Cultural Values, Meaning and Form in an Indigenous Movement

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This paper will discuss various issues of contextualization facing Concentric in mobilizing indigenous movements of church-based youth ministry with special focus on delivery systems in light of Lingenfelter's model of cultural values.

Key Reference:
Ministering Cross-culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships, Sherwood G. Lingenfelter & Marvin K. Mayers. Baker Books, 1986.

Concentric is an intentional partnership of distinct organisations committed to a common mission, core values, and a strategy of youth ministry based on the life of Christ. The common mission is to mobilize indigenous movements of church-based youth ministry in order to fulfill the vision of every young person in every culture having the opportunity to respond to the claims of Christ.

In every respect Concentric is committed to cross-cultural ministry and interaction as both an international and inter-organisational partnership to mobilize movements in other indigenous contexts. We each bring our different national/ ethnic cultures, our different organizational cultures and our own personal (personality) cultural values into every point of inter-personal communication and interaction with each other as we seek to develop the partnership we call Concentric. We also step off from those same cultural and personal values each time we engage with indigenous leaders in new and developing ministry contexts. In short that means that not withstanding an agreed ministry philosophy and vision, there is significant complexity and prospect of tension in working together as the same actions and words convey different values within our broadly accepted similar meanings. The cross- cultural missionary challenge is always how to maximise effective communication and authentic human connection (heart to heart, mind to mind, spirit t spirit) across the culture/values chasm minimising misunderstanding, confusion and 'disconnection'.

All human communication and interaction is via various *forms* (audio, physical, visual etc) which are *meaning*-**full** to the communicator- in that the chosen form conveys the meaning intended . The problem is that the same form may have very different or just divergent meanings to the 'communicatee'. Both parties values will unconsciously be at work as a kind of subliminal operating system interpreting the form and the total interaction process. Even if both parties more or less agree on the definition of the meaning of the form, the deeper personal emotional and moral significance is primarily ascribed from each one's values and these are usually quite

unconscious. I that sense values are in-built pre- suppositions about what is better, best, right and enlightened.

Is it any wonder that communication is a complicated process even between two people from the same general cultural context? Misunderstandings are frequent, conflicts common and trust vulnerable. As any married person will attest, even in a context of committed love and acceptance as in a healthy marriage, the challenge of communication remains. After 24 years of marriage I understand my wife better and love her more than anyone else on the planet but communication is still a complex art requiring continued dedication. All too often the exercise is summed up in ...”I know you believe you know what you thought I said from what you think you heard...but you still haven’t come to understand what I really meant.” To take this same exercise into the cross-cultural context complicates things all the more and we need to engage in it with our eyes and ears wide open. Communication can never be separated from culture for all communication originates from within a cultural context and all meaning is culturally defined.

The Incarnation as our model.

The model of the Incarnation of Jesus, where the Creator God of the Universe stepped into human history at a place and time is the only sound basis of effective cross-cultural mission. Jesus, in the mystery of the Incarnation, was fully human and fully God (Phil.2:6- 7). In fact he wasn’t just fully human, he was fully first century Galilean Jew in personal culture and others in his day saw him as such and responded to and reminded him of the fact (eg. Jn 4, Samaritan woman). As Lingenfelter (pg. 14) puts it, “In sum, he was 100 percent God and 100 percent Jew – a 200 percent person.”

Two significant facts about the incarnation Lingenfelter makes are, firstly, that Jesus came as a helpless dependent vulnerable baby of a poor powerless family in a conquered land under the domination of another ruling race. He did not come as a powerful one, knowledgable one or notable one, quite the opposite. Secondly, Jesus came as a learner (Luke 2:52), and like all people had to learn the verbal and non-verbal language (of Galilee as well as Palestine, Arabic, Greek and Italian), the culture, social skills, how to play with other children, read/write, and a vocation as an apprentice to Joseph. Incredibly, the Creator of the universe had to learn how to create/ craft things from wood with his hands as carpenter, the Word become flesh had to learn how to read and study the Word of God as did his peers at that time. Jesus was an eager learner, a student of language, culture, the lifestyles and needs of people in his society and he did so for some thirty years before he began his ministry.

Lingenfelter (p16,17) comments, "The implications of Jesus' status as a learner are seldom discussed, let alone understood or applied......He stood at (his people's) side as learner and as coworker...and earned respect to the point that the people called him Rabbi....He identified totally with those to whom he was sent, calling himself the Son of man."

