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A Falling of the Veils: Turning Points and Momentous Turning Points in Leadership and the Creation of CSR

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Abstract This article uses the life stories approach to leadership and leadership development. Using exploratory, qualitative data from a Forbes Global 2000 and FTSE 100 company, we discuss the role of the turning point (TP) as an important antecedent of leadership in corporate social responsibility. We argue that TPs are causally efficacious, linking them to the development of life narratives concerned with an evolving sense of personal identity. Using both a multi-disciplinary perspective and a multi-level focus on CSR leadership, we identify four narrative cases. We propose that they helped to re-define individuals' sense of self and in some extreme cases completely transformed their self-identity as leaders of CSR. Hence, we also distinguish the momentous turning point (MTP) that created a seismic shift in personality, through re-evaluation of the individuals' personal values. We argue that whilst TPs are developmental experiences that can produce responsible leadership, the MTP changes the individuals' personal priorities in life to produce responsible leadership that perhaps did not exist previously. Thus, we appropriate Maslow's (Religions, values and peak experiences, Penguin, New York, 1976, p 77) metaphorical phrase 'A falling of the veils' from his discussion of peak and desolation experiences that produce personal growth. Using a multi-disciplinary literature from social theory (Archer in The reflexive imperative in late modernity, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012) moral psychology (Narvaez, in: Narvaez, Lapsley (eds) Personality, identity and character: explorations in moral psychology, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009) and social psychology (Schwartz, in: Mikulincer, Shaver (eds) Prosocial motives, emotions, and behaviour: the better angels of our nature, American Psychological Association, Washington, 2010), we present a theoretical model that illustrates the psychological process of the (M)TP, thus contributing to the growing literature on the microfoundations of CSR.

Abbreviations
CSR   Corporate social responsibility
MTP   Momentous turning point
PVT   Personal values theory
RVS   Rokeach values survey
SE   Self-enhancement
ST   Self-transcendent
TET   Triune ethics theory
TP   Turning point

Introduction

Our article is concerned with how leaders create corporate social responsibility and their essential role in the development of an ethical corporate climate. The article is based on 'unexpected perspectives' that emerged from some 'extreme cases' (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, p. 1115 and p. 1118). These cases derived from an exploratory, ethnographic research investigation into how personal values are

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practised (Gehman et al. 2013; Hemingway 2005) within a Forbes Global 2000 and FTSE 100 company. We are particularly focused on how individuals with dominantly held self-transcendent, or 'other-orientated' personal values (as opposed to dominantly held self-enhancement values) might overcome organisational constraints (Hemingway 2013). Self-transcendent personal values are concerned with the welfare and interests of others (benevolence and universalist values), whilst self-enhancement personal values are focused upon self-interests and dominance over others (Schwartz 2010, p. 226). We analyse in particular the role of turning points (TP) in responsible leadership development, positing the TP acted as a mechanism in the development of leadership in corporate social responsibility (CSR). Furthermore, whilst TPs have been researched in developmental psychology (e.g., Gotlib and Wheaton 1997; McAdams et al. 2001; Pillemer 2001) and to a limited extent in the leadership literature (e.g., Albert and Vadla 2009; Bennis and Thomas 2002; Janson 2008; Ligon et al. 2008; Shamir and Eilam 2005), we further contribute to our understanding of this phenomenon by distinguishing the momentous turning point (MTP) in CSR leadership.

The TP is a psychological construct that was defined by Gotlib and Wheaton (1997, p. 1) as 'a disruption in a trajectory, a deflection in the path' and by Pillemer (2001, p. 127) as 'a career altering revelation'. Our research defines the MTP as *a more extreme* form of TP, one that produces much greater levels of arousal in the individual. Whilst our research suggests that the TP *per se* can produce leadership in CSR, by reminding individuals of their social responsibility, we suggest that in the case of MTP, the magnitude of arousal generated by particular events generates a more profound re-evaluation of priorities that produces a seismic shift that impacts on personal identity. We argue that TPs produce leadership in CSR, but that the MTP is more personally transformative for the individual, causing a more profound re-evaluation of personal priorities, or values. In particular cases of leadership in CSR, MTPs were of an order of magnitude that were neither mundane nor part of a 'slow-burn' realisation over time, unlike leadership formative experiences (Janson 2008) or the events described as crucibles of leadership (Bennis and Thomas 2002).

Using realist social theory (Archer 2003, 2012), social psychology (Schwartz 2010), moral psychology (Narvaez 2009) plus the exploratory data from our study, we present a theoretical model of this psychological process. Our model posits how these TPs affected the individuals concerned by re-orienting their personal values to produce socially responsible leadership behaviours and, where the TP was momentous, a completely revised modus vivendi (Archer 2000, 2003). Our article therefore addresses the calls for research into the psychological pathways of responsible leadership (Doh and Quigley 2014); the antecedents of responsible leadership (Stahl and de Luque 2014; Voegtlin et al. 2012; Witt and Stahl 2016) and responsible leader 'mindsets' (Pless 2007; Pless and Maak 2011). We also recommend further work in this promising area, derived through the life story narrative, which we posit will develop our understanding of the underlying mechanisms and microfoundations of CSR (Aguinis and Glavas 2012; Christensen et al. 2014). Further, our article makes a contribution to a growing body of research into the motivational drivers for authentic and responsible leadership identity (e.g., Shamir and Eilam 2005; Pless 2007).

The Motivating Roles of Personal Values and Reflexivity in Prosocial Behaviour and Responsible Leadership

We understand CSR as: 'context-specific organisational actions and policies that take into account stakeholders' expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental performance' (Aguinis 2011, p. 855). Thus, we broadly define CSR as the interface between business and society, where CSR is a facet of the field of business ethics and rather more substantial than the limited perspective that CSR is simply corporate image management (Banerjee 2008; Hemingway 2013, p. 15), i.e., just talking about it, but not really doing anything differently. Our understanding is that CSR is concerned with who and what affects—and is affected by—business (Wood 1991) and thus incorporates notions of stakeholder management, corporate citizenship (Crane et al. 2008), sustainability (however defined) and corporate social responsiveness (Carroll 1979; Carroll and Buchholtz 2014; Crane et al. 2007; Wood 1991). Consequently, CSR has been described elsewhere as 'essentially contested' in theory, empirically and in practice (Gond and Moon 2011). Our perspective supports the idea of the interconnectedness between business ethics, stakeholder theory and CSR (see Crane and Matten 2015; Donaldson and Preston 1995).

