or what is worse, never to enter it" (p. 53). Often, women with this orientation live out their "good girl" identity well

into adulthood, usually from the stance of being highly principled. However, Woodman argued, "Living by principles is not living your own life. It is easier to try to be better than you are than to *be* who you are. If you are trying to live by ideals, you are constantly plagued by a sense of unreality" (p. 61). In sum, Woodman said, "Perfection is defeat" (p. 51). She proposed that women follow Jung's advice to distinguish between perfection, which is the province of the gods, and wholeness, which is the state of an individuated human being.

von Franz (1993) explicated several fairy tales to discuss aspects of the feminine principle. Although elements of all of them have relevance to this discussion of the character of female executives, her discussion of the "Girl without Hands" is particularly apt because it described how a "wounded woman" can attempt to rescue herself from emotional neglect by over-identifying with the "kingdom," or, in the case of the executive woman, with the corporation. At one point in this story, a girl who is wandering in the wilderness after being wounded by her father is taken in and rescued by a king who becomes her husband. von Franz said that if the king is interpreted as an inner figure in the heroine,

...he would represent a collective dominating positive spirit. The woman would then adopt all the prevailing ideas concerning religion and duty and behavior, and would live in accordance with collective standards. That would be replacing a personal attitude by a conventional one in which the woman would do the right thing, because that is what's done. She would behave normally, but without spontaneity. Her positive eros quality would not be fully alive. (p. 95)

The “silver hands,” which the king gives to his wife to replace those that were cut off by her father, are artificial. They allow this woman to “cope,” but they don’t allow her to live fully. According to von Franz, when people attempt to be healed in this way, “Instinct is replaced by rule of the collective. But such people will be aware of a dead corner within them...” (p. 96).

Estes (1992) argued that the archetype of the *La Loba*, or *Wild Woman*, is the needed antidote to the perfectionism and hyper-rationality of many contemporary women. According to Estes,

the home of *La Loba* is at the place in time where the spirit of woman and the spirit of the wolf meet--the place where her mind and her instincts mingle, where a woman’s deep life funds her mundane life. It is the point where the I and the Thou kiss, the place where women run with the wolves. (p. 30)

Estes described modern woman as “...a blur of activity. She is pressured to be all things to all people” (p. 4). Out of touch with their “wild” nature, which Estes defined as innate integrity and healthy boundaries, many women today have severed their relationship with their instinctual psyche. As a consequence, Estes said, women “feel extraordinarily dry, fatigued, frail, depressed, and confused.... they are drawn into domesticity, intellectualism, work or inertia because that is the safest place for one who has lost her instincts” (p. 11). Estes argued that without the influence of the Wild Woman, women are inclined toward a “paralyzing ennui or wishful thinking” (p. 9).

Like the other authors cited here, Estes emphasized the insidious effects of what she called the “Nice-Nice” syndrome of women. She argued that this over-adaptation occurs in women when they are most afraid of being disenfranchised or found unnecessary.³ In such cases, a woman is faced with a choice between being overadaptive and being herself. In Estes’ view, not to follow one’s own deepest instincts is to deny life. She explains that the “wild” life she proposes does not mean that one must violate all of one’s “primary socializations,” but rather it means

...to establish territory, to find one’s pack, to be in one’s body with certainty and pride regardless of the body’s gifts and limitations, to speak and act in one’s behalf, to be aware, alert, to draw on the innate feminine powers of intuition and sensing, to come into one’s cycles, to find what one belongs to, to rise with dignity, to retain as much consciousness as we can. (p. 12)

Men’s Psychology: To complement her theory about the goddess archetypes, Bolen (1989) identified eight male gods whose personalities reflect archetypes in the psychology of men. Among those, two that are particularly relevant to the character of executive men: Zeus and Apollo. While any man will have many dimensions to his personality, these two types are likely to be more developed in men who succeed as executives, especially during the height of their careers.

Zeus represents the archetype of the king. Men who identify with this pattern seek authority and power and are willing to take risks to establish their personal and professional realm. The Zeus archetype enables a man to have a

big vision and an awareness of what is possible. Such a man is realistic, confident, and able to depersonalize situations. He also uses his “thunderbolt” to take quick, decisive action, often without regard for consequences to others. This Zeus archetype can lead a man to consider vulnerability and emotionality as signs of weakness or stupidity. Bolen described the successful Zeus man to be the equivalent of an “alpha male” in studies of primates in hierarchical species. She reported that alpha males expect success, are aggressive, intimidate lower-ranking males, and (at least among primates) have their pick of the females and are more sexually active than subordinate males.

A man dominated by the Zeus archetype can be a “talking head” who is cut off from his heart and body. His capacity for sensuality is diminished because he uses his body for mastery, not for pleasure. This archetype inclines a man toward grandiosity, which often causes him to be emotionally distant from others. His lack of self-awareness and his emotional immaturity can cause such a man to be ignorant of the circumstances of his own life; consequently, he can be blind-sided by people close to him, especially regarding matters of the heart.

At mid-life, a Zeus man may find himself uncharacteristically at a loss for drive and he may begin to question the value of his life-long ambitions. According to Bolen, in their middle years such men may begin to place greater value on relationships and self-reflection. To grow, a Zeus man, like the ailing king in the Grail legend, must allow the “fool” to enter his psyche. He must

accept his vulnerability and open himself up to other dimensions of his personality.

Apollo was second only to Zeus in the gallery of Greek gods. The precepts on his temple at Delphi were “Know thyself” and “Nothing in excess.” According to Bolen (1989), as an archetype, Apollo personifies the aspect of the personality that “wants clear definitions, is drawn to master a skill, values order and harmony, and prefers to look at the surface rather than at what underlies appearances” (p. 135). The Apollo archetype favors thinking over feeling, distance over closeness, objective assessment over subjective intuition.

When growing up, a boy who is influenced by this archetype is the “golden one”; he is the fair-haired child who meets with his parents’ approval. Sometimes, such a boy becomes the narcissistic extension of his parents’ ambitions and, consequently, learns to equate his achievements with his self-worth. He also may experience a sense of emotional malnutrition if his parents withhold unconditional warmth and nurturance.

An Apollo man is successful in work because of his inherent ability to focus on a task and his desire for mastery. Such a man adapts easily to life in institutions and corporations, where he is able to compete with peers and to assume a leadership role. He seeks the approval of those above him. Unlike a Zeus-type, an Apollo man is capable of working well with competent women

whom he easily accepts as a peer. Bolen described him as “the ideal organization man” (p. 146).

Like the Zeus archetype, the Apollo pattern encourages men to over-value their intellect and under-value their senses and emotions. Bolen said, “the Apollo man is not a lover.” As the “Sun God,” Apollo was “above it all,” and men who express this archetype stay removed from emotional entanglements and close relationships with others. To grow, such men need to expand beyond the confines of the rational and logical mind and to learn more about emotional complexity. The god Apollo made room for Dionysus in the temple. So, too, men who are over-developed in the ways of this archetype need to have more experiences of spontaneity, sensation, and emotion. They also need to experience humility and to accept their humanity. Bolen advised that the Apollo man needs to grow beyond his tendency to

always do what is expected of him, without questioning whether he really wants to do what he is doing. From the time he was a little boy, he gained love and approval for conforming to the rules, which by his archetypal nature he found no difficulty accepting. It often takes half or more of his lifetime, as well as a mid-life depression, before an Apollo man questions if he is doing work he wants to do, is where he wants to be, or loves his wife. (p. 161)

Moore and Gillette (1990) used an archetypal perspective in developing their model of male psychology, which distinguishes between the archetypes of the boy and the archetypes of the man. Their discussion of the archetype of the “hero,” which they described as the most advanced form of youthful masculine energy, is relevant to the character of executive men. They claim

that when the hero archetype is carried into adulthood, which is often the case with highly ambitious men, it can block men from full maturity. In a man, the hero becomes the bully or grandstander who does not know his own limits. The hero thinks he is invulnerable, that he can dream only the “impossible dream” and fight the unbeatable foe. Moore and Gillette argued that the hero archetype needs to be cultivated in contemporary culture, but for a man to reach psychological maturity he must grow out of his identification with the hero and recognize his limitations or his very unheroic side.

In defining the psychology of men, Moore and Gillette identified four archetypes: King, Warrior, Magician, Lover. Of these, the King and the Warrior are the ones most dominant in executive character. According to Moore and Gillette,

the King archetype in its fullness possesses the qualities of order, of reasonable and rational patterning, of integration and integrity in the masculine psyche. It stabilizes chaotic emotion and out-of-control behaviors. It gives stability and centeredness. It brings calm. (pp. 61-62)

Regrettably, these authors argued, the positive manifestation of the King as the steward or the shepherd is less developed in this culture, while the shadow side of the King flourishes. The Tyrant King, which is one negative pole, is someone who abuses others and inflates his own sense of power. Moore and Gillette argued that any person can display this kind of tyrannical behavior, but, they suggested, certain personality configurations, particularly the narcissistic personality disorder, are prone to it. As an example of the Tyrant,

they described a corporate executive who shows no devotion or real loyalty to the company, only to himself. This kind of leader negotiates deals for his own financial benefit without regard for others.

The complement to the Tyrant is the Weakling. Beneath the rage of the Tyrant are feelings of vulnerability and weakness. If the Tyrant cannot be identified with the King energy, he feels he is nothing. As Moore and Gillette explained it, "The hidden presence of this passive pole explains the hunger for the mirroring--for 'Adore me!' 'Worship me!' 'See how important I am!'--that we feel from so many of our superiors and friends"

(p. 68). A man possessed by the Weakling is insecure within himself, which may lead him to be defensive and hostile. To the Weakling, everyone is an enemy.

Moore and Gillette allowed that the Warrior archetype is universally present in men (and women--there are female warriors), that it is a part of the human psyche, and that it is responsible for some of humankind's greatest achievements and worse horrors. The positive manifestations of the Warrior contribute to a man's being disciplined, focused, task-oriented, action-oriented, and in control of himself. The Warrior is capable of committing to something larger than himself and shows great loyalty to whatever he attaches himself. Because his commitment is primary, everything else, including relationships, are ancillary. Moore and Gillette argued that when the Warrior is connected to the King, the result is a man who "is consciously stewarding the 'realm'" and

whose “decisive actions, clarity of thinking, discipline, and courage are, in fact creative and generative” (p. 86). The Warrior benefits also from maintaining a connection with the Lover archetype, which brings him back into relatedness with people.

According to Moore and Gillette, the Warrior has two shadow dimensions: the Sadist and the Masochist. The Sadist carries into adulthood the adolescent insecurity and desperation of the Hero to make a stand against the overwhelming power of the feminine (emotionality, vulnerability). Unsure of his legitimate power, such a man battles against everything that is supposedly “soft” or relational. Moore and Gillette linked this shadow archetype to compulsive personality disorder. They said,

Compulsive personalities are workaholics, constantly with their noses to the grindstone. They have tremendous capacity to endure pain, and they often manage to get an enormous amount of work done. But what is driving their nonstop engines is deep anxiety, the Hero’s desperation. They have a very slim grasp of their own worthwhileness. They don’t know what it is they really want, what they are missing and would like to have. They spend their lives ‘attacking’ everything and everyone.... In the process, they are eaten alive by the Sadistic Warrior and soon reach ‘burnout.’ (p. 92)

The polar complement to the Sadist is the masochist, who allows himself to be taken advantage of by other people and doesn’t extract himself from destructive situations. This behavior is another form of compulsivity whereby someone doesn’t know when to quit: he lingers in a troubled relationship beyond the point of hope or refuses to acknowledge that a frustrating job will

never improve. The Masochist digs in and works harder no matter what the odds are. He is willing to abuse himself or allow others to abuse him.

Moore and Gillette suggested that men who have over-identified with the Warrior and King archetypes would benefit by increasing their access to the positive dimensions of the Lover archetype. Even in their positive forms, the King and the Warrior archetypes keep a man removed from the earthy, complex and powerful realm of emotion. By relating more to the Lover in themselves, men can empathize with others, access their intuition, and draw on the creative energy that is released through a genuine connection with their own passions.

Bly (1990) used the Iron John fairy tale to elucidate the psychic journey that leads a boy to become a psychologically developed man.⁴ Bly argued that contemporary men suffer from a lack of positive relationships with male elders--be they fathers or mentors--who can help younger men make the psychological transition to healthy manhood. According to Bly, middle-aged men must make a descent into their unconscious, into what Bly called the "ashes," to grieve the loss of unlimited potential, which is the province of youth, and to reconnect with a here-to-fore hidden part of their psyche, which holds the key to mature masculinity.

Like Estes (1992), who suggested that women need to discover the "Wild Woman" archetype, Bly argued that mature men need to surface the "Wild Man" in their psyche, which is represented in the myth by the hairy

dark figure of Iron John, an alleged-to-be dangerous figure who is submerged in a dark pool of water. Bly said that the Iron John story teaches that the Wild Man

does not hide in, reside in, or wait for us in the feminine realm, nor in the macho/John Wayne realm, but in the magnetic field of the deep masculine. The kind of wildness, or un-niceness, implied by the Wild Man image is not the same as macho energy, which men already know enough about. Wild Man energy, by contrast, leads to forceful action undertaken, not with cruelty, but with resolve. The Wild Man is not opposed to civilization; but he's not completely contained by it either. (p. 8)

CHAPTER III.

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

In the last decade, executive coaching, a form of executive development, emerged as an area of practice in the field of organizational psychology. While the practice of executive coaching expanded quickly, the scholarship in this field did not keep pace. Reviewing recent literature on executive coaching, Kilburg (1996) found that most of the formal research being published on this topic was in graduate dissertations and none of the empirical studies reported on the effects of consultants working directly with managers. Kilburg commented, "The research available and reviewed also points to a significant, ongoing problem of a lack of empirical research on the actual work of senior practitioners in the field" (p. 134).

The literature on executive coaching consists of practitioners' descriptions of a particular coaching methodology, based on their field experience, and their beginning attempts to conceptualize the work. Some of these efforts appear to be more or less systematic and scientific than others. Opining about what constitutes executive coaching and what to call the work

constitutes the bulk of the discussion. Of course, naming the practice has significance for practitioners beyond semantics and frequently they disagree about the matter. Labeling this activity coaching, consultation or counseling links the work with other therapeutic models and has implications for the practitioner's role, work scope, authority relations, client perceptions of the work, and level of intervention.

Popper and Lipshitz (1992) argued for the term *coaching* because it is more common in the literature on training and management and rejected other terms, such as consultant or mentor, because they are used in the literature on teaching and psychotherapy. These authors contended that the concept of coaching, which originated in sports, has been expanded to include a process of "creating a culture of development" and "an atmosphere of learning" (p. 15).

Sperry (1993) made distinctions among the executive consultant, counselor and coach. Ranking the three roles by the depth of psychological work they entail, Sperry would put executive counseling at the deep end, consultation in the middle, and coaching at the shallow end. Executive coaching, according to Sperry, involves the "teaching of skills in the context of a personal relationship with a learner" (p. 264). He distinguished it from executive counseling and consulting "where the executive engages in deep self-disclosure." In coaching, he argued, "the need for a close, personal bond and confidentiality is not as great" (p. 264).

The executive consultant's primary task, according to Sperry, is to help the executive formulate the right questions and make informed judgments. Executives expect the consultant to increase their effectiveness as a manager and a person; to provide perspective, objectivity and insight; and to be a safe person with whom they can share private thoughts and feelings. Sperry holds the executive consultant responsible for taking a systemic view of problems, stating that he or she must search for "pattern, precipitants, perpetuants, and vulnerabilities within the corporation as well as the executive," whereas the counselor is trained to search only for the "patient's vulnerabilities and predisposition" (p. 261).

Sperry made additional distinctions between executive consultation and executive counseling or psychotherapy: (1) psychotherapy tends to occur on the clinician's turf, whereas the consultant works in the executive's world where the rules must be negotiated; (2) psychotherapy usually occurs in fifty-minute segments whereas consultation may range from a half-hour consultation to a series of full-day meetings; (3) the focus of psychotherapy usually involves "working through" characterological issues and past events while executive consultation "works around" character and emphasizes here-and-now concerns.

Tobias (1996) saw the roles somewhat differently and suggested that executive coaching includes the psychological interventions that Sperry would relegate to consultation and counseling. He stated,

As far as I have been able to tell, coaching by psychologists is simply a repackaging of certain practices that were once subsumed under the more general terms consulting or counseling. I suspect that the popularity of the term stems from the fact that coaching is perceived to be a little less threatening, perhaps because it may appear to be akin to physical fitness coaching. There is a subtle implication that coaching may not involve wrenching change and may be just a matter of fine-tuning. Sometimes, of course, fine-tuning is all that is needed, but often it *is* wrenching change that is required, so the term, although less threatening, may be slightly deceptive. (p. 87)

Tobias argued, however, that the term coaching has the advantage of implying an ongoing process, which distinguishes it from most seminars and workshops.

Tobias (1996) said the primary focus of the activity is what really distinguishes coaching from consultation; he argued that coaching focuses on the single individual and consultation on the whole organization. Moreover, he contended, coaching may or may not occur as part of an ongoing organizational consultation. Tobias cautioned that when coaching is done in isolation the absence of an organizational context limits the work and may cause the professional to miss the systemic nature of a problem or collude with scapegoating of an individual.

H. Levinson (1996) argued that the executive coach must avoid “becoming psychotherapeutic because executive coaching does not allow time for developing a therapeutic alliance, dealing with the transference problem, and dealing with the ambivalence engendered when the client becomes dependent on the coach.” He stressed that the term *coach* must be “taken

seriously” and that the relationship “must be one of peers, although the client is necessarily dependent on the coach for advice, guidance, insights, and even formal information” (p. 115). He claimed that his own emphasis as a coach is on “interviewing and counseling with a focus on reality problems, using little interpretation or efforts to deal overtly with the transference.” However, H. Levinson believed that a coach must be knowledgeable of psychological dynamics and adult development.

Kaplan (1991) did not engage in the debate about terminology, but he did take a stand on the focus of executive development in arguing that it must bring about a character shift. Kaplan said that most executive development has colluded with executives’ natural tendency to shy away from personal reflection by emphasizing “task-oriented” learning and skill development. Kaplan reasoned that since leadership is a reflection of the whole person, a change in leadership must involve the inner person, not just outer behavior. He suggested that an approach combining “intervention on the surface with intervention below the surface” will produce the best chance for lasting change (p. 153). Kaplan suggested that the scope of executive development rightly includes several areas: examination of how the character of the person is reflected in his or her leadership; discussion of parallels between the leader’s personal life and work life; and exploration of material from childhood that may give insight into current behavior.

Kaplan's (1990; 1991) research on executive character indicated that organizational elevation, combined with an executive's innate psychological orientation, creates leaders who resist learning, especially about themselves. According to Kaplan, expansive executives' beliefs in the rightness of their actions are bedrock and barely pervious to challenging or contradictory information. Kaplan's executive development approach stresses the use of extensive, credible feedback, without which, he argued, executives are unlikely to recognize or change destructive behaviors.

CHAPTER IV.

JUNG'S THEORY OF MID-LIFE DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED RESEARCH

Jung's Theory of Mid-life Development

At a time when most theorists viewed adolescence as the final stage of significant psychological growth, Carl Jung developed a model for human development that encompassed the entire lifespan. Jung (1969a) spoke metaphorically of life's stages, advising that "...we cannot live the afternoon of life according to the programme of life's morning; for what was great in the morning will be little at evening, and what in the morning was true will at evening have become a lie" (p. 399). Jung's model was holistic: the goal of adult development was to balance the personality functions of sensation, intuition, thinking, and feeling (Staude, 1981).

In instances where other developmental theorists did allow for psychological change among adults, they saw it as a function of personal circumstances or social events, such as death of a loved one or outbreak of war.

Jung departed radically from this thinking by naming the psyche as the primary catalyst for adult growth. Jung (1969b) believed that a natural and inherent psychic progression occurs throughout a person's life, and each person's unique individuality is pre-determined, having an "*a priori* unconscious existence" (p. 447). According to Jung, we are born with an essence that is waiting to be discovered--or made conscious. Like Michaelangelo, who believed his challenge as a sculptor was to unleash the form already existing within the marble block, Jung saw the developmental task of an individual as uncovering through consciousness the hidden aspects of his or her true nature. Edinger (1972) says that the outcome of development is "the realization that one's name is written in heaven" and the understanding that personal identity has a "transpersonal origin and justification for being" (pp. 158-160).

According to Jung, the first half of life is directed toward achievement. During childhood and adolescence, the ego is the primary element of growth, and it emerges and becomes firmly established as one develops a personal and social identity, focuses on work-related accomplishments, and creates a family life. Interacting with the world, the ego creates multiple personae, or masks, that become a currency for social exchange. Akin to Erikson's (1980) concept of identity, the persona is the face one shows to the world; it is a necessary ego-adaptation to external demands.

The second half of life is about integration. At mid-life, according to Jung, the psyche shifts emphasis from the ego, which is externally identified, to the more essential, innermost aspects of the Self, which reside in a person's individual unconscious and relate to the collective unconscious. The Self, Jung (1969c) says, is "a virtual point midway between conscious and unconscious," which serves to integrate the psyche (p. 263). The Self connects the individual not only to his or her personal unconscious, but also to the eternal and all of humankind. The Self and the ego are like the mover and the moved; the urges of the Self are revealed through ego behavior, but it is the Self that provides the energetic life force (Staude, 1981).

Termed individuation, this internal psychic restructuring enables a person to be even more of an individual than was possible or desirable during earlier stages of life, when social forces held sway. Jung (1969b) defined individuation as,

... the development of the psychological individual as a differentiated being from the general, collective psychology. Individuation, therefore, is a process of differentiation, having for its goal the development of the individual personality. (p. 449)

Individuation frees people, according to Singer (1994), to "spend their days and nights doing what they are fitted for by their unique natures, without frittering away their energies in pointless strivings or useless regrets" (p. 216). Singer suggests that this process may be undertaken consciously, through analysis or contemplative searching, or unconsciously, by commitment to a goal that is beyond the purely personal.

Ideally, the outcome of individuation is positive, but the process is not necessarily easy. Becoming less ego- and more Self-oriented requires a breakdown of the persona. Such a change is potentially threatening to the ego, which may react defensively by clinging to the persona. In such instances, a person becomes rigid and stuck in outmoded ways of being. The more a person has identified with and developed his or her persona, the more likely individuation will be experienced as an intense psychological disruption. If, however, the person is able to re-balance the psyche, he or she can find a new form of identity and integrity that stems from a core being. Then, the Self becomes a “felt presence” and source of guidance, and one lives in conscious relationship to the non-egoistic Self (Stein, 1983).

The mid-life encounter with the unconscious has several related aspects: the development of the contrasexual aspects of one’s self (usually increased awareness of the anima for men and of the animus for women); recognition of parts of oneself that have been kept in the Shadow; and an enriched relationship to archetypal figures. All of these changes require an increased interiority and self-introspection. As Jung (1969a) says, “After having lavished its light upon the world, the sun withdraws its rays in order to illuminate itself” (p. 399).

Anima and Animas: Jung regarded the twin archetypes⁵ of anima and animus as primary elements in the psyche of women and men. The anima stands for the eternal feminine and the animus for the eternal masculine.

Certain identities that we associate with each of these archetypes remain hidden or repressed in our psyches, in part, because we are socialized into gender roles. Believing that the psyche strives for wholeness, Jung theorized that adult growth requires one to uncover the side of the male-female polarity that has been underdeveloped.

At the time when Jung developed his ideas, sharp lines were drawn between the roles of men and women, with each gender expected to reflect the archetypal ideal of masculine and feminine. Today, social acceptance of greater androgyny allows women and men to express a broader range of gender-associated behaviors. Thus, what we repress as men and women is no longer so clear. Some have called the encounter with the anima or animus the encounter with the “other,” the part of ourselves that has been kept most remote from consciousness (Singer, 1994). Whitman (1991) argued that we must distinguish between the archetypes themselves and their cultural, familial, and personal contents, which are the complexes or shadow aspects that they engender.

While we now understand that some of the fundamental differences Jung posited about men and women were a function of gender bias, contemporary medical knowledge about the relationship between physiology and psychology supports elements of Jung’s thesis. Singer (1994) explained Jung’s viewpoint in saying that “biological differences between men and women give rise to a psychological tendency to form images and concepts

based on these differences” (p. 186). Jung reasoned that mid-life, when significant changes in body chemistry and hormonal production occur, is a likely time for related psychological shifts in men and women. In particular, it’s when men express more traditionally feminine attributes and women develop in more traditionally masculine ways.

The Shadow: The shadow can be understood as the psychic counterpart to the persona. Whereas the persona is what is known, accepted and understood about an individual, the shadow represents what is unknown, rejected and feared. The persona is conscious and exposed; the shadow is unconscious and veiled. Sometimes, the shadow is misrepresented as the negative or evil aspects of a person; however, what is hidden is not objectively bad, it has just been repressed by the persona. Jung (1969d) said,

If it has been believed hitherto that the human shadow was the source of all evil, it can now be ascertained on closer investigation that...the shadow does not consist only of morally reprehensible tendencies, but also displays a number of good qualities, such as normal instincts, appropriate reactions, realistic insights, creative impulses, etc. (p. 266)

According to Hollis (1993), the shadow contains all that is “vital yet problematic ” (p. 43). Depending upon what has shaped the persona, the shadow may contain creativity, discipline, joy, spontaneity, vulnerability, strength or any other undeveloped trait. The stronger and more intact the persona, and the more an individual believes she or he *is* the image portrayed to the world, the more likely it is that important aspects of the personality have been repressed into the unconscious (Singer, 1994).

The encounter with the shadow requires one to take back projections. Usually, what we disown or deny in ourselves, we project onto others, especially people close to us. Individuation involves the recognition that what one disdains or envies in others is, in fact, part of oneself. Sometimes this knowledge can be disturbing--when we realize the darkness in our own personalities--but it can also be fulfilling, as we see the opportunity of the "unlived life" (Hollis, 1993). The resurgence of the Self, and a heightened sense of life's limits, call us to be who we haven't yet been.

This mid-life encounter with one's shadow leads also to a reexamination of values. Jung (1969a) said, "And the descent (of the sun) means the reversal of all the ideals and values that were cherished in the morning" (p. 397). While many adults resist the challenge to redefine their life in new terms, clinging instead to anachronistic ways of youth, those who grow and develop find that the second half of life has its own purpose and goals.

The archetypes: One way in which meaning is achieved at mid-life is through greater consciousness of the archetypes. In addition to balancing anima and animus, at mid-life one is poised to draw from a wider range of archetypes. Because the Self integrates the conscious, personal unconscious, and collective unconscious aspects of the psyche, when a mid-life person opens to the whole Self, she or he has greater access to the archetypal material. By engaging with the archetypes we don't acquire something new; instead we restore what was already part of us, but forgotten. For in Jung's view, our

connection to archetypes is inborn, awaiting the moment to be revealed in an individual life.

One benefit of engaging with archetypal material is that a person experiences deeper meaning in life, which is especially critical in the middle years when familiar sources of meaning are depleted. Edinger (1972) said that “the symbolic life in some form is a prerequisite for health” and helps one to transcend neurosis (p.117). He explained,

For instance, many anxiety symptoms have as their archetypal context the hero’s fight with the dragon, or perhaps the rites of initiation. Many symptoms of frustration or resentment are a reenactment of Job’s archetypal encounter with God. (p. 115)

Several archetypes are especially engaging at mid-life, although the possibilities are unlimited and individuals will relate to whichever ones are relevant to their personal story (Singer, 1994). Among those often found in the dreams of people at mid-life is the *divine child*, whose presence signals inchoate areas in the psyche that have potential for growth. The *puer aeternus* and *puella aeterna*, respectively masculine and feminine figures of eternal youth, can symbolize attachment to one’s youth or represent creative potential, spontaneity, or a willingness to chart a new course without undue restraint. The *senex*, meaning old or aged, represents prudent action and preservation of tradition. At its best, this archetype is expressed as mature wisdom; at its worst, as orthodoxy. The *trickster* helps one to keep a sense of humor about life

and oneself. It counteracts ego-inflation and points to synchronicity in life (Singer, 1994).

Jung launched new thinking about the later stages of life in saying that the potential for adult psychological development is significant throughout life and that it is driven psychically. Jung's model was revolutionary in its time, and today remains an influential theory worthy of empirical investigation (Vaillant, 1997).

Jungian theory's greatest value may be its complement to adult development theories that emphasize ego-mastery and adaptation as the *sine qua non* of maturity. Jung's ideas bring a balance to these models by making credible more holistic ways for adults to grow and be (Staude, 1981). Jungian theory provides a softer lens through which to view adult development because a broader range of behaviors is considered part of healthy growth.

Critics of Jung complain that his theory is applicable only to highly introverted individuals who are inclined naturally toward self-reflection, and that Jung's model is limited because it views development in a social vacuum. Moreover, they contend that Jung's theory is too derivative of his own personal experience (Staude, 1981). Jung's memoir supports their case: his own subjective, inner life was his primary reality, not the external world of day-to-day activity (Jung, 1963).

However, Jung was a scientist, and, presumably, he would defend himself on the grounds that his ideas emerged from years spent observing

adult growth in his patients, himself, and others. He would likely challenge his successors to test the soundness of his model through their own research. The next section of this literature review is a discussion of such work.

Mid-life Development Literature and Jungian Theory

This section discusses research relating to key principles of Jung's theory, including studies that both support and question his ideas. Some of the researchers discussed here aimed intentionally to test Jung's theory empirically, while others investigated Jungian-inspired concepts without such stated purpose. It is a testament to Jung's theorizing abilities that using his model as a framework to sort research on mid-life appears not to neglect any major segment of the literature, although there is some bias toward studies that focus on intrapsychic processes versus those concerned with social adaptation. The reviewed research is organized according to what it says about the following hypothesized changes in the mid-life adult: balancing of the male-female polarity; existence of the mid-life crisis; psychic restructuring, including breakdown of the persona and increased introversion; and the role of archetypes.

Balancing the male-female polarity: Jung's idea that middle-aged men and women become more balanced on the male-female polarity relates most closely to what other researchers refer to as gender-role crossover or increased androgyny. The literature that examines the interaction of gender identity and

age is rich, with complex and contradictory findings. A brief summary of key studies and research reviews is provided here.

D. Levinson (1978; 1996) is the adult development theorist whose work relates most closely to Jung's. D. Levinson called Jung the father of adult development and said that his own research grew out of an intellectual tradition founded by Jung, Freud and Erikson. One sees Jung's influence in many aspects of D. Levinson's work, but especially in his discussion of archetypes and polarities. D. Levinson (1978; 1996) argued that integrating the masculine and feminine aspects of one's self is a central task of mid-life individuation for men and women. What is required is more than just adjusting the balance between these two sides: there must be a "qualitatively new integration of the two" by forming a changed relationship to the various archetypal figures that represent the masculine and feminine (1978, p.236).

In his biographical-interview study of forty-five men at mid-life, D. Levinson (1978) found that a reworking of the masculine/feminine polarity affects a man's relationship to women, allowing him to work more collaboratively with them and to form love relationships based less on projection. The integration of masculine and feminine also makes it easier for a man to become a more valuable mentor for both men and women, a role that D. Levinson believed is important to healthy adult development. D. Levinson concluded that the men he studied all struggled with this polarity, often with mixed success.

When he later studied forty-five women, D. Levinson remarked, "I see, too, how strong are the barriers that separate men from women, and the feminine from the masculine within the self" (1996, p. xiii). In this study, D. Levinson viewed adult development from a gender perspective; he grouped study participants according to gender-related roles and developed the concept of gender splitting, which refers to a "sharp division between feminine and masculine that permeates every aspect of human life" (p. 6). Of particular importance was the split between the domestic sphere and the public, occupational sphere.

