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5 **PART I:**
7 **ADVANCEMENTS TO AUTHENTIC**
9 **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**
11 **THEORY**
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3 VERITABLE AUTHENTIC
5 LEADERSHIP: EMERGENCE,
7 FUNCTIONING, AND IMPACTS
9

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13 L. Gardner

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17 **ABSTRACT**

19 *In this chapter we introduce the construct of the authenticity of a leader as*
21 *a logical extension of the authentic person. We provide an operational*
23 *definition of authenticity, and contrast the pseudo-authentic with the ver-*
25 *itable authentic person. From a social cognitive lens, we propose that*
27 *authenticity is an emergent property of key processes and components of*
the self-system. We then examine how the leader's authenticity positively
affects intra- and interpersonal leadership processes. We propose that
authenticity in leaders is an important leadership multiplier, and is foun-
dational for producing a virtuous cycle of performance and learning for
leaders, followers and organizations.

29
31 The authentic self is the soul made visible.

Sarah Ban Breathnach

33 In his thesis, *Being and Nothingness* (1943), the philosopher Jean Paul Sa-
35 rtre (1905–1980) describes authenticity as a personal search for meaning,

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1 arguing that mankind, having been confronted with the meaninglessness of
existence, embarks on a search for the true self. However, according to
3 Sartre, individual authenticity is to be earned and emerges from its social
context, under guidance of one's own conscience. Sartre's intimation that
5 authenticity involves morality and a journey toward one's possible selves is a
theme that will be elaborated throughout this chapter.

7 At first glance, the use of the word "authentic" in the definition of au-
thentic leadership provided in the introduction of this book may appear to
9 have been stretched beyond the meaning assigned to it by Sartre, and others
(Erickson, 1995; Harter, 2002), of being true to oneself. While the core
11 components of Authentic Leadership Theory (ALT) (e.g., self-awareness
and self-regulation) reflect this adage, Luthans and Avolio (2003) also in-
13 clude additional, albeit desirable qualities (e.g., ethical standards, develop-
mental focus, and positive psychological capacities) in their definition. As a
15 result of these additions, it may seem difficult to find a person who fits their
full definition of an authentic leader.

17 When one breaks down Luthans and Avolio's (2003) concept of an au-
thentic leader into its constituent components, two underlying factors be-
19 come apparent. First, the authenticity of the leader is predicated on the
authenticity of the person (as it is traditionally defined). That is, the ability
21 to behave authentically as a person is a necessary criterion for any leader
hoping to be authentic in his/her leadership. Second, the leader who is
23 authentic can achieve more than any other leader – in other words, au-
thenticity serves as a key *leadership multiplier*. Hence, the extent that the
25 leader is authentic as a person directly affects the efficacy of his/her given
leadership style on followers, as defined by ALT. Cast in this manner, au-
27 thentic leadership is no longer an impossible ideal, but a practical and
achievable goal for many leaders. To this end, it is therefore imperative that
29 the antecedents, components, and effects of authenticity are further ex-
plored within the general context of leadership, and with particular refer-
31 ence to ALT.

33

PURPOSE

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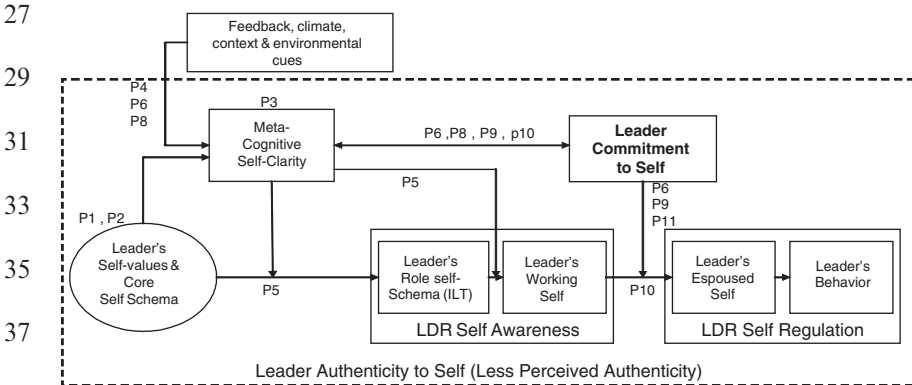
37 We propose a deeper examination of the authenticity component of au-
thentic leadership. We put forth an operational definition of authenticity,
utilizing a social cognitive lens to identify the key processes and components
39 of the self-system that foster authentic leadership, and how that system
interacts in a given leadership environment. We recognize that leadership is

1 a multilevel phenomenon (Ashforth, 1999; Yammarino, Dansereau, & Ken-
 3 nedy, 2001). However, we choose in this chapter to focus on the intraper-
 5 sonal processes of the authentic leader, and limit our examination of the
 7 interpersonal aspects of authentic leadership to just the dyadic leader-fol-
 9 lower relationship. Specifically, we address five major research questions:
 11 (1) What are the cognitive (including motivational) processes associated
 with authenticity? (2) How does authenticity become manifest through the
 leader’s cognitive and behavioral self-regulation? (3) How is authenticity
 perceived, attributed, and internalized by the follower? (4) What are the
 follower-related outcomes? and (5) How does the authentic leader process
 and react to subsequent diagnostic feedback from the follower and the en-
 vironment?

13 The above questions correspond to the five major components of our
 15 proposed theoretical framework for veritable authentic leadership. The ma-
 17 jor subprocesses proposed include: (1) the leader’s self-clarity and meta-
 19 cognition over their self-system (self-awareness); (2) the leader’s alignment
 of self-awareness and self-regulation through meta-cognitive oversight and
 agentic commitment to self; (3) the followers’ cognitive processing of the
 leader’s observed behavior and their resulting attributions and perceptions
 of leader authenticity; (4) the resulting proximal and veritable effects on the
 follower; (5) the self-verification and priming cues the leader processes from
 diagnostic feedback received through the follower feedback loop and vari-
 ous forms of performance and contextual feedback; and finally, (6) the
 formation and reinforcement of an authentic organizational culture (Fig. 1).

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25



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Fig. 1. Process Model of the Emergence of Authentic Behaviors.

1 Using this framework and lens, we advance a process model of authenticity to depict the intra- and interpersonal processes that occur in a leadership system, and how the leader's authenticity positively affects this system. We use the adjective "veritable" (i.e., true or genuine) to distinguish the true authentic leader from the *pseudo-authentic leader* who may temporarily present him- or herself as authentic to followers, but does so for impression management purposes only. We also propose that authenticity in leaders is an important *leadership multiplier*, and is foundational for producing a virtuous cycle of performance and learning for leaders, followers and the organization.

11 13 15 17 19 21 23 25 27 29 31 33 35 37 39

WHAT IS AUTHENTICITY?

Discriminant Validity of the Leadership Authenticity Construct

Authenticity is not *sincerity*. Modern conceptions of authenticity are best understood by what it is not. Firstly, authenticity should not be confused with sincerity. Trilling (1972) best made this distinction clear in his definition of sincerity as "the absence of dissimulation or feigning or pretense" (p.13) in which there is "congruence between avowal and actual feeling" (p. 2). Insincerity is thus the *feeling* of a lack of incongruence in one's relations and interactions with others.

Authenticity, on the other hand, is a self-referential state of being (Sartre, 1943). It is more than a feeling, and has to do primarily with *being* one's true self. It is a state of being that is self-contained and does not require the presence of another for its reality to become manifest – unlike sincerity which is only manifest in one's relationships with others, one is authentic because one has *achieved* authenticity, and this state of being is the same whether one is alone or in a crowd. When applied to the leadership process, however, we will develop how this intrapersonal state of being positively influences the interpersonal follower–leader relationship.

Although we do acknowledge that being authentic has affective and perceptual implications, we stress that the essence of authenticity is a developmental achievement that is manifest in the wholesomeness of one's internal self. From the perspective of the self-system literature, to be authentic is to be "true to oneself"; the assumption being that there is a coherent phenomenological self (Kihlstrom & Klein, 1994) to which one can be true. Achieving coherence with this known and experienced self, and

1 having the cognitive capabilities to maintain this coherence, is what is critical in defining what makes a person authentic.

3 Authenticity is not *impression management*. To be inauthentic is to betray one's own relationship with oneself. Berman (1970, p. 60) describes inauthenticity as "the determination of men to hide themselves not merely from others but from themselves." Behaviorally, this is manifest as hiding one's
5 true thoughts, being phony, or saying what one thinks others want to hear, rather than what one really wants to say. However, this behavioral manifestation of inauthenticity is not to be confused with impression management (Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Rosenfeld,
7 Giacalone, & Riordan, 2002). The behavioral manifestations, while similar, do arise from different causes.

13 In a social situation, the inauthentic person acts in deference to external information because of a lack of coherent internal information that he/she can draw upon, which may be due to causes such as a lack of self-awareness, or an inadequate commitment to the self. Taken away from the social setting, the inauthentic person is still intrinsically inauthentic, lacking the ability and/or motivation to be true to the self. Impression management, on the other hand, makes no assumption about the coherence of the self, and is primarily concerned with the manipulation of social information to achieve
15 a particular image objective with a target or audience.