A variety of conceptions of leadership are relevant to our discussion. These include notions of ethical leadership (Brown et al. 2005; Schaubroeck et al. 2012; Treviño et al. 2003); follower-centric approaches (Shamir and Eilam 2005); responsible leadership (Doh and Quigley 2014; Maak and Pless 2006; Miska and Mendenhall 2015; Pless 2007; Pless and Maak 2011; Pless et al. 2012; Voegtlin et al. 2012; Waldman and Galvin 2008; Witt and Stahl 2016); servant leadership (Greenleaf 2002); distributed leadership (Bolden 2011); authentic leadership (Endrissat et al. 2007; Luthans and Avolio 2003; Michie and Gooty 2005) and transformational leadership (Burns 1978; Ciulla 2004, p. 316). The overlaps and distinctions between these

notions of leadership have been identified previously (e.g., Miska and Mendenhall 2015). However, one commonality in notions of leadership is that they encompass a perspective on 'the other', whether this is in terms of employee followership, or, a wider stakeholder perspective. Indeed, for the purposes of our micro- and meso-levels of analysis of CSR leadership, the psychological concepts of prosocial (Penner et al. 2005) and, conversely, antisocial behaviour, are also relevant, where an individual's prosocial behaviour can be understood as CSR in practice (Hannah et al. 2011; van Aaken et al. 2013). Prosocial behaviour is understood as voluntary behaviour enacted with the intention of benefiting others (Mikulincer and Shaver 2010, p. 4) and antisocial behaviour as behaviours that have hurtful effects on others (Eisenberg 2010, p. 142).

Personal Motivation for CSR Leadership: Life narrative, Reflexivity and Personal Values

We are particularly influenced by a literature that demonstrates the importance of leaders' life narratives in the creation of CSR. In her discussion of the formative experiences of leaders, Janson (2008) described the role of life narrative in self-identity. She cited Shamir et al. (1994) in that: '…people are motivated to maintain and enhance their self-esteem and their self-worth, and…are also motivated to retain and increase their sense of self-consistency…[these]… developmental stories are likely to guide the teller's theories of action…' (Janson 2008, p. 88). These functions of the life narrative in the development and maintenance of self-identity have also been attributed to our personal values (Hitlin and Piliavin 2004; Rokeach 1973; Schwartz 2010). McAdams (1985, 2001), too, was interested in the biographical narrative approach to understanding human behaviour, arguing that 'identity is a life story' (McAdams 2001, p. 100). McAdams and Pals (2006, p. 209), quoting Giddens (1991), argued that: 'under the complex social and psychological conditions of cultural modernity…Narrative identity is…that story the person tries to "keep going"'.

However, we posit that the life story narrative is more than just a story. Indeed, Archer (2003, 2012) argued that narrative contains emergent properties in our social world. She equated the personal deliberations of 'the internal conversation' (Archer 2003, 2012) with reflexivity, a mechanism that allows us to negotiate structural constraints and manifests in personal agency. As Archer (2000, p. 223) argued: 'Since our highest concerns are about what we value most, then reflection is about what commentaries are the best guides to what matters most to us. We evaluate our first-order emotions as guides to the life we wish to lead and thus end up embracing some and subordinating others'.

This perspective of reflexivity as causally efficacious and underpinning personal life projects is central to our argument. Archer (2012) identified three modes of reflexivity: Communicative, Autonomous and Meta-reflexive, and it is the latter that is most important in our research into responsible leadership. Meta-reflexives were described as the 'cultural idealists, trapped in a search to pursue a vocation…[engaging in] …a restless search for self-knowledge' (Archer 2003, p. 255 and p. 295). We will return to meta-reflexivity later, as part of the explanation of our theoretical model at Fig. 1.

Whilst our social psychological perspective acknowledges the impact of socialisation on personal values (e.g., Rokeach 1973, see p. 77–80), moral psychology is also helpful and in particular, Narvaez's (2009, 2014) triune ethics theory (TET). This meta-theory draws from neuroscience, anthropology and other human sciences to comprise three foundational ethical motivations of self-protectionism, engagement and imagination. TET '…postulates that the emotional circuitry established early in life underpins the brain's architecture for morality and ethical behavior…' (Narvaez 2009, p. 137). As part of our dualistic approach, the value of the narrative approach to our understanding of leader development for CSR is evident, but there is a dearth of hermeneutic phenomenologically derived (Laverty 2003) life-narrative research in the leadership literature, as well as a shortage of empirical study of CSR leaders. Perhaps this is due to a shortage of responsible leaders, particularly if, as scholars such as Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2016) have argued, unethical behaviour in organisations has become more prevalent.

In summary, the *range and magnitude* of life course events purporting to impact on individual development, including leadership development, is very broad. These events have been classified in various ways, from life formative experiences (Janson 2008); crucibles (Bennis and Thomas 2002); originating events, turning points, anchoring events, analogous events, redemptive events, contaminating events (Pillemer 1998; Ligon et al. 2008); personal history events and trigger events (Gardner et al. 2005; Luthans and Avolio 2003). Gardner et al.'s (2005) personal history events included a positive role model and their trigger events included promotion; or a decision to study, or to work abroad, akin to the 'defining moments' of Badaracco (1997). In this article, then, we focus on the defining events that shaped a commitment to CSR and manifested in responsible leadership. We have also articulated a distinction between the TP and MTP, where the latter produced a seismic shift in personal priorities, thereby contributing to the life-narrative literature and adding some nuance to our understanding of the TP construct that we have described above.

Qualitative Research Approach

The phenomenon of the turning point emerged as a 'surprise discovery' (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, p. 1116) when we uncovered a small minority of responsible leaders in an exploratory investigation. We used an inductive methodology that was designed to understand how personal values are practised in organisations (Hemingway 2005). More specifically, our pre-supposition centred upon the notion of the informal organisation (Mayo 1933) and we were interested in how employees' espoused personal values impacted upon prosocial behaviour (Schwartz 2010) as discretionary CSR (Carroll 1979) and how individuals experienced the constraining and enabling effects of the organisational context. Personal values were described as under-theorised in organisation theory (Gehman et al. 2013); hence, the method of our hermeneutic-phenomenological investigation (Laverty 2003) comprised a form of ethnography (Burawoy 2009). Importantly, such 'deep immersion over time' (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, p. 1114) can provide a most fertile environment for the generation of 'novel ideas' (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, p. 1115). The novelty to which we refer came in the form of the TP narrative.

The study was conducted within a $5bn Forbes Global 2000 and FTSE 100 company. The organisation was selected on the basis of its prominence in the global healthcare industry. Also, its image as a relatively socially responsible organisation, due to a philanthropic history of employee welfare (Hassard 2012) and recognition for its activities in sustainability (for example, recognition by Corporate Knights 2016). Furthermore, one of us had previously been employed there as a manager, although this was nearly two decades earlier. But this researcher status enabled privileged open access via the President of the company, over a three year period. Thus, the combination of our ex-employee status and our 'extraordinary access' generated a very unusual degree of trust, where rapport was established with the informants that produced 'fresh insights' (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, pp. 1117–1121). Indeed, the notion of the turning point was an idea that we 'had not imagined' (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, p. 1115) and so it did not even feature in our interview guide.

