

# Ethical aspects of the Credit Crunch: the Decision-maker and his/her Societal Responsibility

*Saturday 9 May, 12 Noon, Mount St Joseph, Malta*

## Introduction

The unprecedented changes to the global economic environment are without question giving rise to many strategic challenges for businesses worldwide. Many companies are finding that their structures are no longer appropriate for their business. Organisations of all sizes, commercial and non-commercial, are being forced to confront issues including strategy amendment, reshaping employee profiles, tax planning, cash flow and financing, cost reduction and new forms of work practice.

Changes that were previously overlooked or deemed difficult, are now necessary if organizations are to achieve the best value from their operation, and not only sustain themselves through the current downturn, but emerge leaner and fitter to take advantage of the upturn when it comes.

It is in this context that this presentation examines ethical aspects of the credit crunch and, in particular, the decision-maker and his/her societal responsibility.

## 1. Ethics in Business

*The Connection between Ethics and Values.*

*Ethics:* 'The study of the general nature of morals and of the specific moral choices to be made by the individual in his relationship with others; the rules or standards governing the conduct of members of a profession; any set of moral principles or values.' *Values:* 'Those qualities regarded by a person or group as important and desirable; a set of standards and principles.'

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*Typical Business Values:* Trust, reliability, transparency, being 'systems-driven' to ensure ISO Accreditation, value for money, quality, zero-defect, lean, customer-driven, just-on-time – these are only some of the generally-held values in Business. These values assume transactions with people and the assumption is that these people are functioning effectively.

## **2. The Condition Needed for People to function Effectively**

High self-esteem (not to be confused with pride and arrogance); Positive attitude, Sense of security; Trust; Sense of being part of a Team or Community in which one's skills and person are valued; Stability in the general day-to-day systems that run the country in which we live and the globe of which we are a part and with which we have to interact. (References: Fanning & McKay; Fukuyama; Nelson-Jones; Satir)

## **3. The impact on the Effectiveness of People of the Current Work and Life Context Created by the Credit Crunch**

Low self-esteem, negative attitude, huge anger, fear, worry, no sense of security; no sense of stability because the wider context is itself unstable; people feeling isolated and then withdrawing from social interaction (into one's 'cave') due to loss of job and consequent inability to pay debts and general bills; people are asking themselves 'Who am I now that I have no job, no ability to pay bills, perhaps no house, no insurance, no car?'

Most people attempt to fight against the chaos, to force their way through the storm and get out. But all that happens is a constant fight that eventually leads to exhaustion or in other words, they burn out.

In burn out, even the simplest of tasks is extremely difficult to do because the person doesn't have the energy due to stress and worry; not being able to do things for oneself and not even being able to 'be there' for those who depend on one.

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Business are experiencing no customers due to the downturn and so, some business owners are feeling no sense of being of value; whole communities are on edge wondering will 'our jobs be next to go?'

Some people have resorted to suicide...

*Is this what we want?* If we grind down or annihilate a core element of our business model (ie people) how will our business model continue to function effectively if it needs people - employees and customers - to be successful?

#### **4. Why is this Breakdown in Human Effectiveness Happening?**

##### **1 Human Nature**

**2 Some of our business values are not compatible with optimum human functioning**

**3 The Limited Worldview of Newtonian Physics**

**4 Violation of a more accurate Worldview as uncovered by Quantum Physics**

**5 Violation of God's Ethics: Love, Mercy, Compassion, Do to Others as you would have them do to You.**

**6 Some of our general systems are counter-productive**

**7 Some of our leadership systems are out of date**

**8 Some of our spiritual systems have needed to be re-prioritised**

##### **4.1 Human Nature**

A lot of people are motivated by pain. So, they wait until they get to the threshold of pain before they take action instead of acting with the information they have already been given.

##### **4.2 Some of our business values are not compatible with optimum human functioning**

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Eg time pressure, job done at any cost, 'lean' environments in which few do the work of many; work more important than family, live to work; upholding the system more important than the wellbeing of the individual.