19 In fact, a person can have high levels of self-awareness and yet choose to use that awareness to further dramaturgically manipulate their external portrayal of the self. Although the inauthentic person may engage in impression management (e.g., as a defense mechanism to portray coherence), by itself impression management is an insufficient condition for determining the authenticity or inauthenticity of an individual. In fact, an authentic person may use impression management techniques to ensure that his/her true self is displayed to and perceived by others. What differentiates authentic leaders is whether the impression attempted is consistent with the self, or dramaturgical in nature.

23 Authenticity is not *self-monitoring*. The continuum of inauthenticity to authenticity appears to closely mirror that of self-monitoring (Snyder, 1987), with the high self-monitor displaying different behaviors according to what is perceived to be appropriate for the situation, while low self-monitors are more apt to listen inward for guidance on how to behave in a situation. High self-monitors report having multiple selves (Lester, 1997), while low self-monitors may initially appear more genuine and true to themselves.

37 Several things differentiate authenticity from self-monitoring. First, inauthenticity is characterized by false self-behavior (Lerner, 1993), while high

1 self-monitors do not necessarily report or regard their behavior as false
(Snyder, 1979). Although authenticity is a state of being, inauthenticity can
3 be felt and experienced as an affect, measurable by self-reports (Harter,
2002). Self-monitoring focuses on behavioral flexibility across situations and
5 not on the felt affect associated with behaviors. In addition, although
Snyder's original definition of self-monitoring included the intention to
7 display socially appropriate behavior (Snyder, 1979), self-monitoring scales
do not measure either motive or intentionality (Briggs & Cheek, 1988).

9 Inauthenticity, on the other hand, arises out of a sense of false self that is
"socially implanted" (Harter, 2002) against one's will and is often reported
11 by the person. Hence, high self-monitors will adapt their behavior to the
situation, believing strongly that they are presenting their most appropriate
13 self for the situation at hand. On the other hand, the inauthentic person is
aware that the self presented is phony and may judge it to be the product of
15 situational pressures.

Second, authenticity includes a commitment to one's identity and values
17 (Erickson, 1995). As such, this commitment aspect of authenticity is more
state-like. On the other hand, self-monitoring is a personality attribute that
19 becomes manifest as a preference for utilizing alternative sources of infor-
mation when deciding on one's social behavior (i.e., context versus self-sys-
21 tem; prototypical person for situation versus prototypical self for situation).
Self-monitoring reflects a trait-like preference and proficiency for utilizing
23 self-knowledge (low self-monitor) versus knowledge of others (high self-mon-
itor) in social situations (Snyder, 1987). Authenticity is purely self-referential,
25 to "exist wholly by the laws of its own being" (Trilling, 1972, p. 93). Put in
another way, authenticity involves an agentic commitment to one's own laws.
27 This intrapersonal *commitment to the self*, however the self is defined, con-
stitutes another core characteristic of what it means to be authentic, and will
29 positively affect the interpersonal processes that define leadership.

The final contrast between authenticity and self-monitoring is that the authentic
31 person is concerned with the degree of self-referential expression, whereas the high
self-monitor is concerned about the degree of social impression. Authenticity consists
33 of knowing what being true to oneself means (self-awareness) and expressing oneself
truly (self-regulation) – with discrepancies between the two resulting in feelings of
35 inauthenticity (Lerner, 1993). Without fully invoking the admittedly important role
of individual perceptual processes in order to retain the intrapersonal focus of this
37 chapter, self-expression is here assumed to be accurately received by the external
audience, resulting in perceived authenticity by others. Thus, faithful self-expression
39 and perceived authenticity go hand in hand in the case of the authentic leader; there
is no need for active impression management by the leader.

1 Conversely, the high self-monitoring leader is more concerned with making
2 the appropriate social impression; that is, the goal is always to portray some
3 level of the ideal group prototype (Hogg, 2001) or the leader's role-based
4 prototypical self (Lord & Brown, 2004) that is deemed most appropriate for
5 the social context. Hence, the high self-monitoring leader will have a higher
6 propensity to engage in active impression management (Kilduff & Day, 1994).

7 We take the view that the authentic leader is not necessarily a low
8 self-monitor, although we recognize that the overlap in personality traits
9 associated with these constructs suggests that the authentic person may be
10 predisposed to low self-monitoring. The reason for this seeming irony lies in
11 the fact that authentic leaders are not given free rein for expressing their
12 personalities, but are also bounded by their roles as leaders. Unlike au-
13 thentic persons, authentic leaders are not only true to themselves, but also
14 true to their roles as leaders, which include an element of being aware of
15 social cues and followers' needs, expectations, desires and feedback (Day &
16 Kilduff, 2003). Because the authentic leader is very self-aware (Gardner,
17 Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003), he/
18 she can react to environmental priming cues to make certain aspects of the
19 true self more salient. This results in a *working self-concept* that is more
20 adaptive and responsive to situational cues (Markus & Wurf, 1987).

21 Authentic leaders are not automatons driven by some homunculus that
22 determines their behavior. In fact, the phenomenological self is too vast for
23 any leader to access it at any given time (Kihlstrom & Klein, 1994). Hence,
24 authentic leaders can remain true to themselves and yet display a range of
25 behaviors that are well-adapted to the demands of the situation at hand
26 depending on the part of the true self that is activated. Conversely, low self-
27 monitors are less amenable to contextual priming cues at the self-awareness
28 stage simply because of an inherent preference to defer to internal cues. This
29 results in a less flexible working self-concept that carries itself through to self-
30 regulation, eventually manifesting itself as behaviors that may be true to self,
31 but "stubbornly so" and unheeding of situational demands. In this regard,
32 low self-monitors tend to be less effective leaders (Day & Kilduff, 2003).

33 On the other hand, we also argue that authenticity adds incremental value
34 to a leader who is also a high self-monitor. On his/her own, a high self-
35 monitor is less receptive to internal priming cues at the self-awareness stage,
36 and may instead allow situational cues to prime self-regulation mechanisms
37 that conflict with the working self-concept. This produces behavior that is
38 more appropriate for the situation, but not necessarily reflective of the "self-
39 in-situation." When the high self-monitoring leader is also authentic, how-
40 ever, more aspects of the self become accessible due to higher levels of both

1 self- and other-awareness. Consequently, more contextually applicable concepts associated with the self are activated, enabling the leader to be both
3 adaptive and true to self in leadership episodes. What is critical is that this authentic temporal and role-based working self-concept is still a coherent
5 part, albeit a subset, of the true self.

Authenticity develops in parallel to morality. As is further explained by
7 Hannah, Lester, and Vogelgesang (2005) in this book, we propose that authenticity and morality are mutually reinforcing in that one cannot be
9 authentically immoral or antisocial. Developmentally, the path to authenticity in a person gives rise to the ability for *postconventionalist* (Kohlberg,
11 1984) reflection and *self-authorship* (Kegan, 1994). These capacities not only increase one's pro-social orientation, but also the ability for self-regulation
13 that is empathetic and relational.

Consistent with the notion of Leader Developmental Level (LDL) introduced by Eigel and Kuhnert (2005) in their contribution to this volume, we
15 propose that the underlying cognitive processes that enable authenticity also produce high levels of moral capacity and agency. Such individuals are
17 characterized by highly developed meta-cognitive ability, a heightened sense of self-awareness, a strong sense of one's core values and identity, and an
19 efficient self-regulatory system. Authenticity is thus not a vacuous construct, and by logical extension, its antecedents produce higher levels of ethical,
21 individually considerate leadership that is associate-building in its orientation. This logic supports Luthans and Avolio (2003) and May, Chan, Hodges,
23 and Avolio's (2003) inclusion of these key leadership qualities in their authentic leadership construct.
25

In summary, the discussion so far indicates that the key components of
27 authenticity include at least an affective component (feelings of being true to one's self), a cognitive component (self-awareness of one's true self and
29 socially prescribed roles), a valance component (commitment to self), and a self-referential expression component that may be perceived by others.
31 These components are summarized in Fig. 2.

33

35 AUTHENTICITY IN LEADERS: A SOCIAL COGNITIVE 37 VIEW

37

Thus far, we have alluded to a social cognitive perspective in our conceptualization of authenticity. In line with this view, we view authenticity as an
39 emergent property of various components and processes of the self-system.

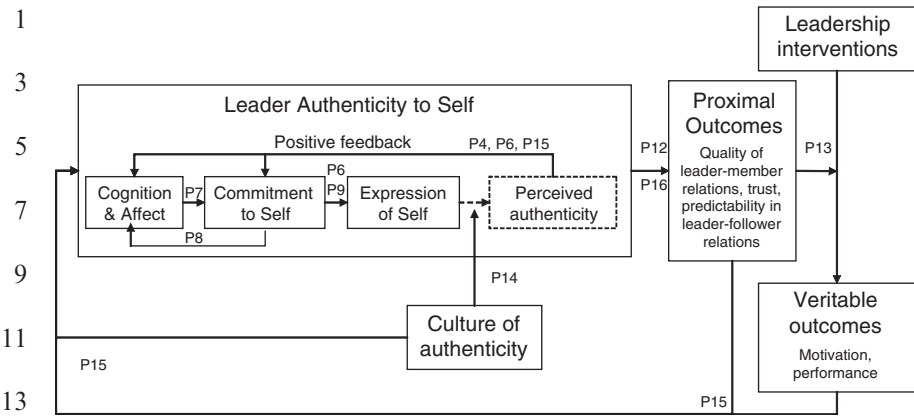


Fig. 2. Virtuous Cycle of Authenticity to Self, Interventions and Outcomes.