Due to our uncertainty regarding the existence or not of CSR leaders, mentioned above, we employed purposive sampling (Miles and Huberman 1994; see also Endrissat et al. 2007). The organisation was told that we were looking for employees, at any level and function in the organisational hierarchy, who had a reputation within the company for prosocial behaviour. We were provided with an initial list of twelve potential research subjects, comprising a mix of functions and levels of seniority, which included directors, managers and non-managers and ten of these informants agreed to be interviewed. However, only five individuals that were eventually identified through our study as empirically derived leaders in CSR, were on the initial list of twelve potential research subjects. In order to boost our purposive sample, an additional eighteen research subjects were identified via the snowballing technique (Miles and Huberman 1994; see also Fryer 2011), whereby our subjects were asked if they knew of any other employees who had a reputation for prosocial behaviour at work. Altogether, twenty-eight subjects took part in in-depth, personal face-to-face interviews that were conducted either in the subject's own private office, or in a specially booked meeting room. These semi-structured interviews lasted for an average duration of 75 min. All twenty-nine face-to-face interviews were digitally recorded and an additional six telephone interviews took place in order to verify aspects from the interviews and they included one follow-up second interview. The second follow-up personal interview took place with a director of the company, conducted at an overseas head office, which lasted a further 90 min. Additional data were collected via informal meetings with employees and also from company documents and reports.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Our research subjects were initially asked why they thought they had a reputation in the organisation 'for personal convictions to make a difference in life, in addition to doing your day-to-day job' and what kinds of things they got involved with. Thus we began with the behaviours rather than overtly asking 'What are your personal values?' This indirect approach reflected our understanding of the deep-rooted nature of personal values which can result in differences between expressed and operative personal values (England 1967). By asking 'How and why did you get involved in X…' put the focus on the behaviour and was a more subtle approach. In effect, this enabled our subjects to define CSR and in the majority of cases, we did not overtly introduce the subject of personal values, until at least the second half of each interview. Our interpretative phenomenological analysis aimed 'to explore in detail participants' personal lived experience and how participants make sense of that personal experience' (Laverty 2003, p. 19; Smith 2004 p. 40), as opposed to the rather blunt and reductionist categorisation (Ligon et al. 2008, p. 317). Social responsibility was thus defined by our research subjects and then later on in the interview, it was probed further by the researchers, using a prompt sheet.

The CSR prompt sheet included 'managing relationships with all stakeholders' (which were listed), the triple bottom

line, corporate citizenship and 'going beyond the requirements of the law in a wide variety of areas' (Carroll 1979) and included different domains of CSR, such as helping the community, employee welfare and human rights and integrity in your dealings at work. After the activity had been exhausted in each interview, we then introduced the Rokeach Values Survey (RVS) Form G (1973). The purpose of this instrument was not to determine respondents' value hierarchies, but to stimulate our research subjects to articulate the meaning and importance of their personal values in the process of a co-construction of meaning (Laverty 2003). The data were cross-checked against the RVS responses using the technique of constant comparisons (Silverman 2001). In addition, our data analysis consisted of the production of transcripts and memos (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, p. 1114), the assigning of descriptive coding and the production of cognitive maps (Miles and Huberman 1994; Silverman 2001). Interpretive themes formed a second level of coding using multiple level coding, followed by meta-level codes and the compilation of coding consistency statistics (Antonakis et al. 2014, p. 168). Interim results were discussed throughout the study with our academic colleagues and with two senior informants on separate occasions, although our subjects' confidentiality was maintained throughout.

Turning Points and Leadership in CSR

We found tentative evidence of leadership in CSR, operating at all levels in the organisational hierarchy, regardless of job role, status and departmental context. This challenges the prevalent view that prosocial behaviour in organisations results from senior actors seeking 'symbolic capital' to increase their power (egoism), or, the macro pressures on and from the organisational context (van Aaken et al. 2013), that can sometimes result in greenwashing (Banerjee 2008). We also found exploratory evidence that (M)TP events can act as a mechanism for moral cognition and may trigger CSR leadership, regardless of individuals' personal background and even though motives for CSR within the organisation may well be mixed, (Christensen et al. 2014, p. 171; Di Norcia and Tigner 2000).

Twelve out of twenty-eight research subjects were revealed as leaders in CSR, comprising five individuals from the initial list of twelve potential 'prosocial' subjects. They ranged across all functions of the company: from the shop floor to the executive suite. This minority were highly principled individuals with a strong sense of personal responsibility to society, who were driven by their dominantly expressed self-transcendent personal values (Schwartz 2010). They drove a social agenda at work,

having enlarged their own jobs (Argyris 1957) to incorporate one or more of the CSR domains. Some of these individuals were repeatedly cited by their colleagues as CSR leaders. However, the orientations (Hemingway, 2013; Pless et al. 2012; Treviño et al. 2003; Witt and Stahl 2016) of these CSR leaders varied, depending on which of the domain(s) of CSR (or which stakeholder group or groups) they championed. Notably, four of these twelve leaders articulated their sense of limitation around the company's commitment to CSR and sustainability.

Examples of CSR leadership included: a middle manager who initiated and drove a company-wide environmental project; a junior manager who instigated and garnered company-wide support for a re-cycling initiative which was not part of his formal job role; a head of department who repeatedly resisted commercial pressure to conduct product testing on animals; a factory shift manager who regularly challenged racist bullying; and a junior administrator who had become a serial charity fund-raiser. The latter described how she repeatedly used her influence to persuade the management of the company to commit resources for a local hospital, galvanising her colleagues to participate in her fund-raising initiatives. Of the remaining sixteen research subjects, all but three were involved in CSR as part of their formal job role, such as health and safety, but they could not be described as leaders of CSR. They articulated job satisfaction, but it was not expressed with the passion (see also Pless 2007) of the twelve leaders in CSR, nor as a salient personal concern. This *majority* of non-leader research subjects were driven by their dominantly expressed self-enhancement personal values (Schwartz 2010) and demonstrated an instrumental approach to CSR: espousing the business case and emphasising their involvement in CSR as good for their career.

However, one group stood out in their path to CSR leadership. In eight out of the twelve cases of CSR leadership, turning points were narrated as a critical life event that had either defined (MTP) or re-defined (TP) their self-identity as leaders of CSR. Most of these events were spontaneously narrated by our research subjects, thereby illustrating the 'unexpected perspectives' that can emerge from 'extreme cases' (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, p. 1115 and p. 1118). This unexpected finding from our study is also comparable with the leadership research of Bennis and Thomas (2002), who referred to serendipitous discoveries, when narratives regarding their 'crucibles' also emerged as an unanticipated finding. From these eight cases, four (M)TP event narratives emerged from the CSR leaders in terms of a critical life incident: existential workplace experience, enlightening educational experience, religious epiphany and critical family illness/bereavement.