D. Levinson reached a fairly straightforward conclusion that mid-life men need to develop their feminine selves more fully. However, for women the situation was more complicated. D. Levinson described the psychological tension experienced by the women he studied--those in traditional homemaker roles and those employed outside the home--between the inner, archetypal feminine figures of the Traditional Homemaker and the Anti-Traditional Homemaker.⁶ Not only did women struggle to increase their identification with the masculine archetype, they also wrestled with two competing feminine archetypes, each with its own positive and negative aspects. D. Levinson acknowledged that these tensions may have been particularly acute in the women he studied because of the gender revolution occurring in the late seventies and early eighties, the period when his research was conducted.

Neugarten and Gutmann's (1964) use of projective techniques to study age-sex roles in the family is considered a seminal study in the area of gender and adult development. They demonstrated a linear relationship between increased age and androgyny, concluding that "women, as they age, seem to become more tolerant of their own aggressive, egocentric impulses; whereas men, as they age, of their own nurturant and affiliative impulses" (p. 89). In a later work, Gutmann (1987) found continued support for this earlier finding that people develop, what he termed, "sexual bimodality" as they age.

Parker and Aldwin (1997) reviewed literature on gender identity spanning the period between 1955 to 1992 and found a tangle of inconsistent results. They reasoned that the seeming confusion results from two primary sources. First, is the variation in measures using personality- or values-based tests. They defined personality-based measures as instruments that use self-attributions of traits differentially associated with men and women, and values-based measures as those that assess goals, interests, motivation and gender performance. Since gender identity is not a single concept, various measures reflect different gender aspects and yield different results.

Second, Parker and Aldwin revealed a confound between age, period, and cohort effects. Studies vary considerably by age of the groups investigated and time period when they were conducted. Given the massive social revolution in gender roles during the last thirty years, it is hard to discern the effects of social change versus development.

In their review, Parker and Aldwin summarized eleven cross-sectional and longitudinal studies on changes in gender identity that used personality-based measures. They found a curvilinear relationship between age and gender identity, with each sex exhibiting an increase in the opposite gender identity from very early adulthood to early mid-life, with a plateau or slight decrease thereafter. The general trend was for an increase in same-gender identity throughout adulthood. However, their review of eight values-based studies, whose measures included the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), showed that the clearest pattern for women was an increasingly masculine values-orientation from early to late adulthood. For men, there was a decrease in masculine concerns and an increase in feminine concerns over the adult years.

An additional explanation for the differences in gender research discussed by Parker and Aldwin may be found in Lachman's (1989) review of the literature on stability and change in personality. She noted considerable stability in studies of five major personality traits using conventional rating questionnaires. However, when intrapsychic variables, such as motives, defenses, and self-concept, were measured using more open-ended measures and projective techniques, there was a greater degree of change. In addition, stability was most evident in short-term studies using questionnaires, whereas change was demonstrated in longer-term studies using open-ended measures. Commenting on this work, Franz (1997), said, "It may be that projective tests

are more sensitive to nuances of change than measures requiring conscious averaging and evaluation of one's characteristics" (p. 45).

Two key longitudinal studies of adult development, which used multiple projective and rating-type measures, suggest that men and women become more androgynous with age. Based on his study of 105 men and women from college years through mid-life, Heath (1994) developed a model for adult maturity that correlates increased androgyny with maturity. While Heath doesn't focus on specific life stages, he understands androgyny and maturity to be progressive with age. Heath found the women's movement to be an important explanatory variable for this change, but speculated that other psychological forces are also at play in this shift of gender identity. In the Grant study, Vaillant (1977) followed approximately 200 college-aged men through old-age. In writing about them in their middle years, Vaillant, echoing Jung, described how male and female physiques change so that each one begins to resemble younger versions of the other. He illustrated the concomitant psychological change toward androgyny by quoting a study participant who said, "My professional work still means much, but doesn't dominate as it used to. Our farm, our children's lives and ideas capture my mind more than the mechanics of medicine" (p. 233.)

With the stated goal of testing Jung's theory about the anima-animus shift at mid-life, and wanting to advance Gutmann's (1987) work, James and Lewkowicz (1997) used the TAT to compare cohorts of younger and older

middle-aged men and women during a twelve-year period to determine whether there is a cross-over in affiliative- and power-related concerns. The women demonstrated the expected increase in a concern with power, influence, and impact. The pattern for men was less clear: the younger male cohort had higher affiliative needs compared to the older male cohort; however, within all cohorts there was an increased need for affiliation over time. Overall, they found that age cohort was more predictive of this change than family life stage.

Based on the results of their own research and a literature review, James and Lewkowitz concluded that "...we can draw few robust conclusions except the obvious one--that the crossover phenomenon is more complicated than currently understood" (1997, p. 128). Doubtless, they speak for other researchers in acknowledging the daunting challenge of understanding the interplay of gender, identity, and age. For the purposes of this study, it is useful to note that the literature reveals ongoing interest in and, at least, partial support for Jung's theory about gender change. And when projective measures are used, the results are even stronger--an approach with which Jung would surely agree.

The mid-life "crisis:" Although he didn't use the term, *crisis* is the right word to describe Jung's personal experience of mid-life; in fact, some students of Jung's life have deemed his mid-life experience a psychotic breakdown

(Staude, 1981). If one defines crisis as Webster does--an emotionally significant event or radical change of status in a person's life--then the term also fits Jung's description of what mid-life presents for others. The field of adult development, however, is divided about whether mid-life inevitably involves a crisis.

Jaques (1965) coined the term *mid-life crisis* in his study of highly creative men at mid-life. Jaques concluded that the major developmental challenge of middle age is a successful psychological confrontation with the prospect of one's death. He argued that coming to terms with the limitations of one's life and abilities can free a person to transform the "hot-from-the-fire" creativity of the twenties to the "sculpted" or mature creativity of the thirties and beyond. Jaques described the mid-life crisis as a depressive experience in contrast to the crisis of adolescence, which is a paranoid-schizoid one. At mid-life, the predominant symptom is depression or its defenses: mania, hypochondriasis, obsessional mechanisms, superficiality, and character deterioration (Jaques, 1965).

Gould (1972) used cross-sectional data from clinical and non-clinical populations of men and women to arrive at his phases-of-life model. Sounding much like Jung and Jaques, Gould described the mid-life decade as a time when "we are more frightened," and feel that, "whatever we do must be done now" (p. 217). Gould said that to achieve an adult sense of freedom we must "pass through periods of passivity, rage, depression and despair as we

experience the repugnance of death, the hoax of life and the evil within and around us" (p. 218).

Erikson (1980) used the term crisis in his model of adult development; yet, he meant a tension between two psychological states rather than what is commonly understood as a crisis. According to Erikson, adults at mid-life face the crisis of generativity versus stagnation. The central achievement of the generative stage is the direction of one's creativity and energy in a way that produces a satisfying legacy. Emotional impoverishment and self-indulgence can result when mid-life adults cannot express their talents in meaningful ways.

D. Levinson (1978; 1996) regarded the mid-life period as one in a series of alternating stable (structure building) periods and transitional (structure changing) periods that occur during the adult years. As a person enters mid-life, he or she begins to call into question the life structure of the early adult years, considers possibilities for a new self and a new life, and makes changes that lead to the next stable period. According to D. Levinson, the questions one asks at mid-life are: What have I done with my life? What do I really get from and give to my family, friends, work, and community? What is it I truly value for myself and others? D. Levinson said that during any transition, but especially in the mid-life transition, "the neglected parts of the self more urgently seek expression and stimulate the modification of the exiting structure" (1978, p. 61).

During the initial transition phase, which D. Levinson says lasts from roughly ages forty to forty-five, one is in the phase of questioning and considering alternatives. After forty-five, a person must make choices about priorities and come to terms with the inevitable compromises that settling into a new life structure entails. According to D. Levinson, the life structure that emerges for men in the middle forties “varies greatly in its satisfactoriness, that is, its suitability for the self and its workability in the world” (1978, p.61). Some people lack the internal and external resources to make the changes required to allow themselves to live fully at this stage of life. They may be able to create a life structure that conforms to social expectations, but leaves the inner self unfulfilled.

D. Levinson found that for the great majority of the men he studied the mid-life period “evokes tumultuous struggles within the self and with the external world” (p. 199). He described the mid-life transition for these men as:

...a moderate or severe crisis. Every aspect of their lives comes into question, and they are horrified by much that is revealed. They are full of recriminations against themselves and others. They cannot go on as before, but need time to choose a new path or modify the old one. Because a man in this crisis is often somewhat irrational, others may regard him as ‘upset’ or ‘sick.’
(p. 199)

D. Levinson contended that disowned aspects of the self begin to need attention. The man “hears voices of an identity prematurely rejected,” and longs to live out aspects of his life that were neglected to become the person he is today (p. 200).

D. Levinson's research revealed that men took several alternative pathways through the crisis. Some men were able to advance within their existing life structure while others declined, a third group broke out to build a new life structure, a fourth group's advancement evolved a new life structure, while the last group was not able to achieve stability in an existing or new structure. Modifications to the life structure were in the realm of career, marriage, or dreams for one's future.

D. Levinson's (1996) study of women produced similar results. Mid-life for women was characterized by emotional trauma and struggle. Some women found themselves forced to accept unwelcome change, while others sought change but didn't know how to make desired transitions. Of one study participant D. Levinson says,

Nora's dream depicts the sadness, anger, and confusion so common in the Mid-Life Transition. She is moving from one 'department,' that is, era, to another. The new place is dark and unfamiliar. It is hard to see the new landscape. Her old skills seem less useful and relevant. People want help but they don't say what they want, and she has trouble knowing what it is. She doesn't know what she has to offer them. She feels lost--and angry at having to move." p. (175)

Like the men he studied, D. Levinson found that mid-life women attempted both to achieve greater satisfaction within existing life structures and to break out into new ones in marriage, career, and personal life. Again, however, the story for women was more complicated. For homemakers, as their children left home, professional opportunity became important to them

for the first time. For career women, professional advancement gained increased importance as they attempted to realize their full potential. Yet, women found that bias against their presence in the workforce created additional obstacles not faced by men. One "career woman" participant said, "When you're younger and you're discriminated against you keep wondering, 'Maybe it's me, maybe I'm really inadequate.' Now it just infuriates me. I'm finding it very difficult to find a position at my level, and I think discrimination is the reason" (1996, p. 380).

Farrell and Rosenberg (1981) used epidemiological evidence on men to demonstrate that middle age is characterized by personal disorganization ranging from neurosis to psychosis, increased alcoholism, low marital satisfaction, and psychosomatic illness. They showed that peptic ulcers, hypertension, and heart disease are most often diagnosed in middle-aged patients.

On the other side of the debate, Vaillant (1977) said,

Certainly there is nothing magical about a given year; Elliott Jacques's [sic] thirty-seven, Gail Sheehy's "Catch 30," Daniel Levinson's forty-to-forty-two definitions of middle life crisis are as arbitrary as suggesting that adolescent crises occur at sixteen. (p. 223)

He claimed that movement through the life-cycle necessitates growth and change; but "crisis is the exception, not the rule" (p. 223). Vaillant found divorce, job changes and depression in roughly equal frequency throughout the life cycle of his male study participants. However, he commented, "I do

not mean to convey that the decade of the forties is without problems....middle-aged men, like adolescents, often do experience pervading depression" (p. 224)⁷

Similarly, other researchers dispute the idea that psychological upheaval is associated universally with mid-life. In a questionnaire study of a large sample of men, Costa and McCrae (1980) found no evidence that psychological disturbance was more prevalent at mid-life than at other periods. Neugarten and Datan (1974) argued that the normal life events of middle age do not in themselves constitute emergencies for most people. They contend that middle age is not a particularly stressful period and refute the view that psychiatric illness peaks during mid-life. They refer to many studies that report high levels of life satisfaction among the middle-aged. Neugarten and Datan concluded that those who progress through the adult life course in a normal, expectable way are able to anticipate and predict the life course, and, thus, avoid the crisis experience.

Stevens-Long (1979) suggested several explanations for the different stands by researchers on the existence of the mid-life crisis. Using a social and cultural lens, she suggested that cohort differences may explain some different views about mid-life. On methodological grounds, she argued that in-depth case research conducted by clinicians is more likely to reveal emotional disturbance than studies based on self-report questionnaires to which respondents may give socially acceptable answers. Furthermore, she suggested

that the professional identity group memberships of these researchers--whom she categorizes as psychiatrists versus social scientists--may affect what they find and how they interpret their findings.

In considering possible explanations, Stevens-Long (1979) argued that the most plausible one focuses on the operational definition of the word *crisis*. She says, "The research data on life satisfaction are not directly related to the issue of crisis. Crisis need not be experienced as negative" (p. 263.) Thus, although people at mid-life report emotional disturbance, they may have the emotional and psychological wherewithal to weather this psychic upheaval. Stevens-Long contended that a person can be both depressed and satisfied.⁸ Thus, she concluded, what one researcher might code as life dissatisfaction another may code as questioning or overcoming self-deception and illusion.⁹

Psychic Restructuring: In Jung's framework, at the root of the mid-life crisis is a psychic restructuring. This internal reordering, created by the breakdown of the persona, confrontation with the shadow, and the emergence of the Self, increases introversion and decreases concern with social identity and approval. Although other theorists use different conceptual models for interpreting human behavior, they describe phenomena similar to what Jung discussed.

In her review of a collection of studies on personality in middle and late life, Neugarten (1964) found a trend toward increased introspection and

reduction in social interactions. She described the “increased saliency of the inner life, or what may be called the increased interiority of personality with age” (p. 193). She concluded that this intrapsychic change is both intrinsic and responsive to social conditions, but placed greater emphasis on the purely developmental aspects over the environmental effects.

Vaillant (1977) said of Grant study participants at mid-life, “... they are confronted by instinctual reawakening and...they are more honestly able to acknowledge their own pain” (p. 222). At mid-life, the Grant study men “put aside the preconceptions and the narrow establishment of their thirties” (p. 222). Vaillant described men, all study participants since their college years, who could only at mid-life admit their mother’s suicide, or break out of their “gray flannel straitjackets,” or acknowledge hatred for their father or mother. According to Vaillant, a rebirth experience around age forty is not uncommon.

In his early forties one man took up underwater archaeology and deep sea diving in the Mediterranean. Another man built a dramatic, shamelessly exhibitionistic house. A third man, who from his projective tests at twenty-four was seen to possess an inner life like ‘some Brazilian jungle spilling out onto a North Dakota plain,’ was at fifty finally able to let that Brazilian jungle emerge into his conscious life.... (1977, p. 220)

Comparing changes in values expressed by Grant study men between ages forty-one and fifty-five, Vaillant found the older men less concerned with maintaining good public relations, having a wide range of acquaintances, establishing new contacts, or acquiring new information relevant to their professions.

Gould's (1978) study of middle-aged adults led him to conclude that at the end of the mid-life decade: "...the life of inner directedness finally prevails," and "...from it we derive the meaning of our lives" (pp. 310-318). The struggle that leads to this achievement is what Gould described as the development of an adult consciousness, as opposed to a childhood consciousness. To achieve this transformation, Gould says one must find release from the grip of childhood demonic images by confronting them head-on. Gould described the paradox of the mid-life decade as a time when adults grow into their childlike selves through greater expression of playfulness, spontaneity, and unpredictability, while simultaneously disregarding childhood strictures that forced them into limited conceptions of ourselves.

Helson (1997), writing about the self at mid-life, said, "Because artists have the talent to express subtle and only partly conscious phenomena, some of the relatively unselfconscious genres of art may be a good place to find evidence of what Jung called the individuation process" (p. 33). She cited Maduro's (1974) study of middle-aged artists in which he found that cognitive processes of the most creative older artists were freer and their egos more permeable than those of less creative, younger artists. She argued that some of the best books for children were written by mid-life adults who turned from other occupations to write fantasy as an expression of the unconscious. As examples, Helson cited *The Hobbit*, written by the linguist J. R. R. Tolkien at age forty-five; *The Wizard of Oz*, written by Frank Baum, a forty-three-year-old

retired salesman; and the classic fantasies of E. Nesbitt, which she wrote in her forties (Helson, 1997, 1984).

Archetypes: D. Levinson (1978; 1996) is the only prominent adult development researcher who addressed directly the role of archetypes; his writing on this topic is summarized below. However, Hillman (1996), a theorist who would certainly balk at being included in the group of developmental theorists, is mentioned also because his thinking takes this field to its edge and, perhaps, back to its source.

D. Levinson (1978;1996) identified four polarities that adults must integrate to complete the mid-life transition successfully: Young/Old; Destruction/Creation; Attachment/Separateness; and Masculine/Feminine. He said these polarities have their sources in the self and society; in other words, in the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious.

D. Levinson considered the Young/Old polarity to be the most critical at middle age. He referred not to a chronological state, but to the symbolic meaning of "young" and "old," and to what Jung termed the *Puer* archetype of being young and the *Senex*, archetype of being old. Each archetype has its advantages and disadvantages. Being young is associated with verve, possibilities, and growth, as well as with fragility, inexperience, and lack of development. Being old is associated with wisdom, power, and accomplishment, as well as senility, impotence, and irrelevance. According to

D. Levinson, the major task of mid-life development is to confront and embrace the old and young aspects within one's self and seek new ways of being, which inevitably involves facing one's mortality and the legacy of one's life.

Regarding the Creation/Destruction polarity, D. Levinson says that the mid-life adult can release creative potential by acknowledging his or her destructive capacities.¹⁰ The mid-life challenge of integrating the Attachment/Separateness polarity is to find a better balance between the needs of the Self and the needs of society. Finally, the integration of the Masculine/Feminine polarity, as discussed above, allows men and women to give greater expression to their full range of capabilities and feelings (D. Levinson, 1978;1996).

Hillman (1996), credited with developing post-Jungian archetypal psychology, eschewed the language of development and suggested, "We need a fresh way of looking at the importance of our lives" (p. 33). Hillman analyzed the life stories of several famous people, seeking inspiration for the ordinary in the bold-relief of these extraordinary lives. Hillman challenged the explanatory power of early childhood experiences to reveal the meanings and motives of human behavior. He argued that such interpretations demean the essence of a life, which, for Hillman, transcends the traditional influences of "nature" or "nurture." An open-systems thinker, Hillman claimed, "We are ecological from day one" (p. 87).

Inspired by Plato, Hillman espoused his “acorn theory,” proposing that each life is formed by a particular image that calls it to its destiny. Just as the imprint for the oak exists in the acorn, Hillman believed that one’s character is innate, needing only to be revealed, not developed. Uncovering one’s soul-essence, according to Hillman, doesn’t happen in the conventional ways our society encourages for “growing up.” Instead, Hillman argued, people need to “grow down” into themselves: “Until our culture recognizes the legitimacy of growing down, each person in the culture struggles blindly to make sense of the darkenings and despairings that the soul requires to deepen into life” (p. 43).

Conclusion: Although it has been more than fifty years since Jung wrote about mid-life, it is said that “mid-life is the last uncharted territory of the life course” (Brim, 1992, p. 171). Scholarship on childhood and old age has more studies, while research on mid-life has fewer. There may be practical explanations for this neglect. School and retirement provide relatively defined demarcations for the first and last life stages, but the middle is less easy to define. And researchers have fairly easy access to children and the elderly, while working adults are more challenging study participants (Lachman and James, 1997).

Yet, deeper issues may underlie this inattention. By its very nature, the middle of life is a both/and phenomenon, not an either/or state. It is an in-

between time. It is a time of looking forwards and backwards. It is a time of yes and no, start and stop. Perhaps the only clear statement to be made about mid-life is that it's murky. Some researchers may shy away from the no-easy-answers territory of mid-life, and from their own mid-life struggles.

It appears that Jung's theory has provided important heuristic value to the research challenge of understanding the middle years. Although some of its key propositions and concepts have been difficult to test, considerable evidence exists to support Jung's general thesis (Lachman and James, 1997; Helson, 1997; D. Levinson, 1978;1996). Helson (1997) argued that more specific theories are needed to document the particular meanings of middle age for various subgroups in society and for different cohorts. She says that general theories have a wide bandwidth, but they cannot give a close fit to any particular individual or group. Yet, Helson argued, generalist theories, such as Jung's, are not "as wrong as specific theories in portraying the middle age of individuals under other particular conditions" (1997, p. 36). Clearly, there is opportunity for researchers to know more about the universalities and the particularities of the experience of being middle-aged, and Jung's framework is a viable map to guide the inquiry.

CHAPTER V.

EMBEDDED INTERGROUP RELATIONS THEORY

Embedded intergroup relations theory uses a group-level analysis to understand interactions between individuals and groups within a system. According to this theoretical perspective, individuals' cognitions, affect, and behavior are understood, in part, as a function of their identity- and organizational-group memberships (Alderfer, 1987; Alderfer & Smith, 1982). To explain individual or interpersonal behavior from the perspective of this theory, one examines the group memberships of the parties involved and the relationship among these groups in the broader social context. Thus, a person's behavior is understood to be shaped by the collective social processes of the groups to which she or he belongs.

One can understand this theory best by examining its two key components: embeddedness and intergroup relations. Alderfer and Smith (1982), drawing on several decades of scholarly research on intergroup relations, identified several properties of intergroup relations that apply regardless of the particular group or setting. These were:

1. Group boundaries: The physical and psychological boundaries of a group determine membership and the nature of transactions between group members and outsiders (boundary permeability).

2. Power differences: Groups have varying degrees of access to resources. Power discrepancies affect the ease with which groups relate to each other.
3. Affective patterns: The degree to which group members associate positive feelings with their own group and project negative feelings on to other groups affects how groups relate.
4. Cognitive formations: Power differences and affective patterns influence how group members perceive and explain phenomena and cause groups to develop their own language or reference points.
5. The behavior of group leaders and group representatives is a reflection of the above properties of their group; their behavior can also shape these dimensions of group functioning.

In this theory, the idea of “embeddedness” means that subgroups exist inside groups and determine relations between groups. The status of a particular group in a particular setting is determined, in part, by the status of that group in the larger system that surrounds the setting. Such positioning in the suprasystem determines the group’s relationship, positively or negatively, with other groups in the system. And the experience of individual group members is affected by the status of their group in the system and the larger environment in which their system resides.

In organizations, there are two sets of groups to be considered: identity groups and organizational groups. According to Alderfer (1987),

an identity group may be thought of as a group whose members share some common biological characteristic (such as gender), have participated in equivalent historical experiences (such as migration), currently are subjected to similar forces (such as unemployment), and as a result have consonant world views. (p. 204)

an organizational group may be conceived of as one whose members share (approximately) common organizational positions, participate in equivalent work experiences, and, as a consequence, have consonant organizational views. (p. 204)

Identity group membership and organizational group membership are often highly correlated. For instance, corporate executives are most often white men. Although male and female executives have organizational membership in common, differences in the status of their gender within the corporation and in the larger social system affect how executive men and women relate to each other and how they experience themselves in the organization. Because white men are in the majority, they can view themselves and are viewed by others as just “executives.” However, for women at the top of organizations, their gender identity has as much significance as their organizational group--they are “women executives.”

Embedded intergroup relations theory also takes account of the unconscious ways in which the “dynamics of a system tend to reflect processes in the suprasystem and in its subsystems” (Alderfer, 1987, p. 210). This phenomenon is termed “parallel process,” and it is analogous to the transference/countertransference that can occur between a patient and a therapist. Parallel process explains the way in which systems tend to “infect” one another, so that one part of a system unconsciously begins to manifest the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of another part of the system. This process can occur at the individual- or group-level, where members or whole groups become infected.

An application of embedded intergroup relations theory can be made to the process of conducting research (Kram, 1988). In this instance, the relationship between researcher and client (and between the researcher and the

data) can be understood by considering the groups represented by each of the parties in the research process. Embedded intergroup relations theory suggests that the relationship of the various research participants will be influenced by the relations in the larger social context of the groups represented by the participants.

When conducting a study from an intergroup perspective, a researcher regards data about individuals as reflective of their group memberships and the condition of those groups in the relevant environments. In addition, the researcher acknowledges the influence of his or her own group memberships when interacting with others and analyzing data (Alderfer, 1987; Berg & Smith, 1988; Kram, 1988).

CHAPTER VI.

METHODS

Participants

Identification, Selection, and Recruitment

In designing the study, I decided to include four male and four female executives, between the ages of forty and fifty, who had completed the three phases of NewLeader (data collection, insight, and consolidation/planning) during the period from January 1996 to August 1997. (See Appendix A for a description of the NewLeader program). I designated these criteria to:

1. have a reasonable number of NewLeader participants from which to draw the sample;
2. provide a comparison between the experience of men and women;
3. have a focus on leaders who are in their middle years;
4. ensure that the participants have relatively ready access to their memory of the NewLeader experience.

In addition, to avoid the conflict of a dual relationship, I eliminated from consideration anyone who had worked with me in my role as a NewLeader consultant. And to keep travel costs low, I included only people

from the Mid-Atlantic region, where I live, and the Midwest, where I travel regularly for business.

Ten clients of Leadership Development Firm (LDF), which is the firm that provides NewLeader, met these criteria: eight men and two women. I selected randomly four men to be invited to participate. By adjusting the criterion on age to 54 and the recency of participation to 1993, I was able to add two more women to the group, bringing the total to four.

The LDF consultants who had worked with these clients agreed to invite them to participate in the study, with one exception. One consultant was hesitant to include one of the women because he had concerns about how participation would affect her emotional state. We agreed to postpone the decision about inviting her for a few months, leaving me initially with three women to invite.

The LDF consultants decided who would be best among them to contact each client, and then each consultant telephoned his or her client to extend the invitation. In that initial phone call, the consultant described the study and asked the client to participate in two, two-and-a-half-hour interview sessions with me. The consultant also discussed how the client's confidentiality would be protected in the study. Based on this initial phone call three men and three women agreed to participate, although two women stipulated that they wanted to discuss with me my plans for protecting their confidentiality before making a final decision. One man agreed to think about the invitation, saying

that he was interested in participating but hesitant about committing because of a heavy travel schedule. He phoned back in two weeks and declined participation. I selected another man at random from the pool remaining, and he accepted the invitation to join the study.

One of the women who agreed initially to participate dropped out two weeks before her scheduled interview, saying that she needed a break from discussing anything work-related because she had just retired from her position. She believed that participating in the study interviews would stir up her feelings about work and she didn't want that to happen. Another woman, age fifty-five, who had not been considered earlier because of her age, was included. The woman about whom the consultant had initial hesitation was invited in the end to participate. Thus, the final total of participants in the study was four women and four men.

I telephoned each of the eight participants to introduce myself and discuss the purpose and procedures of the study. In particular, I talked about what would be required of them as participants. People seemed interested in the project and pleased about being included. The women who were cautious about the matter of confidentiality explained their two-fold hesitation: (1) their visibility as senior executive women made them fearful of being identified, and (2) their previous negative experiences with researchers caused them to be suspicious of researchers' promises. They agreed to join the study when I told them that they would have the right to approve the disguise I would create to

shield their identify and to sign-off on any extensive quotations of their words.

I agreed also to change anything in the document that they believed would hurt them.

Description

The eight men and women are all senior executives. The women range in age from thirty-seven to fifty-five; the men are between the ages of forty-two and fifty-one. All are white, non-Hispanic. Three members of the group have law degrees (two women; one man); three have MBA degrees (two men; one woman); one woman has a master's degree in human resources; one man has a bachelor's degree in business and a certificate from the Harvard Business School Advanced Management Training Program. All of the men are in their first marriages and have children. The structure of the men's marriages would be considered "traditional," with the husband as primary breadwinner and the wife as primary caretaker. One woman is divorced with no children; one woman is single with no children; two women are married with children, one in her second marriage. The husbands of the married women are employed full-time, both as professionals in their own businesses.

The participants were drawn from three companies, all of which have headquarters in the U.S. and operate globally (two in the Mid-Atlantic region and one in the Midwest). Two are consumer products companies and one provides consumer and business services. Two companies are held privately and one company is traded publicly.

Information about the individual participants is provided below, with their names changed and some identifying information disguised or excluded. To further protect their privacy, I have not associated them with any one company or described the specific nature of their position. It is my belief that knowing such information about them is not vital for a reader's understanding of this study. They are grouped by gender and in order of age, from youngest to oldest.

Men:

- Roger Lawson, age forty-two, is a senior vice president who has worked in many positions in his current organization during his 12 years of employment there, including one overseas assignment. In 1997, by mutual agreement between him and the company's CEO, he was removed from a position with a wide span of control and put in charge of a smaller department. This move, which occurred just prior to his entry into NewLeader, was meant to be a temporary assignment--to allow him to recover from personal and professional difficulties that had reached a crisis level--and an alternative to his leaving the company voluntarily. Recently, he was offered and accepted a new assignment as senior vice president with global responsibilities. He is married and the father of three children, ranging in age from 6 to 13. His wife participated in NewLeader by

giving feedback and meeting with the consultant. She was also interviewed for this study.

- Charles Allison, age fifty, graduated from the Naval Academy and went on to get a master's degree in engineering and an MBA. Chuck manages several small entrepreneurial businesses for a large corporation. He spent most of his career with this company, working in several locations in the United States and in Europe. Chuck is married and the father of two grown daughters. His wife and daughters contributed feedback for NewLeader. His wife also met with the consultants and was interviewed for this study. His daughter received career counseling from one of the NewLeader consultants.
- Ted Marshall is a fifty-year-old senior vice president who has worked with the same company since graduating from law school in his early twenties. He majored in English as an undergraduate at an Ivy League school. He is married and the father of two boys, one who is in college and another who is a high-school student. His wife and sons gave feedback in the NewLeader process and his wife participated in some of the consulting sessions.

- Andrew Bocca, age fifty-one, is the president of a small company that was recently spun off from its parent. Andy now reports to a board of directors that is independent of his former company. He worked for the larger company for twenty-five years, rising through its ranks in positions of increasing responsibility. He is the married father of a son and a daughter, both in their twenties. His wife, parents, brother, and a friend gave feedback for NewLeader. His wife was interviewed for this study.

Women:

- Jill Flynn, age thirty-seven, is vice president in a company where she has worked for twelve years. Jill went to work for this company after graduating from college and receiving her MBA degree; she has had no other employer. Jill has held several positions in the company, including an assignment in Europe. She worked for the current CEO of the organization before he assumed the top position and he has been her mentor for several years. Jill is single and considers adopting a child as a single parent. Her sister contributed feedback for NewLeader.
- Marcia Lacey, age forty-five, worked primarily as a corporate lawyer throughout her career and now holds the position of vice president

and general counsel in her corporation. Except for three years spent with a private law firm immediately following graduation from law school, she worked for this one corporation, now for a total of seventeen years. She is married and has two children: a daughter, age fourteen and a son, age six. Marcia serves on several corporate and community boards. Her husband provided feedback for NewLeader and was interviewed for this study.

- Kristin Holmes, age forty-seven, spent most of her career rising through the ranks to become senior vice president in the human resources department. One year ago, she achieved a career goal when she was given line responsibility as president of a small company division. Kristin holds a master's degree in personnel administration. This is her second marriage. She and her husband have two girls in grade school. Her husband, mother, and brother and four friends gave feedback to the NewLeader consultants, and her husband was interviewed for this study.
- Grace Lentz, age fifty-five, graduated first in her class from a large university and was first again when graduating from a prestigious private law school. She worked in a private law firm and then as legal counsel for a corporation before becoming chief administrative

officer and executive vice president for her current company. Grace was married for many years and divorced in 1993. She is very close to her parents and extended family, and supports several family members financially. Her parents, two brothers, and a sister provided feedback for NewLeader.

Data Collection

Instruments

I used semi-structured interviews to collect the data for this study (See Appendix B for the interview guides). The interview questions were primarily open-ended and designed to encourage respondents to share their thoughts and feelings freely. Likewise, I used sentence stems to encourage open-ended responses and, possibly, to tap the unconscious. Specifically for the purpose of accessing unconscious material, I used the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) published by the Harvard Psychological Clinic. For men, I used cards 1, 7BM, 10, 12BG, 14, 15, 17BM. For women, I used cards 1, 8GF, 10, 12F, 12BG, 15, 17BM.