In particular, to illustrate the impact of the working self-concept, we chose the leader role as our focus. For the remainder of this chapter, we shift our discussion to authenticity as an emergent process in specific individuals, namely leaders, and further explicate the underlying constructs of authenticity presented thus far as key functions of the leadership process. In keeping with the intrapersonal focus of this chapter, we explicitly acknowledge, but choose for now to exclude the role that follower attributions and leader impression management may play in affecting how authenticity in the leader is perceived.

A social cognitive perspective of authenticity has two key features: (1) the presence and awareness of a core self within the self-system; and (2) the need for one's presentation of self to be aligned with one's core self. When defined this way, our operational definition of authenticity consists of the integrity of the self-system and the alignment of this self-system with public demonstrations and perceptions of the self by others. The proposed framework also provides for a third social cognitive variable, environmental influence, which is further developed in the discussion of priming cues and follower and environmental feedback mechanisms below.

Leaders, by virtue of their unique role demands, high visibility, and salience to followers, face additional challenges in being authentic to both themselves and to their roles as leaders. History is replete with examples of leaders, who under normal circumstances may be considered authentic, or at

1 least not inauthentic people, but when called to face a leadership challenge,
2 failed miserably and acted in the most inauthentic fashion.

3 For example, one could argue that abuse of Iraqi prisoners at the Abu
4 Ghraib prison by military personnel, as well as the conduct of officers and
5 noncommissioned officers – if charges that they condoned the beatings and
6 humiliation of prisoners prove to be true – reflect an abdication of the moral
7 responsibilities that accompany the role of leader. In other words, those
8 responsible for the abuse behaved inauthentically as leaders, failing to dis-
9 play moral courage as they succumbed to pressures to combat terrorism at
10 any costs. Similarly, the historical instances of groupthink documented by
11 Janis (1972) and others (e.g., Esser, 1998; Turner & Pratkanis, 1998) suggest
12 that such cases can arguably be seen as more than just the power of the
13 group over the self – they can also be seen as failures of persons in leadership
14 roles to behave authentically as leaders.

15 The power of the situation is but one of the many tensions that
16 threaten to wrestle leaders away from acting true to themselves and to their
17 leadership roles and responsibilities (Davis-Blake & Pfeffer, 1989;
18 Mischel, 1973). The role of leader poses significant challenges. Not all
19 authentic people can be leaders, much less authentic leaders. And not
20 all authentic leaders behave authentically all the time. In fact, one must
21 see oneself as possessing the attributes that one determines are needed
22 in a given leadership situation in order to emerge authentically as a leader.
23 Role conflict will result when authentic *persons* are asked to assume lead-
24 ership roles that they believe require attributes not found in their true
25 self and that they are unable to develop in time for expected performance.
26 A more reserved police lieutenant, for example, may be very comfortable in
27 leading officers through the processes involved in managing investigative
28 resources, but may experience great inner conflict when asked to lead a
29 SWAT team.

30 We therefore, see authenticity as varying along a continuum from
31 complete inauthenticity to full authenticity (Erickson, 1995). Rather
32 than being dichotomously authentic or inauthentic, leader authenticity
33 varies as a function of both internal and external factors. With regards
34 to external factors, we agree with the assertion made by Luthans and
35 Avolio (2003) that there are both trait and state components to a
36 leader's authenticity. In their view, state components of authenticity
37 are contingent on situational factors, and may be domain specific. In the
38 next section, we first introduce the internal factors that we believe contribute
39 to authenticity in leaders, and then turn our attention to the external
influences.

SOCIAL COGNITIVE PROCESSES OF AUTHENTICITY

From a social cognitive perspective, we hold that authenticity is predicated on: (1) self-clarity regarding one's schematic self-system (to include values, beliefs, goals, roles, attributes and emotions); and (2) meta-cognitive ability and commitment to self to apply the true self-system to cognitive and behavioral self-regulation during leadership episodes. Below we advance a conceptual framework that delineates the emergence, structure, and functioning of this authentic self-system.

Veritable authenticity requires leaders to first have increased awareness of and self-clarity regarding their self-system. Referring to Fig. 1, the proposed framework posits that the leader's self-system is an interactive and multi-dimensional process composed of the leader's set of *core-self schema* and their collection of *leadership role self-schema*. Self-awareness is evidenced by the leader's ability and motivation to identify and assess the components of these schemas, and have meta-cognitive oversight with respect to the cognitive processing of self-information during leadership performances.

As originally defined, the self-awareness construct involves a cognitive state in which an individual focuses conscious attention on some aspect of the self (Duval & Wicklund, 1972); it says nothing about the degree of accuracy or inaccuracy of self-perceptions. As used here and by Gardner et al. (2005), however, self-awareness arises from self-reflection about one's values, beliefs, attributes, and motives. We believe that such self-reflection can help authentic leaders to know themselves and gain clarity and concordance with respect to their core values, identity, beliefs, emotions, motives, and goals. Moreover, as will be further elaborated, our framework proposes that distinct components of the leader's self-system will be activated at any given time through priming cues provided by the context, the followers, and personal introspection.

Our framework (Fig. 1) proposes that authentic leaders have a heightened capacity to effectively process self-information giving them strong abilities to: (1) access complex self-schemas and domain knowledge; (2) conduct centralized and peripheral cognitive processing of self-information; and (3) meta-cognitively select and activate (i.e., self-regulate) self-schema reflecting their beliefs, values, goals, roles, attitudes, and emotions in the activation of the working self-concept. The overriding driver of these processes, however, is the leader's strong and agentic commitment to be true to the self. As shown in Fig. 1, it is this driver that provides the motivation for deep and

1 controlled meta-cognition and moderates the manifestation of self-awareness into self-consistent regulation. Below we elaborate on aspects of the self
3 that make self-awareness and authentic self-regulation possible.

5

Cognitive Structure of the Authentic Self

7

Jones and Gerard (1967, p. 716) defined the *phenomenological* self as a
9 “person’s awareness, arising out of interactions with his environment, of his
own beliefs, values, attitudes, the links between them, and their implications
11 for his behavior.” Such a definition views the self as both a memory store as
well as a constructivist process. As a memory store, Kihlstrom et al. (1988,
13 p. 150) stated that “the self is one of the richest, most elaborative knowledge
structures stored in memory.” As an emergent, constructed entity, the self
15 affects current perceptions of reality, such “that memories of past actions
and outcomes are available in integrated form to clarify current action
17 possibilities” (Jones & Pittman, 1982, p. 232).

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Drawing from this literature, our proposed framework offers a structuralist
19 view where the leader’s self-system involves the development and activation
(instantiation) of selected self-schematic logogens held in long-term
21 memory. In other words, the structure of one’s self involves organized and
accessible memories of one’s self. The hypothetical constructs stored in the
23 leader’s self-schema (Markus, 1977) provide a framework for answering
questions of existentialism (“Who am I?”), functioning (“How do I relate to
25 different people/environments?”), self-attributions (“Am I friendly, moral,
capable?”), and other key informational requirements. In sum, these self-
27 hypotheses, to the extent that one has the ability and motivation to recall
and process them, define the leader’s phenomenological “self as known.”

29 Building on the work of Markus (1977), Lord, Brown, and Freiberg
(1999) proposed that there is a temporal dimension to the self-concept
31 whereby one identifies not only a current *self-view*, but also holds a more
distant image of a *possible self*. The ability to envision a possible self is
33 unique to humans and is based on the ability to engage in mental time travel
(Roberts & Dowling, 2002; Tulving, 1972). Because mental time travel
35 techniques are largely context-based, they rely heavily on contextual episodic
(autobiographical) memories. Such cases illuminate the interaction
37 between semantic memories of one’s self and episodic memory that will
occur in leadership role episodes. Additionally, we assert that the clarity of
39 one’s possible authentic self, coupled with the drive to attain this possible
self, can provide strong motivation for self-development toward

1 authenticity. Although a full exploration is beyond the scope of this chapter,
2 we propose that such motivation lies at the heart of authentic leadership
3 development.

5

The Multidimensionality of the Self Structure

7

8 One's self-system is not a one-dimensional whole, but rather a complex,
9 interconnected and multidimensional phenomenon (Hoyle, Kernis, Leary, &
10 Baldwin, 1999). As shown in Fig. 1, our framework proposes that the au-
11 thentic leader holds a core self of superordinate beliefs, values, attributes
12 and other factors, as well as a leadership role-based self that contains the
13 differentiated, role-based knowledge held in semantic memory. The cogni-
14 tive processes, whereby portions of these domains are activated into a con-
15 textual working self-concept are examined further below as part of the
16 discussion of the cognitive functioning of the authentic self. For parsimony,
17 only the leader's role self-schema is shown in the model, but other role-
18 based schemas held in the leader's memory, such as those associated with
19 one's family roles and community roles, may be similarly activated (e.g., via
20 spreading activation).