Our subjects' life story narratives connected their prosocial behaviour to a salient and sometimes life-

changing event. Our research also suggests that (M)TPs enabled these individuals to overcome organisational constraints and had informed their responsible leadership, where leadership was often exercised across more than one domain of CSR and sustainability. These particular research subjects represented extreme cases (Eisenhardt et al. 2016, p. 1118) that emerged spontaneously and serendipitously from our investigation into how values are practised in organisations (Hemingway 2013). Hence, we now highlight them as a potentially important insight into the dynamics underlying value creation based on CSR.

In the next section, we discuss the four event types. Our first situation, the existential workplace experience, represents the TP case. It is followed by three MTP narratives that we posit may have been incrementally momentous, producing greater levels of arousal in our subjects and subsequent re-evaluation of their priorities. Indeed, the three MTPs were narrated in terms of a seismic shift in their personality through a re-ordering of their personal values, transforming them from dominantly self-enhancement to dominantly self-transcendent (Schwartz 2010), re-defining a changed sense of self. But, the TP case is notable too, as it appeared to have triggered the subject's previously dominant social values, making them salient again. So we suggest that whilst the TP experience was narrated as a learning experience, it was not life-changing, as in the cases of the MTP. Thus, our TP case enables comparison with the MTP cases. This distinction adds a degree of nuance to the TP phenomenon that we wish to highlight for the purposes of our analysis.

Existential Workplace Experience

Our first TP narrative case relates to an existential workplace experience. We cite Helena, a head of department, who disclosed her experiences of the difficulties of running the business abroad in a country with different employment legislation to that of the home country. Helena's personal agenda was a deep-rooted socially oriented concern to behave with integrity (Blasi 2005), i.e., a strong personal moral code (Martin et al. 2013) and influencing her subordinates to behave ethically. She articulated this as: 'hold[ing] our heads up high'. Helena demonstrated her moral imagination (Johnson 1993, p. 207; Moberg and Seabright 2000), narrating how she had initiated a meeting with the company President, before accepting her post abroad, specifically to discuss and to clarify whether or not she would have his support regarding her intention to uphold what she regarded as the company's high ethical standards, across a broad range of areas. In describing her motivation as a CSR leader, Helena commented on her existential workplace experience:

> I actually had to close a factory … and I think that…awakened me to a lot of the issues. Is that what made me think these things are important? It certainly reinforced it. But did I always think that people should be treated properly—should try and do your best for your community—I probably did raise it on my agenda.

Helena implied that her self-transcendent values were already dominant and that this learning experience was probably not a momentous turning point in her life. However, Helena suggested that this TP 'twinged' her conscience, like the 'ethical twinge' that was reported by H.R. managers and accountants (Lovell 2002). Hence, we assert that the TP event is still important, even if it did not induce a change of identity, because the TP event was described by the subject as a formative experience that triggered her meta-reflexivity (Archer 2012) to clarify her social values that 'awakened' (sic) her ethic of engagement (Narvaez 2009) and her development as a responsible leader.

> …whether or not I'm doing it right or not, I think the issue is, well, it's what do…do you actually change your moral compass, or your guiding principles. Do you change them because of the environment in which you find yourself, or do you actually say, well, these things are actually worth having? They're of value. And hence, you're not going to change things. You know, my view is…the Nuremberg defence didn't work at Nuremberg! So it's—the obligation on all of us is…that we actually have to be driven by our own sense of right and wrong.

Helena's self-identity was of a socially responsible leader with:

> …a strong sense of humanistic values…I was brought up having a strong sense of social values and with a sense of, you know, always trying to help somebody who needs help: help the under-dog, or whatever.

Even though Helena described her upbringing as formative in the development of her self-transcendent values, her case illustrates how a TP event can trigger the individual *to re-evaluate* their priorities in life, or 'raise it on my agenda', as she put it. Thus, we posit that the TP case is theoretically useful as it serves as a foil upon which we can compare the following cases of MTPs.

Enlightening Educational Experience

The enlightening educational experience could equally be categorised as an existential workplace experience. But in contrast to the last TP event that we described, above, the

enlightening educational experience was reported by our research subjects to have changed their lives. Moreover, it was recalled and remembered vividly, without prompting by us, despite having occurred nine years prior to our data collection. Even though we did not measure the levels of affective response to these four events, either at the time they occurred, or whilst being recounted to us; we posit that the enlightening educational experience was connected with a greater level of emotional significance to these subjects than the generic turning point, represented by the existential workplace experience. Also compared with the turning points reported in the literature (Gardner et al. 2005; Pillemer 1998, 2001; Shamir and Eilam 2005), such as Janson's (2008, p. 82) reference to a first taste of public speaking. These were developmental experiences that we regard as rather mundane in comparison with our three unprompted MTP events that were reported to be life-changing by our research subjects.

The educational experience was a company-wide training programme, run by a firm of consultants that appeared to have left far-reaching, profound and long-lasting effects on the employees of the organisation. Such as Brian who, as a result of the course, had been inspired to instigate and drive a workplace sustainability agenda. Or Barry, who attributed his moral courage to champion the fair treatment of employees, including speaking out against racism at work, to the impact of this particular training programme. It had been commissioned to help improve performance, and it focussed on personal goal-setting for all areas of employees' lives. This programme had been rolled out across the whole organisation, covering all levels and functions, with every employee receiving training. Some employees had been selected to be in-house trainers, and they had received their training both in the USA and in Europe. Now this particular training programme was spontaneously mentioned by eight out of our twelve CSR leaders. Brian, a senior manager introduced it like this:

> You make a path through life yourself. There was a fantastic training course a few years ago called XYZ—goal setting and choices—opportunities when they arise.

This sentiment is comparable to that of Janson's (2008, p. 85) research subject who described the impact that a similar self-development course had on them as a leadership formative experience: 'There was a choice, I could make choices in my life and it just gave me a huge opening to be me…' It also reminds us of Hitlin's (2003, p. 123) statement that: 'We feel authentic when we behave in keeping with our values'.

Brian expressed a strong belief in protecting the environment, which he had built into his job since he had been trained as a facilitator on the course. Following this,

he had applied to study for a part-time postgraduate business qualification and he elected CSR as the topic of his dissertation. We posit that this enlightening educational experience was the trigger for Brian's ethical shift from self-protectionism (Narvaez 2014), developing his moral imagination as part of the process of his self-transformation. Thus followed his proposal to the executive board to head up a company-wide environmental programme, for which he had gained approval. Brian also described how he was 'heavily, heavily involved' in his local community, working on various committees for his local school. He espoused a strong sense of personal agency and social duty that he attributed to the training programme:

> I struggle with people who aren't independent, who won't do things for themselves. It's going back to this course that we did… *It opened my eyes* (our italics)… I struggle with people believing that the world and life owes them something…I don't like being told what to do.