Jesus was a Galilean Jew, 100 percent. As such his personal values were largely those of his culture without being sinful in excess in any degree. Certainly there were many points where Jesus righteousness challenged the prevailing values and behaviours of the culture of the day. He was often at odds with accepted norms, yet we must make no mistake about this, Jesus was a 'local', an indigenous leader in every way. He was not North American, Australian, British or African, but his culture was specific to a people, place and time in history. What set him apart and drew people's attention to him was NOT that he was a social isolate or some kind of minority subculture much like a recent migrant in a foreign land (or sadly like so many church subcultures who seem so strangely alien in the indigenous context. Radical, prophetic, challenging, yes, but Jesus was still an 'insider' in every way, a local boy.

In a commitment to a model of ministry based on the life of Jesus, to teaching 'Jesus strategy' of ministry and movement building, there is a danger that we can fall into the trap of seeking to reproduce Jesus methodology and delivery systems rather than the meanings (principles). Sound exegesis is important to firstly understand what Jesus strategy, method and message meant in its own context, then to work through application of those same meanings in the most appropriate forms in the new context and culture. The question must progress from *what did* Jesus do, to *why did* Jesus do it, to *what would* Jesus do today in this culture, time and place among these people if he was indeed starting over as a son of this (current specific) rather than that first century Galilean cultural soil? What *forms* would *he* choose to express those same *meanings* in *this* context? Certainly, he would still be listening to the Father, prayerful and obedient to the Spirit's prompting. Yet once intentions and meanings are put into forms (words, actions, symbols...) they must be expressed through a specific culture of a specific people, for that is the essence of communication.

A person's personal culture is like the lens of their eye, although it affects everything they see as reality and they see everything through it, they rarely if ever become consciously aware of it; that is they see through it but never really see it. This cultural blindness prejudices us against accepting and comprehending cues from cultures that are contrary to our own. Rather than recognise that we are experiencing cultural blindness or prejudice, we simply judge the other person is at fault and is the problem, after all "it's obvious isn't it?"

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"It is because of cultural blindness that we must become incarnate in the culture and thus in the lives of the people we wish to serve. We must begin as 'a child' and grow in their midst. We must be learners and let them teach us before we can hope to be teachers to them and to introduce the Master Teacher to them." (Lingenfelter, p22)

1 Cor 9:22-23.

A Framework for Understanding Values Variance

In <u>Ministering Cross-Culturally</u>, Lingenflelter develops a framework of values (originally proposed by Mayer) as a framework of assessment and a conceptual model of understanding personal values and underlying priorities of ourselves and others. Whilst it is a simple model it provides a common frame of reference for insights into complex social interaction, tensions, misunderstandings and potential conflict. There are twelve key elements in the model, twelve basic values that are grouped into six pairs, each pair forming a continuum or a vertical and horizontal axis of a values matrix.

Value Continuums

Time orientation	-	Event orientation
Crisis orientation	-	Non-crisis orientation
Dichotomistic thinking	-	Holistic thinking
Task orientation	-	Person orientation
Vulnerability as weakness	-	Vulnerability as strength
Prestige/status ascribed	-	Prestige/status achieved

*Brief Descriptions of Each Value:*

- **Time Orientation:** structured around specific hours and minutes.

- **Event Orientation:** life's activities are structured around a social environment, and the relational event.

- **Crisis orientation:** behaviour of preparation and prevention.

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- **Non-crisis oriented:** behaviour based on dealing with issues as they arise.

- **Dichotomistic Thinking:** views the world in segmented parts.

- **Holistic Thinking:** views the world as an integrated whole.

- **Task Orientation:** Object as goal**,** completion of the task is vital.

- **People Orientation:** People are the goal, relationships are foremost in importance.

- **Vulnerability as weakness:** transparency of character is seen as weakness (western).

- **Vulnerability as strength:** transparency of character is seen as strength.

- **Prestige / status achieved:** through effort and accomplishment.

- **Prestige/ status ascribed:** through criteria set by the culture.