21 Due to the vast amount of self-information held in memory, some type of
22 organization is necessary for cognitive functioning. Self-differentiation in-
23 volves the ability to categorize one's self-concepts (self-knowledge) accord-
24 ing to roles, situations, relationships, traits, states, emotions, and other
25 categorical factors, creating multiple phenomenological (Markus & Wurf,
26 1987). Multiple selves can create more flexibility and resilience than a unified
27 core self (Markus & Wurf, 1987), but excessive categorization may result in
28 self-fragmentation, which may be characteristic of extremely high self-mon-
29 itoring persons (Donahue, Robins, Roberts, & John, 1993).

30 Self-schemas are also thought to be defined at the individual, relational,
31 and collective levels (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Since leadership is at its core
32 a pro-social and collective phenomenon (e.g., Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999), the
33 term *authentic leader* – i.e., applying the attribute of *leader* to the authentic
34 person – implies a pro-social leader who has high clarity of self, is motivated
35 and able to regulate consistent with that self, and manages ongoing tensions
36 between self and social/collective demands at various levels.

37 We know that developmentally, the complexity and strength of one's self-
38 beliefs stored in long-term memory can be advanced by increasing the in-
39 tensity and frequency of a person's exposure to trigger events, with more
40 experienced (cognitively complex) individuals having better organized

1 schemas and inter-concept linkages to make better sense of stimuli to ac-
2 quire new knowledge (Bower & Hilgard, 1981; Hersey, Walsh, Read, &
3 Chulef, 1990; Lurigio & Carroll, 1985). Experienced individuals can also,
4 when called upon, consciously elect to spend more time deliberately
5 processing new information without referring to learnt heuristics (Dollinger,
6 1984). This deliberate processing is critical to providing a feedback loop to
7 the developmental process. Thus, we propose that increased levels and
8 complexity of self-knowledge held in the leader's self-concept will create a
9 reciprocal and cyclic heightening of self-awareness, and increased assimilation
10 of future self-related feedback.

11 Based on the preceding discussion, we propose:

12 **Proposition 1.** The authentic leader's self emerges as a function of in-
13 stantiation of core- and role-based self-schemas into an authentic working
14 self during leadership episodes.

15 **Proposition 2.** Authentic leadership will be positively associated with the
16 level (amount) and complexity of self-information held in a leader's ep-
17 isodic and semantic memory.

18 *Cognitive Functioning of the Authentic Self*

19
20 An important distinction is made in the proposed framework between the
21 structure of the authentic self and the functioning of this self-system
22 (Kihlstrom, Beer, & Klein, 2003; Kihlstrom et al., 1988; Kihlstrom & Klein,
23 1994). The latter comprises the activation, recall and processing of self-
24 information from memory, and the resulting self-relevant beliefs, attitudes,
25 perceptions, and other cognitions that emerge to drive the leader's self-
26 awareness and self-regulation. We explore the cognitive functioning of the
27 authentic self and its implications for our focus on veritable versus pseudo-
28 authentic leadership below.

29 Self-concept clarity is the ability to report self-beliefs that are clear, con-
30 fident, stable, and consistent; it has been recognized as an individual dif-
31 ference variable (Campbell, Assanand, & Di Paula, 2000; Campbell et al.,
32 1996). The clarity of one's self-awareness, however, is confounded. Owing to
33 cognitive limitations and attentional capacities, all self-relevant information
34 is not accessible at any point in time. Additionally, individual biases alter
35 the processing of that limited pool of information.

36 In light of these limitations, our framework (see Fig. 1), proposes that the
37 phenomenological self displayed in a given leadership episode is a temporal
38 entity – a subset of the leader's self-system, that becomes manifest in a
39

1 contextual working self-concept (Markus & Wurf, 1987). The working self-
3 concept is that part of one's domain of self-schema that is activated by
stimuli (primes) from one's current environment, or by the self-activation of
a more expert leader.

5 The various self-schemas that a person holds differ in the ease with which
they can be activated (Markus, 1977), creating a highly salient core, and less
7 accessible peripheral self-schemas. Research has shown that when individ-
uals are focused on their self, the activation of core values increases (Ver-
9 planken & Holland, 2002). We propose that the values associated with and
arising from authenticity are highly salient aspects of an authentic leader's
11 core self-schema, and thus chronically accessible during working self-con-
cept activation. This produces a strong *commitment to self* during leadership
13 episodes. Hannah et al. (2005) propose that this value-laden commitment
may be associated with the leader's internal virtues whereby they see
15 self-consistent behavior as a moral issue and imperative.

Although this framework provides for context-based activation to form
17 the leader's working self-concept, this is an acknowledgment of the role that
context plays in the automatic and controlled triggering of the working self
19 (Lord & Brown, 2001). It should not be confused with the controlled, con-
scious effort that the leader expends to address contextual factors as indi-
21 cated in theories of self-monitoring or impression management. In these
theories, one can be bankrupt in terms of the richness of one's working self-
23 concept as a leader for the situation at hand, and still, with great effort and
practice, conjure up a reasonably convincing leader role-play. Not that these
25 are inherently bad – controlled processing is a feature of self-regulation. For
example, anytime a leader encounters a novel leadership situation (a young
27 commander giving a first speech to her soldiers), she employs such control-
led processing.

29 Put another way, for a veritable authentic leader, the working self-concept
is inherently a subset of the leader's self-system, and thus part of their true
31 self. The authentic leader is aware of this activated self and carries it forward
into self-regulation that is true to their self-system. Conversely, self-pres-
33 entations by pseudo-authentic leaders (leaders who present themselves au-
thentic for dramaturgical purposes only) entail some level of de-linkage
35 between the true self-system and behavioral regulation, and hence varying
levels of *self-distortion*. Like their veritable counterparts, pseudo-authentic
37 leaders may appear authentic to their audiences. However, they can be
distinguished by the manner in which they respond to environmental cues.
39 For veritable authentic leaders, environmental cues exert their influence
during the *self-awareness* process by activating context specific portions of

1 the leader's core and role-based selves. In contrast, as will be further dis-
cussed, pseudo-authentic leaders may allow environmental cues to influence
3 their self during the *self-regulation* process, by activating elements of a
dramaturgical self that de-link and violate the working self.

7 *Meta-Cognition and Self-Information Processing*

9 Our framework proposes that veritable authentic leaders have heightened
meta-cognitive abilities that provide them with an increased capacity to
11 oversee the activation and implementation of their working self-concept.
Meta-cognition (Brown, 1987; Flavell, 1979; Schraw & Dennison, 1994) is
13 most broadly referred to as *thinking about your thinking*. Meta-cognition is
commensurate with the top strata of Craik and Lockhart (1972)'s levels of
15 processing approach (Velichkovsky, 2002), and has the two main functions
of *monitoring* and *controlling* (regulation) human cognitions and processes
17 (e.g., Metcalfe & Shimamura, 1994; Nelson & Narens, 1994). It thus serves
both self-referential and executive-control functions that enable authentic
19 leaders to process complex dilemmas and self-relevant information.

Increased meta-cognitive ability helps leaders to: (a) better assess and
21 make meaning of self-relevant information during leadership episodes; (b)
monitor and adjust their reasoning processes toward issue-specific out-
23 comes, and (c) control the selection and activation of self-schemas to meet
goals while also remaining true to themselves. Such oversight also allows
25 personal biases and limitations to be identified, and thus scrutinized and
controlled. Through the functions of monitoring and control, meta-cogni-
27 tive capabilities also oversee the formation of intentions and other cogni-
tions that support self-regulation, and thereby facilitate authentic behavior
29 that is aligned with the leader's working self-concept.

Meta-cognition provides the authentic leader with heightened self-aware-
31 ness through the dedicated and controlled processing of self-relevant infor-
mation. When a person has both the *motivation* and *ability* to engage in
33 meta-cognition, the amount of elaborative message-relevant thinking they
apply increases, thereby determining whether a central (controlled cognitive
35 effort), or less rigorous and peripheral (automatic or heuristic) mode of
processing is utilized (Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, 1986). The
37 level of processing ultimately determines the impact of a message on one's
attitudes and beliefs, with controlled processing producing more persistent
39 attitudes that are predictive of behavior (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and
greater understanding and retention (Craik & Lockhart, 1972). We propose

1 that controlled processing of self-information will lead to heightened self-
2 concept clarity for authentic leaders and activation of commitment to self as
3 a core value.

4 Additionally, although people seek accuracy, they are also *cognitive mi-*
5 *sers* and normally settle at a *sufficiency threshold* of processing once initial
6 hypotheses are confirmed (Chaiken, 1980). To go beyond this threshold and
7 initiate controlled processing, one must have sufficient motivation and abil-
8 ity. We propose that, for authentic leaders, this *motivation* comes from an
9 agentic commitment to authenticity, whereas *ability* is derived from meta-
10 cognitive self-clarity. In summary, meta-cognition will result in heightened
11 self-concept clarity: the ability to report self-beliefs that are clear, confident,
12 stable, and consistent (Campbell et al., 1996, 2000) and the emergence of this
13 clear self into self-consistent regulation. This reasoning suggests:

14 **Proposition 3.** Authentic leadership will be associated with heightened
15 levels of meta-cognitive ability and controlled processing of self-infor-
16 mation, resulting in greater levels of self-concept clarity.