I conducted two pilot interviews to test the questionnaires. The pilot participants were NewLeader clients with whom I had worked as an LDF consultant.

Interviews

I conducted the sixteen participant interviews during a six-month period, from March to August, 1998. Generally, the two interviews were scheduled about a month apart. All interviews were held on-site in the client's office or a nearby conference room, with the exception of two follow-up interviews that were conducted over the telephone.

At the start of each interview session, I again introduced myself and the study. I reviewed two written documents and asked each participant to sign them: One was a letter of informed consent for their participation in the study (Appendix C), and the other was a letter outlining how I would protect their identity in the publication of this material (Appendix D). I asked their permission to tape the interviews and to type their responses as they spoke. Everyone agreed to these procedures.¹¹

The first interview dealt primarily with the client's experience in NewLeader and the second interview focused on individuation and leadership. I chose this order for the content because I believed that answering questions about their NewLeader experience would be less threatening for the participants and, therefore, easier to do first. I used the TAT in the second half of the second interview, speculating that this would be the most threatening aspect of the procedure.

My prediction about the TAT was accurate. Other than appearing a bit challenged by a few thought-provoking questions, participants seemed to manage most of the interview material with relative comfort. However,

everyone seemed somewhat uneasy about the TAT. Participants joked about this being like the Rorschach test and questioned whether it would tell me how crazy they are. Most expressed interest in learning about these test results and I assured them they would.

In addition to interviewing study participants, I also interviewed the LDF consultants and the spouses of five participants (See Appendix E for the consultant interview guide and Appendix F for the spouse interview guide).

The consultant interviews were conducted over the telephone. I interviewed at least one consultant who had worked with each study participant, and in several cases I interviewed both consultants who worked with the client. The purpose of the interviews was to help familiarize me with the study participants and the consultants' views of the clients' issues. In addition, these interviews gave me the consultants' perspectives on their clients' development, which I could then compare with the clients' perspective on their own development.

The spouse interviews were also conducted over the telephone. I interviewed three out of four wives and both husbands. One man agreed to ask his wife to participate, but after two reminders he did not follow through on my request and I decided not to pursue the issue any further with him. The spouse interviews were intended as a data source about the spouses' experience with NewLeader and about their perspective on the study participants.

Archival Information

I read all of the written data collected on each client by the NewLeader consultants. This material included feedback from colleagues, family, and friends; leadership and personality assessment data; and biographical information provided by the client. I used this data as background information to enrich my understanding of the study participants as leaders and as people. Becoming familiar with this data also gave me a vantage point from which to understand the clients' reaction to the feedback they received. For instance, when one study participant cited gender bias in the feedback she received, I was able to review that feedback myself.

Data Analysis

Participant Interview Data:

To analyze the data, I used procedures outlined by Rossman and Rallis (1998) for analyzing qualitative research: (1) organizing the data; (2) becoming familiar with the data; (3) generating categories, themes, patterns; (4) coding the data; and (5) developing alternative explanations of the data. In sum, my process for analyzing the first data set--the interviews on NewLeader--was inductive. I used the participants' interview comments to identify themes; I

next organized these themes into more general categories; finally, I grouped the categories according to more abstract organizing questions.

To organize the data, I first had to clean up my notes from the interviews. I used my typed notes and the tape recordings in tandem to arrive at a relatively complete transcript for each interview. Working with the tapes and typed notes to create a transcript helped to familiarize me with the data.

I read and re-read the transcripts to deepen my understanding of the content. As I stared at the data, common themes and patterns emerged from interviewees' comments, which, of course, were shaped somewhat by my interview questions. Some themes emerged clearly from straightforward questions, such as "Describe your relationship with the consultants." Some themes were embedded within questions on other topics. For instance, I asked no direct questions about gender, except to follow up on gender-related topics when they were mentioned by study participants. Because women spoke about gender when responding to questions on other topics, gender became a theme in the analysis.

I then organized themes into categories, such as issues related to entry; impact on work relationships; nature of the process; the role of the data. I then grouped these categories according to key organizing questions that seemed to encompass them: What is it like to enter NewLeader? What is it like to go through NewLeader? What are the key elements of the process? What is the impact of NewLeader? What is NewLeader?

I followed a similar procedure, with some variation, for analyzing the second data set--the data on mid-life development. I began again by using tapes and typed notes to create clean transcripts for each interview. I then used the Behavioral Indicators of Mid-life Individuation and Lack of Individuation, which I had developed to operationalize Jung's theory on individuation (See Appendices G and H), as a framework for analyzing the data. I studied the data to find material that reflected these behavioral indicators or contradicted them. I also studied the data to determine other key themes that were not captured by the behavioral indicators framework but that were relevant to the topic, as indicated by the literature review.

TAT Data:

I created a transcript of the TAT data for each participant, again using the tapes and typed notes. These transcripts were analyzed by a clinical psychologist who identified key themes across the data from all eight TATs and who did a brief analysis of each individual TAT. Comparisons were made between the responses of men and women, with the interpreter being aware of the respondents' gender.

CHAPTER VII.
REPORT OF THE FINDINGS, PART 1.¹²
NEWLEADER FROM THE CLIENT'S PERSPECTIVE

What is it like to enter NewLeader?

Executives enter NewLeader in different ways and for different reasons. Some are invited to participate by their boss who recognizes their potential and wants to enhance it; some are encouraged to do it because they are perceived to be failing in their leadership; and some initiate the process themselves for their own enrichment or to deal with career difficulties. Some executives learn about NewLeader for the first time when they enter the process, while others may have previous knowledge of NewLeader before they get involved. Executives gain prior exposure by hearing colleagues who have been through NewLeader talk about their experience, by serving on feedback panels for colleagues who are participating in the process, and by meeting NewLeader consultants in other venues, such as serving on another company's board.

Executives' attitudes about beginning NewLeader vary, too; some are curious and oblivious to risk, while others feel cautious.

The findings of this study showed that how and why executives entered the process and their familiarity with it as they began have some relationship to their initial attitude toward the experience, but there did not appear to be any difference in overall impact of NewLeader related to the conditions of entry. Yet, what participants said about how they entered this process is important: their reports give insight into the inner experience of NewLeader clients as they begin the process and suggest how external factors can influence that beginning.

Andy's story illustrates important themes in the entry process. Andy had recently turned fifty, celebrated his twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, and completed his twenty-fifth year with the company. He decided that this was a time, as he described it, to "look at himself to see if there were ways to be more effective." He hadn't done anything for his professional development since attending a sixteen-week Harvard management program a decade ago. Andy knew about NewLeader from talking to several colleagues in the company who had been through it; he had also been interviewed to give feedback on some of them. He liked what he had heard about the program and thought the time was right for him. He decided to call Ken Burke, a NewLeader consultant whom he had met, to discuss signing on.

Andy said his open-minded attitude toward the NewLeader experience was a result of his being the one to initiate the process, and he contrasted his experience with others in the company who had felt some pressure to participate. He suggested that the NewLeader process was more difficult for them, although, ultimately beneficial. People around Andy were mixed in their response to his decision. Those who were unfamiliar with the process were, he said, “amazed that I would put myself through this. Many of them said they would never do this themselves.” In contrast, people in the company who regarded the program highly “thought it was a great idea that I was doing it.” His wife and children felt good about it, but his brother had concerns. Andy recalled that his brother “...wasn’t sure about what to say. He didn’t want to do anything that would compromise my career. I told him to say what is on your mind and don’t be guarded. I coached him [to be more open].”

At the outset, Andy looked at NewLeader as an opportunity to improve himself as a manager. He was about to take a new job, which meant he could use the process to prepare for his new assignment. NewLeader taught Andy about his management style, but ultimately he found that he gained “as much from it for personal relationships--with my wife and children and my brother.”

Andy didn’t recall having any fears going into NewLeader, except that he was concerned about what he might hear from senior management. He wondered how they would evaluate his performance and whether their views

would match his. He remembered, “The anxiousness was [that] I thought I had a pretty good sense of who I was. I didn’t seem to have major issues with people. But did the organization have a different perception of who I was and was I kidding myself all these years?”

Looking back, Andy thought the risk could have been “getting information I couldn’t deal with. That could have screwed me up mentally and put me back...I didn’t realize when I signed up for this how much into your mind and past [life] the process gets. I had heard about it, but I really didn’t understand it.” Andy speculated that if he had had a difficult childhood or a “dysfunctional family that I’d been hiding from all these years” the process could have been difficult. He knew someone to whom that happened: “They eventually recovered but it took them a while to do that. The person has had to deal with it more on the table as opposed to repressing it. It [NewLeader] has helped them understand what’s driving their behavior.”

Andy said that knowing Ken Burke beforehand gave him the trust necessary to move forward with NewLeader. He said, “I guess I trusted the process because I knew Ken and thought he was a very sensitive individual, so that made it a little easier.”

Themes related to entry

Andy’s account of his entry into NewLeader highlights these themes from the study findings:

- One, these executives were motivated to participate out of a desire for personal and professional growth and an interest in knowing how they are perceived in the organization;
- Two, most of them were not particularly conscious of fears in the beginning and they did not assess up front the potential risks of participating in NewLeader;
- Three, information about the powerful impact of the process did not register emotionally until people had some first-hand experience;
- Four, family members were often more cautious than the clients themselves;
- Five, having some prior contact or relationship with the consultants helped build trust at entry;
- Six, organizational dynamics affected entry;
- Seven, people entered NewLeader motivated to focus on their professional development, and yet found that personal development and changes in family relationships were unexpected benefits of the experience.

1. Motivation

When asked why she participated Grace said, "I was curious to see. I've been in the world of work for a long time and it had been a long time since I had gotten extensive feedback. I was hopeful that it might give me something I could improve, and it has." Chuck's boss had been through

NewLeader and he suggested that Chuck do it to become a better leader.

Chuck said his boss “didn’t describe it as a leadership intervention....It wasn’t like you’ve got a real problem, guy...It was billed as helping to improve the odds of going to the next level, which certainly appealed to my desire to advance.” The opportunity also appealed to Chuck because one of his strong personal values is trying to improve himself. He said, “If it was that kind of opportunity I thought I’d do it. Plus I thought it would be neat.” Marcia said she hoped “...to use this as a tool to be a better leader, a stronger leader and put things in priority.” For Kristin, it was a vote of confidence to be eligible to participate, and it seemed like a good thing to do. Jill said she had done a lot of work previously to understand the “what’s” of her behavior, but now she wanted to understand the “why’s” and how to get to the next level.

Unlike the other study participants, a crisis first motivated Roger to sign-on for NewLeader. He said,

Certainly what I was doing wasn’t working and I needed a different mode. My biggest motivation would be to figure out why I didn’t feel more engaged. Why did I think this was the crappiest place to be. I was working in an environment that was energy draining and I didn’t know what was going on. I couldn’t understand why the company was having the effect it was.

Ultimately, NewLeader took the form of personal development for Roger. He described it as a “time out,” an “experience in reflection,” and a chance to gain “clarity about who I am, what I’m good at, and how I should deploy myself.” Initially, however, it was knowing that he was fast headed for a crash that caused Roger to engage a NewLeader consultant.

2. Risk Assessment

Like Andy, most other participants recalled having little or no fear going into the process and few gave much thought to the potential risks. Kristin said, "I always go into things assuming the best or the good outweighs the risks. I'm sure I didn't [have concerns] because that's my approach....I'm sure I just said nothing bad will happen to me." Grace said, "I would say to start out with I didn't really have any fears as much as I was just curious to see how people perceived me. Also, I think I was probably over-confident. I wasn't smart enough to be scared." Chuck said he was far too busy to even think about risks. For Roger, "...maybe the biggest risk was allowing time to take place and not what do we need to get done this week and next week. I had to let the rope go on that."

3. Underestimation of the Impact

Andy knew from colleagues who had been through NewLeader that it was an emotionally challenging experience, but, upon reflection, he realized that that information didn't convey what was really in store for him. Other study participants spoke about being "informed" about what was involved without really understanding what it would mean to do this kind of emotional work. Only one of the study participants had participated in any kind of counseling or therapy, and their other career development experiences were lightweight by comparison. Grace said, "I remember being told many times by Ken and Kelly [NewLeader consultants] that it will be an emotional experience

and a lot of work. I knew I was supposed to feel trepidation, but I didn't feel much." Part way into the process, however, Grace "was shaken." Jill reported, "I didn't expect fully when we started the process that we would get to the level of long-held personal beliefs about myself. When I had to confront that, that was painful." Marcia was excited at her entry into the NewLeader process: "I've always kind of liked feedback sessions so I got excited....I used to love report cards. Yet, she found that, "It was a lot harder than I thought it would be...."

4. Family Skepticism

Like Andy's brother who worried about hurting Andy's career, other family members were skeptical about what the company's intentions might really be for engaging in this activity and concerned that their feedback might be used deviously. Although many family members, especially spouses, became more supportive of the process as they developed a relationship with the consultants, learned more, and saw beneficial results for their loved ones, initially some were cautious--more so than the clients themselves. According to Ted, knowing that NewLeader was associated with succession planning raised his wife's apprehension. Roger said that his wife didn't trust the NewLeader consultant at first because she didn't trust anyone associated with the company. She confirmed his statement in saying, "I was very apprehensive about the whole process because it was initiated by the company. I was concerned as to what their actual motives were." Chuck said his wife had

initial concerns that she might, as he described it, “say the wrong thing and it would hurt my career.” According to Grace, her family was “skeptical about why anybody would go through this” and “skeptical that it might be used against me.”

5. Relationship with Consultants

Feeling comfortable with Ken Burke helped Andy decide to initiate NewLeader. Several other study participants cited prior exposure to or a relationship with a NewLeader consultant as a key factor in easing their entry. As director for a corporate board, Marcia had interviewed Tim Holland to work with the company’s CEO. She remembered, “After interviewing several people, I felt most comfortable with Tim and the approach he took.” She then helped to bring Holland into her own company to work with others. About that process, Marcia said,

I got to know Tim...and developed great respect. I started to talk [to him] about some very serious issues I faced in my career and developed trust with him and asked him to assist me. After I worked with him as a counselor on some of these issues I said let’s do the whole NewLeader program.

Grace, too, learned about NewLeader while serving as director on another company’s corporate board, and she was instrumental in bringing it to her own organization. She said,

I had a lot of contact to decide whether we were going to hire the consultants so that the contact for getting me into the process was redundant. I suppose the fact that they seemed to be serious but warm, friendly people made me feel comfortable, as opposed to

if they had been stuffy people or frivolous people. The chemistry felt right.

Roger took the initiative to interview several executive coaching consultants suggested to him by someone in his company's human resources department. He was turned off by the style of the other consultants, but said of his first meeting with the NewLeader consultant,

Tim drilled me with some questions. That was an important meeting and I felt comfortable with him. He seemed to be approaching things from a different angle and I was curious about that. I just had a good sense that we were compatible and I could learn something from him and it was a different approach.

6. Organizational Dynamics

Ted's experience suggests that the organizational context in which NewLeader occurs can affect a person's entry and raises questions about the consequences of declining the "invitation" to participate. The CEO of Ted's company decided that all members of the senior team would be offered the chance to participate in NewLeader. Ted said,

I heard that it had been determined that we were going to do this and that it was voluntary and that someone would interview me about it and I had the option not to participate. I might have been told that it was connected to succession planning, but I didn't hear that. The focus was on helping you, to give you better tools to be a better executive. Part way through the process it was referred to and identified as part of succession planning, and I think that created a little tension and apprehension amongst the group....I think the fact that it was coincident with the succession issue was probably unfortunate, even though that's probably why we did it. It was an issue. Whether it was unfortunate, I'm not so sure. You could argue that with the

succession occurring so quickly thereafter that it was really valuable in terms of how effective you can be in your new role, whether it's higher, with someone else, or different. I don't think it should be billed as part of succession planning.

When asked if he could have declined to participate, Ted cited the example of someone who had: "So somebody had demonstrated you didn't have to be a part of it. But I was glad that I felt comfortable with the process because I would have hated to say, 'No, I don't want to do it.' I can't think of what an acceptable answer would be."

When she was vice president for human resources, Kristin was the company's liaison to NewLeader. She said that one of the best decisions she and the NewLeader consultant made was to offer the program to people who were performing well. According to Kristin, "We did some 'fix-it' people, but for every one we did three for whom we were making an investment." One difficulty she encountered is that some people didn't trust that they were in the "development" category; they wondered if they were really a "fix-it" and not being told the truth. In Kristin's company, "...NewLeader became the thing to do. NewLeader became a way of saying this is how we see that person and this is how they want to develop." When asked what would happen if someone declined this organizational vote of confidence, Kristin said,

I've had some postpone it for as much as two years. If you're in the high-potential column, turning it down would be a negative. People would say is there something we don't know that you're afraid we're going to find out. The choice thing is a fantasy, but the system of saying I had a choice may help when they get into the feedback.

Although Jill works in a different organization, her response to the invitation to participate in NewLeader sounds like what Kristin described. Jill had been encouraged by the vice president of human resources to meet with the NewLeader consultant; she resisted the idea initially because she interpreted the suggestion as a message that she needed to, in her words, “get fixed.” Upon reflection she said,

In reality I don't think that was the case, or maybe it was but it doesn't matter now....Eventually, I wanted to do the process on my own for myself. I had been in my job for probably a year. I had a sense that while it was going well enough, it wasn't going nearly as well as I wanted it to.

Grace entered NewLeader with the hope of influencing organizational dynamics and her relationship with the senior team, in addition to having goals for her own development. Because many members of the team were going through the process at the same time, Grace thought,

...this would be a way for me to bond with the newer members of the team with whom I'd had less work experience. Because we were all going through the same process at the same time, sharing notes and crying on each others' shoulders, it would give us something in common, which in fact it did.... It was a connection that you might not have otherwise. It was a leveling agent because all of us were having to deal with things; all of us had to work on things and admit that we were not perfect. Admitting your weakness, even in the abstract, makes people feel less distant from each other.

6. Personal Benefits

Andy's initial motivation to participate in NewLeader was to assess and improve his leadership. In reflecting on the actual outcome of the experience, he cited as many benefits in the personal realm of his life. Several other study participants reported similar career goals at entry and similar personal benefits as outcomes. Chuck said the experience, "had a profound effect on me, more so in my personal life than in my business life, although it had an effect on my business life." According to Jill, going into it she "had hopes that were all very business-oriented." However, as she went through the process, Jill reported that she understood her personal issues better than ever before and, as she said, "...my hopes became more about fulfilling those rather than what would happen back here specifically [at her job]." Grace found, "The really high point in some ways was my family's feedback....Because of the nature of the feedback process, it's made me feel--I always knew I had a good family--confident that the way I feel about it the other six people in the family feel too." Ted said, "I had a hard time separating business from life in general....the power I felt from the information was not limited to the walls of this building. It's given me a great deal of confidence with neighbors, friends, tennis buddies."

What is it like to go through NewLeader?

Study participants spoke uniformly about the power of this process and characterized it as emotional and intense. For some, this was one of the most emotionally engaging and, at times, draining experiences of their lives. They felt opened up and revealed, especially to themselves, in a way they had never been before. Andy said, it's like "digging deep inside of yourself." Chuck called it a "psychic circumcision. It's good for you, but it hurts like hell." For Grace, NewLeader was like "looking in the mirror the morning after." Jill reported, "There were times when it was almost physically painful."

Through the feedback, NewLeader clients hear the voices of a phalanx of people from their past and present, both fans and critics, lined up to speak their piece about the person. Hearing the consultants read aloud the words of family members, colleagues and friends touched the study participants deeply and triggered strong emotions of pain and joy. Even hearing their own words, spoken to them by the consultants, had impact. Ted said,

I think the feedback from myself about my personal feelings relative to my parents and myself was really quite emotional. That's kind of interesting because you're reading your own words. I don't remember being that emotional relaying them, but it certainly was emotional to read and hear them being read....

Sometimes the challenge was to confront lost opportunities, mistakes made, or damage done. Chuck felt, "A lot of disappointment in myself and sadness in some of what I heard and the loss of achievement in business and the loss of relationship in my family." At other times, the struggle was to recognize accomplishments and the positive impact one has had on people.

Marcia found that, "It's hard to have people speak so highly of you; that can be difficult."

In some instances, the emotion came when clients became aware of aspects of themselves or their relationships that they had never fully acknowledged or understood before. Kristin discovered that she didn't have an image of herself living beyond her children's high school graduation. This realization caught her off-guard emotionally and evoked tears that she had not anticipated: "Crying in front of two consultants was not what I had in mind when I went down there."

Men said they felt "uncovered" by the experience. Ted spoke about feeling "stripped down," "peeling back the onion," and "exposing your nerves." Andy said, "It's like your life is exposed to everything." Roger said, "You feel more exposed at the end of the day." Chuck, as cited above, likened the experience to the removal of his foreskin and to having "your persona bared totally and stripped of all veneers you've built up over time." He concluded that, "It's about discovering parts of yourself that you never would experience."

Women spoke in terms of gain and loss, or birth and death. Jill described it as "a little bit like losing a very good friend in the sense that you...may lose something, or give up something, or walk away from something that you have been comfortable with." Marcia said, "It was similar

to the birth of a child.” Kristin compared the experience to “raising a family or garden or anything else.”

For all, it was an emotional experience.

I found out at fifty years old that I can cry again; that’s pretty heavy stuff. (Ted)

The whole thing is a very emotional experience. (Andy)

I can remember crying at one point in that session. (Kristin)

For me, at times, it was very painful. (Jill)

The full range of emotions were worked through. (Chuck)

My mood did change. I did feel anger at some of the things, embarrassed at some of the things. (Marcia)

It’s a pretty intense session....It was intense....It’s kind of tough hearing all that stuff even though it’s true. (Roger)

This kind of feedback is hard work and likely to be emotionally draining. (Grace)

In particular, people had strong feelings when they reflected on what others said about them. Roger described feeling defensive about and humbled by some of the criticism he received. Andy reported his frustration in trying to understand what people were saying and his excitement to see that some people recognized his capabilities. Marcia was angry that people held certain views about which she had never before been told. Grace described her hurt in learning that people didn’t see her role as important. Kristin was touched by the tender comments of her husband.

For some, the intensity came from being the focus of attention for a sustained period of time. Study participants reported that having the consultants center all of their efforts and energy on understanding, supporting, and guiding them was a profound and, for some, a reparative experience. Some clients became known by another person in a way they had never done before--with intimacy and acceptance. With the consultants they could talk about anything and everything without fear of being hurt.

Ted said,

How often do you have the opportunity to sit down and have protracted time for this kind of discussion. And the chance to say can we talk about that more, that's not exactly what I wanted to say. Even in your personal life, my wife and I are very close, but there are some topics where she might yawn or go out the door, or say what's wrong with you. I mean, I downloaded a lot of stuff.

Marcia said,

You realize this is for me....Just having somebody asking the questions and taking the time. It's a funny thing, but I was the oldest in my family, well my older brother died, and I've always taken care of everything in my family. When I came here I was taking care of the [company] family. So, to have somebody just be there, that was a high point for myself.

Even though the experience was emotionally intense, the findings suggest that it was manageable. Study participants found that several factors about the design of the process helped them to cope constructively. Ted said that being allowed to ease into things helped him:

I felt pretty comfortable once people [the consultants] started asking me questions. Part of it had to do with the way that the process was constructed. You start with putting your toe in the water and before you know it you're swimming.

Chuck said that varying the kind of material presented kept him going:

Because they moved things around enough they didn't drag you down into this pit. It was 'let's go here and then let's look at this.' I never felt the depth of helplessness in the process. They manipulated me well and I don't mean in the negative sense....They let different parts of your brain work on things.

Jill reported that her trust and confidence in the consultants helped her to handle the intensity of the process and she described "the sort of small and large ways" in which they supported her: finding the Kleenex box for her, suggesting that they move from the table to comfortable chairs when the discussion was getting rough, asking how she was doing, sending her two books.

For Andy, being asked to work with the consultants to interpret the data was important:

They made *me* interpret the data. It was a participatory diagnostic. Ken and Sarah [NewLeader consultants] were walking through it together [with me].

Marcia echoed Andy's sentiments that the partnership with the consultants helped:

“I’m very private about personal things, but for some reason I thought an environment was created and I could talk about that very freely. It wasn’t a demanding thing, but it was just comfortable....The process was not intimidating and you felt this was going to be a great help to you and that we were working together to a common end.”

Kristin described how being encouraged to keep a balanced perspective helped her:

I think it’s pretty positive and, yet, you hang yourself up on the few negative things in there. One of the things the consultants do is keep reinforcing the positive. When you get an inch-and-a-half [thick stack of paper] of negative feedback that doesn’t feel so good. It was a real balanced picture so you try to work with it in a positive way.

For Grace, getting a second round of feedback was critical. More than any of the others, Grace was, in her words, “shaken” by the initial feedback because the message was ambiguous--neither she nor the consultants could interpret it clearly. She reported that it helped that the consultants were “being very warm and supportive,” yet she felt confused and out of control because, as she said, “it was hard for me to plan a course of conduct when I didn’t have a really good sense of what the issues were.” Getting a second round of feedback ultimately helped Grace:

When I read the feedback from the spotcheck [the second round of data collection] it was like a light bulb went off and I said this is what they meant by all that stuff. I put together a plan because I knew what people were trying to say to me. I felt more directed and much less frustrated.

What are the key elements of the process?

Study members' comments suggest that they found four elements of NewLeader to be essential to its effectiveness: the data; the design of the meetings; the consultants; and ongoing consultation. Participants believed that these components of the process enabled them to learn about themselves and begin to change attitudes and behaviors that interfered with their ability to lead constructively and live happily. When asked about various aspects of the experience and their reaction to them, study participants had very few criticisms to offer, although there were some mixed feelings about the data. Most said that they would place the least value on the battery of personality tests, relative to other types of feedback.

Data

NewLeader is a data-driven process, and the data appear to be important for several reasons. First, the participants in this study found that the volume and variety of data presented made the feedback credible. Chuck said, "The individual interviews in and of themselves, interview by interview, weren't startling. But put together, the weight was compelling." Ted described how the quantity and quality of the data caused him to pay attention to what was being communicated to him:

...to me the most important thing about the process was there was enough data coming from enough sources, collected in a very specific and scientific way; the information by definition was highly credible. Over the years, in modified assessment programs I was always able to discount what I thought was off.... This was totally different...the data was something I could waste no time questioning.

And, Ted argued, the way in which the data were organized mattered:

The data alone would not do it. The order of the feedback is important too....Bringing it together and ordering it, packaging it in a way that doesn't change it but gives it more meaning and makes it easier to see the relevance.

In the end, being presented with the actual words spoken by family, friends and colleagues is what truly gave heft and emotional power to the data. According to Marcia, reviewing these data was a different experience than she had had in other feedback sessions because "it's not like you had a chart to look at. You had comments."

That both positive and negative data were included was important to the study participants, although some said they had preferences for the bad news and others preferred the good. Roger was surprised to see the clarity and consistency around his strengths and weaknesses and was pleased that even his critics could articulate his strong points. For Kristin, hearing honest, constructive criticism was more helpful than hearing positive feedback, although she did feel boosted by the positive messages. She said,

I know what those positives say because that's what I heard my whole life. They were reinforcing and positive and made me feel good, but they were what you already knew. They didn't round out the picture...the low points really helped me grow.

Grace, too, was more interested in the criticism. She said,

The positive data was not particularly interesting to me, not that I don't love when people tell me I'm wonderful. It was very hard for me, despite being pushed to feel good about this. What I was interested in is the data that was not positive because I went into this to improve.

Ted, on the other hand, reported that "The power of the positive feedback for me was extremely valuable. That had a greater effect on my way of going around here than anything else could have or has had."

The study participants appreciated that this process was not just a "data dump," but instead was an active, joint venture between the client and consultants to explore the feedback and to make it meaningful. Several people spoke about the benefit of working with the consultants to understand the data, a process that usually ended in the clients achieving greater clarity about themselves and a better understanding of others' perceptions. Andy liked interpreting the data to gain an understanding of the causes of his behavior. He said, "In normal feedback you find out that certain things you do cause a problem and that you should change that behavior, but you never know why you do it."

Grace's experience was a notable exception. She reported,

My initial reaction to it was confusion because I couldn't understand what was being communicated. It made me feel out of control, which is not a state I like to be in.... I started out curious and interested and ended up exhausted and depressed, and very insecure because I couldn't figure out any patterns.

At first, Grace believed her colleagues were careless in their comments when being interviewed because they didn't take her seriously. After receiving the second round of feedback, Grace concluded this wasn't the case. She speculated that people had gotten more sophisticated in giving feedback because they had come to understand the process better.¹³ She suggested that NewLeader could be improved by having the consultants stress to interviewees the importance of being thoughtful about their feedback. She believed that because people like to answer interview questions, they may engage in speculation or hearsay just to have something to say.

Meeting Design

As described above, study participants liked that they received both positive and negative feedback and that the presentation of the material moved back and forth between the two. They also liked the mix of different sources and types of information: interview data from colleagues, interview data from family and friends, leadership assessments, and personality inventories.

Chuck spoke about how this approach aided his learning:

They came at it in so many different ways. No matter how your mind works there was a hook some place. When you get hooked, then your mind opens up. Here are your test results, they say this. Here is what your mother said, here is what your friends say. No matter what level your mind is at, and most of us work on several levels, it began to coalesce.

Others spoke about the sequence of the sessions. While these very action-oriented executives felt some frustration in having to work through the data before developing a plan, they seemed to appreciate the logic and flow of the design. Knowing that the end game was to achieve clarity and create a plan of action helped when these clients felt lost temporarily in attempting to make sense of the data. Roger spoke about “having enough feeling of where we were going” to enable him to be patient with the process. Chuck said that the process made “this mystery unfold and you say that makes sense.” Marcia said, “On the weaknesses, just having them down there and having a game plan of how I would deal with that. That was extremely helpful.”

Jill spoke about the benefits of having a structure that generated intensity and forced engagement. She contrasted the design of NewLeader sessions with her experience of seeing a counselor weekly. About the counseling she said,

I was seeing this person once a week, and I don't know if it was the quality of the counseling, the quality of the process, or my willingness to disclose or what. I just never felt like I was making any progress.

About the structure of NewLeader she said,

When I look at this process, one of the things that is very good about it is the intensity in the plunge. It's not something that you deal with an hour at a time or an hour a week. You get thrown into it.

The Consultants

Study participants had much to say about their relationship with the consultants and the role of the consultants in NewLeader. Their remarks suggest that participants considered the role of the consultants to be equal to the data in terms of relative importance to the success of this process. Some, when asked what about the high points for them of participating in NewLeader, spoke about their relationship with the consultants. For others, the consultants were so critical to what happened that it was impossible, as Ted said, "to separate the process from the implementers." No study member was dispassionate in describing his or her feelings about the consultants and all spoke with appreciation about what the consultants had done for them.

One of the key themes that emerged from discussions about the consultants was the importance of their being both professional and personal, and of their being professional, but not clinical. Ted said, "They were very, very professional, but I feel as if I have a good personal relationship with them as well." When Marcia was asked to explain what she meant in saying the consultants "were very professional" she replied,

I can see when people are professional...They are very intelligent and I respect intelligence. I think some of the tools they use, the thoroughness of it, the respect they showed for me as a person, the way they conducted themselves. The confidential way--they didn't talk about other people. They didn't express a lot of opinions. There was no conflict of interest there....They weren't just hired by the company. I could detect some strong values in both of them. That's important to me. Strong integrity. That's part of professionalism. Good people.

Marcia's comments echoed those of other study participants who spoke about their regard for the consultants' professional standards, skills, expertise, and experience. Yet, as she and others suggested, it was a certain brand of professionalism that appealed to these NewLeader clients. As Chuck said, "It wasn't a fact-based approach, but they had plenty of facts." Study participants liked working with professionals who, as Andy said, "put it on a personal basis as opposed to a clinical basis." Or in Chuck's words, "It wasn't a cold clinical way; it was a caring way." Jill described the consultants as "caretakers of the soul." And, as Marcia said, perhaps most important, it was a professionalism practiced by "good people."