#### **4.3 The Limited Worldview of Newtonian Physics**

The limited worldview of Newtonian Physics in which the human worth is based on amount of possessions (tangible and intangible) owned by the individual eg property, money and the experiences money can bring. Newtonian Physics, therefore, creates a 'thing consciousness' and an emphasis on achievement and accumulation. Consequently, when the things people have, are taken away from them, then people feel they have lost their personal worth and identity; they can feel helpless, disoriented (how do you re-invent your identity if it has been eradicated?), depressed, despairing, desperate. In fact, they are grieving a death – the death of all that gave them meaning and value.

*Newtonian Physics* says that reality is what you experience through your five senses. What you experience with your five senses is all there is to reality. You master your world by educating your brain. Your thoughts and personal motivation have nothing to do with shaping that reality.

#### **4.4 Violation of a more accurate Worldview as uncovered by Quantum Physics**

Violation of a more accurate worldview as uncovered by Quantum Physics and that worldview is that your thoughts create reality. You are experiencing right now the results of past thinking. This worldview, therefore, puts *God's* Ethics at the top of the Agenda.

*Quantum Physics* says that the five-sensory realm is only 3% of reality and that 97% of reality is a Zero Point Energy Field which is intelligent and which brings to the individual what matches his/her deep, subconscious thoughts. This model of reality says that a person's thoughts and personal motivation have EVERYTHING to do with shaping reality. Medicine (General Surgery, Cardiology, Sports Medicine), Biochemistry, Genetics, Neurology – all agree that the thoughts of an individual have a powerful impact on the reality they

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experience. Quantum Physics, therefore, emphasizes a life of meaning, doing to others as we would want them to do to us.

The powerful shift from the ego constructs of Newtonian Physics which we are taught early in life by parents and society – and which promote an emphasis on achievement and accumulation - are shown in contrast in Quantum Physics, to a life of meaning, focused on serving and giving back.

Quantum Physics emphasizes that our choices determine our experience. What experience do we want? If we read into the message is speaking to us we are given an opportunity to move more deeply into the depth of consciousness.

Ambition to Meaning not only moves and inspires but demonstrates to us why we are here in this life and on this journey.

Quantum Physics says all information is 'out there' in the atmosphere and the brain is a data retrieve mechanism, downloading all that it needs from this invisible 'world wide web' which the Jesuit mystic Tielhard de Chardin called the 'neuesphere'. This model of the brain – one which Einstein and Conrad Hilton supported – gives us hope. For example, if you need to be enterprising, you simply 'log on' and the entrepreneurial ideas are downloaded into your brain. This means that re-inventing yourself isn't as difficult as it first seems. This system is also a reflection of how Jesus functioned. He said 'I only say what I hear My Father say and I only do what I see My Father do.' (John Chapter 8 v 28, 29)

We are seeing the collapse of the 3% Newtonian version of reality and the experience of people is like that of the death of someone close. They are in the grieving process: they are in disbelief, numbness, anger. Hopefully, they will move to acceptance that the economic meltdown has happened with the consequences they have experienced and then open up to the possibility of change. Only then, at that last stage of the grieving process, the stage of acceptance, is the grieving person ready to consider being positive.

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#### **4.5 Violation of God's Ethics: Love, Mercy, Compassion, Do to Others as you would have them do to You.**

Each nation has to decide what set of values it will be governed by. NASA's Voyager Photographs: the Earth from 3.7 billion miles away – is just a tiny blue dot. From this viewpoint, what should our values be? And from this vantage point, how do our usual commercial, material and Newtonian values stack up? The Chinese mystic Lao Tsu says: 'If you want to get the most out of Life, start with Death'.

#### **4.6 Some of our general systems are counter-productive**

Some of our general systems are counter-productive given the current reality eg in Ireland, imprisonment for debt has increased by 40% last year alone – even though Ireland is a signatory to the European Convention of Human Rights which states 'No one person shall be deprived of their liberty merely on the grounds of their inability to fulfil a contractual obligation.' There are implications here for risk-takers and entrepreneurs who would like to set up a new business in the current climate. There are also implications for existing small business and new ventures in R & D.

#### **4.7 Some of our leadership systems are out of date**

Some of our leadership systems are out of date, based as they are on the former global environment that had more economic and psychological stability .

