

Nanwani, S. (2022). *Organization and Education Development: Reflecting and Transforming in a Self-Discovery Journey*. London: Routledge.

Jack Whitehead

Jack Whitehead

University of Cumbria

ORCID

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9644-0785>

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Suresh Nanwani has shared a remarkable story, told well, from an organizational development perspective, of his educational influences in his own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that have influenced his life. Suresh's story is relevant to a wide readership who are interested in living a good and productive life with values of integrity, professionalism and spirituality. The story integrates the life of a development practitioner and an academic who draws extensive insights, from a wide range of theories, in the generation of his own life's journey. Rather than simply apply anyone else's theory to explain his own life, Suresh has provided insights and learning that might be of value in our own.

Suresh shares his learning from more than 30 years of experience in international organizations that include the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. He complements and informs this practitioner knowledge with his academic work for his doctorate in Organization Development, an LLM degree from the University College London and an LLB degree (honours) from the National University of Singapore.

Since 2008, Suresh has lectured on international financial institutions, and law and governance in various countries, including Australia, China, Japan, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, and the United Kingdom. He is a honorary associate professor in the Australian National University, visiting professorial fellow in the University of New South Wales, and honorary research fellow in the Birkbeck University of London.

He has published extensively on international financial institutions, law and development, governance and accountability, Sustainable Development Goals, and Belt and Road Initiative. His latest publications are *The Practice of Independent Accountability Mechanisms (IAMS): Towards Good Governance in Development Finance* (Brill Nijhoff, 2019), as co-editor with Owen McIntyre, and *Covid-19 in the Philippines: Personal Stories* (Amazon Kindle, 2021), as co-editor with William A. Loxley.

Suresh is:

- a member of the Advisory Board of the *International Community Law Review*, a UK peer-reviewed journal;
- a member of the Editorial Board of the *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies*, a Czech Republic peer-reviewed journal;
- an executive council member and secretary of the Society of International Economic Law (SIEL), a global organization for academics, practitioners, government officials, and students on IEL research, practice, and development. (p. xxiv)

Suresh's book captivated my imagination, not only because of the above wealth of experience. I found particularly attractive his reflexive talents that are integrated within, and help to form, his life's journey as he continues to live his core values as fully as possible. I identify with his valuing of being a fully integrated person, integrity, professionalism, spirituality and being a community member positively contributing to society.

I recommend Suresh's book for all readers who are interested in living a productive life in the sense of including your own continuing professional development as you ask, research and answer questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. I know that we each have our own unique constellation of values that help to constitute us as fully integrated persons. The book will appeal to all those who wish to live their value of integrity, in the sense of seeking to live their unique constellation of relationally dynamic values, as fully as possible. It will appeal to all readers who adopt a professional approach to what they are doing. Suresh refers to professionalism in terms of the methods, characteristics, and attitude of a person through qualities, such as specialized knowledge, competency, honesty, accountability and self-regulation.

I was particularly attracted to the way in which Suresh integrated spirituality into his life's journey. For Suresh spirituality is the state of believing that there is more to the world than the material world. It includes attending to mental and emotional states to gain self-knowledge; having a healthy work-life balance; and valuing and practicing virtues, such as being compassionate, empathetic, and openhearted. Suresh expresses himself with a life-affirming energy that I associate with spirituality. He demonstrates a respect for the spirituality that is expressed through Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity. Suresh's spirituality is profoundly humanistic in the sense that his life-affirming energy embraces and expresses values of human flourishing.

Whilst the book is mainly printed text-based, Suresh recognises that whilst definitions are useful to guide one's study, it is difficult to apply clear-cut definitions for some words, such as spirituality or professionalism. Advances in digital technologies will enable Suresh to include visual data as evidence in the generation of his explanations of his educational influences in his own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence his practice and understandings with values of human flourishing. These values are included in Suresh's belief in being a community member who is positively contributing to society through living as a professional with integrity. I see one of Suresh's contributions as being his generation and sharing of his living-educational-theory:

Jack Whitehead's living theory approach talks about a dynamic educational theory of professional practice constructed from a practitioner's questions of self-inquiry, such as "How do I improve my practice?" (Whitehead, 1988). The living theory approach focuses attention on the experiences and implications of living values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. These values are the life-affirming and life-enhancing values that give meaning and purpose to the researcher's life. They are clarified as they emerge in the course of research questions, such as "How am I improving" or "What am I doing?" The living theory uses methods and draws insights from a range of other methodologies and theories, such as action research, narrative enquiry, self-study, and participatory research. (pp. 6-7)

One of the characteristics of a living-educational-theory is that the individual's claims to knowledge in an evidence-based explanation of their educational influences in learning are subjected to validity through the mutual rational controls of critical discussion. Suresh's provides evidence to justify his claims about his professionalism. For example he states:

- I show consistency by being respectful to all parties and valuing contribution from everyone.
- I engage with students to stimulate discussion and learning and in the process improve myself through student feedback.
- I am fair and objective.
- I explain in various ways to make sure students understand me (especially when English is not their language of instruction). (p. 59)