Lingenfelter uses the 48 statement questionnaire developed by colleague, Marvin Mayers, as a basis for determining relative values/importance or priority given to each of the twelve values. (see questionnaire attached as appendix). This provides a very useful and objective frame of reference for discussion and self insight. Each pair of values can form a matrix that enables the plotting of individual responses on a scale of 1-7, and comparison with others.
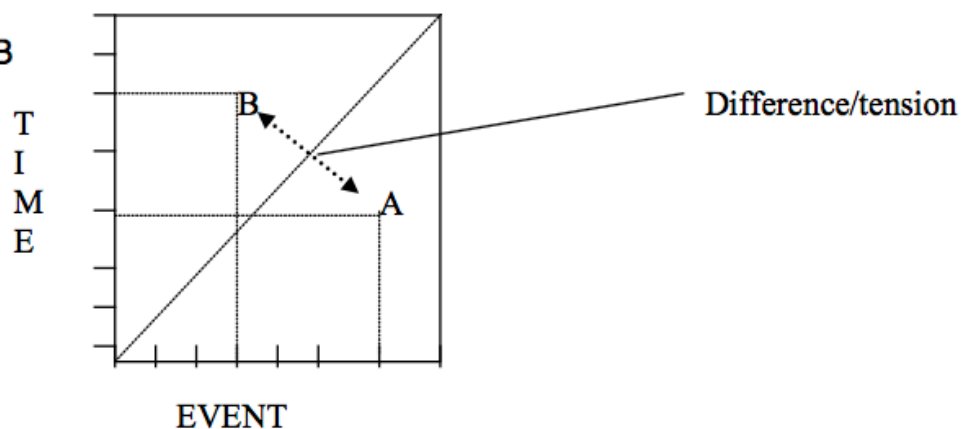
Like the DISC or Myers Briggs personality and behaviour instruments, the point is not that there is a right or wrong better or worse result but that we compare, contrast and interact with each other for greater insight and understanding of difference and potential tensions. In his own words:

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"The personal profile of basic values can be applied in several ways. It can serve as...

• the basis of a judgment against a person who does not behave as we would wish

• a radar signal that we are headed for conflict with another person and thus should avoid confrontation

• an insight which will help us achieve maximum intelligent interaction with another person." (Lingenfelter p 36),

Note: This paper assumes a certain working understanding of the Lingenfelter values. For more detail on Lingenfelter's model refer to the survey and notes in the appendix.

Some Implications to Internal Operations of Concentric

By its very nature, Concentric is confronted with the challenges of contextualization and working effectively cross-culturally. Within the "...intentional partnership of distinct organisations"... there are not only distinct organisational cultures to contend with but also different national/ethnic cultures (US, European, Australian, South African, Singaporean, Indian, Latin American etc) represented by the leadership of national partner organisations. Simply because the common language of participants (with some exceptions) is English does not mean all are on the same page in all things of understanding meaning from the many various forms of communication employed. We can outwardly agree with statements and group decisions but the values implied by those statements and decisions can mean very different things to different members and, as a result, feelings, relationships and trust can inadvertently suffer. As Lingenfelter (Baker 1986, pg 14) observes, "...people often attribute moral force to their priorities for personal behaviour and judge those who differ from them as flawed, rebellious, or immoral."

I sat with a national Australian leader in corporate training discussing the emerging tensions and brewing misunderstandings between the US based parent company owners and himself as he sought to launch the Australian operation. He was committed, in fact seriously financially committed to its success, he was of the understanding that they would be working as peer associates and there had been much discussion about mutual learning, relationships being primary, and all that he believed was possible in Australia. From all the initial talk and interaction he *felt* accepted, trusted and affirmed as a peer and confident that he and they were singing the same tune and in the same key. The confusion had arisen ever since the time came to finalise their working agreement in writing. My friends confusion stemmed from what he felt

was a legal business document that was based on distrust rather than mutual trust and gave no consideration to the values of relationship, mutuality and contributing to each others success. Rather it seemed to question his integrity, and assume there would be a crisis that must be mitigated against. There was in his mind a great inconsistency between what had been the rhetoric and interaction up to then and what he was hearing now. His response was confusion and disappointment, not only were they singing in different keys they seemed to be singing different tunes all together.

On the other hand they were viewing his insistence on changes and personalising the agreement as non-cooperation, difficult behaviour, reason for concern and indicators of possible trouble ahead. They were on a collision course based around the value continuum of goal as task or people. In explaining the difference between US and Australian cultures as I had experienced, where as the US is more a *contractual* and *task oriented* culture in contrast to Australia's more *relational* and *people oriented* values bias. As peers, friends and committed Christians both use the language of relationship but the bias of each of our cultures sets us up for very different expectations of each other ad disappointment. He was able to adjust his expectations and re-interpret the communications. It was all about gaining an appreciation of the differences in values underlying the forms of communication so that intended meanings and expectations could be understood in their context.