*4.7.1 Solution 1: Leaders need to give their people coping and resilience skills so that they are:*

- strong and clear-headed no matter what they are faced with
- Able to faces these incredibly uncertain and stressful times
- Thoroughly prepared for whatever life, and the world, might throw at them
- Able to face the reality of bad news on top of more bad news and keep out the stress and worry

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- Clear that they can't always control what happens out there in the world, but they CAN have a lot more choice about how they respond to it.
- Able to feel peaceful and clear-minded, and to make resourceful choices, even when things seem to be falling apart.
- Able to see that 'Pessimism is a luxury of good times...In difficult times pessimism is a self-fulfilling, self-inflicted death sentence' (quoted from Jamais Cascio, a director of World Changer.com)
- Able to agree with Sarah Breathnach's statement: "When we choose not to focus on what's missing from our lives, but are grateful for the abundance that's present...we experience heaven on earth."
- Able to agree with Vivian Greene's statement: "Life's not about waiting for the storms to pass...It's about learning to dance in the rain."
- Able to see life as a creative piece where they are the artist and designer of their own experiences and that they no longer see life as a series of random events.

**Tuli Kupferberg comments:** *"When patterns are broken, new worlds emerge." And, that is your challenge...to convince your team that the new world you are trying to create is better than the one you're in. Is it easy? Of course not. It takes planning, commitment, patience and courage.*

*The truth, of course, is that change can be a wonderful gift. In fact, it is the key that unlocks the doors to growth and excitement in any organization. And, most importantly, without it...your competition will pass you by. A big part of success, as a leader, will be your ability to inspire your team to get out of their comfort zones; to assure them that even though they are on a new path, it's the right path, for the right reasons."*

**However, many people are willing to change not because they see they light but because they feel the heat! This is where the coping and resilience skills are so important.**

When the leader gives his or her people coping and resilience skills, they are empowering their people to take responsibility for the quality of experience they have in life.

*"If people lose responsibility for their own affairs, they become irresponsible on a regular basis" – Rory Quinn, Member of Irish Parliament*

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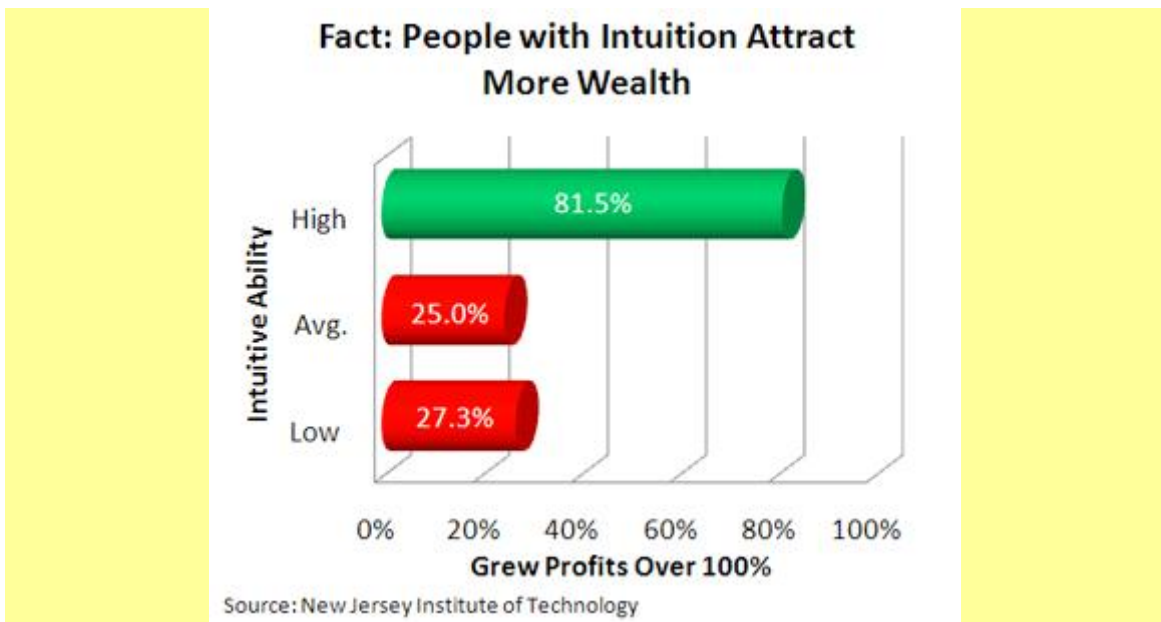
**4.7.2 Solution2:** Leaders need to strengthen in themselves the skill of intuition