A similar sentiment was articulated by Barry, an engineer whose personal sense of social responsibility was palpable. He displayed his leadership in CSR, harnessing his referent power (French and Raven 1959): 'I try to use my influence' he said, when speaking out against racism, angrily urging his factory working colleagues to 'think for yourself!' when he encountered misinformed and disrespectful comments about migrant employees. We asked Barry to elaborate about the company-wide training course, after he had spontaneously referred to it in the context of his promotion: 'I used to be a blue-collar worker' he said, going on to explain how the course had motivated him to both secure a managerial position, putting him in a stronger position to champion the fair treatment of his co-workers and subordinates:

> I suppose it was a way of making you realise that you're accountable for what you do yourself and everything's achievable as long as you set the targets to achieve them. You're accountable for your own actions…they rolled it out to everybody in the factory.

The course had lasted a full working week, followed by a gap to reflect and to set personal goals: 'To think about how you wanted to change your life', followed by a second full week. Barry stressed that the course was as much about setting personal goals as it was about work-related goal setting: 'The course taught me to say 'No' to that inner voice stopping me from doing things'. We will return to Barry, a bit later. His colleague, Brian, articulated what he regarded as the consequences of what was, for him and others, a life transformative experience:

Taking responsibility for your own destiny; firmly realise that you're in control of your life rather than other people are…be comfortable with the choices you're making as well…

We emphasise that this particularly intensive training course was a one-off and whilst it had taken place nine years previously, its impact upon these subjects was still being felt. But (M)TPs will not always occur in the workplace. This was acknowledged by Maclagan (1998, p. 20) who referred to 'significant personal experiences…triggers which awaken a moral sensitivity'. These outside work experiences lead us to our second MTP case, a religious epiphany.

Religious Epiphany

Eric's formative experience in his CSR leadership development gave rise to the second of our MTP narratives. A departmental head, Eric was also active in a not-for-profit movement which promotes social entrepreneurship across the private, public and voluntary sectors. He had taken paid leave to help in the aftermath of a major environmental disaster abroad and he reported that he would also be asking the company for aid funding: 'Money follows vision', he declared. Eric confided how he had employed a recovering drug addict, a member of his church, as a consultant to the company, thereby avoiding HR recruitment procedures. His Christian beliefs formed his MTP which emerged as follows:

> …the reason I get involved in sort of wider social issues is really because of my…Christian conviction and Christian beliefs…When I was at University I had a sort of quite a life changing sort of series of events, really. Prior to that I was fundamentally very self- focused and what I wanted, very career minded and all that sort of stuff and, you know, the agenda revolved around me. And while I was at University I became a Christian and…really recognised that the world is a little bit bigger than that…And a lot of that got turned on its head and so really since then…I've had much more… of a desire to…you know… make a make a difference where I can…and what I can sort of contribute to and change, really.

This particular life story narrative illustrates an apparent shift from the self-enhancement personal values that characterise self-protectionism (Narvaez 2014) to the self-transcendent values underpinning generativity (McAdams 2001) and a moral vision (Johnson 1993). Eric claimed that his main goal was now to make a difference in life. It's about 'knowing that the world is bigger than you' and that 'there's more to life than flat screen TVs'. This example of moral imagination concurs

with that of Pless (2007), who concluded that Roddick's identity script comprised an alignment between her personal values and her 'thinking, feeling and acting' that included being driven to be a part of something larger than the self (Pless 2007, p. 451). We now move to our final MTP case, the critical family member illness or bereavement. We posit that this type of situation may have produced the greatest levels of arousal and impact on the individual to trigger meta-reflexivity (Archer 2012) and re-evaluation of personal priorities in life from a *modus vivendi* of self-protectionism to moral vision and subsequent ethical engagement (Narvaez 2014), via leadership in CSR.

Critical Family Illness/Bereavement

Francesca was the departmental head of a function whose espoused self-identity was someone who is highly principled. She described feeling 'strongly' about maintaining 'ethical standards' in a number of areas. She was notably protective of her employees across different areas and was known as her employees' champion. The health and safety of employees was a major personal concern to Francesca and she made it a priority to be seen to be setting the example. Francesca attributed her particular vigilance and concern in this area, to her father's serious accident at work. This had resulted in his near-permanent blindness:

> I see it as my role, to try and support getting that culture. It's like, you know, walking the talk: it's easy to write the words, but if people don't see anyone going around in a position of authority doing that, then why would they do it? But I do believe it as well…When I was quite young my father worked at Sand Bay [large-scale chemicals manufacturing plant]…and he nearly lost—well he did lose his sight for several…days. He eventually came 'round—there was an accident at the plant and he was…injured. So it wasn't an abstract thing for me…It's quite a hazardous environment working here, people forget that.

Moreover, Francesca's personal sense of social responsibility manifest across different domains of CSR. For example, she narrated how she and her staff sustained significant commercial pressure exerted by sales staff to conduct product testing on animals, in order to expedite the production of sales aids and advertisements. Clinical trials using humans take much longer. This pressure was resisted. She described, too, a meticulous approach with regard to the fair treatment of subordinates which connected with her espoused personal value of equality. This took the form of a diligent approach to regular performance appraisals in order to protect staff and to facilitate their promotion. There had been situations:

…where people get labelled and it's hard for them to shake it off. You can have someone really exceptional but they can't perform because they've been labelled for something that might have happened a long while ago. Everyone should be given a fair opportunity to try and achieve.

Francesca described how she found it necessary to speak out, once or twice a year in board meetings when she was asked to begin disciplinary proceedings against a subordinate and she deemed that the individual was being treated unfairly:

> I don't want to be viewed as being difficult, but when it comes to those sorts of situations …I would consciously say 'Well, I'm sorry I'm not going to do that." Also: '…if I was told to go and tell someone about a performance issue and I fundamentally disagreed with it, again, I wouldn't do it and I wouldn't worry if it had an impact on my career: I don't *care* about that, in that sense.

Francesca espoused a strong belief in being principled and being seen to be principled. This, for her, was central to her identity as a responsible leader. It reflects Blasi's (2005) notion of integrity as part of the moral personality, i.e., 'internal self-consistency' (Lapsley and Hill 2009, p. 197). It was also demonstrated by Barry, the engineer who was described above, when he referred to his son's near death experience:

> …when my son had meningitis, your life just changes and you think of all the things you could do better…They are the most important people in the world, my wife and kids.