Study participants' comments indicate that the consultants achieved this kind of relationship with their clients in several ways. One had to do with the way the consultants managed their authority. Study participants described being treated as equals and with mutual respect. Jill said, "The process, I don't think, could be good for anybody if the person's basic integrity and sense of themselves and their value is not only preserved but also enhanced." For Roger, it was important that the consultant he worked with, "never became a judge." Andy said it was helpful that his consultants were "willing to reveal themselves as well." Marcia described feeling as if "we were working together to a common end." Chuck appreciated that one consultant would ask Chuck to review drafts of professional articles that he was writing. He said, "Ken will send me stuff he's working on and ask me to read it and comment on it. There

is some mutual respect for what I do, which helps, too.” Roger, too, liked being asked by the consultant for his perspective on organizational dynamics in the company.

Another important element of these relationships was the consultants’ willingness to go beyond what some might regard as traditional professional boundaries. Andy liked that he and his wife had dinner with the consultants because, he said, it “relaxed the whole situation.” He also appreciated that the consultants would talk about examples from their personal lives and their own struggles, which made him feel that he wasn’t the only one with problems. Chuck appreciated that “when the consultants are in town they will pick up the phone and call.” Chuck was also grateful that one consultant was willing to talk to his daughters and counsel them about their career-related decisions.

Most of all, it appeared to be the consultants’ ability to blend professionalism with personal sensitivity and integrity that enabled them to build trusting relationships with these NewLeader clients. To a person, the study participants described the consultants with words such as: warm, caring, supportive, genuine, interested, friendly, trustworthy, playful, comfortable. As a result of regarding the consultants in this way, study participants were able to reveal very private parts of themselves to the consultants and to engage in the process of self-exploration that NewLeader was designed to encourage. Several people commented that the consultants know them better than anyone else does, even their spouse. As Marcia said, “I shared things with them that I

never shared with anybody and wouldn't even share with some of my friends."

Study findings suggest that effectively managing the boundaries of the personal and professional realms is one important aspect of the NewLeader consultant's role. Moving between the functions of challenger and supporter is another. When asked to describe the role of the consultants, study participants used words that fall into these two categories. On the supporter side were: coach, guide, counselor, facilitator, sounding board. On the challenger side, were: stimulator, catalyst, thought-provoker. Study participants spoke about the importance of the NewLeader consultants being both accepting of them and their feelings and willing to prod them to confront difficult issues or decisions. Grace said, "The two things that were particularly helpful was one, their support when I needed it and two, their challenge when I needed it." Andy talked about being "supported" and "prompted." Marcia spoke about how the consultants "listened but kept me on the task," and described how one consultant combined these two roles to enable her to act in an organizational crisis:

When I realized our president had to be removed and I didn't find that strength in the organization, I called Tim. He was that source of strength who reminded me of my strength. He let me know that I had to take things into my own hands, and I'm not sure I would have without him.

In sum, it appears that the consultants became trusted confidantes and advisors for these NewLeader clients, and that they filled a gap in professional and personal support. Both men and women spoke about the consultants providing support for them that nobody else could. When Chuck faced a crisis at work, the NewLeader consultants were the only people in his professional network in whom he could confide his feelings of loss and disillusionment, and he wondered how he would have gotten through these difficulties without their counsel.

The women, in particular, spoke about the loneliness of their role in the organization and the comfort they found in having mentors and coaches who were truly there for them. About her NewLeader consultants, Marcia said, "I developed great respect for them, more so than anybody I've worked with in the past, and felt that for once in my life I do have mentors here. That's been real important." In NewLeader, she found that she had "Tim, Pamela, and my plans. I wasn't alone."

Women also made a point about the importance of having a female consultant on the team. Marcia said,

I think it was very helpful for me to have a woman in the process. I would say things and she would light up because she had an understanding.... It was good for me with Pamela [NewLeader consultant] to have a female who had been through things I had been through. I get very little opportunity to meet with women here who are my peers. I felt that I had that with Pamela-- someone who really understood based on her own career and the careers of women she had worked with. I've always worked in a male-dominated environment so I've had very few women I

could learn from. Pamela was able to bring that in and help me and be that person.

Grace found that the female consultant brought insight into gender issues that were embedded in the feedback. Kristin had requested to have a woman consultant included and, in retrospect, she realized how important that decision was:

I was glad that I had Angela [NewLeader consultant] in the mix.... Angela was enormously helpful because of really drilling in on the psychological side of the female things and really confronting some things....Martin and Fred [NewLeader consultants] were used to seeing male profiles and that's what they knew how to deal with.

Jill noticed differences in approach between the male and female consultants, which she speculated may have been gender-related:

Tim [NewLeader consultant] was more into the intellectual and trying to probe the issues and Kelly [NewLeader consultant] was very empathetic and making sure I was okay. Whether they consciously choose to take those roles or because Tim as a guy processes things one way and Kelly as a woman processes things another way. If the process had been mainly mental and there had not been concern for how I was feeling and the empathy, I'm not sure that I would have kept going there.

Ongoing Consultation

Study participants voiced their belief in the importance of ongoing consultation, specifying that they appreciated having the consultants initiate periodic contact with them and that they themselves reached out to the consultants in times of need. In their view, regular contact with the consultants

reminded them of the commitments they had made in NewLeader and helped to reinforce behavior change.

Roger, who had been working with the NewLeader consultant for nearly two years at the time of this study, said his action plan was still evolving and described how the ongoing relationship with the NewLeader consultant was

...the best thing is not so much the exercises we go through but how do you apply it, what do you do with it, the experiments we set up around it. It doesn't have to be dramatic, just try something. You need all the information and the diagnostics, but it is the application, trying new things, forcing yourself into uncomfortable zones. You have to wander into where it is uncomfortable.

According to Ted, left to his own devices, he "would have been satisfied with the good feeling and the information I had that I didn't have before." He insisted that "some kind of reminder, check-up, reinforcement is important." He worried about a "tendency to snap back a little bit" or for "muscle memory to erode positive aspects of this." Marcia reported that she re-reads periodically some of the conclusions she made during the initial NewLeader sessions and meets with the consultant for what she described as a "follow-up so that the process stays in place." Chuck described the periodic reminders as "one of the things that sets the whole process apart," and reinforced the importance of consultant-initiated contact:

It was interesting. Pamela [NewLeader consultant] will call and I didn't know that I wanted to talk to her and we still have a lot to talk about. I'm the kind of person that if I know that I need to talk to her it's probably too late.

Andy emphasized the importance of follow-up for reinforcing behavior change. In the two years since his initial consultation, twice he pulled out the NewLeader material and reviewed it on his own. He suggested that the consultants might automate a reminder process to send periodically to clients a one-page summary of their plan. According to Andy, "Behaviors don't change that fast. Before you know it you get wrapped up in your job and everything else that's going on in your life."

What is the impact of NewLeader?

NewLeader examines the client's early history, personal life and leadership behavior on the premise that executives will develop more readily if they gain a holistic understanding of themselves. Participants' perceptions of the impact of NewLeader indicate that the outcomes of the experience are as comprehensive as the process itself. All study participants reported that NewLeader had some effect on the way they thought and felt about themselves, their leadership, their work and family relationships, and their personal life. Most clients entered the process focused on enhancing their leadership and ended with a development agenda that went beyond making behavioral changes in their work role. For some clients, the experience was the

catalyst to address unfinished business in their family of origin or to reinvigorate a flagging relationship with a spouse, child, or friend. Others found benefit in receiving over-due recognition of their professional capabilities, which enabled them to take up their leadership with newly discovered confidence. Overall, most study participants spoke about being affected deeply and profoundly by this experience, often in ways that they never anticipated at the outset.

Impact on Self

The idea that character drives behavior is a theoretical underpinning of NewLeader, and NewLeader interventions are intended to help people make connections between who they are and how they behave. It follows, then, that when asked to describe how NewLeader affected them, study participants spoke about how the experience influenced the way they felt about themselves. What may be unexpected, however, is how frequently people described feeling more confident and secure as a result of this experience. It would be easy to conclude that senior executives must be brimming with self-confidence to do what they do; yet, the literature on executive personality suggests that feelings of inadequacy often drive achievement-oriented people. The study findings suggest that the NewLeader intervention helped them to heal narcissistic wounds that had fostered anxiety and insecurity for many years. For some, the difficulty had taken the form of low expectations of self; others had expected too much from themselves.

Ted said it simply and powerfully: "I feel a lot better about myself."

He then went on to report how in an initial meeting with the NewLeader consultant he had used the word *paranoid* to describe himself. He clarified that he meant this "not in the clinical sense, but uncertain about how I was perceived by others despite the fact that I had moved pretty rapidly through the organization and had not had a setback." Ted said of himself, "There was no consistency in my mind between self-perception and achievement."

Receiving positive feedback from people all around him in the organization challenged Ted's self-image. When he read his colleagues' endorsements of him, he found, "it was almost as if I was reading about someone else." But, the sheer weight of these positive data released the grip of self-doubt, and Ted, for the first time, internalized a picture of himself as competent. Ted knew that his capabilities hadn't changed because, in his words, "all that was there before." Instead, he understood that "it has to do with injecting it, feeling comfortable with it, not questioning myself."

Andy, who described himself as an over-achiever and slow-starter, said that the experience left him "much more confident on personal dimensions." He realized that even though he had accomplished a lot, he had always underrated himself. Knowing that his abilities were recognized by others caused Andy to feel less stressed, less threatened and, by his account, "better about myself, my ability, my own intelligence, and that I had the capability of doing more than I was doing."

Marcia fit the “superwoman” profile of someone who does it all. Marcia described how, “You put so much stress on yourself. I had to be the best mother possible. Best at work. Best at being a wife.” Coming into NewLeader, Marcia realized that she was, as she said, “really tired. I was tired in a different way. That wasn’t a physical tiredness. I felt the exhaustion of a lot of years.” The NewLeader experience helped her see that she didn’t have to be, in her words, “everything to everybody.” Marcia came away from the experience being less hard on herself and more capable of being, as she put it, “more selfish and taking a little better care of myself.” The effect was for her to feel calmer. She learned, “...it’s okay to say no, it’s better to say no, it doesn’t hurt so much.”

Grace described a similar reckoning with an ideal self whose measure of worth depended on pleasing others. She said that it is her personality to “accommodate, to want to make people happy, to do what’s expected of me.” Going through this process helped change that for Grace:

For the first time, I said there are some other things that even though somebody wants me to do them, I’m not going to...because despite the fact that I had done all this accommodating it wasn’t satisfying the people I was accommodating anyway, and it wasn’t achieving the desired end result.

Yet, despite this assertive stance, Grace also reported that going through NewLeader had the effect of shaking her confidence. She said that before

NewLeader she was “naively secure” in the belief that she had the confidence and respect of her colleagues. She said,

I wasn't thinking about a lot of the issues that came up and how effective my leadership was. I was thinking I did a good job and got the work done. I wasn't thinking about the effectiveness issues and about how I could get better or more effective.

When she received the first round of feedback, Grace felt stung because some of her colleagues' criticisms related to aspects of herself that she couldn't or didn't want to change. In retrospect, Grace wondered whether she was more vulnerable to emotional upheaval at this particular time because, as she described it, she was “just coming up the curve” in getting over her divorce and was “less together” than she might have been. She concluded, “Nonetheless, I think it would have shaken me.” Yet, she added, “All of this being said, I think I'm an under-appreciated asset for [her company], which means I haven't lost all of my self-confidence.”

As it did for others, NewLeader brought Jill face to face with a wounded sense of self and launched a process to build or restore her capacity to appreciate herself as she is. In her words, “I felt that I always had to live up to a perfect standard and anything else was unacceptable. I believed I wasn't deserving of people to have positive, loving relationships with me.” After working through the initial phases of NewLeader, Jill could say, with some acknowledged hesitancy, “I am good as I am and there is a lot of warmth and value and humor and fun and a lot of great things about me.” She admitted,

“The positive voice is growing in strength; it’s not a chorus yet, though.” Jill now finds herself being, “...more honest with myself in a gentler way and more patient.”

The process helped Chuck to recognize and begin to express an undeveloped side of himself--his emotional capacity. According to Chuck, his early childhood and later military training had caused him to develop a stalwart personality. Although he cared deeply about people at home and work, they rarely saw his feelings. Before NewLeader, Chuck said, “...there was a door or gate in front of my mind or heart that not a lot of people got to pass through.” The NewLeader experience enabled him, in his words, to “develop a side of me that heretofore was not particularly strong, which I can bring to bear on life, or issues, or problems.” Chuck illustrated this change by talking about solving problems with his daughter, who tends to evaluate decisions emotionally. He said previously he didn’t understand why she wouldn’t just let facts dictate a course of action. Now, when she tells him that something just doesn’t feel right, he understands better what she means.

For Roger, one outcome of the process was a reduction in obsessive/compulsive behavior that had brought him to the brink of an emotional breakdown. As he entered NewLeader, Roger was, as he explained it “getting to a point where I was uncertain, probably very uptight. I started stuttering.” Roger described a sense of “calmness” and more patience that came from stepping back and getting a different perspective on life. Things

didn't feel as urgent to him after NewLeader; he was able to pick his battles and ignore things that weren't so important.

Impact on Leadership

The changes people experienced in their sense of themselves, both positive and negative, affected the way they regarded their leadership. For instance, NewLeader helped Marcia to identify less with an image of perfection and be to more self-accepting. When asked to describe how NewLeader affected her leadership, Marcia reported behavioral changes that might be interpreted as manifestations of this more fundamental shift in her self-regard. She spoke about focusing more on priorities, being more productive, and resisting unnecessary involvement in extra tasks for others. In choosing assignments, she began, by her account, to take on "things that will really help me grow and not just to accommodate somebody else's growth."

For Ted, aligning his inner sense of self-worth with the reality of his external accomplishments allowed him to, as he expressed it, "feel more comfortable with the fact that I have this very substantial responsibility." He reported being able to take charge in a stronger way, being much more decisive, and being more comfortable with his decisiveness. In sum, he said, "I see myself as a leader of people and I'm not sure I could do that before." Similarly, Andy, by internalizing his strengths, felt freer and more relaxed about his leadership. He reported feeling more able to use his leadership

talents to the fullest. Both Roger and Kristin said that the boost in confidence enabled them to take up their leadership roles with greater ease and authority.

According to Jill, NewLeader helped her realize that holding herself to a standard of perfection kept her at a distance from others. She discovered that by being more accepting of herself she could be more authentic in her leadership. When asked to describe the impact of NewLeader on her leadership, Jill said,

It's helped me realize much more the importance of connection with people and building relationships, and not just because that's what people want of me or what I'm supposed to do as a leader, but because that is a vital source of energy for me, too.

Grace's confidence-shaking experience caused her to question how far she can progress in the organization. Yet, her belief in her leadership was not totally undermined, especially because of the positive feedback she received from her direct reports. When asked to describe how she felt about her leadership following NewLeader Grace said,

I think and feel that I am a very good effective leader of people. I think I have strong management skills and interpersonal skills in that regard. I think that I am a very competent and unselfish independent contributor. I think I am pleasant and smart, which makes me a desirable business associate.

Chuck said that the leadership change for him came on, what he called, "the people side of things," when he recognized that he needed to expand the repertoire of behaviors included in his definition of appropriate leadership.

Chuck had always considered himself a “people person” because he cares for people, gives them support, and engenders loyalty. The NewLeader feedback showed Chuck that he didn’t, in his words, “connect as well as I could have, should have, can on the emotional, personal side.” Chuck realized that what he had considered invasive, others viewed as personal warmth. After the NewLeader intervention, Chuck said he was less hesitant to reveal himself to others and engaged more deeply with them. He said, “I’m not as reticent about stopping by somebody’s office to talk about the family. That’s helped me a lot on the leadership side of things.”

Impact on Work Relationships

The study findings show that participants believed that NewLeader was an intervention in their work relationships in three key ways. First, reporting about the experience to people who contributed feedback provided an opportunity for self-disclosure and a more intimate exchange between colleagues. Study participants talked about the benefits of going back to direct reports, peers or bosses to describe how NewLeader had affected them. These conversations, in and of themselves, were opportunities for participants to demonstrate and effect change by relating differently. According to Jill, the post-NewLeader meeting she had with her boss was one of the high points of the experience. By her account, she went into the meeting knowing exactly what she wanted to communicate and being clear about what she would tell

him. She said, "I felt confident and it was one of the more honest discussions we had."

Second, participants reported learning about how their behavior affected others and taking account of that awareness in their future interactions. Andy learned that his directness, speed and assertiveness, qualities that often served him well, became liabilities when overplayed. Typically, when he had difficulty with someone he would, by his own account, "barge right in and say 'what's going on?'" After NewLeader, he began to approach things differently. In describing an encounter with a direct report he said, "I let him tell me what's going on. I got him to tell me a couple of things." He concluded, "I think I'm driving more toward a closer relationship with people."

While Andy moved closer to others, the feedback Grace received inclined her to put more emotional space between her and her colleagues. She reported, "On the down side, I would say to some extent it has made me a little bit careful of my relationships with my colleagues, which has made me distance myself on a personal basis." Grace's reading of the feedback led her to conclude that by blurring the boundaries between her personal and professional relationships she had caused others not to take her seriously. She reported, "The process makes me think of them as business colleagues and not friends, and it wasn't as clear a line--there wasn't a line in my mind before."

One disturbing aspect of this awareness was what Grace perceived to be a

double standard for men and women. She found that her casual conversation was regarded as frivolous, whereas the men could talk about sports or weekend activities without being judged similarly. Grace commented,

If they sit around the table and talk about the Final Four or playing golf some place or the money their wives spent, they don't think of each other as being frivolous. If I talk about cooking, spending time with my nieces and nephews, or myself going shopping or some other endeavor, they see me as frivolous or somehow not at the level that they are.

Finally, study participants reported that feeling differently about themselves caused them to behave differently toward others. Jill reported that greater self-acceptance enabled her to be more authentic with the people who work for her. She commented, "I used to be more the company line. I'm much more willing to be direct with people about what I agree with or don't agree with. I let them see me when I'm down as well as up." Marcia reported that feeling reinforced in herself allowed her to be more decisive and assertive with colleagues; she felt able to speak her opinion more freely. Marcia's husband reinforced this claim in a follow-up interview. When asked if NewLeader had affected Marcia's leadership, her husband said that when he overheard Marcia in phone conversations with colleagues she seemed more willing to express her feelings and opinions.

Impact on Personal Relationships

As noted above, study participants reported NewLeader effects that were not confined to the work role. In fact, some of these clients were most impassioned about how the process had affected their family relationships. Changes in personal relationships came about as these NewLeader clients began to understand themselves better, learned more about the dynamics of their family of origin, and digested the feedback from family members and friends who were interviewed. In some cases, NewLeader stimulated a repair of damaged relationships, in others it triggered an adjustment of family boundaries and roles, and for some it meant a renewed appreciation for deeply valued connections.

For all, it was a novel and important event to have the NewLeader consultants interview family members and friends and feed back their comments. Grace commented, "It is very rare in life that somebody objectively looks at their family relationships." Even in families where people described being close to one another, members may not have been explicit about their feelings for each other or the nature of their relationships. And, especially where there had been tension, much had been unspoken. According to study participants, NewLeader gave their family members and friends a voice, which some used to share thoughts and feelings for the first time.

NewLeader allowed Andy to understand how early childhood experiences had strained his relationship with his brother. When asked to talk about the impact NewLeader had on him, Andy spoke with great feeling about

using this process to close that rift. He also described becoming softer and more open with his spouse and children. He recounted a dinner with his grown daughter where he consciously listened to her rather than peppering her with questions, which is what he would have done previously.

Chuck said of NewLeader, "The real effect was with my family, particularly my daughters....It opened up a relationship I really didn't have before. It was extremely important to me." According to Chuck, his daughters gave very frank feedback about what they needed from him that they were not getting. He remarked,

It was kind of wake up and smell the coffee. I'm sure like most people, I think I have a pretty neat family. I wasn't getting the most out of it, nor was I allowing them to [get the most from the family]. I was the creator of some level of dysfunction. It functions better now.

For Marcia, an outcome of NewLeader was a re-negotiation with her husband about managing home responsibilities, made possible by her being more open about her needs and less driven to be everything to everyone. According to Marcia, in the course of discussions with the NewLeader consultants, "we talked about my husband being a better partner to me..." Marcia also reported that she changed her expectations of others. In some cases, such as with her children, she reported being less demanding of them, less in need of perfection. With her siblings, however, she came to expect more from them rather than assuming so much family responsibility herself.

Jill, too, adjusted her relationship to her family of origin because of new awareness of herself and the impact of family dynamics on her adult functioning. She said, "I've learned through the process to put more boundaries between me and my family and their expectations for me and how I will relate to those expectations."

Roger reported making a significant adjustment in the time and energy he devoted to his wife and children, a change that his wife confirmed in a follow-up interview. He said, "She used to be the one keeping the relationship together. Now it's more balanced." With his children, he described things as "less tense and intense;" he said, "there isn't a wall up around us."

Grace said that the high point of the NewLeader process for her was receiving her family's feedback. She described this aspect of the experience as "emotional but really positive," and said,

I learned things about my own upbringing and family that I never knew. I was impressed with the insights of my family about behavior and things that I might not have given them credit for....It made me appreciate them as individuals more than I did before.

Gender and its Impact

All four women in the study raised several gender-related issues when describing the impact of NewLeader on them, but no men spoke about gender as a factor in their experience of the process. As discussed above, women stressed the importance of having a female consultant on the consulting team. That is, these women perceived that the female consultants had greater insight

into and sensitivity toward gender-related issues and they felt comforted by making a woman-to-woman connection with the female consultant, an experience missing from their daily work lives.

Yet, gender differences went beyond the importance of having a cross-gender consulting team. In some instances, the feedback to the women pointed out existing gender bias in the organization. Such information was not new to them, but it was a sobering reminder of the conditions in which they work--a recognition that triggered feelings of anger and sadness.

Grace reported dismay at her boss's words: "My boss, who gave me wonderful feedback, said something about how 'I don't know how the guys would take reporting to a sweet little woman' like me."¹⁴ She objected also to her colleagues' presumptions about her management style:

When they were talking about how demanding I was or wasn't of my subordinates, and this was clearly based on something nobody knew, someone said, 'As nurturing as Grace is she couldn't be very tough.' They would never have said the word 'nurturing' about their colleagues. And if they were thinking about one of their male colleagues and didn't know the answer they never would have thought in those terms. One of my colleagues said, 'We would have said this is a very participative manager, but we would have meant the same thing.' Somehow it is better when it's participative. While I'd rather be sweet than heinous, do people promote people who are sweet?

The feedback provided by Grace's colleagues revealed that, as the only woman on the senior team, Grace served as the object for many projections--conscious and unconscious--about women and leadership. She believed, and

her colleagues' comments confirmed, that her role in the organization reinforced many gender stereotypes: Grace oversaw all of the presumably "soft" functions, such as human resources and public relations. And for several years, Grace had been the CEO's confidante and advisor, a position of privilege that could easily arouse the envy of her male colleagues.¹⁵ During the time Grace was participating in NewLeader, the CEO was preparing for his retirement, a successor was named, and it was clear that Grace would no longer hold a favored position. As a consequence, Grace became a displaced and under-appreciated partner at work-- a situation that mirrored where she was in her personal life after her divorce.

Kristin said, "In some ways it [the feedback] did point out the gender stereotypes and that made me angry, although it was the way it was." Yet, the feedback also helped her to understand the priorities and world-view of the male executives to whom she reported and allowed her to take account of their perceptions in making decisions about how she wanted to or should behave.

She commented,

Because of what was said to me and about me in NewLeader, I always had one eye or ear to control perceptions about that. How good is she with numbers, how much does she know about strategy, can she manage multiple functions....NewLeader allowed me to see through their lens how they were looking at that and then [decide how] to manage to that.

Reading the feedback and reflecting on themselves also prompted some women to face the psychological cost of adapting to a male-dominated

environment. These women recognized that important aspects of themselves had been lost in the struggle to be accepted, they wondered how those parts could be recovered or newly expressed, and they questioned what they would be willing to do--or not--going forward. Grace said, "I've always believed, in areas of gender bias, that you can't change the world as easily as you can change yourself, where it's worth it." As an example of when it's not worth it, she recalled being told that if people were seeing her too much as a woman maybe she should cater her dinner parties rather than cook herself. Grace, who loves to cook and entertain said, "I thought about it and said damnit, it they can't get over it that's their problem."

Kristin spoke with great poignancy about her recognition of the personal and psychological adjustments she had made to survive in a male culture. She said, "I think I've let go of a lot. Parts about being a woman. You forget what you've let go of, you let go of so much." Like Grace, who said she was deemed "frivolous" for talking about her life outside of the workplace, Kristin described limiting discussions of her family life for fear of not being seen as a serious career person and holding back on building personal relationships at work for fear of being labeled "too soft." Although as a senior executive Kristin felt responsible to "trail blaze" for other women and more confident to show more of her personal side, she still faced difficult dilemmas because, in her words, "It's very tough to evaluate every decision based largely on the numbers." Kristin described how the NewLeader process was a

catalyst for her to reassess her psychological position vis-à-vis the expectations of her company:

Being a woman in this organization, which is largely male, has been a rewarding and difficult experience. Doing the androgynous scales is still a very memorable and painful experience because of the number of things about being a woman that were pushed way down in order to manage in a male environment. One of the things NewLeader did was to bring that front and center so you could make a conscious choice about whether you want to do this or not, and how much you want to push that envelope. That would be different for men. It helped explain a lot of feelings I had. Do you want to keep doing it or do you want to do it differently? I came out somewhere in the middle. In this organization you cannot totally ignore being a woman.

Although being a woman added a level of intensity to the NewLeader experience for Kristin, she believed it also made the experience less of a life-changing event than she knew it to be for many of the men in her organization. Kristin argued that women and others who are in the minority in a white, male culture develop extraordinary interpersonal skills that keep them in tune with how they are perceived in the environment. Even though Kristin said she certainly learned and benefited from the feedback and consultation, she believed that her “ah ha’s” were fewer because she had kept her ear to the ground for years. She said her male counterparts will say, “Wow. I didn’t know that I was coming off that bad.” She termed their behavior “blind ambition.”

What is NewLeader?

Study participants responded to several questions that in different ways probed their answer to: “What is NewLeader?” An analysis of their comments suggests that a prototypical response might be:

NewLeader is a powerful experience that engaged me at the outset because it concerned my leadership, which is vitally important to me, and later on, because it enabled me to understand myself, my past, my family, and my personal life more deeply than I had ever imagined possible. NewLeader is not for the faint of heart. If you do it, be ready to dig in and work hard. Do it at a time in your life when you are ready to learn and have the time to devote to the process. At times, you will feel as if you are riding an emotional roller coaster, but just remember you are in good hands. You may be surprised, in the end, that the most meaningful outcome of your investment in NewLeader is that you feel better about yourself and are more free to lead and live the way you want to.

Several elements of this answer have been discussed already: the emotional intensity of NewLeader; its holistic approach; the importance of the relationship with the consultants; and the likely possibility that the outcome will be a reinforced sense of self-worth and one’s capabilities. However, there are three additional areas that need to be discussed: (1) how the prospect of leadership development provides the opening into personal development; (2) the psychological level at which NewLeader works; and (3) the timing of participation.

Prospect of Leadership Development

As described above in the section, “What is it like to enter NewLeader?” study participants reported that they entered with the purpose of enhancing, or rescuing, their leadership. The implications of their response are not only that leadership development was foremost in their minds at the beginning, but also that without the promise of leadership change these executives might never have undertaken this level of professional and personal development, which, in the end, they seemed glad to have done. That is, the prospect of enhancing their leadership was the “hook” that engaged them to deal with psychological issues well outside the conventional confines of their work role--albeit with the ultimate purpose of improving leadership development.

Jill was the only study participant who reported having received personal counseling. Several others seemed surprised by the idea that they might have pursued therapy. When asked if he had ever gone to a counselor, Chuck said, “Never thought about it. Didn’t think I had any problems. Why would I go?” Yet, Chuck signed up for and was a fully engaged participant in NewLeader. It may be that the psychological and social conservatism of these executives discouraged the use of therapy. Yet, because its stated purpose is professional development, NewLeader appeared to be an acceptable and palatable therapeutic intervention.

Jill’s report of her experience in counseling and her comparisons of that and NewLeader suggest how NewLeader provided an entree for her into the

arena of personal development. As stated earlier, Jill expressed a preference for the intensity of the NewLeader format, where sessions ran for two days straight, versus the hour-long weekly sessions she had in counseling. Beyond this difference, Jill spoke also about the benefit of grounding the process of personal exploration in the context of leadership development. Her account suggests that familiarity with and security in the leadership realm allowed her to venture into unknown territory in the personal realm, as long as connections were made between the two worlds. It also reinforces the idea that an executive's orientation to learning requires linking more abstract aspects of personal growth with concrete applications to everyday work life. Jill said,

I probably couldn't have gotten to the personal issues by just trying to zero in on that. When I think about seeing this counselor, looking back I think she was trying to probe on some of the more underlying stuff that was going on, but it was almost as if we went to that too directly. I almost needed to be led to there: Are these things happening on the outside--x, y, and z; so, let's make some sense of them first and then work them back through the process to their root causes. Going right to the heart of it was almost like, 'What is the value of poking around in there that intensely?' I'm an F [feeling type] on the Myers-Briggs, but my work has a pragmatic side to it. I've never been touchy-feely for the point of being touchy feely; there needs to be a pragmatic outcome. With Kathy [the counselor], I was never sure what the pragmatic outcome was that I was looking for.

Psychological Level

Another way to understand Jill's experience is that she needed to manage the power of the unconscious material that was evoked in the process and that contact with the "pragmatic side," or her conscious self, provided the

passageway in and out. The study findings suggest that NewLeader goes beyond the conscious ego-level in its psychological engagement. In particular, the metaphors that study participants used to describe their NewLeader experience indicate that NewLeader tapped their unconscious.

When painting a verbal picture of their NewLeader experience, study participants associated to images that in Jungian theory relate to delving into the unconscious, such as being in water and getting in touch with nature, or to bringing material into consciousness, such as moving into the light or coming out of the water. For instance, Roger spoke about drawing a picture, which, in his words, would “be a sunrise where you are going from dark to light.” He also spoke about,

A setting over the water as opposed to a city setting. On the water you are calm, you lose track of time, it’s very energizing, there are good times to be had. A sunrise over a lake. Slowly it ticks off from darkness to light. It’s also the signaling of a new day. A fresh slate. It’s very calm on lakes in the morning. There is not a lot of activity. You can hear nature a little bit more at that time of the day.

Grace said the picture she would paint of NewLeader would be “someone sliding down a sliding board into a very deep pool of water. Across the water would be a nice sandy beach, the sunshine.” When asked if she got out of the water, Grace replied, “No, but there was hope to be there. It was cold water.” As mentioned above, Grace also referred to the experience as

“looking in the mirror the morning after.” The morning after can be associated with the pain and shame of realizing what one has done in an unconscious state.

Ted said the picture would be “Light. It would have an opening of some sort. Sort of from darkness into the light, but a certain amount, a lot of stuff on the sides or background, and then a little clarity. Clarity ahead.” Marcia said, “There were darker times, but there was a light at the end of the tunnel, so it got brighter.”

Marcia said NewLeader was like giving birth, which in the language of the unconscious represents bringing into consciousness aspects of herself that had been dormant. Jill said the experience was like losing a good friend, which suggests the process of shedding aspects of her persona.

As mentioned earlier, Chuck associated the NewLeader experience with circumcision, a procedure that represents a fundamental, primitive altering of a man’s genitalia, or, speaking metaphorically, the way that he is a man in the world. For Chuck, one might say, the NewLeader knife cut deep and in sensitive areas: the result was the uncovering of his undeveloped feminine side.