17 *Functions of the Feedback Loop and Self-Information Processing*

18 Our framework proposes that contextual feedback serves two purposes
19 within the process of authentic leadership emergence. First, feedback serves
20 to cue (cognitively prime) aspects of the leader's self during the self-aware-
21 ness phase, resulting in the instantiation of selected self-schemas to form the
22 working self-concept. Second, in response to the leader's subsequent be-
23 havior, contextual feedback serves a self-verifying control function. As
24 shown in Fig. 1, contextual feedback is composed of follower verbal and
25 non-verbal cues, follower performance and relational (e.g., trust) outcomes,
26 and cultural/situational variables.

27 Self-schemas can be accessed into a working self-concept through either
28 automatic or controlled cognitive processing (Lord & Brown, 2001). Re-
29 search has shown, however, that with increased practice and familiarity,
30 even complex and attention-intensive tasks may be executed through au-
31 tomatic processes (e.g., Logan & Klapp, 1991; Spelke, Hirst, & Neisser,
32 1976; Zbrodoff & Logan, 1986), suggesting that authenticity in one's ac-
33 tivated working self-concept may become a habituated phenomenon.

34 Priming is an automatic process (e.g., Friedrich, Henik, & Tzelgov, 1991;
35 Neely, Keefe, & Ross, 1989) occurring when an environmental cue (stimu-
36 lus) automatically activates a meaning in semantic memory, and conse-
37 quently cues meanings closely associated with it through spreading

1 activation (Collins & Loftus, 1975). Primes have been shown to not only
 2 activate, but also inhibit activation of specific aspects of the self (Bargh,
 3 Chen, & Burrows, 1996; Higgins & Brendl, 1995), thus increasing or de-
 4 creasing the accessibility of various aspects of self-schema in the working
 5 self-concept. Priming explains how a leader may develop a “trigger” or
 6 greater propensity to activate specific schemas and other inferences auto-
 7 matically based on stimuli in their environment.

8 By extension, we propose that an authentic leader who holds complex and
 9 clear core- and role-based self-schemas can habituate salient schemas, creat-
 10 ing a propensity to instantiate authentic aspects of their self-system into
 11 an authentic working self-concept, and engage authentically during leader-
 12 ship episodes. Leaders will of course also call upon their schemas and scripts
 13 when making controlled processing judgments.

14 In summary, we propose that the temporal working self-concept is a
 15 multidimensional subset of the leader’s domain of schematic self-knowledge,
 16 activated through environmental priming during the self-awareness process.
 17 Portions of this working self-concept may be implicit to the leader, but yet
 18 hold great influence over their cognitions and resulting behaviors.

19 Previously, we defined the authentic leader as holding a strong commit-
 20 ment to self, providing a pervasive *motive* for self-awareness and self-con-
 21 sistent regulation. Here, we propose that increased meta-cognitive capability
 22 will provide the *ability* to direct this motivation toward greater conscious
 23 oversight over both the activation of self-information and its use during self-
 24 regulation, supporting the following propositions:

25 **Proposition 4.** Contextual and follower feedback cues will prime selected
 26 aspects of the leader’s domain of self-knowledge during leadership epi-
 27 sodes.

28 **Proposition 5.** An authentic leader’s increased meta-cognitive ability and
 29 commitment to authenticity will provide the ability and motivation to
 30 balance conflicting requirements from the environment, self-values and
 31 self-schema, resulting in the instantiation of core- and role-based schemas
 32 into an authentic working-self.

33 Contextual feedback serves a second *self-verifying* function for the leader.
 34 Relationally, how others perceive us serves as a primary determinant of our
 35 self-concepts. Such *reflected appraisals* (Mead, 1934) serve as a “sociometer”
 36 and are critical to effective self-regulation (Higgins & May, 2001; Tice &
 37 Baumeister, 2001). These feedback cues can be implicitly or explicitly pro-
 38 cessed by the leader and, as shown in Fig. 2, include follower verbal and
 39

1 non-verbal responses to the leader's displays of authenticity, follower proximal (e.g., trust) and performance outcomes, and cultural/situational variables.

3 We propose that an authentic leader's agentic commitment to self also
5 includes an increased motive for self-verification (Swann, 1983), and thus, a
7 propensity to transparently display one's true self. We further propose that
9 this increased projection of the authentic self will lead to increased leader-
relevant cueing from followers. Together, a commitment to self, heightened
11 attention to self-relevant information, and meta-cognitive processing ability
will increase the leader's capability to perceive and process self-verifying
information from the environment.

13 This process produces a cycle of reinforcement for the leader's authentic
self and the associated commitment to that self. In other words, because
15 authentic leaders are true to themselves, they influence followers around them
to respond to their authenticity. Part of this follower response will include
17 authentic and other supportive behaviors (Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies, Mo-
rgeson & Nahrgang, 2005). Authentic followership in turn causes or verifies
leaders to remain or become more authentic. Accordingly, we advance:

QA :5

19 **Proposition 6.** Authentic leadership is positively associated with self-ver-
21 ification motives, leading to increasingly transparent displays of the self
during leadership episodes.

23 **Proposition 7.** Increasingly transparent displays of the self by leaders
25 produce increase in self-verification cueing from followers.

27 **Proposition 8.** Authentic leadership is positively associated with the per-
ception and processing of self-verification cues, resulting in heightened
29 reinforcement of leaders' self-concepts, and their commitment to authen-
ticity.

31

Linking Leader Self-Awareness to Authentic Leader Self-Regulation

33

35 As the dual-headed arrow in Fig. 1 indicates, we view meta-cognitive pro-
cesses and commitment to authenticity as interactive processes. Heightened
37 meta-cognitive self-clarity provides the requisite ability for self-awareness,
whereas a high level of commitment to self provides the motivation to self-
regulate behaviors in accordance with the true self. Additionally, meta-
39 cognition raises the salience of one's core values and beliefs, including one's
commitment to authenticity. We have proposed that this elevated level of

1 self-commitment, reciprocally provides the motivation for centralized deep
processing, resulting in heightened meta-cognition of self-information.

3 Beyond this interaction, we also propose that a leader's *commitment to*
4 *self*, as shown in Fig. 1, directly moderates the relationship between self-
5 awareness and self-regulation, thus enabling authenticity. Specifically, high-
6 er levels of commitment to self foster behaviors that are consistent with the
7 leader's activated role-based working self-concept. Research has shown that
8 the most activated portions of one's self-concept serve as the greatest source
9 of proximal regulation (e.g., Lord et al., 1999). In our proposed framework,
10 the construct of commitment to self contains two major dimensions: a *cy-*
11 *bernetic self-regulatory system*, and a *drive for attitude alignment*.

12 Markus and Wurf (1987) proposed that one's inter- and intrapersonal
13 behaviors are regulated by cybernetic processes that compare one's self-
14 views with either proximal goals or a more distal view of one's possible
15 selves. Lord and Brown (2004) expanded this model into a cybernetic self-
16 regulatory control system. They argue that activation of the working self-
17 concept includes activation of one's *self-views*, *current goals*, and *possible*
18 *selves* that, through comparative processes, create cognitive, affective and
19 motivational forces to regulate behavior.

20 In this model, comparing one's self-view to *current goals* establishes sa-
21 lient standards and creates a largely affect-based response if a discrepancy is
22 found, thereby eliciting proximal motivation to reestablish alignment. Com-
23 paring one's current self-view with one's possible selves, conversely, creates
24 motivation for self-development. Lastly, comparing current goals to a pos-
25 sible self provides a more cognitive-based reaction and distal motivational
26 forces. Any two of these three components can therefore initiate regulatory
27 control processes that drive the leader's behavior, with any one of the com-
28 ponents providing the standard and the other the feedback source (Lord &
29 Brown, 2004). This cybernetic process can be either controlled or automatic
30 and can activate powerful goal-relevant scripts that drive action (Lord &
31 Kernan, 1987).

32 By extension from this line of research, we argue that an authentic
33 leader holds a value-laden commitment to self that will manifest itself
34 during activation of the working self-concept. This supports the value-laden
35 description of authentic leadership provided by Luthans and Avolio
36 (2003). Specifically, we propose that these values will be highly salient in
37 the leader's self-view, current goals, and their vision of a possible
38 (and authentic) self. The salience of these values, coupled with the height-
39 ened meta-cognitive self-clarity of the authentic leader, typically results in
increased recognition of discrepancies in the leader's cybernetic system,

1 creating powerful motivational forces to reduce the discrepancy and rees-
2 tablish authenticity.

3 The cybernetic model suggests that if an authentic leader's current self-
4 view is not aligned with the current goal of being authentic with associates,
5 negative affective reactions and proximal motivational forces will produce a
6 drive back toward authentic behavior. If the leader holds a vision of a
7 possible self that is even more authentic than his/her current self, this cy-
8 bernetic process will result in regulation toward self-development to achieve
9 greater authenticity.

10 Lastly, if the leader's current goals are determined to be incompatible
11 with achieving a highly authentic possible self, cognitive-based distal moti-
12 vational forces will drive the adjustment of goals to put the leader on a
13 path toward a possible, authentic self. Hence, we see in authentic leaders a
14 high commitment to self, characterized by a drive toward being true to their
15 own development as individuals and leaders in the long term, being true to
16 their own performance of leadership responsibilities in the short- to mid-
17 term, and being true to ensuring that both sets of objectives are compatible.