Suresh offers the following understandings in his OD model and the Matter-Ikigai-Creativity-Appreciative Inquiry/Living (the MICAI) intersection model, as he says he continues to move forward as an OD practitioner and as a professor:

The final model of a wheel with six spokes – inquire and discover; self-validation; self-awareness; self-partner; exercise presence and mindfulness; and know your- self through revitalizing, personal growth, and integration – was the ultimate best picture and image of my journey. This final model of a six-spoked wheel has shades of the Buddhist wheel of life that signifies to me the meaning of my life as I see it in my journey. The final model also takes into account key concepts, for example, "knowing oneself," humanistic psychology (Carl Rogers), social psychology (Charles Cooley), and a realization that life itself is change, requiring constant review to integrate the self with education, growth, and development within society. (p. 85)

For Suresh there is always room for improvement in teaching and in living life. He believes that there must be a clear process in distilling the consistencies in the ways that his three values of integrity, professionalism and spirituality have made him a fully integrated person and a better professor. The route chosen was through live action research theory where he applied theories and concepts, including AI, appreciative living, flow, creativity, quantum leaps, presencing, and ikigai. He says that there were many others that he touched upon but did not delve into, though he wished that he had. Just as we all have our unique constellations of values that give meaning and purpose to our lives, Suresh uses his creativity to draw insights from a wide range of theories from other researchers in the generation and sharing of his own.

Suresh emphasises the importance of writing a Journal (1) being in the present or past; (2) inquire with curiosity; and (3) focus on the essence of your narrative; (4) weave and interconnect with any other related stories or events; and (5) make your journal alive by discovering and sensing pleasure. He says that Journaling clarifies the mind, the thought processes, and your understandings or misunderstandings by tracking your own impressions, trends, and personal development (p.93):

Journaling can provide peace, quietness, solitude, reflection, inquiry, and creativity by triggering in us the experiences we wish to articulate to better understand them and situate ourselves within the community of fellow beings. (p. 94)

Suresh demonstrates how he has given meaning to his life through reflection and interactions with others. The people around him have made him realize that he lives in the context of others and that this interconnectivity is an energizer whilst offering experiences to improve himself and to be a better teacher. One suggestion Suresh offers is:

...to explore the literature on flow, creativity and AI, not from western-articulated lenses but from other perspectives, such as eastern approaches to lifestyles, e.g., yoga, tai chi, and ikigai. There is a lot that one can learn from a fusion of diverse perspectives. There are many theories, concepts, and models out there – there is no right combination: What is important is to be open and receptive, and incorporate what fits best for you. (p. 100-101)

He believes that the scope for human connectivity has never been more pronounced than ever, and knowing this, we should affirm the positivity of life that alters our conventional mental map to a positive mental state:

...My pursuit of self-interest now moves toward the common good of material, cultural, and institutional facilities that a community provides to all members to fulfill a relational obligation they have to care for common interests. Bracing for the new world requires learning how to help and cooperate within the community and to be mindful of new needs for the betterment of all (e.g., for the neighborhood to thrive in provision of key services, such as education, health, and social welfare)...

My move from individual ambition to team focus is a realization that far more group benefits and interests are reaped than adopting a self-centered approach. (p. 111)

In this review I shall leave you with Suresh's insight about growth within organizational relationships and his postscript from his journey with the mental maps before and after Covid-19:

Learning to cooperate and be inclusive results in more than just personal growth but also growth within organizational relations. Patience and calm address needs of affection, connection to family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues by creating a sense of belonging to one community. There is awareness that work matters may take longer to process in trying times with new schedules and revised health standards. My being daring gives me courage to challenge myself to carry on while moving forward with compliance to health and safety...

Table 7.1 Mental maps: before and after Covid-19 (Suresh Nanwani)

<i>Assumptions</i>	<i>Conventional mental map (before Covid-19)</i>	<i>Positive mental map (after Covid-19)</i>
People	Pursue self-interests Prefer status quo of the good old days with minimum change	Support the common good Brace for the new world, including the new normal, and adapt to changes as often needed
Organization	Individualistic Workers are important and key team members	Team or group focused Workers must realize that team members' inputs are equally important so they can positively contribute their valuable inputs to advance the common goal
Existing personal values	Individuals look after themselves Patience Daring	Individuals learn to cooperate and be inclusive Patience and calmness Be daring (have courage to face challenges) but be aware of health and safety standards
New personal values	N/A	Resilience, grit, care

(p. 112)

We are all living with the educational responsibilities of living our values of human flourishing whilst facing the local and global issues raised by the covid-19 pandemic. Suresh Nanwani has captivated my imagination. He has inspired and re-energised my commitment to live as fully as possible co-operative and inclusional values of integrity, professionalism and spirituality. He has reinforced my belief in the importance of contributing to a global social movement of organisational development practitioners who are sharing their educational influences, not only in their own learning and in the learning of others, but in the learning of the organizations that they are improving by living as fully as possible our shared values of human flourishing.