Timing

Having been through NewLeader, study participants had much to say about how to make the experience successful for others. One of the issues they spoke about was the importance of timing, stressing that people should

undertake NewLeader when they are mature enough in themselves and their leadership to benefit from it. Study members believed that a NewLeader client should have been in the job or organization long enough for people to provide meaningful feedback. In terms of personal maturity, they wanted the person to feel secure enough to handle the rigors of the process. Several study participants said that earlier in their careers they would not have been capable of or prepared to do this level of self-exploration. Some also emphasized being cautious about doing NewLeader when under extreme stress.

As discussed earlier, Grace wondered whether the effects of her divorce made her too vulnerable to being hurt by critical feedback.¹⁶ Andy said he would not recommend the process to one of his staff members who currently had great personal demands at home, for fear that she would, in his words, “flip her lid.” He also said that one of the liabilities of NewLeader becoming fashionable in his organization is that people elected to do it even though the personal timing might not have been right.

Overall, the advice and caution that study participants offered about who should do NewLeader and when speaks to what NewLeader was for them: a potent intervention. In the end, it may not have been what they knowingly signed up for at the beginning, but no one, not even Grace, expressed regrets about participating. Some credit NewLeader with changing their lives.

CHAPTER VIII.
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, PART 1
NEWLEADER FROM THE CLIENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Discussion of the Data Collection Process

Before discussing the study findings, I want to comment on the data collection process, using the perspective of Embedded Intergroup Relations Theory (Alderfer, 1987). My experience in conducting the interviews suggests that study participants regarded me first and foremost as a representative of the LDF consultants, or even an extension of the consultants. For instance, on more than one occasion, study participants reminded themselves out loud that I didn't know some piece of information because I hadn't been part of the consultation. That participants associated me with the consulting staff was a likely influence on the "how" and "what" of data collection.

On the plus side, study participants probably afforded me easier and faster access to intimate information than I would have received otherwise. It was my sense that they were being unusually open and candid with me, even

about some very private matters. There appeared to be an assumed trust between us because the participants trusted the LDF consultants.

Yet, a drawback of their linking me so closely to NewLeader is that they may have felt inhibited about criticizing it. While I believe that study participants were authentic in making positive remarks about the experience and expressing heartfelt appreciation for the NewLeader consultants, their knowledge of my relationship with these consultants may have caused them to restrain their negative comments.

As researcher, I, too, was subject to this dynamic. Throughout the data collection, I was very aware of being in two roles: doctoral student and LDF consultant. For instance, when interviewing, I needed to remind myself to stay in the researcher role, which meant being empathic to the study participant's feelings but without providing consultation about the content. And my relationship with LDF may have caused me to collude unconsciously with the study members in taking a protective stance toward NewLeader and the consultants.

Gender is another factor that affected the data collection. While I cannot know how it would have made a difference in the interviews with the male participants had I been a man, I do believe that some of the gender-related discussions with women were facilitated by our shared gender. I believe that my being a woman made it easier for female study participants to discuss their experiences as women in the workplace, especially painful ones, and I know

that at those moments there was a sense of understanding between us that stemmed from our both being women.

Likewise, other shared group memberships eased the communication. Study participants and I are white, middle-aged, highly educated professionals. While none of them has done doctoral research, several talked about related experiences in their graduate training or the work of family and friends. They were interested in my research because of their general appreciation of such endeavors and their desire to help LDF.

In fact, several people described their decision to participate in the project as way to “give something back” to the consultants who had helped them so much. This sentiment made them very willing research participants, once the interviews were underway.¹⁷ Being asked to participate in the project may have also have been therapeutic for some clients, as another example of the NewLeader consultants working in partnership with them.

Discussion of Study Findings

Study participants created vivid impressions of their NewLeader experience; their rich, emotional language adds personal texture to an understanding of what it is like to be a client in this process. Their accounts provide a grounding in the tangible details of the experience and a stepping-off point from which to conceptualize what transpires in NewLeader. Four key questions raised by the findings are: (1) What is NewLeader? (2) What

does NewLeader do? (3) How does NewLeader do what it does? (4) What accounts for the very positive reports that most clients made about their experience?

1. What is NewLeader?

Is it counseling, coaching, or consultation: The review of the literature on executive development revealed that there is no consensus in the field about what this practice should be ideally (See Chapter III, Executive Development). Opinions range from the belief that going beyond the level of behavioral coaching is inappropriate to the position that ignoring inner motivations and the origins of repetitive behavioral patterns is unprofessional. This study shows that the spectrum of psychological work that NewLeader clients do varies from the relatively safe, such as role playing, to the rather risky, such as feeling the pain of having closed oneself off to intimacy for many years.

In fact, what study participants conveyed about their NewLeader experience indicates that all three types of interventions mentioned in the literature are a part of NewLeader: counseling, coaching, and consultation. Study members' accounts suggest that the NewLeader process evoked a level of emotional expression and psychological self-examination that would qualify the intervention as counseling. Study members described instances of getting feedback from the consultants about their experiments in behavior change that are consistent with the coaching function. And they talked about the

consultants helping them to think through organizational dilemmas, understand their role, and plan a course of action for problem-solving, which are the tasks of a consultation.

Whether NewLeader *should* function in all of these ways is another question. Taking guidance from the study participants, who said they benefited from the experience, one can argue that, at least for some clients, this range of psychological work is appropriate for executive development.

How is NewLeader like therapy? Clearly, the depth of psychological exploration involved in NewLeader places it at the psychotherapeutic end of the spectrum of executive development interventions. In fact, in several ways NewLeader is a form of psychotherapy. In both therapy and NewLeader, clients form a therapeutic alliance with the consultant or therapist, explore past influences of present behavior, and work through deep emotions. Also, NewLeader, like many kinds of therapy, is an intervention in relationships. Whereas in family or couples therapy the parties speak directly to one another about their reactions, in NewLeader the feedback tells the client how others feel about her and her behavior, and she then decides if and how to respond.

Furthermore, NewLeader, like therapy, has the potential to be a reparative experience; that is, an intervention that heals past wounds or re-works past events more constructively. In NewLeader, this change can occur in at least two ways. First, contained within the data are alternative views of the person's identity. As the client comes to terms with the way others see

him, he has an opportunity to change his self-perceptions. It may be that the client still sees himself through the eyes of someone who knew him as a child, such as a parent or sibling, and that his self-image has not developed as he has grown into adulthood. As he internalizes feedback from others, he can add new dimensions to his self-identity, and, perhaps, shed those that no longer or never fit.

A second way in which NewLeader can be a corrective experience is through the client-consultant relationship. The study findings show that clients perceived enormous benefit from the concentrated care and attention they received from the consultants. Just as a client is revealed in new ways by the data, she is also seen anew by the consultants. Clients who lacked a supportive experience with other important figures--parents, spouses, mentors--can find one in their relationship with the consultants. For instance, when a client sees that the consultants accept and tolerate parts of her that she deemed unacceptable, she may begin to accept them in herself.

How is NewLeader different from therapy? Even though NewLeader shares some characteristics with conventional therapeutic practice, it is not identical to it. Perhaps the most significant difference is the use of feedback in NewLeader. In therapy, clients are responsible for telling their own story, which unfolds gradually throughout the process. In NewLeader, the story has been written before the client enters the first session and it is told to the client in the form of the feedback report. As this study shows, the stories are

powerful, complex, and, at times, surprising even to the client. The work of NewLeader requires the client to react to the story's many characters and their respective viewpoints, figure out the plot and its meaning, identify key themes, and decide what is fact and what is fiction.

Having read others' accounts of him, the client is free to rewrite his personal story based on a more developed picture of who he is. Stated from the perspective of the client, the task is: *Clarify who I am as a person and as a leader, based on what I know about myself and what others have told me about me.* The result may be a new story or an updated edition of an existing one. In either case, the process involves interpretation and creation. The client and the consultants interpret the feedback to reach clarity about the key themes contained within it. Using what emerges from that process, they create the client's version of the story. Although the outcome of NewLeader may be similar to what a client would accomplish in therapy, the process of achieving it is quite different.

Based on the findings of this study, one can say that this approach was perceived as helpful to these clients. They emphasized the credibility and utility of the feedback, even when they had to struggle to understand its meaning. Their reports suggest that it might have been difficult, if not impossible, for these clients to engage as fully in the process and to achieve the level of insight they did without having the data to react to and work with.

Another difference between NewLeader and therapy is that the consultants operate outside some of the structural boundaries ordinarily observed by therapists. For instance, therapists usually see clients in their office for hourly sessions held weekly, and the appointments are scheduled at the client's request. NewLeader meetings range from two days in a hotel room, to half-day sessions in the client's office, to hour-long phone conversations, and the contact may be initiated by the consultant. Such differences in the boundary conditions of the engagement may affect the authority dynamics between the parties.

Finally, even though NewLeader represents the outer edge of psychological depth for executive development interventions, it does not go as deep as some forms of therapy do. NewLeader consultants acknowledge this boundary on the occasions when they refer their clients to therapists. In such instances, the consultants determine that the kind of psychological work needed by their client is beyond the capacity of NewLeader and its practitioners.

Areas for further study about what NewLeader is or isn't: Further research is required to understand what level and type of psychological exploration are beyond the boundaries of this kind of leadership development and to determine what principles should guide consultants' decisions about referring clients for therapy. Yet, the findings of this study suggest at least two areas of inquiry to clarify the boundaries of executive development.

First, since the contract with the client is for leadership development, which concerns a professional role, what restrictions, if any, does that agreement imply for delving into the personal realm of the executive's life? According to this research, NewLeader clients enter the process with the explicit intention of improving their leadership and with a seemingly vague understanding that doing so requires investigation into their character and personal history. The implication of the initial agreement is that the personal sphere is fair game for study, but only in the context of the professional role. Understanding more about what is in or out of bounds would help to define the nature of this practice more clearly, which might enable clients to make a more informed choice about what they are signing up for, or, at least, give consultants more information to use in describing the process.

Second, if the contract represents one boundary for this practice of leadership development, another might be its structural form. The study showed that clients found benefit in the NewLeader format because it contributed to the intensity and depth of their experience. Thus, this way of working seems to be very effective in engaging executives who are well-defended against opening up emotionally and psychologically. However, there can also be inherent limits in this approach because some psychological work may require regular rather than sporadic contact with the consultant or therapist. Since NewLeader consultants meet their clients periodically over a number of months, this intervention will not meet such needs. The field would

benefit from knowing more about what types of problems or situations are more suitable to the traditional therapeutic model and which can be dealt with in this kind of executive development.

In sum, this form of leadership development appears to cross the boundaries of several disciplines and, as such, operates in new territory. As the literature on this newly emerging practice suggests, there are many questions in the field about what this work is or should be. The findings of this study can contribute these ideas to that discussion: (1) it is possible to include all three types or levels of intervention in a comprehensive executive development model; (2) clients who experience this kind of intervention report that it is emotionally demanding and helpful to their professional and personal development; (3) this type of executive development accomplishes some of the same aims as psychotherapy, although its process is different in some ways; (4) there appear to be natural limitations to what type and level of psychological material can be dealt with in this kind of executive development, but more research is needed to understand and clarify the boundaries of this work.

2. What does NewLeader do?

The findings say much about what it was like for these clients to participate in NewLeader and the impact the experience had on them. Their words, reported in detail, tell the story best. Yet a psychological analysis of their accounts yields a different level of understanding of what NewLeader

does, or, at least, states it in different terms. That is, that work on the self is the psychological crux of NewLeader. Or that NewLeader affects the client's sense of self, allowing him to be more fully and genuinely who he is, with himself and with others. And that this change in the self, in turn, affects how the client experiences and expresses two key dimensions of human personality: the need to have authority and the need for interpersonal intimacy.

It makes sense that the self is the focus of NewLeader, since problems of the self seem to be the psychological marker of even normally functioning men and women, at least in recent decades (McWilliams, 1994). Reporting on his clinical experience, Edinger (1972) made the summary comment, "...the basis of almost all psychological problems is an unsatisfactory relationship to one's urge to individuality" (p. 160). McWilliams (1994) found that the focus of much contemporary psychoanalytic treatment is on the psychology of the self.

¹⁸ In describing patients whose self is in need of repair, she said "On the surface, they might look very self-assured, but internally they were in a constant search for reassurance that they were acceptable or admirable or valuable" (p. 35). Although not speaking specifically about executives, McWilliams' words could not be more apt to describe the struggles about self that were expressed by the participants in this study. The challenge for McWilliams' patients and for people in the executive role is to confront what Epstein (1995) said is "...the emptiness, inauthenticity, or alienation that results

from estrangement from our *true* selves and our confusion or ignorance about our own true natures" (p. 39).¹⁹

For some executives, such as Ted, whose ego is deflated and whose sense of self-efficacy is inconsistent with external reality, the work may be to integrate a more positive self-image. Others, like Jill, who are identified with perfection and an inflated ego-ideal, need to value themselves as they are rather than as they think they should be. For all, the developmental and, perhaps, therapeutic task is, in Jungian terms, to decrease their identification with the persona, to claim disowned parts of themselves, and to increase the relationship between the ego-level self and the larger, transcendent Self.

Although NewLeader is not described as a form of psychodynamic treatment, it appears that the NewLeader experience creates conditions in which a client can recover dispossessed aspects of the self, whether they be unacknowledged strengths or weaknesses, and shed parts of the self that are not congruent. Grace's experience, in particular, shows, that becoming "self-conscious" is not always pleasant, especially when it means accepting a definition of one's self that falls short of perfection.²⁰ Yet, as Epstein (1995) cautions, "...narcissism requires that we keep the truth about ourselves at bay." So to know ourselves, we need to tolerate the reality of who we are.

In NewLeader, reality comes in the form of feedback. The feedback allows clients to learn how others perceive and experience them. Many realities are represented in the feedback; however, through the process of

teasing it apart, a truth appears to emerge. Contained within this truth is the potential for the person to view his or her self differently, or to feel differently about the self that has always existed.

A new relationship with the self enables the person to exercise authority more constructively and express intimacy more easily. I use the terms *authority*, meaning the power to influence, and *intimacy*, suggesting personal closeness and authenticity, because they seem to reflect most closely study participants' descriptions of their experience. But authority and intimacy refer to core psychological dimensions, usually understood as a polarity, which have been described by diverse personality theorists. Kaplan (1997) traced the history of the use of these core psychological dimensions in the social science literature on personality, citing the terms *agency versus communion; autonomy versus inclusion; individuality versus sociality; power versus intimacy*. Kaplan himself called these dimensions an *orientation to self* versus the *orientation to others*. In Jungian psychology, these aspects of the psyche are understood as manifestations of the Masculine and Feminine archetypes.

This study revealed that when executives gained a more conscious and constructive relationship to their inner self they felt more able to employ their authority differently, both at work and at home. Kaplan (1996) described two polarities for the expression of executive leadership: forceful and enabling. As reported, study participants perceived growth along both dimensions. Some said they became more forceful in their use of authority, as in being more

decisive, setting clearer boundaries, taking more initiative, and making reasonable demands of others. Others reported being more enabling, as in asking for input and listening to others' concerns. In family relationships, there were similar examples of people exercising their personal authority differently. Some clients reported being more assertive about expressing their needs, getting help from others, and setting limits for what they would do. Others said they reined in their aggressive expression of authority by becoming less directive and more facilitative in interpersonal interactions.

Edinger (1972) affirmed the critical importance of this kind of growth. He said, "The majority of patients in psychotherapy need to learn how to be more effectively selfish and more effective in the use of their own personal power; they need to accept responsibility for the fact of being centers of power and effectiveness" (p. 161). The findings suggest that NewLeader offers the possibility for clients to take up their authority in the ways that Edinger recommends.

As reported, study participants also perceived growth in their ability to express intimacy and receive it from others, again with colleagues and family. The findings include examples of their sharing feelings and personal opinions more openly with others, showing greater concern for the personal well-being of people around them, and being able to invite colleagues and family to speak to them about more personal matters. And, as discussed in the findings, Grace adjusted the boundaries between herself and her colleagues in the opposite

direction: she believed her effectiveness would be enhanced through less intimacy with them.

Polarities represent opposite, but complementary, dimensions on a pole. Thus, there are connections between authority and intimacy. Study participants' experience showed that making adjustments in their handling of authority affected their intimacy with others, and vice versa. Paradoxically, using one's authority to set a limit between one's self and another may, in fact, create greater feelings of intimacy. For instance, the findings showed that when Ted was more decisive in the exercise of his authority he felt more open in his relationships. As reported, setting limits on the extent to which she carried the burden of responsibilities at home, allowed Marcia to be more intimate with her family.

Since the psychological dimensions of authority and intimacy are often gender-linked, with assumptions that men are more comfortable in the realm of authority and women in the realm of intimacy, it is interesting to note that the experience of study participants did not fall so cleanly along gender lines. For, instance, as reported, Ted's primary task was to recognize and employ his substantial authority while Jill's work centered on creating greater intimacy. A more accurate conceptualization of what occurred for these executives is that their growth entailed developing undeveloped aspects of themselves.

Whitmont (1991), in commenting upon the role of the feminine and masculine archetypes in the psychology of contemporary women and men, said both

sexes are “in need of compensation and complementation by all those gender qualities of either kind that happen to have been but inadequately developed (p. 317). Especially among executive women, whose character, role, and minority status in the organization incline them toward identification with the masculine, it is likely that traditional gender lines will be crossed.²¹

Finally, in taking up the question of what NewLeader does it seems important to ask: Does NewLeader improve leadership? As reported, study participants discussed various ways in which they believed they have changed or are changing how they lead. Since this study did not seek independent verification of those changes, it is not possible to agree or disagree with the clients’ self-reports. However, an analysis of what participants said about how the NewLeader experience affected their leadership suggests that there are two ways in which change is likely to occur: one, by clients understanding more about the impact of their behavior on others and two, by their developing a new sense of themselves as people and, by extension, as leaders.

Executive character and role can cause leaders to be blind to others’ needs and reactions (what Kristin, echoing John Dean, referred to as “blind ambition”). Receiving the candid feedback that NewLeader delivers, executives can be awakened to how their behavior affects people around them. And the learning is not only about problem behaviors that disturb others, although it is helpful for them to receive criticism. As Ted’s experience

showed, learning that people were responding more positively to his behavior than he realized encouraged him to lead from his strengths.

When describing the effects of this experience on their leadership, study members also spoke of new leadership behaviors as a manifestation of inner changes. In short, their position was: Because I feel this way about myself now, I am able to do such and such. When asked to report behavioral changes, they tended to make the connection between outward, visible signs and the underlying driver for the new way of functioning.

H. Levinson (1996), in describing the executive role, specified the need for executives to be competent in using their authority and in relating to people. He said,

To be a successful executive, one must be able to take charge of his or her authoritative role comfortably, to manage the inevitable ambivalence of subordinates and the rivalry of peers and superiors, and to avoid being caught up in the regressive behavior of the work group he or she leads. Executives must not sacrifice their authority for the need to please. Often executives must manage the troublesome behavior of customers, clients, and their own superiors or board members. They must be able to accept their own limitations and make use of the specialized contributions of others, as well as the support of their colleagues and followers. (p. 116)

The findings of this study show that NewLeader participants believe that the experience helped them develop these two executive functions. When discussing how the NewLeader experience affected their leadership, study participants gave examples of taking up their authority by being in charge, setting limits, being decisive, and seeking input from others. They also

focused on becoming more effective in their relationships with subordinates, peers, and bosses by listening better, expressing feelings and opinions more openly, and being able to work through the talents of others rather than over-relying on their own abilities.

Although study participants reported significant changes in their leadership, my impression of their comments was that they were confident of their awareness of what needed to be changed and the importance of change and tentative about the amount of change they had made.²² Several of them acknowledged that changing is difficult and that it takes time to really integrate new ways of being and acting, despite a keen motivation to improve. This response may be explained by the fact that, with the exception of Kristin, all the study participants were active in the follow-up phase of NewLeader and that they were very much in the midst of a change process. Of course, their more critical evaluation of their performance toward a goal may also be symptomatic of their ego ideal at work again--that is, what they do is never quite good enough.

How does NewLeader do what it does?

The role of authority and intimacy: Authority and intimacy emerged as themes in explaining the “what” of NewLeader, and they also help to explain the “how.” It is axiomatic in most helping relationships, be they coaching, counseling, or consulting, that forming an effective therapeutic alliance

between the client and the professional is requisite for doing the work. This study highlights that the way in which the NewLeader consultants exercise their authority is critical to creating an intimate bond between the client and the NewLeader consultants, allowing them together to take up the task of leadership development . All clients need to feel that they have a hand in their learning, but executives, in particular, may have a heightened requirement to be authorized as full participants, if they are to open up intellectually and emotionally. The NewLeader consultants foster trust in them and the process by fully taking up their role as consultants, while at the same time allowing clients to maintain the authority of their own role.

The consultants also need to be confident enough in their own authority to be intimate with the clients. It appears that the consultants' willingness to self-disclose and to work outside traditional therapeutic models--over dinner, in consultant-initiated meetings, and on the phone--deepened the connection with the client and enriched opportunities for client learning. As reported in the findings, the consultants' ability to be both "professional" and "personal" was critical to their success with these clients. That study participants described the consultant as "not clinical" suggests that they had an expectation for how a psychologist might behave, which the consultants fortunately did not meet. Study members' comments reinforce the idea that this kind of therapeutic intervention is a new model, which departs from conventional notions of the client-clinician relationship.

The role of uncovering and supporting: McWilliams (1994) distinguished between uncovering and supporting modes of treatment, and suggested that neurotic clients, who in her diagnostic system are considered normally functioning, are capable of responding to a more uncovering approach.²³ She also reported that within the psychoanalytic field there is debate about which mode of treatment is preferred for patients with narcissistic tendencies: some theorists suggest that the client should be nurtured and others that the client should be confronted. The NewLeader model, which is designed for psychologically normal executives, incorporates both uncovering and supporting interventions.

In NewLeader, the data do most of the uncovering; they show the client aspects of himself that he has not recognized and reveal hidden patterns or underlying dynamics of his life.²⁴ As reported in the findings, study participants used these phrases to describe their experience: “peeling back the onion,” “exposing your nerves,” “your life is exposed to everything,” “more exposed at the end of the day,” “persona bared totally and stripped of all veneers.” The data bring into the light or raise to a conscious level information or insights that heretofore lay hidden in the shadows, outside of the client’s conscious awareness.

The study showed that this process of self-discovery or self-recognition is not easy, even when one is learning about one’s assets. A character in *Major Barbara*, a play by George Bernard Shaw, said, “You have learned something.

That always feels at first as if you had lost something.” Development entails the pain of relinquishing the familiar persona and the security attached to it. Jill described this feeling well when she likened her development to losing a good friend. And there is also the shame of one’s own ignorance. The uncovering exposes us not only to what was not seen, but also to the realization that we did not see it. Grace’s analogy of looking in the mirror the morning after speaks to this feeling of embarrassment for having been unconscious.

Because the data do the uncovering, the consultants can do more supporting. While the study findings revealed that the consultants did play a part in challenging clients, it may be that the existence of the feedback as a separate entity allows the consultants, especially in the beginning of the consultation, to place more emphasis on their support function. This dynamic may contribute to the consultants’ success in creating a partnership with the client--it is us versus the data--and in generating strong feelings within clients that they are accepted by the consultants. In conventional one-on-one therapeutic or consulting situations, the therapist or consultant may be required to do more uncovering. And in family or group consultations, the helping agent is concerned about managing relationships with all parties. In NewLeader, the consultant becomes the helpmate of the client as he or she makes sense of what others say about him or her and, at least in the initial session, the consultant does not have to manage others’ reactions to the client.

What accounts for the positive finding?

It is an unequivocal finding of this study that participants evaluated their experience as important to their professional and personal development--even the one person who had particular difficulty with the feedback. As reported in the findings, study participants described various ways in which they believe NewLeader benefited them. It seems important to ask why they were so positive in their response. One obvious explanation is that NewLeader was enormously helpful to these clients beyond their expectations and that their accounts are an accurate reflection of their experience, as they experienced it. That is, in their view, the quality of the data, the personal-professionalism of the consultants, and the good sense of the design combined to create a caliber and depth of learning unlike anything they had known before. There is ample evidence to support this interpretation, yet, other factors may also have played a part in producing such a positive finding.

As mentioned above, participants' loyalty to the consultants could have exaggerated their optimism. Of course, if that were so, the existence of such a sentiment reinforces the idea that participants had reason to feel grateful. Social compliance might have been involved, too. Since participants viewed me as a LDF representative, they may have believed that the acceptable answer to my questions was an endorsement of the program; and I, in turn, may have reinforced such behavior. Finally, a desire to reduce cognitive dissonance might have influenced participants. Because the experience was so

emotionally demanding for them, participants may have needed to justify their pain with the belief that the struggle was worth it.

Executive character, in one sense, could be considered a counterweight for any exaggerated optimism. Executives, whose personality and role fuel demanding and critical behavior, are not typically an easy-to-please audience. By reputation, many executives expect much and give little, at least in an emotional sense. Yet, executive character and role may also predispose executives to this experience. At the inner core of many executives is a fragile self, and their role at the top of the organization isolates executives from much intimate contact with others. Ultimately, executive neediness may account for why executives respond well to NewLeader. In NewLeader, executives find an experience that addresses some of what is missing from their inner and outer lives: a deep and authentic engagement with themselves and colleagues who temporarily care about them. Moreover, this constructive encounter with the consultants gives them a chance to repair prior relationships with other authorities, such as parents and bosses, that may have wounded them emotionally.

CHAPTER IX.
REPORT OF THE FINDINGS, PART 2.
INDIVIDUATION IN MID-LIFE EXECUTIVES

Introduction

The findings reported in this section address two of the key questions that I posed at the outset of this study: first, would the mid-life process of individuation, as theorized by Jung, be limited among executives, whose personality is oriented primarily toward external achievement? and second, how would the NewLeader experience, which invites executives to be introspective, affect their individuation?

Based on these findings, my general answer to the first question is that these executives showed evidence of engagement in the individuation process, but the extent of their individuation may be limited by personality and role and complicated by gender. Because no comparisons were made with non-executive groups and because no absolute standards exist by which to judge a person's individuation process, it is not possible to say with certainty that these eight people are more or less individuated than anyone else. Moreover,

individuation is primarily about unconscious processes and my measures were mainly conscious. Yet, by using the behavioral indicators that I developed to operationalize Jung's concept of individuation, I was able to take some measure of the extent to which these executives exhibited evidence of individuation and to speculate about how their personality, role and gender might interact with their ability to individuate (See Appendix F for a description of the behavioral indicators of individuation).

In answer to the second question, the study findings suggest that the NewLeader experience may have helped to facilitate the individuation process for these individuals. When responding to questions related to individuation, study participants often spoke about what they had learned or experienced in NewLeader and they made explicit connections between the NewLeader process and their adult development. In addition, when study participants spoke about the effects on them of NewLeader (See Chapter VII), they described behaviors that fit within the individuation framework.

The findings in this section come from two primary sources: participant interviews and the TAT; the data from each are reported separately. Archival data (collected by the LDF consultants as part of the NewLeader intervention) are referenced where they are germane. The consultant interview data and spouse interview data are discussed briefly in a separate section at the conclusion of this chapter.

Participant Interviews

The data from participant interviews are described in detail in the following four sections: (1) reported examples of behaviors that are consistent with the behavioral indicators of individuation; (2) reported examples of behaviors that are consistent with a lack of individuation; (3) reported examples of behaviors that relate to the question of mid-life as a “crisis;” (4) reported examples of connections between individuation and the NewLeader experience.

1. Behavioral Indicators of Individuation

I developed five behavioral indicators of individuation at the outset of this study. In this section, I report data from participants’ interviews that reflect these behavioral indicators. Each behavioral indicator is discussed individually.

The first behavioral indicator is:

- o *Exploration of inner desires*: listening within to find direction, inspiration, and a source of meaning. Specific indicators are:
 - Awareness of dreams
 - Quest, longing for, experience of deeper meaning, purpose, connection
 - Urgency about claiming one’s own needs, priorities, time
 - More differentiated sense of identity

- Capacity for greater intimacy with self and others, whereby the person feels psychologically free to reveal more aspects of himself or herself and to experience others more fully

Evidence emerged from the interviews to suggest that participants were developing a greater need and ability to explore and act on their inner desires, instead of responding only to external demands pressed upon them by others. For most study members, the change was a subtle and slight shift, not a dramatic move from their accustomed way of being. They spoke about feeling less concerned about how others regard them, being more capable of being themselves, caring more about using time for their own needs, and requiring more time alone.²⁵

Marcia reported several ways in which she listened more to her inner desires and acted in accord with them. She described her increased introversion and need for privacy, saying,

Socializing isn't as important to me as it used to be. Now privacy is more important.... I think you would see me a little more introverted socially. Less outgoing. A little less anxious about a number of things and quieter.... It's just a great desire for privacy and quiet. It's more, much more, of a desire for privacy.

She spoke about her increased ability to be genuine with others without fear of their judgments. She said, "It's been really much easier to admit my own values and not care about the reaction." She reported that a lot of her interests are "blossoming" and that she has "much more deeper concerns." Finally, she spoke about a greater willingness to trust her intuition, commenting, "I used to

think that it was a weakness to rely on intuition. I now know that that is a strength to build on and use because it hasn't failed me."

Like Marcia, Andy spoke about an increased need for introversion and introspection. He described his "longing for more time to think...to use a little more of my wisdom." He reported that although people view him as an extravert, there is a part of him that is introverted. When asked if he is now more comfortable being introverted, Andy said, "Yes. I'm not worried about it." Andy also reported that he is in a self-reflective phase of life, pondering what kind of contribution he wants to make with his next twenty-five years. As options, he has considered politics, community service, and a small business opportunity with his wife.

Jill spoke about her greater capacity to be genuine with herself and others:

I think certainly the thing I'm doing in the work environment is to let people know more broadly who I am and how I feel about a whole range of stuff.... Now, I'm willing to share my own ups and downs and frustrations and my day-to-day feelings.

And, like Andy and Marcia, she described having more of a focus on her inner process. She described herself at this stage of life as a person who is:

More reflective about her own journey and where she is at. Maybe not quite as bubbly optimistic about life. More reflective. Someone who is intrigued by possibilities for personal and professional growth.

Grace reported that she is less concerned about what people think about her and that others' opinions are "less of a driving force" in her decision-making. She said one outcome of that shift is that she makes time in her life for fewer friendships, but that those she has are deeper and more meaningful. As Grace sees it, her need to be liked has become less pronounced, which allows her to show others more of what she described to be her "toughness or determination." Grace also said that she has learned to have "some sense of humor" about herself and has realized that she is not going to be perfect. She commented, "That's a terrible burden, to want to be perfect."

Echoing Grace, Ted reported that the biggest change in him at mid-life is gaining the realization that, "It's just perfectly acceptable to make mistakes, to be wrong. It's okay to make a fool of yourself." Roger, too, described feeling "less constrained."

Roger spoke also about seeking more meaning in his work and personal life, investing more of himself in his intimate relationships, and being able to step back and reflect on things. About his work he said, "I'm starting to think in nontraditional ways about my career. People can think I'm crazy. It's [my motivation] not driven by title and pay; it's driven by fulfillment and accomplishment." He spoke about wanting to help the organization rediscover the values upon which it was founded. About life at home, he said, "I've re-engaged myself with the church and my kids. My relationship with my wife has improved.... I spent about fifteen years not engaging with her as I could

have. I want to get that relationship back to where it could be and see that it doesn't slip anymore."

The second behavioral indicator is:

- o *Reexamination of values*: making the outer life more coherent with the inner life. Specific indicators are:
 - Questioning of one's "fit" at work and home, from the perspective of psychological, emotional and spiritual alignment
 - Feelings of estrangement from some of what is familiar/comfortable
 - Finding new meaning in existing roles and activities
 - Expansion into new roles and activities
 - Ending of some old relationships; establishment of some new relationships.