18 The second major dimension of the leader's commitment to self consists
19 of a heightened propensity and need for alignment of object and behavioral
20 attitudes. This dimension complements the first. People establish attitudes
21 not only toward objects, but also toward specific behaviors, with both forms
22 of attitudes requiring alignment to accurately predict the relationship be-
23 tween intentions and behaviors (Ajzen, 1991; Eagly & Chaiken, 1998).
24 Hence, an authentic leader's commitment to self leads him/her to be be-
25 haviorally consistent – to “walk the talk” so to speak. For example, an
26 authentic leader's attitude toward a possible promotion opportunity in an-
27 other company may be very strong and positive (object attitude), but they
28 may choose to forgo that opportunity because such behavior would betray a
29 position espoused to followers of remaining loyal to and “growing with the
30 company” (a values-based behavioral attitude that is salient in the leader's
31 self-system).

32 The theory of planned behavior proposes that attitudes toward behavior
33 are more predictive of behavior than are attitudes toward objects (Ajzen,
34 1991), suggesting that one's held beliefs may often not be acted upon. This
35 can be a functional source of self-regulatory constraint, such as shown in the
36 above example. Conversely it can be dysfunctional, as illustrated when a
37 leader's desire to speak out against unethical accounting practices is not
38 acted upon due to a behavioral attitude that resists “rocking the boat” and
39 facing potential ridicule. We argue that attitude inconsistency often man-
40 ifests itself in impression management or other forms of self-distortion,

1 leading to cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). As stated earlier, such
 3 cognitive dissonance, or inauthenticity, is typically experienced as negative
 5 affect. One can extrapolate that leaders must have a strong agentic com-
 7 mitment to self, and to their held object attitudes, to act authentically, even
 9 in the face of potential personal risk.

11 We propose that authentic leaders, as a consequence of their commitment
 13 to self, will tend to hold behavioral attitudes that are in alignment with their
 15 object attitudes, and will have a high propensity to hold true to those at-
 17 titudes, making their behavior consistent, predictable, and coherent with
 19 their self-system. This predictability, as will be further discussed, elicits more
 21 consistent follower attributions and trust. This discussion suggests the fol-
 23 lowing propositions:

13

15 **Proposition 9.** Heightened levels of meta-cognition among authentic
 17 leaders will increase the salience of core values, producing an emergent
 19 agentic commitment to authenticity.

17

19 **Proposition 10.** Increased commitment to authenticity provides the mo-
 21 tive for controlled meta-cognition of self-relevant information, thereby
 23 creating greater alignment between one's object attitudes and associated
 25 behavioral attitudes.

21

23 **Proposition 11.** The activation of authenticity values and commitment in
 25 a leader's self-view, current goals, and possible selves will positively
 27 moderate the linkage between self-awareness and self-regulation, resulting
 29 in lower levels of cognitive dissonance.

27

29 **IMPACT OF LEADERS WHO ARE AUTHENTIC TO** 31 **SELF**

31

33 Having explicated the *intrapersonal* processes of authentic leadership, we
 35 turn to discussion of the *interpersonal* effects of such a leader in the lead-
 37 ership process. The framework provided in Fig. 2 proposes a self-reinforcing
 39 *virtuous cycle* of impact. The construct definitions comprising authenticity in
 leaders discussed thus far are encapsulated in the box spanning cognition
 and affect perceived authenticity. At the interpersonal level, authentic
 leaders positively impact the proximal outcomes of trust, predictability, and
 the overall quality of leader–follower relations. These proximal outcomes in
 turn positively moderate any leader-led interventions so as to multiply the

1 veritable effects of such interventions. We call this a *leadership multiplying*
effect.

3 At the same time, authentic leaders positively influence a culture of au-
thenticity directly. This culture is indirectly reinforced through the beneficial
5 impact of veritable outcomes of leader-led interventions as perceived by
followers. Ultimately, both the culture and the veritable outcomes serve as
7 self-verifying reinforcement for the leader to continue to be authentic,
thereby perpetuating the virtuous cycle. The following sections elaborate on
9 the components that contribute to this virtuous cycle.

11

Leadership Multiplier Effects

13

As indicated above, we posit that authenticity in leaders operates as a *lead-*
15 *ership multiplier*. By this we mean that when leaders are perceived as au-
thentic, their leadership interventions are more favorably received and the
17 resultant impact multiplied. Gardner et al. (2005) proposed that authentic
leadership leads to veritable, sustainable follower performance. We agree
19 with this proposition and assert that it is the level of authenticity in leaders
that provides the moderating effect between the two variables (see Fig. 2).

21 Leaders who are authentic to themselves are able to achieve this lead-
ership multiplier effect because they display behaviors that engender trust
23 and allow followers to easily and confidently infer authenticity from their
actions. Such behaviors have two components that lend themselves to an
25 easy inference of authenticity. First, they are consistent, thereby facilitating
internal attributions to the leader by followers (Kelley, 1971). Such con-
27 sistency in the leader's behavior is maintained through the various psycho-
logical and social mechanisms described above (e.g., self-verification and
29 reinforcement).

The second component contributing to the attributed authenticity of such
31 leaders is that their behavior is intrinsically authentic. By this, we mean that
the leader's behaviors do not contradict the espoused values, espoused
33 principles and other self-referential information that followers may infer
about the leader from other sources. In other words, the observed behavior
35 supports the leader's (inferred and espoused) commitment to be true to him-
or herself (Erickson, 1995). Together these two components help followers
37 to make accurate inferences about the authenticity of the leader and achieve
a level of stability and predictability in their relationship.

39 A dramatic example of a leader who remained true to his values and
secured the trust and devotion of followers as a result is provided by Aaron

1 Feurstein, the CEO of textile manufacturer Malden Mills. In one of the
2 largest fires in Massachusetts history, the firm's plant in Lawrence burned to
3 the ground. Immediately following this disaster, Mr. Feurstein pledged to
4 continue paying workers their salaries and to rebuild in Lawrence rather
5 than moving the plant overseas to reduce labor costs or declaring bank-
6 ruptcy.

7 During an interview with *60 Minutes* correspondent Morley Safer, Feur-
8 stein quotes a Jewish proverb: "When all is in moral chaos, this is the time to
9 be a 'mensch'." The word "mensch" is Yiddish for a "man with a heart."
10 Although Feuerstein's efforts to avoid bankruptcy ultimately failed due to
11 competitive pressures facing the U.S. textile industry, he succeeded in earn-
12 ing the trust and devotion of followers, who remain committed to him and
13 stand behind him as he pledges to continue the fight for Malden Mills'
14 future (Seeger & Ulmer, 2001; Ulmer & Seeger, 2000).

15 When followers are able to accurately infer that their leader is authentic,
16 their working relationship with the leader becomes more manageable. Because
17 leaders who are true to themselves are predictable, followers spend less time
18 and energy trying to anticipate what such leaders' next moves will be. Instead,
19 they quickly build up shared cognitions with the leader regarding his/her be-
20 havior and expectations of followers that constitute a psychological contract.
21 Such shared cognitions guide followers by providing cues and standards for
22 appropriate behavior that meet the expectations of the leader. Because such
23 implicit roles and behavioral norms are quickly learned and shared, followers
24 experience higher levels of psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999) and en-
25 hanced performance in organizations (Cannon-Bowers & Salas, 2001). These
26 processes help to explain why the development of authentic leadership can
27 produce the leadership multiplier effect described above, and thereby enhance
28 the effectiveness of a leader and his/her associates.

29 When followers attribute authenticity to the leader, the overall level of
30 trust in the leader-follower relationship is likewise elevated. Trust involves a
31 "willingness to be vulnerable" (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Rousseau, Sitkin,
32 Burt, & Camerer, 1998). People who achieve authenticity engage in routine
33 self-disclosure because they are comfortable revealing self-referential infor-
34 mation (Kernis, 2002). Such acts of self-disclosure by a leader can be
35 construed as a willingness to be vulnerable, thereby fostering higher levels of
36 trust by followers.

37 Moreover, because such leaders display a commitment to core-self values,
38 integrity is inferred. The trust literature defines integrity as one's commit-
39 ment to a set of principles that is acceptable to the beholder. It is "... the
40 degree to which the trustor's actions reflect values acceptable to the trustee,"

1 such as consistency and predictability (Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000,
p. 236). Given the consistency and predictability of behavior displayed by
3 authentic leaders, such leaders are also likely to be seen as possessing in-
tegrity, which is a crucial foundation for trust-building (Butler & Cantrell,
5 1984).

The contribution of leader authenticity to heightened levels of trust
7 among followers has important implications for resultant outcomes. For
example, follower trust in a leader has been shown to mediate the relation-
9 ship between leadership style and performance (Jung & Avolio, 2000) and,
over time, trust in one's leader predicts future performance (Dirks & Ferrin,
11 2002). Additionally, trust is a key component in the quality of leader-mem-
ber exchanges (LMX) (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Schriesheim, Castro,
13 & Cogliser, 1999). LMX is in turn related to performance (Howell & Hall-
Merenda, 1999; Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994) and moderates the effects of
15 leadership interventions (Scandura & Graen, 1984).