*What are some applications of this framework of international values **within** Concentric especially in regard to delivery systems and forms? Where do the Concentric core values sit on the continuums? Is there a preferred Concentric values profile? Why or why not?*

Take one expression of a Concentric delivery system form: **the Concentric Global Leadership Forum.** The requirement that members of the international leadership forum of Concentric attend an international gathering annually as a priority with equal personal financial costs (air-fares, travel, accommodation, time etc). Initially the Forum agreed that for the health of Concentric as a viable and meaningful partnership in mission, leadership needed to meet face to face regularly. We agree this was vital in order to maintain the quality relationships necessary for clear communication, growing trust and the integrity of Concentric's commitment to incarnational ministry valuing the relational context above the formal. This was considered so important that key national leaders of member missions/orgs. are expected to make every effort to attend the international gathering.

However, whilst everyone may have agreed with such a decision for the reasons given, that does not mean that the decision has the same meaning and implications for all. The specific form of an

international gathering is prejudicial against leaders from developing countries for whom such an expense may represent many months if not a years salary and who have neither the organisational nor personal resources available to cover such expense. They commit to participate along with their western partners who hold that face to face relationships are all so important and for whom the world seems so small, but whereas to those western partners it has, financially speaking, 'small-change' value, the participants from developing countries are expected to make it perhaps the major financial project of their year! One missionary delegate mentioned in passing that the cost of him attending would be sufficient to pay two local workers wages for a whole year! He insisted on purchasing the ticket himself so that his assistant (a national) would not be aware of the price in order to avoid the difficulty of trying to explain the justification of such a financial commitment. The cost of me attending was not much more than a month's salary.

Interestingly where as the west tends to value time over money, the developing world tends to value money over time. That is, the more precious commodity and more expensive currency in Australia and more so in the US is leader's time. Leaders from those cultures would happily spend thousands of dollars to travel to Africa for a four day conference and all the time talk about the importance of real relationship building. However the African leaders are would be happy to spend a week or two (or more) together to really build relationship and maximize the event but cannot afford but a fraction of the money required getting there. So which value is more biblical? Which value is more in keeping with the Concentric Core values and philosophy? And which one shows the commitment to Concentric's vision? Is there a willingness on both sides of that culture gap to demonstrate commitment through sacrifice of a most precious commodity?

If each were asked to contribute the same percentage of their annual financial budget as the leader from a developing country to make the event possible, then the real economic value associated with such a simple decision would be evident to all and the inequities inherent would become clearer. Jesus comparison as he observed and commented on the giving of the widow and the Pharisee reminds us of a Kingdom value of equal sacrifice not equal economy. In spite of Concentric's commitment of members to meet in a global leadership forum, they are yet to vigorously address this issue and solve the problem.

Another simple example of delivery systems and inherent values is **training materials**. To assign any monetary value to training materials based on the economy of the developing country is troublesome to the extreme. Even when as materials providers we seek to be so very generous ("...but it's only $5") the currency exchange rates and the differing cultural values confuse matters and hinder kingdom effectiveness. This remains a practical problem for Concentric and

potentially a continuing source of tension. What do we mean by "own" and "control"? Are materials that any of us develop "owned" by its developer in an intellectual property sense only, so that content integrity and acknowledgment is controlled, or does ownership mean dollar$ and cash flow return. From a Kingdom perspective, which is the higher value, return on investment in dollars or in leadership multiplication? Which economy provides the truly biblical value, the economy of finance, or of the Great Commission ad Great Commandment. Which currency is the measure, money or disciples/fruit? Ironically, Jesus made a direct connection between fruitfulness/return and surrendering control pointing out that a seed had to fall and be buried before it could be fruitful. Is copyright for example about ensuring financial rights (a right to get financial return) or about ensuring that the user uses it right?Church mission history is all too stained by the results of mission endeavours corrupted by colonial self interest and what with wisdom of hindsight is seen as exploitation ('..For King and empire").

Lingenfelter's model suggests that from a predominantly western perspective the dichotomistic view (dichotomy value in thinking) separates out 'business/financial' issues from relational, and Kingdom issues so that it is easily considered in isolation without real implications beyond itself ('business is business' after all). But for those cultures and people who are less dichotomistic and more holistic in their perspective/values there simply *is no* such separation. Much like in a family in many cultures there simply is no such individual ownership or rights to anything especially anything that someone else needs.