In addition to speaking out against racism, Barry had secured the agreement of his line manager (not Francesca, who was in a different function) that he would be exempt from giving 'feedback' on colleagues who were being selected for redundancy during the latest round of rationalisation. So, like Francesca, Barry had taken a principled stand not to participate in the official 'feedback' system:

> Some very capable people have been ousted but their job wasn't made redundant, they just got new people in. And rather than maybe manage that situation by training, or just making people aware that you're failing on this criteria you've got to improve, it's just, like: 'Push Off.'

Such examples illustrated to us that prosocial behaviour following the TP need not *necessarily* share the same content in terms of 'matching' domains of CSR or the specific subject of concern. For example, where Barry's child's meningitis had resulted in his active participation in a meningitis hospital group to help other families, his defence of colleagues was not attributed to the rationalisation of the factory (as a TP), as it was an ongoing situation that had resulted in successive rounds of redundancy over a number of years. But he attributed this behaviour to the profound impact of the training course, above and he also narrated the story of his son's serious illness as a driver that motivated his desire to help others. So we posit that TPs acted as the mechanism *for re-evaluation* and that the MTP produced a more significant shift: "…your life just changes…" (declared Barry) and "…it opened my eyes…" (confided Brian). Hence, our exploratory data suggest that the re-evaluation produced by the event results in moral vision (Johnson, 1993) and a dominant, salient concern for the welfare and interests of others (Schwartz 2010, p. 226), that may manifest across a number of CSR domains and not necessarily only one domain (such as a concern for animal welfare, or environmental issues). In other words, we posit that personal values can shift in response to the catalyst of an event.

There have been other indications in support of our argument, such as the epiphanies that led sustainability managers and consultants 'to reconsider their job or career and discover a higher purpose [and] how their concerns about sustainability and climate change followed critical events, major life changes and upheavals' (Wright et al. 2012, p. 1468). Those situations may well have been MTPs. Thus, we have argued that TPs represent a critical formative experience that may be accessed via the subject's life story narrative. We posit further that MTPs, defined earlier as producing higher levels of arousal in the individual, may trigger personal transformation. Our analysis revealed four narrative forms of (M)TP: existential workplace experience, enlightening educational experience, religious epiphany and critical family illness or bereavement. We now present our descriptive, theoretical model of this psychological process.

Theoretical Model of the (M)TP Process in CSR Leadership

Our proposed theoretical model at Fig. 1 depicts the psychological process of the TP as an important antecedent in CSR leadership and how the MTP might sometimes completely transform individuals. It is based on a combination of social theory (Archer 2003, 2012), social psychology (Schwartz 2010), moral psychology (Narvaez 2009, 2014) and the exploratory research findings, discussed above. This model features Narvaez' (2014) three ethics of self-protectionism, engagement and imagination (TET), to illustrate the moral motivation and behaviour that is generated by our power of reflexivity.
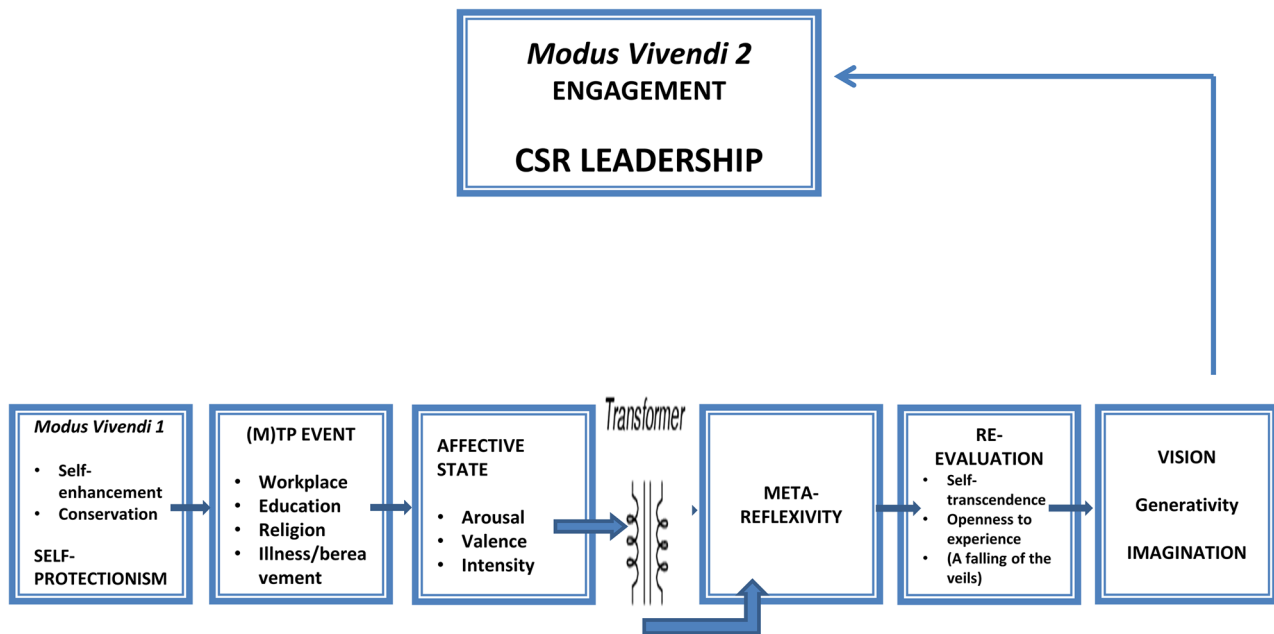
Fig. 1 Theoretical model of the (M)TP process in CSR leadership

Our life narratives indicate that leadership in CSR can occur at multiple levels, throughout the organisation and not necessarily as a top-down style of leadership (Ciulla 2004). This was illustrated by Janice, the secretary turned administrator; a serial charity fund-raiser who had raised over $50,000 at work over a four year period. She described how she regularly used her influence to persuade the management of the company to commit resources for a local hospital, galvanising colleagues to participate in her fund-raising initiatives. But Janice took us by surprise when she attributed her responsible leadership to an MTP. She began to narrate how she had been profoundly affected by the unexpected death of her sister, which had happened five years prior to our study. Only a young woman, her sister had died of a heart condition. This event shook Janice to the core. She described the MTP as the eulogy at her sister's funeral:

> I lost my sister—she died—she was only thirty-three…and I was only like thirty-one at the time… and…you know, it makes you take stock doesn't it? Do you know? What do I do to actually…make a difference to anybody?