Research indicates that emotions can be transmitted automatically to fol-
17 lowers through emotional contagion processes (Cherulnik, Donley, Wiewel,
& Miller, 2001; Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994; Ilies et al., 2005; Pugh,
19 2001). As we discuss in more detail below, we assert that authenticity reduces
the levels of cognitive dissonance and negative affect experienced by the
21 leader, and thereby contributes to increases in well-being. Followers will de-
tect and respond to these largely non-verbal emotion-based cues "given off"
23 by the leader (Goffman, 1959). Positive affect can also be used to inform
judgments about the leader's competence and status (Tiedens, 2000). Fol-
25 lowers will use both affective and cognitive processing during role episodes
with the leader, with affective processing normally occurring more quickly
27 and spurring instantaneous responses unless it is overridden by cognitive
processes (Lord & Harvey, 2002). Emotions can thus activate followers'
29 scripts, often automatically, driving behavioral responses. For example, pos-
itive emotions have been shown to raise self-efficacy through arousal proc-
31 esses and thus increase engagement in tasks (Bandura, 1997).

Based on the above literature and reasoning, we assert that authenticity is
33 a leadership multiplier. We propose that followers respond more favorably
to interventions by authentic leaders because they are more likely to identify
35 with and trust leaders who are true to themselves. Followers are also better
able to predict the leader's style and make their own adjustments to the
37 relationship for mutual benefit.

We also believe that followers prefer transparency in any leader-follower
39 relationship as it leads to feelings of stability and predictability. Transpar-
ency is more likely to occur in leaders who self-disclose their values, beliefs,

1 and intentions, and abide by them consistently, resulting in more accurate
 2 attributions by followers (Gardner et al., 2005). Additionally, the contagion
 3 effects of the leader's positive affect will likely result in a higher propensity
 4 for positive behavioral responses (Ilies et al., 2005). As an example of this
 5 multiplier effect, the level of perceived authenticity may determine whether a
 6 leader's use of individual consideration is perceived by followers as genuine
 7 concern or an attempt to gain their support for a needed initiative. Thus, we
 8 advance:

9 **Proposition 12.** Leader authenticity to self produces more consistent and
 10 predictable leader behavior, and thereby fosters higher levels of attributed
 11 integrity, trust, and positive affective responses among followers.

12 **Proposition 13.** Leader authenticity to self positively moderates the im-
 13 pact of any interventions initiated by the leader.
 14

15 **IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON** 16 **AUTHENTICITY**

17 *Impact of Organizational Culture on Perceptions of Authenticity*

18
 19 Leaders are shapers of organizational culture. Schein (1992, p. 9) defines
 20 culture as, the "pattern of basic assumptions ... that has worked well
 21 enough to be considered valuable and therefore to be taught to new mem-
 22 bers as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those
 23 problems." For an authentic culture to exist, we propose that organizational
 24 members must perceive that: (1) they are asked, expected, and enabled to be
 25 authentic, (2) that such efforts will be rewarded and are part of the "way
 26 things are done around here," and (3) that they are inspired by a cadre of
 27 authentic exemplars.
 28

29 When espoused values are observed to be associated with valued out-
 30 comes, the values undergo a process of cognitive transformation in followers
 31 to become a shared value or belief, and ultimately a shared assumption
 32 (Schein, 1992, p. 19). This shared assumption forms as a newly adopted
 33 organizing schema and goes through a process of *objectification* and *reifi-*
 34 *cation* (Augoustinos & Walker, 1995), by which individuals lose sight of the
 35 assumption's socially derived character and forget about its inception.
 36 Ultimately, the assumption becomes transformed into the member's insti-
 37 tutionalized view of the organization. We propose that when authenticity is
 38 espoused by the leader, and members experience such authenticity as
 39

1 beneficial, it becomes taken for granted. When this occurs, there are not
2 only priming effects, but top-down cognitive processing by members as they
3 come to recognize, interpret and expect authentic acts of leadership. This
4 reasoning suggests:

5 **Proposition 14.** Organizational culture moderates the extent to which
6 authentic leader behaviors are interpreted as authentic by followers.

7
8 *Cultural Effects on a Leader's Commitment to Authenticity*

9
10
11 We have argued that authentic leaders use external cues to regulate their
12 authenticity, such cues prime controlled or automatic meta-cognitive pro-
13 cesses to regulate the self-system and secure self-verifying feedback, and
14 promote self-clarity. We further propose that organizational culture can
15 enhance the leader's commitment to be authentic.

16 Leaders are not only shapers of culture, but products of culture as well
17 (Schein, 1992). Certain types of organizational cultures are toxic to the
18 authenticity in leaders. In particular, an organizational culture that is low on
19 psychological safety does not allow for creativity and self-development
20 (Edmondson, 1999). On the other hand, learning organizations (Argyris,
21 1999) encourage learning and development at all levels. In such organiza-
22 tions, the less stable or trait-like portions of one's learning goal orientation
23 (Button, Matieu, & Zajac, 1996; Dweck, 1986) are enhanced by a culture
24 that is perceived to be supportive (Potosky & Ramakrishna, 2002).

25 Efficacy beliefs regarding one's ability to be authentic may also be
26 strengthened by aspects of the work culture, and enhanced by vicarious
27 learning, enactive mastery and social persuasion (Bandura, 1997). Hence, a
28 culture that strongly encourages role modeling and is positive and strengths-
29 based, should enhance efficacy beliefs regarding authenticity (Gardner et al.,
30 2005). With repetition, these cues will reinforce authentic behaviors that
31 become habituated and serve as a powerful force for aligning the values and
32 behavior of individuals with the authentic culture.

33 **Proposition 15.** Leader authenticity is increased at the intrapersonal level
34 by agentic (valued) outcomes, at the interpersonal level by positive and
35 self-verifying feedback from followers, and at the organizational culture
36 level by norms that promote authenticity.

37
38 When leaders are confronted with inauthentic cultures characterized by
39 ethical lapses and a lack of transparency, their efforts to remain true to
40 themselves and promote a positive ethical culture will be challenged.

1 Consider, for example, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In
 3 recent years, Mr. Annan's once stellar reputation has been tarnished by a
 5 series of scandals at the U.N. including widespread corruption in the now
 defunct oil-for-food program provided to Iraq and charges of sexual abuses
 to youths in the Congo by U.N. peacekeepers.

Ironically, these scandals overshadow the successes Mr. Annan has
 7 achieved in pursuing the primary initiative he championed upon taking office
 in 1997, including sweeping steps to overhaul the U.N. bureaucracy and
 9 changes in personnel to increase accountability and transparency in the
 agency. Nonetheless, he plans to continue with these efforts by introducing
 11 initiatives, such as a freedom of information policy that will make U.N.
 records available to the media and public, protections for whistleblowers,
 13 and promotion criteria that will emphasis accomplishments over tenure
 (Bravin, 2005). It remains to be seen if his efforts to foster greater openness
 15 and higher ethical standards will be successful in creating a healthier or-
 ganizational culture while restoring the U.N.'s external reputation.

17

19 **DISCRIMINATING THE VERITABLE FROM THE** 21 **PSEUDO-AUTHENTIC LEADER**

21

Having outlined our framework, both at the intrapersonal level as shown in
 23 Fig. 1, and the expanded interpersonal level shown in Fig. 2, we now further
 delineate *pseudo-authentic* leaders from *veritable authentic* leaders.

25

Similar to discussions of personalized versus socialized charismatic lead-
 27 ers or pseudo-transformational versus authentic transformational leaders
 (e.g., Avolio & Gibbons, 1988; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Klein & House,
 1995), it is critical to differentiate actual from the perceived authenticity of
 29 leaders. Viewing Fig. 1, pseudo-authenticity would be defined as a de-cou-
 pling between the leader's self-awareness and their self-regulatory processes.
 31 We call such leaders pseudo-authentic because this de-coupling is not often
 readily detected by followers.

33

During self-regulation, pseudo-authentic leaders attempt to and often
 35 succeed at matching their espoused self (values, norms, goals, etc.) with their
 behavior, giving followers' an impression of authenticity. Although their
 regulation, as viewed by followers, appears to be authentic, this regulation is
 37 not aligned with the leader's true self. Pseudo-authenticity can occur when a
 leader is incapable of or not motivated to conduct an accurate and
 39 controlled self-assessment. It can also occur when a leader chooses to prac-
 tice *self-distortion* through the use of impression management.

1 *Interpersonal Effects of Inauthenticity or Pseudo-Authenticity*

3 We propose that pseudo-authenticity can only be maintained over the
5 short-term and only in contexts that include short, infrequent and
7 structured leader–follower interfaces, high leader–follower distance, and a
9 lack of organizational transparency. In longer-term relationships
11 and in organizations that sponsor transparency, inclusion and interaction,
13 a lack of true, veritable authenticity will eventually be uncovered
15 leading to a *boomerang effect* (Gilbert & Jones, 1986). That is, a
17 leader who is perceived as highly authentic may be more easily discredited
19 than a less authentic leader when they experience a similar lapse in
21 authenticity.