Although study participants said they have not moved far from the values they adopted growing up, they did acknowledge some changes that relate to this behavioral indicator. First, they reported being more inclined to question--to themselves and with others--some of the values held by their organization with respect to diversity, workaholism, fair treatment of others, and the meaning of work and career. Second, they believed they act more in accordance with their own values rather than merely saluting what the organization professes.

Third, they were inclined to value personal life more highly than they had at earlier stages of life and career, although some expressed fear about the consequences of slowing down at work: would they become depressed and bored? Most participants reported putting greater emotional distance between them and their organizations, although with some ambivalence about doing so.

They seemed to wonder what would fill the void if they identified less with their job role and organization. Kristin, however, was an interesting exception; she reported being more identified with the corporation's values at mid-life than she had been previously.

Marcia said, "I think I'm the most satisfied I've ever been with what's happened. I realize what my values are and it's clearer to me how I've acted on those values and I'm pleased with that." She said, too, that she realized that she didn't want to spend time climbing the corporate ladder because "it's the other things in life that are so precious and you don't want to miss them."

However, she voiced her ambivalence and fear about making work less of a priority in her life in saying:

While I yearn for quiet and privacy, that doesn't mean that I don't want challenges. I yearn for contentment, but I wonder when you are not moving at that pace, I wonder what happens. What happens if I have to move at a different pace? What kind of person will I be and have I prepared myself for that?

In response to having reached a career plateau and, possibly, the final peak, John said he is "...figuring out that that's okay and I can deal with that. I am getting a lot more richness from accepting the fact and getting to know my family better and doing things I wouldn't have done otherwise.... I have figured out that this is not that bad a place after all." With less of his energy devoted to work, John invested more in his relationships with his daughters and wife. When asked about what matters most to him right now he replied, "More than anything else I'd like to see my daughters have happy marriages.

They're both dating people; they both want it; and they're having trouble figuring it out."

Jill said, "My leadership is gaining its own voice and is more based on who I am as a complete person rather than who the person is I felt I had to be or should be at work." She explained this change as an outgrowth of her questioning some of the values that were inculcated in her by her family of origin and the Catholic Church, which was a strong influence in her childhood and adolescence. Comparing her leadership behavior now with how she led several years ago she said,

My leadership in the past was very much focused on: Here is the role I'm supposed to play and here is the right conduct to act as a leader. But that conduct doesn't necessarily define leadership and, in fact, can inhibit it. The more you can be who you are and live a principled life is more important than leading by following a certain code of conduct.

The third and fourth behavioral indicators deal with shedding outmoded aspects of the self and expressing new dimensions of the self, respectively. While participants reported changes in each of these areas, they had more to say about new parts of the self that were emerging than about those from which they had detached. Looking at the two areas together, one sees that study participants reported being more at ease with themselves, less demanding of perfection, and freer to be who they *want* to be rather they who they think they *ought* to be. Overall, they reported being more balanced in

their personalities and more capable of expressing hitherto undeveloped parts of themselves.

The third behavioral indicator is:

- o *Detachment from outmoded dimensions of the self*: shedding of masks that once served ego development, but not constraining the growth of the core self. Specific indicators are:
 - Greater sense of inner freedom to be one's self
 - Relinquishment of behaviors/roles that seem counterproductive or stale

Several participants reported that they are working on accepting themselves as less than perfect. According to Chuck, it took some soul searching for him to decide that he is not perfect, but once he came to terms with that reality, he found that "the rest fell into place." Jill said, "I'm certainly trying to let go of all those voices that would say you are not good enough if you don't do XYZ and if you are not perfect every day." As reported above, Grace said she has acknowledged to herself that she is not perfect. She explained, "I think my need to be liked was more excessive at earlier points of my life. I'm less inclined to make career or personal decisions because of that." Similarly, Roger said he has learned to accept that he "does not have all the answers." He reported that when his wife was suffering from post-partum depression she wanted him to accompany her to counseling, but he was unable to join her because he "saw it as a sign of weakness." He said today he would "probably go for her and myself."

Other examples of this behavioral indicator are Marcia's and Andy's comments about their tendency to be less extroverted and less anxious. Marcia described herself as, "Less outgoing. A little less anxious about a number of things and quieter." Andy said that in social situations he doesn't "push himself" to be aggressive, as he did when he was younger; now he is comfortable being "a little more low key." Both at home and at work he said he is less "hyperactive and nervous and probably a little less short-fused."

In a similar vein, Chuck spoke about being less goal-driven than ever before. He described with great poignancy the process of letting go of his career expectations and working to define a new sense of self that depends less on career advancement. Chuck said,

A few months back I would have given you bitterness. It was a significant door I've gone through in the last months. It took some grieving to go through it, but I'm definitely through it... Part of it was going through the grieving process. As I look back on it now, I'm not even sure what I was grieving.

The fourth behavioral indicator is:

- o *Emergence of new dimensions of the self:* uncovering and revealing aspects of one's self that had been hidden, unexplored or undeveloped. Specific indicators are:
 - Feel and express new range of feelings that were previously considered inappropriate for one's gender or status
 - Expand role set at home and work with less regard for social approval
 - Express and develop new talents and skills that reflect inner desires rather than external expectations.

Jung's theory on mid-life development contends that adults at this stage of life are likely to develop "contra-sexual" elements of the self that have been undeveloped. For women, this may mean allowing greater expression of the masculine principle, while men may find themselves more able to claim their feminine dimensions. As explained in Chapter II, this phenomenon may be more complicated for executive women, whose personality and role incline them to identify with and express attributes associated with the masculine principle (Hennig & Jardim, 1977)).

Women's Expression of New Aspects of the Self: The archival data collected on the women in this study support the theory that executive women, as girls, were more identified with their fathers and, as a consequence, developed attributes that are associated with the masculine principle. All four women revealed that they had very close relationships with their fathers and were likely to identify more with their fathers than with their mothers. Feedback from their family members reinforced that observation.

Listed below are comments the women made about their fathers when interviewed by the LDF staff during the NewLeader intervention:

He thought I was wonderful and I thought he was wonderful.
(Grace)

I so emulated my father that for some time I saw feminine virtues as not as desirable. I like to cook and so on, but those things came much later in my life. (Grace)

[My mother] had a way of putting herself down. As a consequence, I tried to aim myself toward the characteristics my father had because those were valued. So I placed more

emphasis on the way I was like him rather than the way I was like her. Although the older I get the more I see how I am like her. (Grace)

[Question from the LDF consultant: Do you see any connections between what your father was like and the way you turned out?] Oh, yes. More so than like my mother. Like my dad I am reserved; I am very analytical in how I think through things; I am sure I have incredibly high standards because of him... I like to catch him in his logic flaws. (Jill)

He [my father] spent a lot of time talking to me and listening to me. He loved to hear my opinions about things. (Marcia)

He [my father] was a tremendous influence.... He also taught me to be pretty tough. 'Learn to take care of yourself,' he would say. (Marcia)

Dad was as encouraging of me as my mom wasn't. He took me on sales calls. I'd work in the summer. I watched him meet customers. I have very fond memories of time spent with him. (Kristin)

So I believed that my father was strong, and what I heard from him is that strength and ability to take care of yourself was a very important thing. (Kristin)

When asked by the LDF consultants how their sisters related to or resembled their fathers, the study participants' siblings made these comments:

She is more like him than she is like my mother. She is matter of fact, businesslike, does her job--this is first and foremost. (Jill's sibling)

He showed depression; it ran in his family; [she] struggles with depression. (Marcia's sibling)

In my opinion, my sister is a pretty driven person, more like my father than my mother. (Kristin's sibling)

She was his little lady and he was special to her. (Grace's sibling)

There was always a very positive relationship between the two of them.... She was very special to him. (Grace's sibling)

Father didn't go to college on the GI bill because [she] was born. He wanted to be a doctor. (Grace's sibling)

About their mothers and their relationship with them, the women said,

It [my relationship with my mother] is not as close as my relationship with my dad. It is a good relationship--not a negative relationship. (Jill)

She depended on me a lot. (Marcia)

She did not give me a lot of attention. (Marcia)

It was important to my mother that I have boyfriends and that I go to the prom. It used to annoy me. (Marcia)

We get along well. We were very different, but I could appreciate that. (Grace)

My mother was a very good mother.... But she spent a great deal of time telling me how inferior she was compared to my father--not in so many words. So I grew up thinking you needed to protect her. (Grace)

She was dominated by my father.... I also got from her the lack of self-confidence piece--don't get too proud, too big, or it will get you. I got on the Dean's list every semester and during the last six weeks of school she was convinced I'd flunk out. (Kristin)

These comments suggest that the women in this study identified with their fathers, whose influence they deemed constructive. Moreover, the women and their family members regarded the relationship between the women and their fathers as special. In contrast, the women were more likely to devalue their mothers and, in some cases, feel devalued by them.

At mid-life, however, women reported that they have developed or expressed feminine qualities in ways they had never done before, and some women have begun to recognize more of their mother's qualities in themselves. As an exception, Marcia said, "I realize I've become more like my father." To her, that meant being more able to act on her principles. Others said:

There is a whole emotional, feeling, even feminine side of me. When I first started working I came in with the little blue suit and red tie and I did things the way others were required to do things. I never spoke up about diversity or handling people who might have different style issues. (Jill)

I would say one [new aspect of myself] may be, to use a nice term, the whole feelingness-- be it a sense of justice when I think about things politically; be it in decision making to put people in the play versus cold, hard facts; and even in how I think about decisions for myself. (Jill)

[I have realized that] I am very much my mother's daughter and one of the things I criticized my mother for over the years was getting upset because she couldn't solve all the world's problems.... The older I get the more aware I am that I have a lot of that in me, too. (Grace)

In addition to reporting that they have reclaimed some disowned feminine attributes, these women revealed that they felt freer to express feelings, attitudes and behaviors associated with the masculine realm. The women spoke consistently about increased assertiveness at work and at home. Interestingly, sometimes what they asserted was their femininity or their

identification with other women. Among the comments they made about this change were these:

I find myself being able to me more of a woman and to take a stand on it. I said the other day that I'm almost becoming a feminist, which I probably would have decried earlier. There are things that happen in this organization for women that I would like people to be more aware of. (Jill)

My ability to say no has gotten better. The tough side has gotten better. (Kristin)

I have become more demanding, but I don't think in an excessive way. (Marcia)

[I am] stronger to say no to things, to prioritize, to give more honest feedback to people, to know what my limits are, to be more assertive. (Marcia)

People might see more toughness or determination than they saw before. (Grace)

Although the women reported that they had discovered and revealed new aspects of themselves, they also gave examples of how their self-development and self-expression were limited or made more difficult by organizational expectations related to gender.

I don't know if it's feeling constrained by the role of leader, but I do feel uncertain about how to exercise the role of leader as woman. I still believe that in this culture and in this company I can behave a certain way, and for a guy it would be okay—it would be being tough and defending his turf and resources. For me, it's not being a team player and being a bitch. I feel like there are two codes of conduct and I'm not sure which one I'm supposed to be living up to.... I think that one thing that has been restricting has been this whole idea of a double standard. It makes it very unclear about what we expect in our leaders as an

absolute and what do we expect from our male leaders and our female leaders. (Jill)

Building relationships in business is very hard. Part of it is the male-female thing. There aren't as many women with whom to make relationships. You're often asked to make paternalistic decisions around relationships. A lot of what you give up is what you like to do around relationships. You hold yourself back from being a close friend with someone you might have to terminate.... You give up that desire to mix family and business. It's almost like a liability. If I cared less about relationships, it wouldn't matter as much, since business cares less about relationships and more about numbers. I've come to understand that I think I see it quite a bit differently and that other women do. That's why you get to be seen as being too soft. When it works, that's when they say women are humanizing the workforce. (Kristin)

It's different for me as a woman. There are stereotypes at my level so people are less open to see it any other way. Men have the outlets. Being a female I don't have my group of peers around that they have. It makes me more introverted. I think there are thoughts that women can't be as together [as men] so you avoid ever looking weak, and everybody has to show some weakness some times. (Marcia)

I came to the point where there were some issues where I just decided that I am not going to accommodate to that. It will either require me to play a role twelve hours of the day, every day of my life, which doesn't make any sense, or what I would be accommodating to, rightly or wrongly, was the other person's problem in my mind. (Grace)

In addition to reporting the effects of organizational gender roles, Grace, the oldest woman in the group, and Jill, the youngest, each spoke about feeling constrained by societal and familial gender expectations, which are held by

others and internalized by the women themselves. Jill described feeling an internal pressure to be married with children, like her sisters. Although no family members voiced their expectations, Jill believed that they consider her to be abnormal because she is single and very career-oriented. However, Jill was not completely at odds with this expectation; it also reflects part of her own deep desire. She has considered the possibility of adopting a child as a single parent, which is something her family would not condone. She said, "I think I long for kids. I struggle because I think I should say I long to be married, but I think I miss having kids more than [I miss] having a spouse."

Grace, reflecting on her behavior in her marriage, said,

I had a definition of a female role that I extrapolated from my mother's role. It was not really what she actually did, but I saw her play 'you're so smart; I'm so dumb.' I patterned on what I saw her doing. I had problems in my marriage because my husband was always less successful and more ambitious than I was. So I spent time being deferential so that I wouldn't be threatening.

Today, Grace is in a relationship with a man who feels uncomfortable when she assumes the role of a traditional wife, which she said makes her feel less closeness in the relationship because she "can't do certain kinds of things for him." She does, however, appreciate her freedom as a single woman and is hesitant to remarry because she equates being a wife with enacting the traditional role.

Men's Expression of New Aspects of the Self: Three of the four men in the study provided significant examples of changes in themselves that are

consistent with Jung's prediction that men at mid-life become freer to express their feminine attributes.²⁶ The fourth man, Ted, did not speak about such changes; instead he emphasized how he has become more assertive and forceful. His experience reinforces the theoretical viewpoint that mid-life development is about revealing the parts of one's self that have been kept in the shadow--be they masculine or feminine attributes.

Those who did report, in so many words, that they had become more feminine spoke poignantly about the great opportunity to take up new roles or experiment with new behaviors. They described having more engagement with their children, showing more sensitivity toward their spouses, and being more able to relate emotionally to colleagues. Among their comments were these:

In the last couple of years I really advanced and fostered a much better relationship with my daughters.... I'm listening more and trying to understand. My wife and I have gotten closer because she values that I have a better relationship with my daughters. (Chuck)

I'm trying to be a better listener, to not always have the answer, trying to bring more of the under-developed side of me front, more the feeling, listening, empathy sorts of things. (Chuck)

I'm probably less demanding and more sensitive and open to her [my wife's] feelings and her approaches. I've come to understand and respect her way of doing things. (Andy)

[I am more able to express] emotion, not rage, but like sadness. When I was taking this organization through the process of announcing that we would be sold, I got choked up on it in the presentation, which is the emotion that everybody in the

audience had. When they saw it, they said, 'he's one of us.'
(Andy)

I was trying to suppress my angry emotion and now I've learned to let it out--that you are angry and upset. You have to control it and not go around like a raging idiot, but you can show that you are passionate. (Andy)

[In my] relationship with [my wife], I've learned how to respect that a lot more and benefit from it and give something back to that.... I think I do more of helping at home with the kids.... I make more time for them [my kids]. I don't think they're as intimidated by me. (Roger)

New Aspects of Leadership: Study participants' comments about changes in their leadership suggest that they have begun to place more emphasis on the relational aspects of their role, especially the opportunity to mentor junior staff members. A common theme is that these leaders believed that at earlier stages in their careers they were more concerned about tasks than about people. They said that now they are more likely to balance their interest in business problems with concerns for people. They reported that over the years their field of vision has widened from a very narrow and intense focus on managing concrete problems and achieving results to a broader view that includes the reality of people's needs, feelings, values, and motivations—their own and others'. Both men and women described feeling more responsible to treat people well in their interpersonal interactions.

Chuck reported that his leadership had matured over time as he developed a greater awareness of the "softer side." He commented that he had always prided himself in being a "people person," but realized that he was

“more a people person in my terms rather than theirs.” He credited his NewLeader experience with helping him understand that he should be “concerned about what people are looking for from me rather than what I want.”

Andy described his realization that, as a leader, “being a real person and showing your emotion at times is okay.” He said he has come to understand that “People do want to be led, but if you show emotion they know you are as committed and passionate as they are; don’t hide that as a sign of weakness.” He also described feeling proud of his leadership because he “drives for results” and the people in his organization “generally feel good about what they are doing, are glad to be here, and glad to have me as their leader.”

Roger said, “I’m still very task-oriented, but I have a better balance with the people side of that; I take time to balance people with task. I’m still urgent, but I balance that more with participation.” He described this balance as “a lot healthier for me and those around me.”

Grace said that her leadership “continually gets to be more of a coaching relationship.” When asked what gives her the most satisfaction as a leader at this stage, she said, “Bringing a team together and seeing them get turned on to something and making it happen. Also, my ability to influence important projects. Developing people. I enjoy developing [others].”

Similarly, Marcia spoke about “feeling a much greater responsibility to help them [my staff] grow. I don’t feel that I’m just managing a division; I think I’m managing talents and helping them grow. I have much more concern over that. I think I’m a better mentor.” She said, too, that she has learned “how important it is to make decisions and base them on integrity and fairness.”

According to Jill, five years ago she defined her leadership responsibilities as being “primarily for the business.” Describing her leadership today, she said, “...I have a much more balanced view of my responsibility as being for the people and the business, and a big part of how I get to the business is how hard I work for the people.” She reported that a primary source of satisfaction for her is “seeing my folks grow and develop and have success in their business and move on to other opportunities.”

Kristin’s pattern differed somewhat from the others because throughout her career she has been very focused on the needs of people. One explanation for this difference may be her long-term involvement in human resources. Now as a line manager, she said she is more understanding of financial decisions made by the company chairman and board. She said, “I’ve come to understand that a lot of decisions that are out of line with my personal values are often out of my control.” Still, she said that comparing herself with her male counterparts, “you would see me push harder on the people questions

than the other guys. That's who I am and that's who I want to be. It's a belief system that I've held."

New Self in the Organization: Some participants felt that their development was constrained by their organizational role, but most did not feel that organizational expectations were an insurmountable hurdle for their growth. Roger, who began the NewLeader process because he felt very personally at odds with his organization, was the person who had the most to say about experiencing inner conflict between being himself and succeeding in the organization. Other than Roger, the men did not express much concern about how their development was constrained by the organization.

As reported above, women believed that the executive role is fashioned after a masculine model of behavior and, as a consequence, they felt they had been compelled to compromise essential aspects of themselves to fulfill organizational expectations. The women were more inclined than most of the men to report a sense of personal estrangement with the organization. Yet, both men and women spoke about receiving organizational support for their development and expressed their gratitude toward their organizations for giving them opportunities to achieve and succeed.

The fifth behavioral indicator is:

- o *Expression of spontaneity and playfulness:* becoming more aware of the light-hearted and whimsical aspects of the self and being able to display those to others. Specific indicators are:

- Take self and life less seriously (while simultaneously being serious about one's beliefs and values)
- Enhanced feelings of expansiveness and creativity
- Greater capacity for playful intimacy and satisfying sexuality.

There was less evidence of this behavioral indicator than there was of the others. Some people spoke about taking themselves less seriously and being able to laugh more about their foibles. Jill reported that she is now able to take vacations, which was something she never felt she had time for before. She also left work spontaneously one day to play golf. She said, "A year ago I would have felt guilty. Now, I think it's a good thing to put work aside. I've had to learn to do that."

The best example came from Chuck, who recounted the story of a business trip he took, accompanied by his wife. He said that when they arrived at the airport of their destination, he took her to lunch. He reported,

She was stunned by that because I usually just drop her off. I said, 'let's go walk on the beach.' She said, 'This is different.' I said, "Yes. They won't miss me for a couple of hours.' I felt like I could do it.

When asked what allowed him to behave differently, Chuck said,

I don't know. It's just part of this collective process. Life continues to go on. I have this woman I care deeply about and a couple of hours with her is more important than what could have happened in the office.

2. Behavioral Indicators of Lack of Individuation

Comparatively little of what study participants said about themselves is consistent with the behavioral indicators of lack of individuation (See Appendix H for a description of the behavioral indicators of a lack of individuation). Participants were more likely to comment on how they were changing, rather than how they were stuck. However, when reporting changes in themselves, participants spoke about being in the midst of a change process, rather than having achieved some end point. Most often, they described having made some changes and knowing that more growth was possible.

Certainly there is evidence in the data about how participants struggled with issues related to individuation. The interview material reported in the previous section on individuation showed that participants wrestled with letting go of outmoded aspects of the self and revealing parts of themselves that are more consistent with their true nature. Since most of the participants had remained identified very closely with their families of origin and the corporations for which they work, they found it challenging to separate themselves psychologically from the influence of those institutions. Nonetheless, the data showed that they appeared to be evolving, to a certain extent, toward greater individuation.

Some participants did make explicit comments that are consistent with a lack of individuation. Grace's belief that she cannot be a wife without assuming a very traditional role is one example. Her comments revealed that she is clearly ambivalent about this role. On the one hand, Grace likes the

freedom she experiences as a single woman—for instance, being able to go away for a weekend with friends. On the other hand, she knows that she would find it difficult to continue to be so independent if she were married. As reported previously, she acknowledged that without being able to behave like a traditional wife, which is the case in her current intimate relationship, she is unable to feel the closeness she desires with her partner. Grace said,

Because of my vision of what it means to marry, now I can say I'm going away for a weekend; I couldn't say that if we [my partner and I] were married. I would have to grow up a lot to be able to do that.... I've made some changes, though. I'm a work in progress.

In addition, Grace described the difficulty of being unable to generate a meaningful personal goal, a situation that she believed would be different if she were married. Despite her career success, she said she had never been driven by her career. Now, as she imagines retirement, it is difficult for her to be excited about a future outside of work. She said,

In my personal life, I'm doing projects. I re-decorated my apartment after my divorce. This new house I bought for my brother is a project, but it's not a goal. I wish I had something that I was working toward. My alternative to a goal has been to make people I care about happy, and I can't do that. I can't control it because what makes them unhappy is not me.

Ted spoke with great poignancy about how unfulfilled he feels in areas of his personal life. He described being at an equestrian event where a string

quartet played. The experience reminded him of his unfulfilled passions for horse riding and playing the violin. These activities were important earlier in his life, but he abandoned them in adulthood because of the overwhelming demands of the executive role. He said,

Do I have some violins? Yes. Do I ever play any more? No. Why do I do that? Is there any reason why, when I go home at night, would it not be interesting to have a glass of wine and play the violin for an hour? You can even have timeshares on horses now. Why not go find out about it and saddle up every third Saturday? Is that impractical? No.... I don't know what these demons are that keep me from doing certain things. Life is good. I'm healthy, basically happy, great kids, super wife, more money than I ever thought I'd have. Yet, life, in terms of some activities, is narrower than it has ever been in forty years. It's kind of a shame. Especially in areas that have some richness to them. I play golf and that's okay, but it really struck me on this trip to Vienna [what was missing].

Also, Ted spoke with emotion about his longing for intimate friendship and his seeming inability to achieve it. He said,

I have close friends, but most are from another time.... But in terms of going to lunch with somebody, being able to be vulnerable, laugh about things, it's noticeable. I'm talking about personal close relationships. It's very hard. I don't link this to any particular thing. There are all kinds of social barriers. For half of the population, there is a social barrier, and I have had very close relationships with women over the years, but that just has to happen. That's kind of sad. On the other side, in terms of where I live, I've got tennis buddies, but that doesn't generate closeness. I can tell you about their tennis game or business, but I can't tell you what makes them tick. They don't really know me. I think you need to have people who know what you're about outside of the business strategy. I miss that and it's getting worse.

2. Data related to the issue of mid-life crisis

There are data in this study that support the idea that mid-life is a period of psychological turmoil that is produced by unconscious processes (Jung, 1969b). Yet, there also are data that support the idea that mid-life is no more or less a growth period than any other stage in adult development and that the catalyst for growth is more related to external events than internal stirrings (Neugarten and Datan, 1974; Vaillant, 1977). What participants said about their growth processes, past and present, does not support just one viewpoint about how and why change happens at mid-life. There are, however, some differences by age that may be significant.

It is interesting to note that the two youngest people in the study--who are in the late-thirties to early-forties age group that Jung and D. Levinson cited as the pivotal period for the mid-life crisis--are the ones whose experience most resembles what Jungian theory says about mid-life crisis. Unlike other study participants, who described from memory these earlier life stages, Jill, age 38, and Roger, age 42, reported their here-and-now experience. It is possible that the retrospective versus real-time perspective influenced the study participants' self-reports.

Of all the study participants, Jill and Roger spoke with the greatest intensity about a driving, inner need for change. Both described being at an extreme point of frustration with how they lived their lives. By their own accounts, they were desperate to live differently. Speaking about herself

before she entered NewLeader, Jill said, “ I didn’t know how to get unstuck and didn’t know how to go to the next level. Where I was going was intolerable.... There was a little voice inside of me that said you have to resolve all of this once and for all.” Roger spoke about being “on a crash course” and “becoming more and more drained.” In response to this internal urgency, each of them said they engaged in a comprehensive overhaul of their priorities and strove to live life differently. It seemed that Jill and Roger felt their choice was: change or die--psychologically, spiritually and, perhaps, physically.

Another group of participants--Marcia, Kristin, Andy, Chuck, Ted-- clusters in age from forty-five to fifty. Among these, Chuck is the one most likely to say that he has recently faced some kind of personal crisis: namely, the realization that he has been put in a “holding pattern” at his job and that future advancement is very uncertain. This circumstance clearly triggered Chuck to engage in the kind of self-examination and reevaluation of life’s priorities that are associated with the mid-life crisis. However, the apparent cause of what he calls his “soul-searching” was an external event, not something that arose from within him.

Marcia referenced a “ mid-life crisis” when she told about having a second child at age forty-two. She reported that having another baby was just something she had to do, despite the difficulties it created in her daily life. She described how this event threw her home-life into turmoil and surfaced difficult issues between her and her husband.

Kristin divorced and remarried in her early thirties and by her early forties she had two children. She described the time when her children were both under ten years old and she and her husband were working full-time as being very difficult, “a project.” The only instance of inner conflict that Kristen described was the time during NewLeader when she became aware that she had not envisioned herself living beyond the high school graduation of her children. She had no explanation for this understanding of her own mortality, but said that recognizing this belief and processing it with the NewLeader consultants had helped her to view her lifespan differently.

Neither Ted’s nor Andy’s accounts of the last decade or so of their lives included any evidence of significant emotional turmoil. Although Ted, as reported earlier, felt dissatisfied with the narrowness of his current existence, both he and Andy described their lives as moving pretty smoothly from one year to the next. They did report that they had developed and changed over time, but without the suggestion of any intense inner conflict or struggle. There had been no significant external crisis or challenge to force them into a period of extraordinary self-reflection, and no powerful impetus had emerged from within. At fifty, Andy did, however, initiate his participation in NewLeader because he thought it was the right time for him to engage in a self-assessment.

According to what Grace, the oldest member of the group, said about her life, the career side could be charted as an ascending line of achievement,

success, and external reward, while her marriage could be plotted as a series of rises and falls from her late twenties to her early fifties. Grace suggested that throughout her marriage she struggled with feelings of self-adequacy when comparing herself to her husband. Despite her greater career achievements, she felt inferior to him in ability to do many things, such as handy work around the house. She reported feeling a sense of triumph when able to screw a screw on her own. The way Grace told her story suggested that her struggles with self-development were both a reaction to her husband's behavior and her own internal need to define herself and her role differently. In some respects, she was attempting to live out a childhood script that fostered both self-reliance (her father's message) and dependence (her mother's model). At the same time, she was attempting to free herself from these early-life influences and the psychological pressure they created in her. Her divorce may have been both result and cause of her change process.

3. Connections between NewLeader and Individuation

In responding to questions about their development, study participants often referenced their experience in NewLeader. Such comments were made often in the first interview, which focused on the NewLeader experience, but they occurred also in the second interview, in which the interviewer did not refer to NewLeader. Most study participants regarded NewLeader as one of the primary catalysts for and facilitators of change during this period of their

lives. In the second interview, when describing changes in themselves participants made comments such as:

This [new self-image] was helped greatly by the NewLeader feedback because I got feedback from people that made all of that reasonable. (Ted)

I feel pleased by what I learned through the whole NewLeader process and I feel that I am growing as a result of it. (Jill)

The NewLeader study helped me to understand that [self-insight] better. That was a takeaway from the NewLeader program. (Andy)

I'm not sure how well I could have made it through this [crisis] without [the NewLeader consultants]. I don't know who I would have called or talked with. (Chuck)

I don't have a sounding board and I feel constrained. I use [the NewLeader] consultant for that. (Marcia)

Their reports suggest that they believed that they would not have experienced the kind of growth they did without the NewLeader intervention. That is, in their minds, their self-development and the NewLeader experience are linked.

Data from the Thematic Apperception Test

Evidence of lack of individuation and of the painful aspects of individuation is more apparent in the data from the TAT than in the interview data. In the interviews, study members spoke occasionally, but not extensively, about depressive feelings. In the TAT data, the clinical

psychologist who analyzed and reported on the TAT findings found “a significant amount of depressive imagery” and evidence of “guilt and remorse” that is consistent with depressive themes. In addition, the TAT report indicated that study participants “experience pressure to meet the expectations of others and feel somewhat restricted by these expectations.” To deal with these pressures, the report stated, these people “demonstrate a sort of passive compliance and may comply despite an impulse to resist.” Some evidence of resistance did emerge, but it was quickly denied.

According to the TAT report, study participants showed that they avoid their aggression and depression “in a unique way, by detaching emotionally and intellectually,” which enables them to “function well on a sort of ‘autopilot.’” The report stated that the primary defense used by participants is denial, with some people refusing to acknowledge affect. When looking at a card that often evokes stories of a man feeling depressed or contemplating suicide, one male study member described the picture as “kind of an emotionless picture so I can’t relate feelings at all.” Another man acknowledged the affect in the same picture, but exerted tremendous effort to deny it. He described the scene as, “It’s more a reflective, upbeat mode, as opposed to thinking: ‘Will I commit suicide?’” A female participant described “dead bodies in the corporate world,” but then quickly distanced from the affect in the image by moving to “medieval times.”

The TAT report stated also that the study members “may have some limitations in their interpersonal lives.” Three typical patterns emerged. One, these people often have relationships based on expectations that others have for them. Two, they express a sense of regret regarding their relationships or longing for more interpersonal contact. Three, they present idealized, fantasy versions of relationships, which, the report stated, “may allow the subjects to remain detached from real, and more complicated, relationships.”

The TAT interpreter observed differences between men and women, noting that the men appeared “more distorted” by virtue of their over-identification with the stories and their inability to maintain distance, which is not a typical response to the TAT. The men voiced their clear sense of obligation and their resentment about having to fulfill it. According to the report, their primary attitude was “I don’t want to do it, but I will anyway.” They expressed a greater degree of aggression, often passively expressed, in response to external demands.

About individual male clients, the report made these comments:

[This male client] seems to struggle with the balance between submission/aggression and guilt/innocence.

The stories in this protocol suggest a sense of hopelessness, frustration, and boredom with the perceived endlessness of obligations. Depression and regret seem to color memories of the past.

At the level of content, [this male client] creates stories in which passive resistance and denial help characters avoid conflicts. At the level of process, [this client] offers fairly brief and

unelaborated stories, suggesting that his approach to the task is similarly avoidance without being openly resistant.

The results of the TAT suggest that [this male client] may often feel restricted by the expectations of others, and that he often responds to these restrictions with a somewhat grudging, passive compliance.

The women were found to be more emotionally conflicted about their sense of obligation, but their behavior was less rebellious, more obedient, and more accommodating. They expressed a sense of idealized happiness, that one will "live happily ever after." They also revealed a wish that things in their life could be different, in particular, an expressed desire for their personal life to be better.