In Pacific Islander and Australian Aborigine society, "what's yours is mine and what's mine is yours", in fact whatever 'we' as an extended family or tribe have between us is 'ours' and if you need it you use it. In main stream Australian society we might say to our family and even closest friends 'Look mate, what's mine is yours', but we really don't mean it literally. In fact if we go to where we last parked our car intending to head off to work or play and it's been driven away by a brother or friend, we feel wronged, ripped off, brushed aside, unvalued, taken advantage of and just plain sinned against. Even if a person were to ask us without notice, could they take our car for the day, we would commonly feel it was inappropriate even to make such an imposing request on our personal resources (ie."*my* personal resources..."). If we didn't know who took the car we would immediately conclude it had been stolen and report the 'criminal offence' to the police. None of that would be the case in Aboriginal or Islander culture. If the car was unused and needed by another, then it is there to be used. After all "...what's yours is mine", right?

Consider the inequity of multinational pharmaceutical companies holding an international patent on HIV drugs seeking to recover their development costs from sales. The countries that are most desperately in need of the treatments simply cannot afford them and the countries with the least

urgent need consider them reasonably priced. What is accepted as simply reasonable economics from the western corporate and government view, is understood from the perspective of the less resourced poor as commercialisation of matters of life and death, an affront to every Christian value. Indeed we might ask, "What *would* Jesus do?"

What are the practical issues regarding training materials, issues of ownership, quality control, finances, availability, and access that must be addressed if Concentric is to remove obstacles hindering achievement of our vision? As the saying goes: "You'll be amazed at what can be achieved when you don't care any more about who gets the credit".

Some Implications for External actions of Concentric

Beyond the internal challenges of effective communication and cross-cultural relationships within Concentric is the inherent challenge of the mission we share of "...mobilising indigenous movements..." where they do not already exist. This process assumes some degree at least of intentional focussed action from 'outside' a national context to initiate and develop indigenous leadership who can multiply a movement that is true to their cultural context. However the very nature of the initiation coming from 'outside' of a cultural context guarantees difference in values and understandings that will lead to tensions and miscommunication.

Let's consider four aspects of Concentric's missional activity: 1. the people (indigenous leaders and incarnational multipliers), 2. the training, 3. the contact and progression-points of people through the movement, and 4. the 'soft ware' or climate factors in relation to the movement 'experience'. I will develop the first aspect and then simply provide questions for the other three for exploration and discussion.

1. The People.

Indigenous Leaders. As we look to raise up or recognise indigenous leaders to grow a movement in a different context to our own, we must be conscious of our own values profile and how that differs from the predominant profile of the target culture. This is critical or else we will seek out and connect with leaders who closely mirror our own profile. The greater potential leaders vary from our profile the greater the points of tension and misunderstanding between us and them and the greater our likelihood of concluding they are not 'suitable' or not 'mature' or simply not 'leadership material yet'. We would seek to 'correct' their points of divergence from our own values and see progress in how they change to become more 'appropriate' (ie. like us and agreeable).

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Of course the end result is likely to be a leader who relates better and has more credibility with us and our culture than with their own. Such leaders often spend more of their time responding to the 'outsiders' expectations than they do actually making any real difference in the lives of their people or building an indigenous model of any real note. We need also to help the leader understand the validity of their own values profile (within scriptural non- negotiable) so they can identify and understand the tensions and confusion points in the relationship and have the freedom and concepts/words to discuss it. This all works for greater understanding.

On the other hand, it may be that in some contexts the predominant profile of values undermines any real likelihood of success in building a Great Commission oriented movement because the status quo never has and never will. As the old adage goes: 'Nothing changes if nothing changes'. Some cultures hold such a negative view of leadership, success, vision and breaking from the herd that the type of indigenous leaders required to build a movement will by definition be at some points at odds from the prevailing profile. Our care must be to determine what that culture requires in a leader for success rather than what our culture expects.

What are the prevailing values of your own mission context that mitigate against building indigenous leaders who break from the status quo and follow the strategy of Jesus in growing great commission movements? What are the Biblical values of Jesus as leader that particularly need to be championed in your culture in order to cultivate effectiveness and Godliness in leaders among their peers? What of your own values do you need to adjust in order to better match your context and increase effectiveness?