23 We propose that authentic leaders draw much of their direct
25 follower affect through the self-presentation strategy of *exemplification*
27 (Gardner, 2003; Jones & Pittman, 1982). That is, they elicit attributions of
moral worth and culturally defined worthiness that serve to motivate others
to emulate or model their exemplary conduct. However, there are two situations
when this strategy can backfire. Jones and Pittman argue that
exemplification elicits feelings of guilt from targets, in that they feel
inadequate in comparison to the exemplifier and attempt to live up to
the example set. Such guilt can easily turn into anger if targets discover
that the exemplifier’s conduct falls short of the espoused standard.
They may feel that their guilt arose from manipulation and/or is unnecessary.
Such anger may result in attempts to assail and “bring-down”
the exemplifier. Retribution would be less likely among followers with
lower moral expectations (and hence lower levels of experienced guilt) of
their leaders.

Second, Jones and Pittman (1982) propose that exemplification is
viewed by followers as a more one-dimensional, seamless whole than is
the case for other self-presentational strategies, such as self-promotion.
Whereas the displayed or inferred ability associated with self-promotion
has some room to vary by context and task, targets will look at the
exemplifier in an all-or-nothing fashion. Because exemplification is
one-dimensional, it has a single possible point of failure. That is, a single
failure to perform authentically or morally, depending upon the severity
of the moral lapse, can easily undermine the power base from which the
leader’s influence is derived. This supports the earlier contention that to
achieve veritable and sustained leadership performance, any significant
decoupling between one’s self and one’s behavior must be quickly reconciled.
Thus, we advance:

1 **Proposition 16.** Higher levels of previously attributed authenticity will be
2 associated with higher levels of damage to the leader–follower relation-
3 ship upon later discovery of inauthentic behavior.

5 *Intrapersonal Effects of Inauthenticity or Pseudo-Authenticity*

7 By remaining true to the self, authentic leaders experience less dysfunctional
8 cognitive disequilibrium such as poor self-esteem, negative affect and hope,
9 than would otherwise be felt from incongruent behaviors (Harter, Marold,
10 Whitesell, & Cobbs, 1996). Their consistent and transparent actions likewise
11 elicit positive follower feedback that provides for self-verification and re-
12 inforcement of the self. We propose that viewing the positive, self-verifying
13 effects of their leadership will also build leadership efficacy, self-esteem and
14 other positive psychological capacities that contribute to well-being. Al-
15 though beyond the scope of this chapter, Gardner et al. (2005) and Ilies et al.
16 (2005) argue that the authentic leader will create a transparent and con-
17 sistent “authentic relationship” that will likewise enhance the well-being of
18 followers.

19 Because inauthentic leaders do not always display their true self during
20 leadership episodes, followers are unable to provide self-verifying feedback
21 to the leader. Instead, their feedback can only serve to reinforce or weaken
22 the leader’s dramaturgical self. We propose that this lack of self-verifying
23 feedback will result in a dysfunctional repetitive process composed of a
24 cyclic lowering of the leader’s self-awareness, which is followed by increas-
25 ingly inauthentic behavior, less self-verifying feedback, lower self-awareness,
26 and so on. This process will continue so long as the leader receives rein-
27 forcing feedback for their dramaturgical self, lowering subsequent motiva-
28 tion to assess the true self and break from this cycle. As the antithesis of
29 *authentic* leadership development, this negative development cycle shows the
30 dark side of leadership development and could explain why societies and
31 organizations may sometimes develop “damaged” leaders.

32 We also argue that inauthentic behavior that, by definition, is not aligned
33 with one’s attitudes will ultimately cause one to adjust one’s attitudes to
34 align with one’s behaviors, thus restoring cognitive equilibrium (Festinger,
35 1957). Pertinent to inauthentic or pseudo-authentic behavior, Higgins and
36 McCann (1984) found that attitudes expressed for strategic goals
37 (e.g., impression management) may eventually become internalized.
38 Because attitudes can be formed from one’s schemas and heuristics (Eagly
39 & Chaiken, 1998), such counter-attitudinal behavior creates a distortion of
40 one’s self-schemas driven by a desire to match counter-self behaviors. This

1 by itself is not harmful if the feedback stimulus is consistently applied – this
is how people grow and adapt to life.

3 However, in the case of the pseudo-authentic leader, because he/she
overadapts to situational demands, the feedback stimuli is inconsistent and
5 highly dependent on the situation, thereby leading to distortions of self-
schemas in all directions. If left unchecked, this cycle would lead to a frag-
7 mentation of the self-system, a lack of self-awareness, and in the extreme
case, some form of psychopathology. At less extreme levels, this cycle could
9 nonetheless lead to inconsistent behaviors and inaccurate follower attribu-
tions, and thereby foster a dysfunctional leader–follower relationship. Per-
11 haps such negative cycles account in part for the lapses of judgment
exhibited by executives such as Michael Eisner of the Walt Disney Co. with
13 his exorbitant salary and Martha Stewart’s insider trading infractions that
have disheartened and alienated their followers. Additionally, the cybernetic
15 regulatory system (Lord & Brown, 2004) discussed earlier indicates that
discrepancies between one’s current self-views and current goals will result
17 in negative affect and strong proximal motivation to reestablish equilibrium.
Hence, the salience of an authentic leader’s value-laden goals toward au-
19 thenticity adds to the force of such disruptive dissonance.

21 **Proposition 17.** Inauthentic behavior will decrease self-verifying feedback
and produce cognitive disequilibrium, resulting in a lack of self-clarity
23 and lower levels of well-being.

25 *Temporal Nature of Authenticity*

27 The delineation of pseudo and veritable authenticity also requires discussion
of the temporal versus static nature of the self. It should be evident from the
29 discussion thus far that while authenticity in a person is a state of being,
leadership authenticity is more temporal in nature, both proximally and
31 distally, depending on which and how many aspects of the self are activated
in the leader’s working self-concept.

33 Critics of the authentic leadership construct have argued that no leader
can be completely true to the self over time, or all the time. This is especially
35 true when the leadership roles require an intimate involvement of the self.
These arguments would be most cogent if the underlying assumption is that
37 the self is a static entity, that is, a retrieval memory store, rather than an
adaptive, dynamic system.

39 We are of the view that the authentic self is an evolving, learning entity.
Although we have attempted to provide support to show that leaders have

1 certain aspects of their selves that are more chronically accessible than oth-
2 ers, and that heightened meta-cognitive ability produces greater self-concept
3 clarity, we have also argued that the knowledge structures that make up the
4 self are learned and continually developed over time.

5 In fact, Ibarra's (1999) qualitative study suggests that people are contin-
6 ually experimenting with provisional selves before appropriating them into a
7 current or envisioned possible-self. Additionally, we have shown that the
8 context will prime certain aspects of the self while inhibiting others, result-
9 ing in varying contextually-based working-selves. The distinction again lies in
10 the fact that an authentic leader will remain consistent with whatever aspects
11 of the true self are currently activated, while a pseudo-authentic leader will
12 de-couple from that working self-concept during self-regulation either due
13 to lack of commitment to self or an inability to achieve self-concept clarity.

15 **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

16
17 Our proposed framework provides a social-cognitive approach to authen-
18 ticity. We recommend that future research extend the framework into a
19 developmental model focusing on: (a) trigger events and experiences that
20 form the self-schemas in memory that foster authenticity, (b) the develop-
21 mental processes that create heightened meta-cognitive ability over one's
22 self-awareness and regulation, and (c) the processes by which the motiva-
23 tional forces underlying commitment to self are formed as core beliefs. Ad-
24 ditionally, our desire for parsimony prevented a full discussion of emotions
25 beyond the affect elicited from one's perceptions of authenticity, and the
26 role of affect in cybernetic control processes. The role of affect and emotions
27 in the development and application of authentic leadership should be fur-
28 ther investigated.

29
30 Our proposed framework invites further inclusion of various dual-
31 processing, or cognitive-affective models such as those outlined by Mischel
32 and Morf (2003) in their treatment of the self as a psychosocial dynamic
33 processing system. Affective processing, automatic activation of affect,
34 schema-triggered affect, and other phenomenon may provide great
35 explanatory power of how emotions may affect the leader's self-awareness
36 processes and the manner in which emotions moderate; how that awareness
37 is regulated into behavior.

38
39 Another area meriting further theoretical and empirical attention involves
40 the effects of goals and motivational states on the functioning of the au-
41 thentic self. As part of our discussion of cybernetic control systems, we

1 proposed that authentic leaders will display less self-incongruent behavior in
pursuit of their goals. Of potential utility, however, would be applications of
3 Singer and Salovey's (1988) work to investigate the effects that goals exert
on the self-domains leaders' choose to activate in given situations/contexts.
5 The result could be goal-directed, situational, and yet authentic behavior
that is distinct from goal-directed impression management or self-monitoring
7 ing behavior.

11 A FINAL WORD

13 Authentic leadership is a lifelong developmental phenomenon that involves
acquiring greater self-awareness along with an unwavering commitment to
15 and regulation of the self. It is manifested through the emergence of au-
thenticity during leadership episodes, multiplying leadership effects on ver-
17 itable performance. We have offered a social cognitive explanation of what
it means to be an authentic leader, and provided an operational definition of
19 authentic leadership for future investigation of this important construct.

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