About individual female study participants, the report made these comments:

In general, [her] stories raise themes of obligation to others and their, and her own, expectations of hard work...[she] may be quite successful... However, her own creative and more personal goals may be sacrificed for the more conventional success and approval she sees. [She] may be longing to recapture a sense of freedom from responsibility.

...[she] allows herself to feel little of the loneliness this image suggests. Her stories also suggest a sense of need to make changes in her life, but simultaneously remain detached from any sense of regret or depression.... Overall, this suggests that [this client] struggles with regret, depression and loneliness, but avoids these feelings through distancing and denial.

[This female client] may also be somewhat vulnerable to depression in the face of pressure to complete difficult or unpleasant tasks.... Tentatively, this may indicate that [this client] vacillates between more obsessive defenses against some depression, becoming detail-oriented and using denial to avoid

difficult themes, and a more disorganized set of defenses, such as vagueness and confusion.

[This client] presents herself with a choice between cold images ('winter and ice') and warmth ('budding flowers'); she 'chooses to believe' in the image of springtime. [This client] may often 'choose to believe' the more pleasant, conventional and benign version of reality, despite evidence of more complicated aspects of the reality she lives.

The report concluded that "three defensive styles emerged for the group as a whole, all of which are consistent with the use of denial and limited access to aggression." First, it appeared that study participants tended to dampen affect and excitement. According to the report, a "degree of restriction, boredom and depression may limit engagement in activities and interpersonal life." Second, the report showed that study members' responses seemed to have a "somewhat conventional, sedate quality;" picture descriptions were often bland and uncomplicated. Third, there was some evidence of obsessive tendencies, with study participants' responses being highly orderly and lacking in imaginative content.

Interviews with Leadership Development Staff

My purpose for interviewing the LDF staff was for me to learn about their perspective on the client and to be able to make comparisons between their views of the clients and the clients' views of themselves.

Overall, there was great consistency between what the clients and consultants said about the key development issues facing the clients and ways in which the clients were changing. In several instances, the clients and the consultants used the same or similar words in their descriptions. This level of consistency is not surprising because the NewLeader process emphasizes a joint effort between the consultants and client to arrive at a distilled understanding of the client's strengths, weaknesses, and development needs.

However, there was one way in which the consultants' views and the clients' views differed. Like the TAT data, the consultants' reports elaborated more on some of the difficulties the clients faced, emphasized more the unfulfilled areas of development, and cited future challenges that may present problems for the clients. The consultants' comments tended to present a more complicated and balanced picture of the clients' development, with equal measure given to the light and dark tones.

Interviews with Clients' Spouses

The spouse interviews didn't generate much new content, which may be their most significant aspect. The three wives interviewed were more able than the two husbands interviewed to comment on their spouses' development. The wives had been more involved in the NewLeader process than the husbands

and they had more to say about what the process meant to their spouses, how their spouses were affected by it, and how their spouses had changed or not as a result. The wives also had comparatively more to say about the issues their spouses face at mid-life. The interviews with the husbands were fairly short in length because they did not have many comments to make.

Albeit limited, the content provided by the spouse interviews was highly consistent with what the clients said. Just as the consultants and clients often used similar language, the wives, in particular, spoke in terms similar to those used by their spouses when describing their spouses' development.

The wives confirmed that they had felt initial skepticism about the NewLeader process because they didn't trust the organization's motives or they feared that they might say something that would harm their spouses' careers. The husbands did not report these feelings, but said, instead, that they were glad to participate if it was useful for their spouse.

CHAPTER X.
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, PART 2
INDIVIDUATION

Discussion of the Data Collection Process

There were no significant differences in process between the first and second interviews, except that there was overall a greater sense of ease between the study participants and me. Whereas in the first interview, the trust between us was primarily an extension of their trust of the NewLeader consultants, in the second interview, we had a real-time experience with each other on which to base expectations. My impression is that they entered the second interview more comfortable than they had been at the start of the first interview. I know that my own comfort was higher the second time.

While there might have been a greater ease in the *process* of the second interviews, there was greater strain related to *content*. In particular, taking the TAT created anxiety for participants, which they expressed by making jokes with me about my learning how crazy they are or my finally understanding

the deep, dark truth about them. They also voiced an earnest interest in learning the results of this test, more so than they did about other findings from the study.

Participants' response to taking the TAT is worth exploring. People are expected to exhibit some anxiety about taking a test that is designed to reveal information outside of their conscious awareness. Yet, the way that these participants managed their anxiety suggests something about their general style of coping with stressful events. Instead of directly expressing concern about taking the test, they joked with me about the test's power and sought to control its effects by getting information about the results. No one openly refused to comply with my request to take the test, but they met only the minimal requirements when carrying out the task. As the TAT report suggested, participants' reluctant compliance may be an indication of a personality orientation that inclines them to: (1) meet others' requests, sometimes grudgingly, with insufficient regard for their own needs; (2) handle a personally threatening situation by denying feelings or expressing them indirectly; and (3) attempt to minimize the dangerous effects of a situation by trying to exert control.

In addition, participants' cooperation with my request can also be understood as a function of our respective group memberships. Social psychology experiments, although they often neglect to account for group-level effects, show that the roles of "researcher" and "subject" can have powerful

effects on individual behavior. Even though these study participants are senior executives (high status) and I am a doctoral student (low status), our roles in this encounter suggest that I have some authority with which they should comply. I, after all, have a mysterious test that has the ability to reveal their secrets; I am the “psychologist.” Moreover, in their role as a NewLeader client, they have experienced the benefits of trusting the consultant, whose mantle I wore in this situation. Cooperating with my request was a natural function of their role.

With respect to quantity of data, the second interviews yielded less than the first. It seemed somewhat more difficult for participants to answer some of the questions in the second interview, which required them to describe themselves, their values, and their adult development. And, to some extent, they had addressed some of this content, especially about development, in the first interview on the NewLeader process. There were more instances in the second interview when participants responded to a question by saying they had already answered it.

Just as their response to the TAT was diagnostic, so, too, was participants’ inability or reluctance to be expansive in answering this set of questions. Although participants reported increased levels of introspection and self-reflection, they demonstrated limitations in these capabilities. It was much easier for them to discuss the particulars of their NewLeader experience than to reflect on themselves. Several of them said they had never given much

thought to the kinds of questions I was asking and that they were formulating ideas for the first time in response to my inquiries. When a question in the second interview related to one in the first interview, rather than elaborate on their earlier answer, they were more inclined to say “I think I’ve already answered that.” I had the sense that the territory of self-reflection was unfamiliar and somewhat threatening, despite the otherwise favorable conditions of the interview.

Discussion of the Findings²⁷

The data on individuation can be analyzed from several perspectives. First, by considering together the material generated from participants’ unconscious and conscious psyches, one gets a more complete picture of their individuation process. Second, using individual- and group-level analyses to interpret the findings creates a more textured understanding of participants’ cognition, affect, and behavior (Alderfer, 1987). At the group level, the influence of gender, role and age are particularly relevant to the findings of this study. At the individual level, one can examine personality and explore how the individual self relates to the collective unconscious through the expression of archetypes. In the following sections, I elaborate on these different interpretations of the findings on individuation and examine how

these multiple influences affect the individuation process for this executive group. In addition, I relate these findings to relevant studies in the field.

Viewing Interview and TAT Data Together

The data from the participant interviews, which reflect mostly the study members' conscious awareness of themselves, suggest that these executives are engaged to some extent in the process of individuation, according to the behavioral indicators I developed. The data from the TAT, which give voice to participant's unconscious, suggest that their egos work overtime to stay identified with external expectations and to repress parts of the self that threaten perceived social acceptability, thus inhibiting individuation.

Thus, in this study, the measures that tap the unconscious and conscious aspects of the psyche, respectively, yielded different data, which is a pattern consistent with previous studies of individuation (Parker and Aldwin, 1997). However, the specific content revealed by the measures used in this study differs somewhat from what was produced by similar measures in prior studies.

In that earlier research, the TAT, more so than ego-level self-assessment measures, mostly supported the hypothesis that a gender cross-over occurs for men and women at mid-life (James and Lewkowitz, 1997; Neugarten and Gutmann, 1964). However, in this study, the interview data did show some

clear evidence of gender cross-over, but with some complications, and such gender-related findings were not so apparent in the TAT.

The interview data from the men demonstrated consistently that three of the four of them were decidedly focused on developing their more feminine attributes. The fourth man (Ted) did suggest that he had become increasingly more sensitive to the needs of others, yet, his primary developmental focus was on becoming more forceful in the expression of his talents, which he had been unable to do earlier in his life. Thus, these data tend in the direction of a gender cross-over for men, but are most consistent with the hypothesis that mid-life development entails developing whatever aspect of one's self has been undeveloped or unexpressed, be it masculine or feminine (Whitmont, 1991).

For women, the interview data showed their becoming more feminine in some respects and more masculine in others. This more complicated response among the women seems consistent with hypotheses about the personality of executive women (Hennig and Jardim, 1977) and about the effects of the executive role on women in male-dominated environments (Eagly and Johnson, 1990). (Gender effects are discussed more completely below.) These data also support the hypothesis that mid-life development involves the expression of previously disowned masculine and feminine dimensions of a woman's self.

What was revealed by the TAT data in this study is that both male and female participants experience "darker" emotions--depression, sadness, anger,

frustration, resentment, loneliness--to a greater extent than they consciously acknowledged in their interview data. The men were found to have a clear sense of duty coupled with strong underlying feelings of resentment and anger about their obligations. The women experienced more emotional conflict about their obligations, but were less aggressive in expressing it and more prone to use child-like thinking to avoid it. Instead of necessarily indicating the "contrasexual" aspects of the unconscious psyche of participants, the TAT data might be understood to reveal hidden elements of the wounded masculine for men and the wounded feminine for women. (See the section on archetypes below for a more complete discussion of these unconscious patterns.)

A summary of the common themes that emerged from the unconscious reports of this group of executives would include these observations:

- They are angry and frustrated about conforming to the expectations of others. They are disappointed and sad because their lives are unfulfilled in certain respects. In particular, they long for greater intimacy with others and more freedom to be themselves.
- Their ego over-identifies with the values of the external world and has disowned the parts of the psyche that don't conform to over-simplified

expectations of what it means to be a good person and responsible corporate citizen.

- The men want to rebel against the constraints of their world, but haven't been able to do so because their ego has decided that acknowledging and acting on such feelings threatens its survival. Their ego believes that compliance is safer than rebellion, and so they are afraid to behave more freely.
- The women tend toward overly optimistic and naively simplistic interpretations of the world, perhaps, because they deny their own power and aggression.
- For both men and women, their creativity, passion, joy, wisdom and power are limited because their conscious self keeps too tight a rein on the impulses and feelings that reside within the unconscious realm.

In contrast, based on the common themes found in the interview data, one might draw these conclusions about individuation in this group of executives:

- Although they have not strayed far from the traditional values with which they were raised--values that are in some respects embodied in the

organizations for which they work--they have become increasingly more able to determine for themselves what matters in life and to act in accord with our own beliefs and priorities. They show sides of themselves they haven't shown before. Sometimes doing so puts them at odds with others, as when the women among them voice their opinions about fair treatment for minority members of the company. And sometimes such changes bring them closer to people they care about, as when the men in the group express greater intimacy toward their wives and children.

- Having lived lives that demand and reward extraverted behavior, they now long for some time to listen within, for privacy, for quiet. Because endeavors of self-reflection are not well-understood in their world, they feel somewhat uncomfortable admitting this need. They worry that other people might misunderstand or misjudge this change in them. They wonder if people will accept them if they fail to be the "entertainer" or the "driving force" and worry about who they will be if they are not that.
- Although the instances are few, they have known moments of spontaneity. Feeling free from restraint is an unfamiliar state for them and achieving it requires a fight with demon-messages from the past. Taking time for themselves, for family, for fun is forbidden fruit that they've resisted for

many years. To appreciate themselves as they are violates long-held beliefs about the desirability of achieving perfection.

- At mid-life, they are awakening to new possibilities in themselves. For the younger members of the group, there is cautious optimism about what they can do and who they can be now that they have begun to shed some of the anachronistic layers of their self. They have a sense of life begun anew, albeit with a tentative foothold in the new world. They want to live the next stage of their lives differently.
- The older members of the group see both possibility and limitation in what lies ahead. Quiet fears nag at them--about losing their potency, about never regaining what they had earlier in life, about not finding meaning in life--but they try to stifle or ignore such feelings. They are settled into this life stage, but are also beginning to look ahead to a new life a few years down the road. Thinking about retirement, a new career, different extracurricular activities, or making work less important in their lives is exhilarating and frightening.
- The women in the group realize that expectations of their work role have interfered with their development. Having matured to a state where they can value and express the feminine in themselves more than ever before,

they find that many of the men (and sometimes other women) reject or fear those parts of them. They are more forceful in certain areas of their lives-- setting boundaries, taking stands, speaking their minds and hearts. Yet, they have conflicting internal expectations about who they should be. Most importantly, they question how can they be a "woman executive," where due attention is given to each aspect of the role.

- The men in the group are unaware of, or at least say little about, a comparable limitation. Yet, they have occasional moments of thinking that what is required of them as executives might interfere with their development. Most of them don't feel at odds with the organizations that employ them; however, they have felt estranged from their loved ones over the years. Recently, they are more able to acknowledge and express the feeling side of them, both at home and at work. Doing so has brought great rewards. Like the women, they, too, continue to discover their personal strengths and feel more able to act on them in the world.
- All of them appreciate what their organizations have done for them. They are grateful for all of the opportunities for advancement and development that have come their way.

Viewing the two data sets together creates a more whole picture of these executives at mid-life. This rounded view shows that they are engaged in the process of individuation, but that their ego is attached to a narrow self-concept that to a significant degree represses the complexity and richness of their deeper self. Listening to the unconscious material the study members presented, one senses a long-standing fear associated with the prospect of change. For them to feel, think or behave differently represents a dangerous possibility. Yet, also contained within their unconscious are the denied aspects of themselves, which could emerge if allowed: the more rebellious, pleasure-seeking, expressive, and passionate sides.

A consequence of judging the interview data in light of what was revealed in the TAT, is that one might question the extent of study members' self-reported changes. That is, their unconscious projections reveal a very psychologically conservative stance toward change, non-conformity, and flouting of others' expectations. Thus, what these executives consider to be instances of self-expression may not be similarly regarded by others.

Interaction of Role and Personality

Some researchers contend that an individual's behavior in an organization is a function of an interaction between personality and role. They suggest that roles have psychological properties that influence the individual and, likewise, that the individual shapes the role through his or her values,

life-goals, and self-image (Alderfer, 1987; Katz & Kahn, 1978; D. Levinson, 1959). Alderfer (1987) wrote that group effects of hierarchical-group membership (e.g., the executive level) arise from the “nature of the work required of people who occupy the different levels, from the various personal attributes that the work calls for from incumbents, and from the relations that develop between people who occupy different positions in the hierarchy” (p. 206).

Using this theoretical framework, one can argue that the interaction of executive role and executive personality was a likely influence on the individuation process of the executives in this study. If organizational role has this degree and kind of influence on executive personality, one question is: Will organizations allow executives to individuate? This question is especially relevant if, as reported in Chapter II, Kanter (1993) was accurate in contending that the executive role encourages loyalty, conformity, and acceptance of authority.

The literature on executive personality suggests that two types of personalities are common among the executive group: narcissistic and obsessive compulsive (Kernberg, 1984; H. Levinson, 1994; Zaleznik, 1975). In this study, the data collected in two rounds of participant interviews and the TAT suggest that both of these personality orientations are present in study members. In Chapter VIII, I explored the data related to narcissism, or the condition of an impaired sense of self. The TAT data, presented in Chapter IX,

indicated that participants used obsessive defenses, such as paying excessive attention to detail, being highly ordered, and being limited in creative association.

One psychological effect of the executive role may be to reinforce both narcissistic and obsessive compulsive tendencies in individuals who become executives. For instance, since being promoted through the managerial ranks requires one to please those in authority, people who want to succeed can become acutely attuned to meeting the needs and expectations of others. When one's sense of self is fragile, one is vulnerable to being overly dependent on the approval of others. As the members of this study demonstrated, one of their developmental tasks was to be more self-directed in determining what constitutes personal success and satisfaction rather than over-relying on external judgments. Yet, changing this behavior may be difficult not only because of its characterological roots, but also because of years of role reinforcement.

Similarly, the executive role, with its emphasis on the value of rationality, can reinforce obsessive compulsive tendencies. The TAT data revealed that these executives had difficulty creating imaginative, unpredictable stories and were more inclined to describe the pictures rather than associate to them, thus, suggesting a more obsessive style. The TAT also showed that these executives had urges to rebel against controls and to free themselves from constraint, but they resisted such impulses. Although

personality may account for some of this effect, it is likely that their role has reinforced such compliance and taught them to play it safe in new situations.

With the exception of Roger, who voiced his difficulty with organizational constraints, the conscious reports of most study members did not include expressions of resentment about being restricted by their organizational role. The women described the gender-related limitations or their role, but, nonetheless they expressed appreciation for their organizations and congruence with organizational expectations (see below for a more complete discussion of gender and role). In the interviews, most men gave fairly innocuous examples of being out of sync with their organizations and overall expressed alignment with organizational values. Yet, when men and women alike spoke from their unconscious through the TAT, they revealed a desire to be more free from external obligations and showed the depressive effects of being overly compliant with others' demands at their own expense.

Thus, although the interaction of executive role and executive personality may serve to create or reinforce psychological conditions that can interfere with individuation, the TAT data indicate that the seeds of growth remain buried in the unconscious. Study participants' ego-level reports suggested that they are more able than ever before to act in accordance with their own values and to express undeveloped aspects of themselves, despite the limitations of personality or role. And their unconscious revealed that they might further their individuation if they were able to unearth their desires to

develop and express more of their true selves, including the darker elements.

When considering what facilitates or inhibits individuation among these executives, one needs to account for role, personality, and the conscious and unconscious elements of the psyche.

Interaction of Role and Gender

Just as the data on study participants' experience of NewLeader showed that gender made a difference in terms of what men and women valued about and needed from the intervention, so, too, were gender differences apparent in the findings about individuation. In the case of individuation, women voiced concern about how their development was hindered or complicated by the expectations of their work role and they revealed internal conflicts related to fulfilling the dual roles of independent career woman and devoted wife and mother.

D. Levinson (1996) said about his research on women, " While women's lives are obviously different in basic respects from those of men, I was surprised by the extent and power of the differences revealed by this study." Although I was not particularly surprised by the differences in the psychology and life experiences of executive women and men, I was very touched by the deep struggle that women undergo just in trying to be themselves. D. Levinson's research on women was conducted sixteen years prior to this study. Given the impact of the women's movement and the increased presence of

women in the workplace during last two decades, one might conclude that being an executive woman would be easier today than the accounts of the women in this study suggest. Sadly, not much has changed since D. Levinson conducted his interviews.

As discussed in Chapter IV, one of D. Levinson's significant contributions to the theory of women's development was his identification of two archetypes that influence women's psychology: the "Traditional Homemaker Figure" and the Anti-Traditional Homemaker Figure." Although I am critical of his choice of labels for these archetypes, which I find retrogressive, I believe that he is accurate in suggesting that the identification that women have with these roles goes beyond socialization and is, in fact, very deeply embedded in the psyche.²⁸

All of the women in this study--single, married, divorced--expressed some level of conflict about combining the roles of mother and wife with the executive role. It is not surprising that Grace, who is of the generation of women who pioneered career success in the upper echelons of corporations, experienced this conflict most deeply. She and her peers were raised by mothers who, at least in the ideal, were expected to embody the traditional homemaker. Her description of her inner experience suggests that the image of this figure is deeply rooted in her. Yet, Grace has also lived out the archetype of D. Levinson's "Anti-traditional Figure" with great aplomb.

Externally, she took up each of these roles easily, but, internally, she was torn between the expectations of the two.

It was interesting to find that Jill, the youngest member of the study, also experienced a version of tension between these female archetypes. Although Jill has been the consummate “career woman,” she acknowledged that one of her inner voices has begun to question more loudly her singular devotion to work. D. Levinson (1996), in describing one woman’s reaction to the “Anti-Traditional Figure,” said, “She wanted greater freedom of choice yet found herself deeply rooted in the traditional pattern by virtue of her own personality development as well as the shaping influences of our social institutions.” His words fit Jill’s dilemma, yet, her proposed resolution of the tension is definitely “modern.” Rather than seek a husband, she may become a single mother.

Kristen and Marcia, the two married women and mothers in the study, expressed their own versions of this pull between the two archetypal figures. Each of them was very committed to career and to motherhood. Listening to what they say, one has the impression that marriage is third in line compared with the other two priorities at this point in their lives. Their struggle with these dual roles is evident on several fronts. One, how can they reveal their “mother” self at work without being devalued professionally? Two, how can they and their husbands arrive at an agreeable arrangement for sharing the load of parenting and household duties? Or, said differently, how can they

and their husbands demonstrate sufficient respect for the importance of the woman's career role? Three, how can they manage the inner tension between the two archetypal figures? That is, can they be both a good mother/wife and a successful executive without exhausting themselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually?

Added to the tension they experience between these archetypal figures is their conflict in trying to live out the traditional expectations of an executive. The executive role, as they interpret it, reinforces behavior associated with the masculine principle and demeans many characteristics of the feminine. Because as girls these women identified so closely with their fathers and dissociated themselves from their mothers, earlier in their careers they could more easily identify with this masculine role and ignore the feminine aspects of themselves. At mid-life, however, they are saddened by the realization that they have repressed or denied aspects of their feminine selves and enlivened by the new expression of the feminine within them.

Yet, their making this internal adjustment to value the feminine in themselves does not alter the external judgment others make against it. Thus, these executive women find themselves in a quandary about how to more fully express the feminine without fatally compromising their professional identity. They have made efforts to redefine the executive role to encompass more of the feminine, yet they continue to feel some sense of alienation from the organizations to which they devote much of their time and energy.

The literature on women's leadership suggests that role trumps gender among executive women because they must identify with men to succeed in the male environment that predominates at the top of organizations (Eagly and Johnson, 1990). Reporting on their meta-analysis of gender and leadership style, Eagly and Johnson said,

Thus, when women were quite rare in leadership roles and therefore tended to have the status of token in organizations or groups, they abandoned stereotypically feminine styles characterized by concern for the morale and welfare of people in the work setting and consideration of these people's views when making decisions. These findings suggest that women may tend to lose authority if they adopt distinctively feminine styles of leadership in extremely male-dominated roles. Women who survive in such roles probably have to adopt the styles typical of male role occupants (p. 248).

The female participants in this study spoke about placing increased value on their feminine attributes and described feeling less cautious, although certainly not free, about displaying their more feminine selves in their professional roles. These data suggest that role may not eclipse gender as fully among executive women at mid-life and that women's life/career stage is another factor to consider when analyzing how women lead. The cause of this age-related change would be twofold: one, at mid-life, executive women are more able to accept and express their feminine side; and two, at this career stage, women feel more professionally secure and, thus, are more able to be more fully themselves.

Men: The men in this study made no reference to gender as a factor in their development, but one can hypothesize that gender influenced their thoughts, feelings, and behavior as much it affected the women. When a group is in the majority in a particular context, as is the case for white men at the executive level, members of that group can be blind to the influence of their group identity, despite the reality that membership in that group significantly influences how one perceives others and is perceived by them (Alderfer, 1987). The reports of women in this study and the research on gender and leadership suggest that the executive role is defined in terms of the masculine principle. If that is so, what is the interaction between gender and role for executive men and what effect does that interaction have on men's development?

Although being male didn't necessarily make life easy for these executives, one can argue that the men in the study had an unquestioned sense of belonging in their organizations because of being men. The male study participants did report personal examples of not quite fitting in one way or another at the executive level, but they did not link those instances to gender nor did they convey the same sense that the women did of feeling fundamentally different from those around them.

Most of the men described becoming more feminine in their approach to leadership in recent years, but they did not suggest that such behavior put them at odds with organizational expectations. In fact, the men argued that their leadership was enhanced by and more appreciated because of their

ability to reveal the “softer” side of themselves in the executive role. Although the women also reported instances of developing the feminine dimensions of their leadership, they worried that being regarded as too feminine might sabotage their career success. It appears that the greater security that men experience in their executive role, by virtue of being men, may enable them to develop certain aspects of their leadership with less constraint than women feel.

Moreover, men expressed no fundamental conflict between fulfilling work and family roles, beyond the matter of time limitations. They voiced no concern about speaking too openly at work about their wives or children, for fear that their professionalism would be questioned, and they did not report experiencing psychological tension between being a husband/father and an executive. Three of the four men talked about giving more attention and time to their family life, but they saw this as a positive development and not a source of either personal or professional tension.

I would argue that the ease that gender creates for executive men is both a blessing and a burden. On the positive side, male executives may be more free to develop undeveloped aspects of themselves, at least to a certain degree, without the psychological conflict reported by executive women.²⁹ Judging by what the men and women said in this study, it appears that men did not feel as if they must deny innate parts of themselves to succeed in their work role, whereas the women did. However, being unconscious about the effects of

gender on their behavior does not make men immune from gender effects.

Perhaps, if men took account of the relationship between their gender and their role they would be more able to assess how they are affected by it. Just as women have gender as an explanatory variable in understanding themselves in context, likewise men might be able to learn more about their behavior if they could see how it is a reflection not only of personality but also of gender identity and expectations.

Such an awareness may be helpful for men in their family roles. While men described experiencing alienation as fathers and spouses, they did not cite gender as a contributory factor in shaping these relationships. Instead, they spoke about their difficulties only as an expression of their own personality limitations and did not suggest that the gender-linked expectations for these roles may have complicated their ability to experience intimacy in their families. Allowing for the influence of gender might help these men to understand better their own behavior and the dynamics of their interactions with others, and, thus, would facilitate their development.

Furthermore, it may be problematic for men that they do not question the interaction between the executive role and their gender. Because the executive role is male-defined, men can identify more easily with the role and, thus, may be disinclined to question its drawbacks. Just as a fish is not conscious of living in water because that is all it knows, men may not

recognize the influence on them of their work role because they can so readily identify with it.

For instance, the men, unlike the women, were less inclined to question how the male-defined executive role reinforced them in putting organizational demands before their own and their family's needs. When the men in this study spoke longingly about a desire for more personal time, for a richer extracurricular life, for greater intimacy with their loved ones, they did not suggest that their identification with the executive role may have contributed to some of these shortcomings in their life. Yet, when speaking from their unconscious, the men expressed anger and resentment about being slavish to external obligations. If women can say that fulfilling the expectations of the executive role compromised their development, perhaps greater gender awareness would allow men to make a similar claim. The benefit of such awareness is greater consciousness about how one lives, which is a hallmark of individuation.

Archetypes

Women: The data reported by the women in this study, as they spoke from the conscious and unconscious aspects of their psyche, suggest that these women are exemplars of the "Athena" and "Artemis" archetypes (Bolen, 1984; Woodman, 1982). They are competent, independent, analytical, focused, disciplined, accomplished. They adhere to strong principles, which were often

their fathers' legacy, and take a moral approach to life. As "superwomen" they demand perfection in themselves and others. Their sense of duty and obligation is strong. They commit to goals--personal and professional--and work hard to achieve them. When they line up behind a cause, their commitment and energy know no bounds. They have been "good girls," even as they have charted a course for women in the executive suite. They traveled a short distance from their "father's house" to the corporation.

Their early relationships with their fathers contributed to their ability to identify so strongly with the masculine principle. In some respects, this psychological connection with and emotional support from their fathers was liberating: it allowed them to express and fulfill talents that might otherwise have been constrained by gender expectations. In other ways, this bond stymied their development, causing them to over-identify with some aspects of their character--namely, their achievement orientation--and to devalue or disown others--such as their intuition, spontaneity, caring. Their mothers were not "full-psyched" women, doubtless, in part, because of gender bias that confined their own development. Consequently, these women did not see in their mothers an image of the parts of themselves that they longed to express. Out of fear of becoming like their mothers--whose passivity and dependence they reviled--they championed the differences between them and their mothers and ignored the similarities.

At mid-life, these women have come up against the realization that something is missing--in them and in life. Jill, the youngest member of the group, is railing for the first time against her father's "principles," realizing that she can determine her own values. Where once her leadership was a blind application of someone else's rules for behavior, now it is a more authentic expression of her truer, more holistic self, which includes her feminine side. At fifty-five, Grace has come to see her mother in herself, acknowledging that she is her mother's daughter, for better and for worse. Grace's inability to relinquish her mother's model for being a wife reflects her identification with D. Levinson's (1996) Traditional Homemaker archetype. Her struggle also illustrates von Franz's (1993) point that a positive identification with the mother has the advantage of creating continuity in life and "the disadvantage of preventing the individuation of the daughter, who continues the positive feminine figure as a type, not as an individual, and cannot realize her specific difference from her mother" (p. 167).

Through the TAT, the women revealed their wounded selves. In particular, the "Dutiful Daughter" and "Martyr" manifestations of the Amazon spoke from the unconscious of these women, as they voiced their resentment about fulfilling obligations imposed by others--which they have internalized as their own (Leonard, 1983). They are duty-bound to carry on with the sober responsibilities of life, while simultaneously they yearn to be free to live differently. These women are "good" despite an inclination to be otherwise.

As a consequence, the feeling tone of their TAT reports was one of depressed resignation and suppression of authentic joy and exuberance.

Leonard (1983) described how the “eternal girl” clings to either “absolutized innocence or absolutized guilt” (p. 53). In the TAT, the women’s Pollyanna-like fantasies reflected this little-girl tendency. One way to escape the demands and complexities of adult life is to become child-like, to see the world as black and white, as a place where people live happily ever after. When a woman identifies with this archetype, she is like Woodman’s (1982) unravished bride, someone who is unable to grow into mature, full womanhood because she fears the power and mystery of her own instinctual energy. As Grace said, she would have to “grow up a lot” to be more self-determining.

Another interpretation of this data suggests that while the existence of the “eternal girl” may imply an anachronistic attachment to youth, it can also suggest creative potential and spontaneity. Singer (1994) contends that this archetype is often present in the psyche of women at mid-life.

Although the “Wild Woman” archetype (Estes, 1992) is not visible in the TAT data, these women suggest that they have glimpsed her. They may not yet be prepared to follow her, but they have seen the path that she has cut through the forest. In their fantasies, they were able to imagine that something intriguing lay off in the distance. They are still uncertain that it is for them, but they might be willing to entertain the possibility. At present, the greatest

source of a “wild” feminine spirit is likely contained in their anger and depression.

Men: The archetypes of the “King,” “Warrior” and “Hero” are strong presences in the psyches of the men in this study (Moore and Gillette, 1990). Like the positive expression of the King, they are rational, reasonable, orderly, stable men who take seriously their role as stewards in their organizations and in their families. They have a vision that carries them forward and they can mobilize others to follow them. Like the enlightened Warrior, they are disciplined, committed, hard-working, and focused. They are capable of decisive action. They are loyal to the “kingdom” at work and at home, and they deny themselves in its service. Their role in life has been unquestioned.

Unlike the women, the men evidenced no apparent pattern of identifying with one parent over the other, which might have helped to explain their strong identification with these archetypes. A confluence of diverse early influences may have led them to pursue the life of high-achievement in a corporate environment. Ultimately, the clarion call for their development may have been the traditional male role, which is expressed through the King and Warrior archetypes.

As men, they are, to some extent, still identified with the adolescent psychology of the “Hero” (Moore and Gillette, 1990). Their heroic tendencies are expressed most clearly in their belief in the possibility of their own perfection. At mid-life, they have begun to challenge this self-ideal, opening

the door to new sides of themselves. As Chuck said, when he accepted that he can't be perfect, "everything else fell into place." Yet, they are ambivalent about letting the Hero die. On the one hand, they experience the release and freedom of accepting themselves as authentic human beings with the predictable frailties. On the other, they rue the loss of the unlimited potential of the Hero and the thrill of defeating the ever-present enemy.