We theorise this psychological process in Fig. 1, where the (M)TP 'influences perceptual processes and goal salience' (Narvaez 2009, p. 5). (M)TP events were described, above, as existential workplace experience, enlightening educational experience, religious epiphany and critical family illness/bereavement. We do not claim these event types to be definitive and thus we recommend further research into this little understood phenomenon. But we assert that the

event disrupts the status quo of the individual, characterised as the ethic of self-protectionism, which is underpinned by conservatism and self-enhancement at *Modus Vivendi 1*. Self-protectionism was originally described as the ethic of security and later revised (Narvaez 2014) whereby: 'self-protective values and behaviours guard the life of the individual and in-group' (p. 143). It was described as: '…focused on self-preservation through safety and such things as personal or in-group dominance. When the security ethic is highly active, the individual will have a difficult time in focusing on the needs of others, because this ethic resides in brain and body systems that are self-focused' (Narvaez 2009, p. 137). Janice illustrated this, where her tremendous feelings of grief disrupted her self-protectionism, causing her to reflect: "… and I thought: Right…well at mine, what will they say about me? What do I do…for anybody else? You know? And it just gets you thinking about what you actually do… other than…like…you know…my mum, my dad and my daughter…"

Our model posits that an affective state is generated by the (M)TP event, differing along three principal dimensions: valence, arousal and motivational intensity (Harmon-Jones et al. 2013). This is not to suggest that the subject does not experience emotion prior to the (M)TP. Only that such events represent a tipping point that moderates the affective state. Indeed, we tentatively propose an increasing saliency of these stories to our research subjects, reflected in the order that we presented them, above, compared with the more mundane turning points and life formative experiences in the leadership development

literature that we outlined earlier. The affective state is hormonal reaction produced as part of the 'fight or flight' response (Narvaez 2009, p. 138). Hence we posit that an MTP produces greater levels of arousal in the individual which may polarise as either profoundly joyous 'peak' experiences or devastating 'desolation' events (Maslow 1976), manifesting as distress or euphoria.

We have used the transformer symbol in Fig. 1 as a device to illustrate the onset of change and it follows the hormonal reaction generated by the event. In the case of the MTP, this would spark an individuals' fundamental re-analysis, as we propose happened to Janice and some of our other research subjects. Moreover, we propose that the degree of change is moderated by the affective state that generates a re-ordering of personal values, which are 'linked inextricably to affect' (Schwartz 2010, p. 222) and where the (M)TP event stimulates meta-reflexivity (Archer 2003, 2012) in the individual to motivate a re-evaluation of work and life choices. This is akin to Hind et al.'s (2009, p. 7) 'reflexive abilities' and Blakely and Higgs' (2014, p. 572) 'consciousness-raising experiences' in responsible leadership and Blasi's (2005) 'reasoned reflection' in moral character. But there is a key difference. As we identified in our discussion earlier, meta-reflexivity is more than learning from one's experience. Indeed, Archer's (2012, see Chapter 6) Meta-reflexives were described as 'critics of market and state'. Such as Kate, with her 'passion' for politics (p. 212) or Halina, who was disengaged from her family and an active member of Greenpeace (p. 217). These were the 'cultural idealists, trapped in a search to pursue a vocation' (Archer 2012, p. 255), perhaps driven by the ethics of imagination and engagement. Hence, in Fig. 1, meta-reflexivity mediates the individual's system of personal values to produce a re-evaluation phase, where self-transcendent and openness to experience values become dominant. This was demonstrated by Janice when she described the moment during her sister's eulogy when she realised that her perspective on her immediate family was too narrow. This illustrates universalism values contained within self-transcendence (Schwartz 2010).

However, it is the perceived magnitude of the event, in terms of the degree of arousal experienced by the individual, that determines the status of the event as TP or MTP; where the latter experience would manifest as 'a falling of the veils'. This comes from Maslow's (1976, p. 77) discussion of human peak and desolation experiences, which he argued produced revelations which can be a natural part of lifelong development and humanity. Maslow's thesis connected with Nietzsche's description of the drive to self-transcendence as the human condition (Painter-Morland 2008, p. 145) and the notion of our ongoing search for meaning in life (Weick 1995). Further to this, we do not deny the role of intuition in the decision making process (Haidt 2001; Sonenshein 2007). Rather, we propose that deeper, meta-reflexive thinking (Archer 2012) will be generated as a consequence of the (M)TP. This reflects Foucault's (2000) argument, based on ancient Greek philosophy, that it is our capacity for reflexivity that generates the conscience, although we posit that (M)TPs create more than reflective thinking. Indeed, our argument is that the TP can serve to remind the individual of their core self-transcendent values. Also, that the MTP is a particularly powerful stimuli for developing moral vision, whereby the MTP can generate a sense of greater purpose in life as part of a process of self-transformation. Both event types manifesting as leadership in CSR. Here, we return to Janice, who described how her sister's early death had spurred her into making a conscious decision to change her own life for the better:

> It makes you take stock doesn't it? …And you think, you start thinking…about your own…path in life really, don't you? And I thought, well, how do I make a difference? I thought, Right! You know, this is, this is going to be…I'm going to make good this year and do something that is going to change my life…

Subsequent to the re-evaluation phase, where self-transcendent personal values are consolidated or become dominant, we posit that the ethic of imagination precedes the ethic of engagement (Narvaez 2009) to produce moral vision (Johnson 1993). According to Narvaez (2009) the ethic of imagination can be linked to either self-protectionism (security) or engagement. Here, our exploratory data indicates the vision and imagination (Johnson 1993, p. 207; Moberg and Seabright 2000) that is generated as part of this process, as a precursor to responsible leadership. The ethic of imagination uses 'reasoning capacities to adapt to ongoing social relationships and to address concerns beyond the immediate…[allowing]… the individual to step back from and review instincts and intuitions' (Narvaez 2009, p.138). At this point in the transformation process, the individual becomes more open to new experiences and is motivated by generativity. Citing Erikson (1963), McAdams (2001) defined generativity as: 'an adult's concern for, or commitment to, promoting the well-being of future generations…and engaging in a wide range of activities aimed at leaving a positive legacy of the self for the future' (p. 17). In addition to the cases above, this was also exemplified by Francesca, when she was explaining her ethical stance in response to significant commercial pressure to conduct product testing on animals:

> …why don't they think, well, we've been in this business for a hundred years, we want to be in it for another hundred years and not, you know, we're not going to jeopardise a product like X for a short-

term…so that some person can make and impact in the organization, can get a nice advert out.

Janice's moral vision was also sparked and her new motivation was not only to "improve myself", but also to be remembered as someone who had made a significant contribution to the lives of others:

> So that's where it all came from, really. I thought, what do *I* do to actually…make a difference to anybody, other than, you know, my mum, my dad, my daughter, do you know what I mean? I thought: Get off your arse and go and do something… to make a difference to somebody…

This is reminiscent of the sentiment expressed by a participant after immersion in a particular leadership development programme, who declared that the experience had "changed my mind completely" and that her habitus had 'shifted' (Blakeley and Higgs 2014, p. 568 and p. 570). Thus, our model posits how CSR leadership emerges, whereby the TP produces meta-reflexivity causing the individual to grow as a leader and where the MTP creates a seismic shift to the subject's personality. As Janice said, she had personally transformed from being: "…a person that would be just carried along, to a person that wants to lead it." This stage in the process is represented by *Modus Vivendi 2*, characterised in our model by the ethic of engagement, i.e., 'oriented to face-to-face emotional affiliation with others, particularly through caring relationships and social bonds' (Narvaez 2009, p. 138). But we reiterate that the event does not have to be momentous to produce a shift from *modus vivendi* 1 to *modus vivendi* 2.