If by definition leadership is influence and influence is based on credibility, authority, trust, and integrity of the leader in the eyes of the people then we must be aware that each of these factors are culturally defined. Each of Lingenfelter's six values continuums impacts on how leaders are perceived in each of these essential factors. Those of particular importance for us to consider are:

Ways of thinking:

        Dichotomistic Thinking: views the world in segmented parts.
        Holistic Thinking: views the world as an integrated whole.

Goal:

        Task Orientation: Object as goal**,** completion of the task is vital.
        People Orientation: People are the goal, relationships are foremost in

        importance.

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View of Vulnerability:

> **Vulnerability as weakness:** transparency of character is seen as weakness (western).

> **Vulnerability as strength:** transparency of character is seen as strength.

Self-worth/Status:

> **Prestige / status achieved:** through effort and accomplishment.
> **Prestige/ status ascribed:** through criteria set by the culture.

Over simplifying it could be said in contemporary Australian culture, effective leaders are generally dichotomistic thinkers, even balance task and people oriented, valuing vulnerability as strength (in the last generation it was seen as weakness) and prestige/status achieved with little regard for positional status (titles and degrees are of no real consequence). In Tonga on the other hand effective leaders would more likely be seen as people who are Holistic thinkers, people not task oriented, vulnerability as weakness and prestige ascribed. Almost a total opposite! Because westerners generally hold very different priorities in these four pairs of values they define 'good leadership' in ways that may actually undermine effectiveness in a non western context. Care is required to be insightful, informed and with hold judgement based out of our own values blindness.

Indigenous Leadership in Concentric has a values profile that more highly values status (success and competence) based on achievement not position. That is we seek to identify people based on demonstrated competence in ministry not position. This will be acceptable in some cultures and not in others. We must consider how to respond in those situations.

Scripturally leadership in the Church has many requirements of character and these qualities have both moral and social dimensions. Many are not absolutes and mean different things in different cultural contexts. For example, Paul wrote to Timothy, "Now an overseer must be above reproach....respectable, hospitable....manage his own family well....must have a good reputation with outsiders..."(1 Tim.3:1-7). Which of these qualities are culturally defined even in part? Given that they are so culturally defined, from who's vantage point should they be judged? Each culture will have its acceptable range of value within in which a person is acceptable but outside of which the response will be "...well that's taking it too far!" This brings us to the inter-relationship between the indigenous leader and the incarnational multiplier.

Incarnational Multipliers. The incarnational multiplier – the "outsider' who has gone 'inside' in order to develop a movement – wrestles with the tension of their own

acceptable values 'comfort zone' and that of the target culture in which they work. They must be ever the vulnerable 'child' and learner. They seek to follow Christ and Biblical values and commands yet much is still cultural in its application lived out in the day to day realities of social interactions. Paul in 1 Cor.8 talked about the differences among believers as to what they viewed as acceptable, in fact righteous – behaviour, and made it plain that the righteous and holy actions may differ between two people in the same culture with different values and understandings. He makes the point that the issue in mission and Christian community is not to argue about points of view but to act in love and respect (1 Cor.8:1."...Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.")
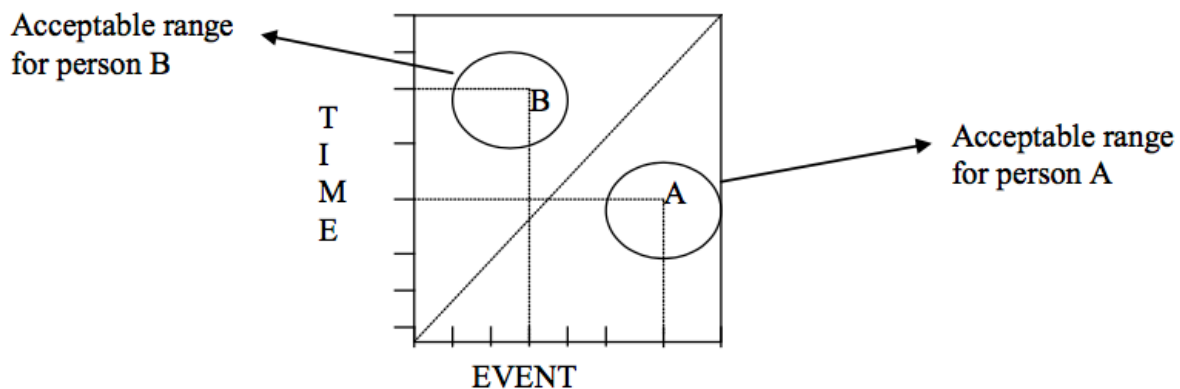