As a group, these male executives don't show strong evidence of the Tyrant aspect of the King. Roger revealed this aspect of himself, more so than others, when he spoke about intimidating his children. However, the Weakling manifestation of the King is alive in their psyches. This archetype is expressed in their belief that if they are not everything, they are nothing. Ted, in particular, seemed to struggle with being able to internalize a sense of self-efficacy, despite considerable external achievements.

The most vivid archetypal images that these men present is of being over-functioning Kings and Warriors and under-functioning "Magicians" and "Lovers." Their TAT data revealed that they are angry and resentful about always being in charge, always being responsible, always being dutiful. Yet, they seem to know of no other way to be because these other dimensions of their psyches have received little nourishment and their King/Warrior selves have been overfed. Their self-denial has led to "Self-denial." If the women need to discover the "La Loba" the men need to release "Iron John" (Bly, 1990; Estes, 1992).

When Ted spoke longingly and poignantly about renewing his love for riding horses and playing the violin, he revealed a distant memory of his more passionate, creative, robust self. And when he proclaimed his need for intimate friendship, he acknowledged his desire to be a “lover.” When Andy spoke about his need for more privacy, he revealed a connection with the “Magician,” which is the archetype of thoughtfulness and reflection (Moore and Gillette, 1990). When Roger described his pleasure in doing art projects with his daughter and his desire for a closer relationship with his wife, he revealed his need to be express more of both of these archetypal energies.

From an archetypal perspective, the story about the individuation of the men and the story about the individuation of the women would be similar. These executives have lived, until now, what von Franz (1993) referred to as the “half right, half wrong life” (P. 103). Their hyper-identification with the inherited, collective values of the culture (as expressed through their family, especially their fathers, and their organizations) put them on a very narrow path. This path was chosen for them and it was an appropriate route in its time. Now, however, having mastered this trail, they can explore the surrounding bush. If they keep to the straight and narrow, they will get stuck in a tired, thin groove, which will eventually wear out. If they do venture out, they will need to find their own way--the map they were given doesn't chart this territory and their own moral compass is best for the next leg of their journey. The women among them have noticed the trail markers; they need to

follow the signs that have caught their eye. The men need to listen to their inner female guide so that they, too, can find a new direction. The expedition will be frightening and exciting and, whatever happens, they will be different when they emerge from the woods.

Age

I made some hypotheses about age-associated effects when I reported the data related to the mid-life crisis. The key point was that the youngest members of the study--Jill and Roger--were the ones whose emotional experience comes closest to the mid-life crisis described by Jung. That is, they reported feeling an intense need for change, which emerged unexplained from within, that precipitated a form of emotional crisis. Each of them spoke about reaching a breaking point when they knew they could no longer go on living as they had. Other members of the study, when reflecting on themselves in their late thirties to early forties, did not describe retrospectively a period of especially acute emotional intensity.

Since Jill and Roger are closest in age to the period when Jung predicted this crisis would occur, one can speculate that their experience supports his theory. Also, since Jill and Roger were reporting in real-time about this period of their lives, while other study participants were relying on their memory of this particular life-stage, one might argue that others could have undergone an intense experience similar to Jill's and Roger's, but that time had muted the

experience in their memory. Alternatively, it may be factors other than age that account for the differences, such as personality or external life events.

What may be most important about the possible age-related differences among participants is that this finding is consistent with D. Levinson's (1978) life structure model. Jill and Roger, who are at the age when D. Levinson said the "Mid-life Transition" occurs, were the ones most urgently engaged with the question: What do I really want from my life? Of all participants, they were most likely to contemplate a radical change in their lifestyle to make their life more consistent with their inner needs.

The group in the middle--Marcia, Kristen, Chuck, Andy, Ted--are at the stage when D. Levinson predicted they would be building and adjusting to a new life structure. According to D. Levinson,

In some lives the shift is signaled by a crucial marker event--a drastic change in job or occupation, a divorce or love affair, a serious illness, the death of a loved one, a move to a new locale. Other lives show no conspicuous change.... however, we discover seemingly minor changes that make a considerable difference (p. 61).

The idea that subtle changes characterize this phase of mid-life is most consistent with the lives of these study participants. As reported in the findings:

- Chuck is adjusting to the plateau of his career and redirecting his energy to family life. He may exemplify D. Levinson's "Age Fifty Transition."
- Marcia and Kristin have renegotiated family responsibilities with their husbands, in part, because of a decision made at the Mid-Life Transition to

have a second child. Marcia, who has likely peaked on the career ladder in her organization, believes that she has other career opportunities ahead, but is not urgent about pursuing a change. Kristin is settling into the responsibilities of the job she always dreamed about having.

- Andy is very comfortable with his life on all fronts; from this position of stability, he ponders new possibilities for life in the mid-fifties.
- Ted has achieved greater comfort with his executive role, but feels unfulfilled in some significant aspects of his personal life.

Grace, at fifty-five, is coming to the end of the stable mid-life phase, but without a clear vision for what is ahead. Her lack of a meaningful personal goal creates emotional uneasiness for Grace. Despite her considerable career success, Grace has not defined herself as much through her work role as one might expect. Without a life partner, she finds it difficult to generate excitement about a plan for the future.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusions

I return to the questions I posed at the outset of this study to summarize some conclusions that can be drawn from the study findings and data analysis. About these eight executives, I asked:

What was their experience of participating in a character-focused leadership development process? The findings of this study show that these executives found this leadership development process to be a powerful intervention that: (1) engaged them emotionally at deep levels; (2) affected their sense of self; (3) created change in professional and personal relationships; and (4) enabled them to expand the repertoire of their leadership behaviors so that they could be more well-rounded leaders. Each of these outcomes has significance for their development as individuals and as leaders.

1. Emotional engagement: First, to be as involved emotionally as these executives were in this process was a very different experience for most of

them. Executive role and personality can distance executives from their own emotions and from authentic, deep engagement with others. In the NewLeader experience, these executives formed trusting, caring relationships with the consultants that: (a) gave them the experience of connecting with another person in a more genuine way than they often do, even with people close to them; (b) enabled them to explore their own emotions and self-insights with the support of an accepting consultant; and (c) opened up the possibility that they could translate their experience with the consultants to their relationship with other significant people in their life. Thus, the process itself presented an opportunity for development, in particular, to repair earlier experiences with authority figures that might have impaired them in some way.

2. *Sense of Self*: Second, the study showed that these executives needed to gain a more solid, realistic sense of self, which is neither deflated nor inflated. Receiving feedback that was as weighty and as credible as that provided in NewLeader caused participants to view themselves differently. In most cases, participants' sense of self was strengthened by coming to terms with the feedback. Some began to internalize greater feelings of self-worth through acceptance of their capabilities and accomplishments. Others found greater self-acceptance as they questioned the wisdom and feasibility of striving for "perfection." Zaleznik and Kets de Vries (1975) said, "Self-healing implies a capacity to take oneself as an object of personal awareness" (p. x).

Through NewLeader, these executives demonstrated that ability and most achieved the hoped-for results.

However, the study also showed that feedback can threaten an executive's self-esteem, at least temporarily. For a person whose identity depends upon others' approval, criticism weakens the fragile bedrock of the self. And, as Grace's story illustrated, when the feedback is confusing and convoluted by group dynamics, in this case by gender bias, the person's emotional security is at risk.

Overall, participants found that the experience helped them to expand their self-identity along two dimensions: authority and intimacy. Some became more authoritative by asserting their needs, setting limits, and speaking their minds. Others increased their capacity for intimacy by acknowledging their own needs and feelings, empathizing with others, and disclosing more of their inner lives with people at home and at work.

For the women, self-identity was complicated because they perceived their work role to be defined primarily by qualities associated with the masculine. Although they manifested many of those masculine attributes and, thus, succeeded well in the executive role, they believed that the price of professional success was the repression of their feminine selves. Through NewLeader, they faced the loss associated with denying significant parts of themselves and explored how they might integrate their more feminine qualities into their executive persona.

Because these women experienced a sense of alienation in their professional role, especially from other women, they found it very helpful to have a female consultant as a member of the consulting team. It was a therapeutic experience for them to be able to share their experiences with another woman who could convey understanding and empathy.

3. Effect on relationships: Third, the study showed that NewLeader is an intervention in professional and personal relationships. Through the feedback, study members learned what others thought of them and how others were affected by their actions. Some study members reported that this information motivated them to modify their self-perceptions and behavior. In some cases, the feedback caused study participants to initiate conversations with colleagues or family members that they might not have had without the impetus of the NewLeader intervention. Often, these encounters furthered the communication and understanding between the parties, at least from the perspective of the study participants.

Yet, the study showed also that the effect on relationships can be more complicated. If the feedback reveals the NewLeader client, it also exposes the attitudes and values of the interviewees themselves. As Grace's case demonstrated, the NewLeader client can learn information about others that diminishes them in her eyes. After reading the feedback, Grace was inclined to distance herself from her colleagues to avoid what she considered to be their unfair judgments of her.

4. Expanded repertoire of leadership behaviors: Fourth, study participants found that the NewLeader experience enabled them to reveal new aspects of themselves in their leadership. As they saw it, the changes in their leadership were not so much the result of behavioral adjustments, although there were some of those, but were more the outgrowth of changes in their inner experience of themselves. One manifestation of this phenomenon was their greater capacity to be more authentic as leaders: to show more of their true feelings, to reveal their opinions more readily, to disclose more of the personal side of themselves in their work. Another common theme was their paying increased attention to the people side of their leadership as a complement to their historic task orientation. A third change was their ability to set limits, to make demands of others, and to focus their attention on critical priorities rather than attempting to be all things to all people. Overall, they described a greater sense of calm and confidence in their leadership, which emerged as a consequence of feeling more secure in themselves.

Once again, however, Grace's story provides an important cautionary tale. Although the feedback reinforced Grace's beliefs in some aspects of her leadership, Grace emerged from the NewLeader experience with her confidence shaken, especially early on. It may be argued that knowing the reality of her situation was an important, if painful, learning for Grace. Yet, if the objective of NewLeader is to enhance executive effectiveness, then the development process for Grace could not end there. Her challenge was to

adjust to this new awareness, determine what, if any, changes she would make in her leadership, and assess her future viability in the organization.

To what extent are they involved in individuation, which is a mid-life developmental opportunity to redefine the Self?

Evaluating the data against the behavioral indicators of individuation one can conclude that these executives are engaged in individuation, albeit with limitations related to personality and role. Their ego-level reports suggested that more than ever before they look within for direction and energy, question their inherited values, relinquish outmoded aspects of their selves, reveal new dimensions of who they are, and allow themselves to be more playful and spontaneous.

Speaking from their unconscious, however, these executives revealed that making such changes is not easy. Their persona is based on perfection, hyper-achievement, and dutiful fulfillment of responsibilities. Although they desire to be freed from the burden of living too much for others and by others' rules, they fear the consequences of stepping out in behalf of their Self. Because they identified so readily with collective values, the role of corporate executive suited them well. Yet, this role may have reinforced some of their vulnerabilities, creating an over-reliance on external approval and a tendency to justify their worth through activity and accomplishment.

The perquisites of corporate positions are sometimes referred to as "golden handcuffs." From an archetypal perspective, the maiden's "silver

hands” may be the more appropriate metaphor (von Franz, 1993). The executive role has provide a serviceable way to live, but at mid-life it feels insufficiently real or alive--something is missing. The personal truths of these executives have been kept in the Shadow, hidden beneath the persona of their professional identity. At mid-life, they are able to reveal more of their genuine selves, but, still, their propensity is to repress inner urges. By keeping too much of themselves under wraps, they wind up with underlying feelings of anger, resentment, and depression and stifled power, creativity, and joy.

The study also showed that the mid-life experience of these executives reflects D. Levinson’s (1978) life structure model, particularly his research on the mid-life transition phase, which, in part, was based on Jung’s theory. Study members who are the age that D. Levinson associated with entry into the mid-life transition reported being in the midst of a period of intense reexamination of their lives, as D. Levinson would predict. Taking stock of how they live, these executives questioned the purpose and meaning of what they do and wondered how they might live more in accord with their own values and needs. Those further along in the mid-life period said they were adjusting to some of the changes they made several years ago: settling into the realities of life at this stage--both good and bad, wrestling with the inevitable compromises that come with making choices, and trying to determine what possibilities remained open to them. Finally, the study member who is coming to the end of the mid-life period faced the prospect of a new life stage that

doesn't fit her earlier dreams of how life should be. Not having a satisfying vision for the next phase of her life troubled her and represented a significant developmental challenge.

Although the overall pattern of individuation was similar for executive women and men, there were gender differences. For better and for worse, the women were more conflicted between their personal and professional identities, as evidenced by their ego-level reports and the TAT data. A benefit of this tension was that compared to the men the women had a livelier connection to more varied dimensions of themselves. Moreover, the women were somewhat more aware of their desires for wholeness. Yet, they still felt compromised by attempting to be everything or to do it all and by not integrating the various dimensions of who they are.

Men appeared to experience less conflict with their professional role, which quite likely afforded them greater psychological ease in fulfilling organizational expectations for executives. They did not show an awareness of having repressed significant parts of themselves to succeed at work or, if they were, they didn't express such feelings to the researcher. Yet, this more seamless identification with the executive role may have made it more difficult for the men to cultivate aspects of themselves that are not valued by the organization. While their ego was reinforced by the role, their unconscious suggests that important parts of them reside dormant in the psyche's Shadow.

There was some evidence in this study of the gender cross-over, which several researchers predict at mid-life (Gutmann, 1987; Jung 1969a; D. Levinson, 1978; 1996; Neugarten & Gutmann, 1964). However, more precisely, one can say that this study supports the idea that at mid-life men and women develop the parts of themselves that have been undeveloped, be they masculine or feminine. For the executive women, in particular, the expectation of gender cross-over was complicated by their early and persistent identification with the masculine.

How is the process of individuation reflected in their leadership performance?

Participants' individuation was reflected in their leadership in several ways. One, both men and women pointed out that they increasingly valued and expressed the "softer side" of their leadership. They reported that they felt and demonstrated greater concern for the needs of the people they work with. As an example of this change, several people spoke about the new importance they place on their role as mentors to junior staff, a role that they have come to appreciate and enjoy at this stage of their leadership. Moreover, they spoke about being better at working through others and taking pleasure in the accomplishments and successes of people who report to them. Exhibiting such tendencies at mid-life is consistent with adult development models that speak about the importance of "generativity" for mid-life adults (Erikson, 1980; D. Levinson, 1978).

Second, it appears that the individuation process has made these leaders more authentic in their role. Several study participants gave examples of how they reveal their true opinions and feelings more readily as a consequence of their personal development. They say they are more willing to take a stand on matters of importance to them and on issues that involve their personal values. In particular, women spoke about being more assertive in raising questions about fair treatment for women and other organizational minorities.

Third, their expanded capacity for authority and intimacy was reflected in the changes they reported in their leadership. Some participants spoke about their increased ability to be forceful, to declare their priorities, to focus their attention and energy. Others recounted instances where they shared their feelings with colleagues, which, they believed, created greater mutual empathy between them and their co-workers.

Fourth, several participants spoke about feeling calmer and confident as leaders at this stage of life. This change was explained, in part, by their being more secure in the organization, based on tenure and experience. But, they also associated their more confident leadership style with changes in their inner experience of themselves, especially a greater sense of their own worth. Increased self-acceptance seemed to correlate with increased confidence in their ability to lead effectively.

For the most part, study participants had no conscious awareness of significant conflicts between the newly developed aspects of their leadership

and their understanding of the organization's expectations of them, nor did they foresee such difficulties in the future. Some believed that their further development--personal and professional--might require them to leave their positions. However, except for the study members who were in the midst of the mid-life transition, most of these executives felt little urgency about needing to change the external conditions of their work to accommodate their leadership development.

However, one can speculate that there could be greater tension between their organizational role and their individual development if they were to unearth some of what is hidden in the Shadow of their unconscious. As things stand now, it appears that these executives accommodate themselves in many ways to the demands of their professional role, often, if one listens to their unconscious, at the cost of their own emotional vitality and spontaneity. It is possible that if they were to relinquish some of their "dutifulness," they may find themselves more at odds with their organization's expectations. Given that it is their kind, namely the executive group, that sets the tone in organizational life, this possibility is quite real. However, alternatively, there may be more organizational latitude for their Self-expression than they might imagine, especially given their conservative stance toward challenging prevailing norms.

In what ways did their participation in leadership development address aspects of their individuation? The study findings suggest that the NewLeader

intervention played a role in facilitating individuation for these executives. It is impossible, of course, to know how these executives would have developed without the NewLeader experience, but based on the findings of this study it seems reasonable to conclude that NewLeader contributed to their development in ways that are consistent with mid-life individuation.

As described above, participants believed that the NewLeader experience affected the way that they experience their self. In some respects, NewLeader had the effect of ego restoration; that is, it helped to repair damage done to the self by earlier experiences. In particular, it seems that NewLeader helped to restore feelings of self-esteem for participants whose deflated or inflated self-image had rendered them chronically dissatisfied with the reality of who they are. (Again, Grace's story was an exception.) This ego-level work is likely a vital step in the individuation process, providing a foundation for the encounter with the deeper Self.

As defined by Jung, individuation requires engagement with the unconscious. The metaphors that participants used to describe their NewLeader experience suggest that the process engaged them at the ego level and at the level of the unconscious. Their images indicate that through NewLeader they uncovered parts of themselves that had been hidden from their conscious awareness. While NewLeader alone would be unlikely to cause this level of change, it appears that the developmental ripeness of these executives made them good candidates for this kind of intervention.

These executives used their NewLeader experience as a reference point in speaking about their development; in fact, some participants could most easily talk about changes in themselves by citing their NewLeader experience. For many, the NewLeader intervention focused their energy for self-study. Because their professional and social roles reinforce extraversion over introversion and given the heavy external demands of their lives, these executives may not have been able to take the psychological plunge that individuation requires without the NewLeader intervention or something like it.

One cannot generalize from the experience of this group to suggest that this kind of executive development would facilitate individuation in all executives. After all, it may be only executives who are already engaged in individuation who would choose to enter and complete such a process. However, it does seem reasonable to argue that for those who accept the “invitation,” there is a good chance that the experience will aid them in becoming more Self-defined.

Implications

Practice of Executive Development

This study will not end the debate in the literature about what to call executive development--coaching, counseling, or consultation--but, more importantly, it provides insight into the nature of such an engagement from the

client's perspective and, in doing so, gives practitioners guidance about what they do.³⁰ In fact, the semantic wrangling in the field really is about the theory behind the practice. So, in considering the implications of this study for the practice of executive development, one must acknowledge the theoretical underpinnings of NewLeader and the reality that much of executive development does not aim to be as comprehensive or as far-reaching.

Attempting to change character, which is the stated theoretical purpose of NewLeader, is not the norm in executive development; nor is collecting data from spouse, children, parents, and friends. To the contrary, some practitioners, such as H. Levinson (1996), suggest that deep psychological work is out-of-bounds for executive development. Yet, while the findings of this study are about NewLeader per se, they do have application to related practices of executive development and other kinds of helping interventions.

It should be clear to the reader by now that this study was not an evaluation of NewLeader. I collected no data from observers to determine whether the participants in this study led differently before and after their NewLeader experience. With the exception of brief follow-up interviews with some spouses and the NewLeader consultants, there was no corroborative evidence to document client-reported changes. The data collected in this study are mainly self-reports from the people who had the experience. Yet, this disclaimer does not suggest that the study findings are invalid or incapable of adding to knowledge in the field. One premise of this research is that good

practice requires knowing about the client's experience, in rich detail and on many levels. And, if the intention of NewLeader and similar kinds of executive development is to affect the psychological state of the client, then it is vital to know from the client if and how the experience did that.

What study participants said about their NewLeader experience has many implications for the practice of this kind of leadership development. One key issue is that conditions at entry matter. Even though the findings suggest that complications at entry do not necessarily preclude a successful consultation, everyone is better served when practitioners are aware of the factors--organizational, interpersonal, and intrapersonal--that affect clients, their family and colleagues, the organization, and the consultants themselves. In particular, consultants need to work with the organizational sponsor and the client to understand the motivation for the engagement and to anticipate and deal with organizational and personal dynamics surrounding it. Since the NewLeader intervention can potentially be exploited by the organization and its members to serve purposes beyond the development of the individual client--for better or worse--the consultant needs to be conscious of the context for the consultation and engage others in open discussion about what is at stake.

Grace's inclusion in the study is important because her experience raises some important and complicated questions about this practice, without supplying easy answers. One question is whether Grace should be considered

a casualty of the process, since she reported that she hasn't fully recovered her sense of self-confidence. If the standard for success is that people feel better about themselves after NewLeader, then the answer is yes. Yet, while it seems self-evident that that result would be optimal, personal development isn't a simple, linear process. At age fifty-five, Grace is confronting some painful illusions about herself, and it may not be possible for her to regain a state of emotional equilibrium right now, even though that is what she would like. Also, as she recognizes the effects of gender bias in her organization, Grace feels disillusioned about her colleagues and her chances for being a full player on the leadership team. Clearly Grace wasn't disabled emotionally by the process: for all intents and purposes, she has functioned well at work and home since beginning NewLeader. Nonetheless, the process left her unsettled, and that's a state with which she is unfamiliar and uncomfortable.

One could ask whether Grace should have been screened out as high risk, given how challenging this experience was for her. While evaluating candidate readiness is important, Grace's case suggests that it isn't necessarily easy to discern who is at risk. As reported, Grace attributed some of her difficulty in NewLeader to emotional remnants of her divorce. Yet, because Grace was divorced five years ago, someone looking at the "facts" of her case may not have predicted that a five-year-old divorce would be such a psychologically close experience. And it appears that Grace herself didn't anticipate this effect as she prepared for NewLeader, even though she recalled

being told by the consultants about the emotional power of the intervention.

Another possibility is that when Grace attributed the emotional upheaval brought about by NewLeader to the recency of her divorce, she was defending herself against the full impact of the development issues she faces going forward.

Grace's experience also illustrated that the quality of the data matters. In this instance, the first set of data were confusing and unclear, mainly because the subtext of the message was about gender and competition among male peers. Grace and the consultants were faced with the problem of sorting out what information related to Grace, the individual, and what related to Grace, as a representative of her gender group. In such an instance, the consultants need to bring to bear an understanding of intergroup dynamics and their impact on how individuals and groups function. Without such a perspective, there is a high likelihood that the client's behavior will be diagnosed inappropriately and that she may be seen as responsible for forces well beyond her control. In this instance, the CEO transition caused greater instability in the organization, which increased the chances that the most vulnerable organizational members would become casualties.

This study showed that being in the minority at their organizational level affected how the women experienced themselves, their leadership, their colleagues, their opportunities for advancement, and their NewLeader consultants. One can speculate that this finding would apply to other minority

executives, such as men of color. Practitioners must take group memberships--their own and the client's--into account as they do this work. For instance, better decisions can be made about who should be on the consulting team and how to interpret the feedback when group-level effects are considered. Moreover, in some respects, minority status alone may be considered a risk factor for women and others, since their success comes with an emotional surcharge that is not applied to those in the majority.

The study also showed that there were differences among the participants based on age, even though they are all in the mid-life phase. Although the broad outline of an executive development intervention might be the same regardless of the participant's age or life stage, practitioners need to be aware that clients at different points in the mid-life transition face different issues. These variances have important implications for the person's outlook on his or her life and all its facets. Jill, as the youngest member of this study, and Grace, as the oldest, had much in common as executive women, but their developmental issues differed because of their particular place in the mid-life era. Likewise, Roger, at 42, faced different developmental challenges than the other men who hovered at around age fifty. While these differences may relate somewhat to personality, age is also a factor.

Practitioners of this work must realize also the powerful emotional impact of what they do and reflect on the implications of that, including their own ability to handle this level of psychological intervention. Although study

participants reported that various elements of the process helped them to manage the intensity of the experience, they may not be able to evaluate whether this was too much or even necessary to achieve the results. This intervention was designed to be strong enough to penetrate the defenses associated with executive character. While that rationale may hold, nonetheless, responsible practitioners will be vigilant about how clients are faring as they weather the emotional storm produced by this intervention, and adapt their tactics as needed. Clearly, this kind of leadership development cuts a new path in the field of helping relationships. As practitioners accrete more data about the effects of such interventions, they must adapt their methodology to fit new understandings of the work.

One contribution of this study for the practice of this type of executive development may be its use of the TAT. The NewLeader intervention does not incorporate such projective measures; thus, the feedback does not present material from participants' unconscious, except as it is revealed indirectly. As discussed, the TAT produced data that created a more complete and complex picture of the participants' psychic state than the interviews alone would have provided. Because the NewLeader process and similar kinds of executive development are so data driven, the best way to make unconscious material available for discussion would be to add it to the database. Also, because this kind of intervention already works at a significantly deep emotional level, the process lends itself to the use of projective measures.

Edinger (1972) said, "The subjective experience of individuality is a profound mystery that we cannot hope to encompass by rational understanding" (p. 162). If so, it makes sense for an intervention that aims to understand an individual life to use tools that invite all aspects of the psyche to participate in the exploration. As this study showed, care must be taken in introducing projective instruments because they represent a greater psychological threat to participants. Yet, if the experience of this study generalizes to other situations, one can argue that the uneasiness clients might experience related to such tests would be countered by the benefits they could gain from learning more about their unconscious.

Individuation and the Development of Mid-life Executives

The findings of this study show that executives who are willing to go through the exercise of character-focused leadership development are likely to believe in the end that they benefited from it as individuals and as leaders. The study also demonstrated that despite the effects of role and personality, which could inhibit their individuation, these executives appear to be developing as Jung's theory would predict. Thus, one implication of this study is that this kind of leadership development intervention holds real potential for facilitating mid-life individuation in executives.

Hillman (1996) said that for people to "grow up," in the conventional sense of development, they must really "grow down." He likened growing

down to the process that trees use for growth: they send their roots deep into the ground so they can ascend into the light. Hillman argued, "Until the culture recognizes the legitimacy of growing down, each person in the culture struggles blindly to make sense of the darkenings and despairings that the soul requires to deepen into life" (p. 43). NewLeader appears to have provided these executives with a socially sanctioned way for them to grow down. Their growing down required unfamiliar tolerance for ambiguity, confusion, reflection, and emotions of all kinds. Yet, within the muck of those experiences, lay fertile seeds of growth.

How the individuation of these executives compares to the individuation of others, who can say. Fortunately, individual development is precisely that--it is individual. While one can acknowledge that their strong identification with their persona makes it more challenging for them to access and integrate other dimensions of the psyche, they need to fulfill only their own destiny. As Hillman (1996) said, "There is more in a human life than our theories of it allow" (p. 3). The Self of each of these executives has its own measure of wholeness, which is not apparent to the rational judgment of others (Edinger, 1972).

A question that did not get addressed very well in this study is: What is the position of organizations toward individuation in executives? Will organizations allow, facilitate, tolerate, or constrain it? Overall, the executives in this study did not seem to worry about the problem for themselves, perhaps,

because it is too threatening to consider. They reported that the changes in them that were indicative of individuation would contribute to their leadership effectiveness and would be welcomed by their organizations. They were optimistic that their individuation (although they did not use that term) would allow them to make more meaningful contributions to their organizations and to influence their organizations for the better. Yet, they also acknowledged that they inhibit themselves to accommodate organizational expectations, suggesting that their individuated selves might be too dangerous for organizational norms.

Extrapolating from the behavioral indicators of individuation, one can hypothesize about what an individuated executive might look like in the ideal. Such a leader would:

- Behave authentically in her role;
- Act in accordance with his deeply held personal values;
- See how the organization can be connected to a larger purpose without being grandiose;
- Seek opportunities through work to bring a sense of meaning and purpose into her life and, in turn, allows others to;
- Laugh at himself and invite others to. Not stand on ceremony or be overly concerned about status or position;

- Use a deepened connection with her inner self to relate more intimately to others. Be touched by others' feelings and psychologically "take in" another person's experience;
- Understand the relationship of polarities and entertain seemingly contradictory ideas to get at the complexity of a situation.

It seems reasonable to think that organizations might embrace such leaders. Executives with this profile could be highly successful; they would surely fit the description of what contemporary books on leadership say is needed today in corporate America. In fact, the executives in this study had developed some of these attributes or, at least, were moving in that direction and most of them were regarded as very effective leaders, perhaps, even more for having these traits. Yet, if there were behavioral indicators for organizations that promote individuation, I suspect that many corporations might not measure up.

Future studies can examine the question of the interaction between individuated leaders and their organizations. Such research can also explore the implications for the practice of executive development: what ethical issues arise if the outcome of the intervention--a more individuated executive--is not what the organization wants?

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¹ Often, this ego struggle is understood by the Freudian term *narcissism*, which is mistaken to be an excess of self-love. Edinger (1972) says that narcissism, in fact, is a "frustrated state of yearning for a self-possession which does not yet exist" (p. 161). The union with the deeper image, or the true self, requires, according to Edinger, a descent into the unconscious and a symbolic death of the false image.

¹ Grace's experience is not explained solely by her individual psychology. Organizational and gender dynamics need to be accounted for in understanding the difficulties Grace encountered; a discussion of those topics follows.

¹ There is a more complete discussion of gender and development in Chapter VI, Section 2 of the findings.

¹ This observation applies to the changes they reported making in their personal lives as well.

¹ To uncover, is to show clients what they do not see, such as aspects of their character, behavior patterns, defenses or underlying feelings; to support, is to show empathy for and understanding of the client's feelings and perspectives. These styles of intervening could be seen as another example of the authority (uncovering) and intimacy (supporting) polarity.

¹ The data are not completely free of the consultants' influence because the consultants prepare and organize the data. However, for the most part, the data contain the verbatim, unedited comments of the people giving feedback.

¹ Scores from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator were available for seven of the eight study members. Of those, three scored as introverts and four as extraverts. The extraverts are Kristen, Grace, Andy and Marcia. The introverts are Jill, Ted and Chuck. I would predict that Roger would be an extravert.

¹ There was no clear pattern of strong identification with one parent over the other among the men, as there was with the women.

¹ In this section, I often write about these executives as a group, based on common themes that emerged among them. Grouping them in this way inevitably masks the existing individual differences and nuances. General statements apply to most people in total, but to some only in part. My aim is not to gloss over participants' individuality, but to create a group portrait, albeit, at times, with a broad brush.

¹ Levinson's use of this terminology and my objection to it are probably indicative of our generational and gender differences.

¹ Of course, behavior is still partly a function of role for both male and female executives, as discussed in the previous section on the interaction of role and personality.

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²¹ There is a more complete discussion of gender and development in Chapter VI, Section 2 of the findings.

²² This observation applies to the changes they reported making in their personal lives as well.

²³ To uncover, is to show clients what they do not see, such as aspects of their character, behavior patterns, defenses or underlying feelings; to support, is to show empathy for and understanding of the client's feelings and perspectives. These styles of intervening could be seen as another example of the authority (uncovering) and intimacy (supporting) polarity.

²⁴ The data are not completely free of the consultants' influence because the consultants prepare and organize the data. However, for the most part, the data contain the verbatim, unedited comments of the people giving feedback.

²⁵ Scores from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator were available for seven of the eight study members. Of those, three scored as introverts and four as extraverts. The extraverts are

Kristen, Grace, Andy and Marcia. The introverts are Jill, Ted and Chuck. I would predict that Roger would be an extravert.

²⁶ There was no clear pattern of strong identification with one parent over the other among the men, as there was with the women.

²⁷ In this section, I often write about these executives as a group, based on common themes that emerged among them. Grouping them in this way inevitably masks the existing individual differences and nuances. General statements apply to most people in total, but to some only in part. My aim is not to gloss over participants' individuality, but to create a group portrait, albeit, at times, with a broad brush.

²⁸ Levinson's use of this terminology and my objection to it are probably indicative of our generational and gender differences.

²⁹ Of course, behavior is still partly a function of role for both male and female executives, as discussed in the previous section on the interaction of role and personality.

³⁰ See Chapter II, Review of the Literature, for a discussion of counseling, consulting, and consultation.