Conclusions

Our theoretical model at Fig. 1 illustrates a psychological process that we posit has emerged as an important antecedent in CSR leadership development. Much more empirical work is now required to investigate our proposals concerning (M)TPs, in order to further develop our understanding and produce practical management insights. Importantly, the responsible leaders identified in our study did not make any claims to be 'better leaders' as a result of their formative experiences (e.g., Bennis and Thomas 2002, p. 40). Some did talk at length about how their priorities and behaviour had radically altered. They attributed their leadership to these events, often without using the word 'leader'. All this indicates that further research is required on a larger scale and we would recommend much more hermeneutic phenomenological research to probe subjects' biographies to further contextualise the (M)TP and produce deeper insights. We also recommend

investigation of both the emotional significance of such critical life events and longitudinal research into the extent of the perceived behaviour change. We propose that the greater the arousal associated with the TP, then the more profound the effect, in terms of the amount, frequency and duration of prosocial behaviour and leadership in CSR. Further, we would like to see more neuroscientific studies to enhance our understanding of how brain chemistry is important in these processes, combined with many more in-depth and semi-structured interviews.

We wonder about the extent to which TPs might produce a second wave of formative experience for some existing leaders. It is also an interesting possibility that MTPs can create leadership from a previous non-leader. We do not yet know whether the MTP will produce a more longer-lasting impact than a TP, although we could hypothesise that it might. We anticipate variation in levels of commitment to CSR leadership and variation in how long the behaviour will last. People revise their priorities in life (Archer 2003). Has every CSR leader had a (transformative) MTP (where values shifted from dominantly SE to ST)? We doubt it, but we suggest that it might be common. We also posit that those CSR leaders with already dominant ST values (and who have not experienced a transformative MTP) who have allowed the situational context to temporarily compromise their personal values may at times 'slip up' and behave anti-socially. This might include not speaking up when encountering misdemeanour at work (Hemingway, 2013) and perhaps experiencing a reminder of what their priorities are in the form of the (less dramatic) TP. In other words, a more moderate 'shuffling' of values as opposed to the seismic shift of the MTP. But the TP still produces re-evaluation, only in more modest form compared to the consequences of the MTP. Hence, our recommendation for more research to identify how widespread (M)TPs are in CSR leaders.

According to Janson (2008, p. 87), much of the literature on the antecedents of leadership is rooted in early childhood, whereas our tentative findings support the notion of the development of the individual throughout the life course and notion that moral character can develop later in life (Foucault 2000; Narvaez 2009, p. 151). Moreover, our exploratory findings support previous work on the role of personal values in identity work (e.g., Bennis and Thomas 2002; Gehman et al. 2013) and specifically on the role of the life narrative in producing leadership identity (Pless 2007). These narratives accord with the notion of developmental crisis and the formation of character integrity (Erikson 1979; Horowitz 2002; Maslow 2011), suggesting a formation of character, as opposed to the fluidity of identity change between roles, which is a common perspective in organisation theory, particularly amongst those in the critical management school (e.g., Banerjee 2008; but

see also Maak and Pless 2006; Treviño et al. 2006). Our own social psychological perspective on character accords with, as one might expect, virtue ethics theory. Crossan et al. (2013) develop a value-based model of ethical decision making and suggest that character strengths can be deepened along the virtuous mean via self-reflection in action which promotes learning, as well as learning from experience after the event. (M)TPs, from our perspective, are a major impetus to reflection and learning and we agree with Crossan et al. (2013) that we need further work to develop our understanding of the development of character as an aspect of virtue. But whilst we recognise the importance of internal character traits and natural tendencies towards goodness, we also acknowledge structural constraints that limit their expression. As Crossan et al. (2013) point out, character in leadership is enacted in a nexus of behaviours, relationships and structures.

What is interesting in our study, is that significant life events can and do provide the impetus to reframing one's values and acting accordingly in certain cases. Major events can even over-ride predispositions, as in Saint Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus illustrates. Once virtue traits are strongly triggered, they can become stable aspects of character going forward. In other words, (M)TPs can provide the stimulus to the emergence of CSR leaders. Conversely, as Joosten et al. (2014) argue, the constant pressure that existing leaders are under may lead to 'ego depletion' and undermine the capacity for self-regulation, thus creating the conditions for unethical behaviour. (M)TPs remind individuals that alternative paths are possible. However, we recognise that CSR and sustainability remains a major challenge for individuals and organisations, not least because our current variant of market-driven and financialised capitalism tends to over-ride consideration of questions about what forms of economic and social activity might improve our capacity for the pursuit of a sustained good life. Hopefully, management education is slowly beginning to have an effect in this area in promoting questions about how to develop character and mindfully pursue an ethical life through empowering individuals to rely on their own reasoned judgments and virtuous intuitions and emotions (Akrovou and Sison 2016). Crossan et al. (2013, p. 296) argue that business educators can help to enable leadership character development and that we as educators have a responsibility to help foster positive relationships, enabling rules of engagement and behaviour norms.

Our micro- and meso-perspective supports the much wider perspective of some organisational researchers who have argued that the past can be an important source of political and ethical guidance in organisations (Hassard 2012; Orr 2014). Now, whilst Armstrong (2014) advocated open discussion of crisis and personal trauma at work so that the developmental value for both organisation and individual is not missed, we also support Shamir and Eilam's (2005, p. 413) warning against the potential for violating norms of privacy or intimacy. So our findings imply an equally or more indirect approach to the one we have demonstrated, for any future study of the role of the (M)TP in CSR leadership, not least because the relative scarcity of responsible leaders, as we have already suggested and due to the extremely sensitive and private nature of this under-researched phenomenon. Sometimes, though, proactive organisation development can be the important CSR catalyst. As Armstrong (2017) argued: HR professionals could look to create 'safe' spaces in which leaders and managers can openly reflect on their challenges and struggles as critical moments of learning, which then sets a tone and culture for learning across the organisation. Nevertheless, our theoretical model demonstrates the capacity for change, because moral agency opens up all kinds of possibilities through our capacity for reflexivity. Bearing in mind the ongoing organisational misdemeanours that feature in almost daily reports of corporate malfeasance, we hope that the reader agrees that this is an important research area where scholars of business ethics might find new impetus within which to 'fight the good fight' (Ciulla 2013, p. 703).

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