Paul cautions us to, "Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak". (v9) In other words, the right thing is not necessarily to get disciples to emulate our cultural values and 'freedoms' but to understand the realities of the gospel of grace and the value of their own culture and how to be effective in mission within their own context not ours. "Imitate me" in Paul's words did not mean imitate my culture so much as my passion and integrity in following Christ. We aren't trying to clone people or leaders but to raise up indigenous leaders. Hence Paul's example of being a servant of the cause "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some....for the sake of the Gospel.." (9:23)

Paul had preferred personal values, his natural comfort zone, but he sought wherever possible to adopt the values and forms of the receiving culture for the sake of effective communication and indigenous fruit. Paul moved out of his comfort zone, his personally acceptable values range to

adjust wherever biblically acceptable to the acceptable range of the people he was ministering among.

What then we might ask is the biblical result or the 'Jesus' result on the Lingenfelter values framework? Lingenfleter tends to argue that is would always be the centre line, perfect balance. Is it as diagrammed below in that the biblical or best value range in a narrow band along the centre line and beyond that narrow range it becomes sin?
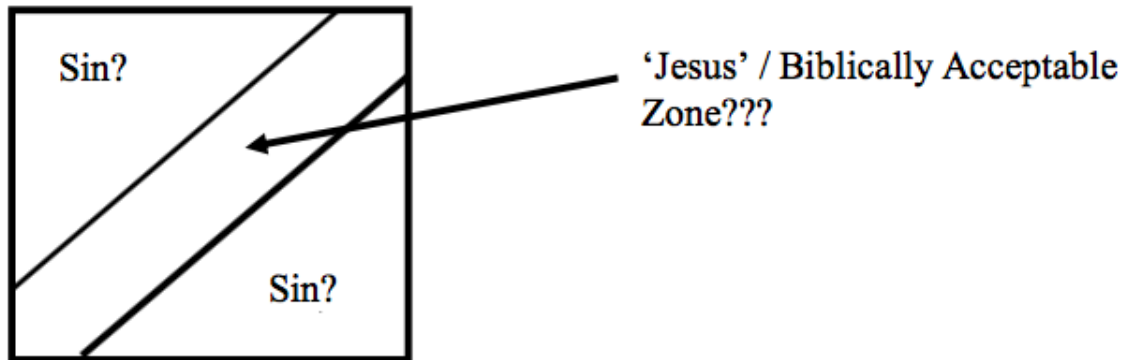
This premise sounds very neat but I believe it is fundamentally flawed as it suggests that the goal is to get everyone the same. However, Jesus was specifically Jewish within the Jewish context and Paul argued that he would move to other people's comfort zone of acceptable values and away from his own. If then the edges aren't necessarily sin, then the centre isn't necessarily holy. The Christlike incarnational multiplier seeks to reduce tension of values differences not by judging others and requiring them to adjust but by adjusting their own to the people they are among. To deny tension points is to deceive ourselves. To confront tension points (as wrong, inferior, inappropriate etc in themselves) is to confront and collide with each other. To recognize and embrace tension points, is to embrace each other and draw closer together.

Therefore, the key for Concentric seeking to identify and mobilize incarnational multipliers is what is their cultural perceptiveness and flexibility? The Lingenfleter grid could be used to identify a close match, but values flexibility, the kind modelled by Paul, needs to be demonstrated in real interaction. Some people will have it, some can learn it but some just won't have it at all. In fact some people when faced with values that challenge their own respond by further exaggerating their own as if to assert their identity. God intentions and willing availability won't be enough in this regard. In some case we need to counsel would be multipliers not to go, or to reconsider their role rather than work out their own ambition and illusion at others expense.

What personal experiences as an incarnational multiplier demonstrate the challenges of values?

What are acceptable ways of challenging prevailing unbiblical values and practices?

What are ways of challenging and retraining people from unhelpful/hindering values and behaviours?

What Biblical principles can be used to determine points at which prevailing values, attitudes, behaviours must be altered?

2. Training

What values are inherent in our standard training materials and delivery systems and is that by design or simply a result of the culture of origin? Is this a limiting factor?

How could training delivery systems be changed to be more internationally compatible/effective or is that too simplistic?

In what ways does the use of seminar and formal training settings limited to a time schedule communicate consistent or inconsistent meanings to people from cultures who value event over time, people over task as the goals? What way can such delivery systems be adapted to be even more consistent in intentionally communicating the meaning of 'relationship primary' incarnational ministry as the mode?

On the values continuum of ways of thinking, Dichotomistic or Holistic, where does the strategy diagram and breakdown of Jesus ministry stages fall? How could this be taught in a more holistic approach to suit less westernized contexts?

What about the Five Level Environment grid, where does it tend to naturally fall and how could the same meaning be communicated in a more holistic manner?

3. The contact and progression-points of people through the movement

What questions need to be considered on this vital issue?

First impressions endure and we only get one chance to make them. Therefore the first point of contact with leaders must be thought through to as far as possible intentionally communicate values and meaning that is consistent with the philosophy of ministry Concentric proposes.

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What are the significant points of contact, entry, involvement/commitment, selection, development and appointment of indigenous leaders in the movement and what values profile does that process convey? What if anything could improve that for the better?

4. The 'soft ware' or climate factors in relation to the movement 'experience'. *What does the values framework say to us in regard to developing a sense of significance, an empowering vision for the great commission, an atmosphere of love and acceptance?*

A movement requires three things for ongoing growth and health: Multiplication, Momentum, and effective Management. What does the values framework imply regarding building these three elements in any given context?

Conclusion.

At a recent Campus Crusade for Christ Australia leadership conference we all gathered for the after conference photo group shot. As is the case people milled around and loosely formed a group with the photographer directing the traffic to fit everyone in the shot. We had three rows and the front row had a few chairs so that, in our minds the shorter people could sit and we could fit more in. I indicated to one of our female staff to,".here, please take a seat" but she seemed not to acknowledge my request. So I encouraged her again, "Sylvia, here, why don't you sit here and I'll stand behind you?" Again she seemed to be confused and uncomfortable with my request. Eventually with some strong insistence I persuaded her to accept the seat which she awkwardly took for the photo but quickly vacated after. A little confused at the interaction I was later enlightened by one of our multi-cultural ministry staff who explained that because Sylvia is Singaporian Chinese she did not want to be seen in a photo where she was seated in front of the National Director, her superior, because in her culture, seating position and placement in a photo is representative of position and status. It would be viewed by her supporters back home as quite inappropriate for her to be seated in front of me. From my values base it was purely functional and a matter of courtesy that the woman be seated.

Cultural form, meanings and values in a truly indigenous movement of youth ministry will mean that there are very real even if only subtle differences. It will mean that the people will identify it as from their own soil, familiar, like a well worn shoe. Yet at the same time it must not be allowed to be held hostage to cultural values that undermine either the integrity of the gospel or the most effective obedience to the disciplemaking command. Leadership, multiplication, reproduction, training, peer outreach, mission priorities, great commandment love etc are non-negotiable in every culture. Certainly effectiveness and fruitfulness is to be the measure of

things, and whatever restricts that needs to be identified and evaluated. But such evaluation must be undertaking from the perspective of an informed insider rather than the cultural blindness and self assuredness of a well meaning outsider.

The power of the strategy of ministry based on the life of Jesus is not in the charts, diagrams, lists, alliteration or other cleverly structured forms. All these are too some degree or another, culture specific rather than generic. Rather the power of our message and strategy is the primary source, the story of Jesus life in the gospels and this must always remain the primary focus of attention and all principles clearly drawn from it. This requires sound exegesis so that clear principles are distilled from the account and then people thoughtfully make the application to their own contexts aided by the insight gained from the perspective of an involved and respectful outsider. Lingenfelters International Values Framework provides a helpful tool to aid self awareness and promote greater understanding of the fundamental differences between people who are equally committed to serving Jesus. To that end we al benefit, God is glorified and our personal and corporate experience of sharing with Jesus in his mission is deepened.

Foot note:
A wise American Indian saying says, Never criticise a man until you have walked at least a mile in his shoes.....then when you criticise him you are at least a mile away and he's got no shoes. Hopefully we won't need to resort to such defences.

Concentric is a global alliance of ministries that provide Biblical leadership equipping based on Jesus' model and strategy.
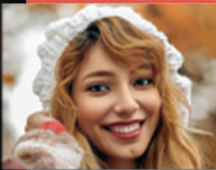
Our common center as an alliance is the ministry strategy we share from the life of Jesus. We are leaders and organizations that are passionate to see each generation reached and mobilized for the cause of Christ.

Our Vision is to generate disciple-making movements built on the model of Jesus which multiply His life, character, and priorities to the nations.

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