Leaders need to strengthen in themselves the skill of intuition instead of focussing on logic, which is dominated by the 3% Newtonian Worldview. It was Einstein who said 'The Intuitive Mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honours the servant and has forgotten the gift.'

**Intuition is vital for the individual to appreciate the ethical aspects of his or her decision-making. Why? According to Nobel Prize Winner, Roger Sperry - for two reasons:**

1) Because intuition resides in the right brain which is that part of the brain that allows the individual to see ALL of the implications of his or her decisions and actions and also allows the individual to identify the optimum way to respond in a situation. Interestingly, highly honed intuition may be one answer to beating the Recession:

In a study conducted by Professor John Mihalasky of the New Jersey Institute of Technology, it was found that CEOs who performed best in tests of intuition also tended to be the ones with the highest profit growth in a space of 5 years in their respective businesses:



Over 81% of CEOs who scored a high ranking in an intuition test managed to increase their company's profitability by over 100% over 5 years.

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**2) Intuition is that part of the brain receptive to the voice of God. So, the individual who is intuitive is more likely to pick up God's promptings for a decision or action.** Highly honed intuition creates a sense of inner stillness. This is important in the modern lifestyle in which most people are bombarded by an array of unrelated and random thoughts – a byproduct of multi-tasking and the 'always-on-the-go-existence' that demands that the individual crams as much as s/he possibly can into every single second. The result of this lifestyle is a constant state of confusion, marked by memory lapses, stress and the feeling of being overwhelmed.

It is impossible for an individual to be creative in this state of mind for the simple fact that s/he cannot concentrate their intentions long enough to get anything done. There are too many other thoughts coming in, demanding attention and pulling the individual away from the peace they are so desperately seeking.

#### *4.7.3 Solution3: Leaders need to strengthen in themselves their role-modelling skills*

Those people who are still at work – their mind is on 'what if I lose my job?' So, there is a lot of distraction at the moment. This means that leaders must lead by example eg let employees know that every day is an opportunity to get up and do things; let employees see the leader being positive and looking for opportunities. And the leader needs to do this even if s/he is scared beneath the surface.

*"When intelligent people are out of a job, they go into their cave for a while, then they come out and talk with their friends. There will be intelligent people freed up from the tyranny of having no time in their recently lost jobs and they will seize the opportunities. But it is the positive ones who will set the pace and lead their countries out of recession."*  
Dr Geoff Lorigan, CEO, Leadership Institute, New Zealand

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## 4.8 Some of our spiritual systems have needed to be re-prioritised

Some of our spiritual systems have needed to be re-prioritised

|                          |   |                           |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| e.g Self-sufficiency     | → | God-sufficiency           |
| 'thing'-consciousness    | → | God-consciousness         |
| Society's rules          | → | God's rules               |
| Religion                 | → | Worship in Spirit         |
| Focus on Intellectual    | → | Focus on Heart            |
| Things as Positive Focus | → | God as the Positive Focus |

### 4.8.1 Self-Sufficiency to God-Sufficiency

*'Limitless is My Miracle-working Power in the Universe, though it has limitations in each individual life, but only to the extent of the lack of vision of that individual. There is no limit to My Power to save. Also, there is no limit to My desire and longing to save. My Hand is not shortened and it is "stretched out still" longing and waiting to be allowed to bless and help and save. Think how tenderly I respect the right of each individual soul, never forcing upon it My Help, My Salvation. Perhaps in all My suffering for humanity, that is the hardest, the restraint of the Divine Impatience and longing to help until the call of the soul gives Me My right to act. Comfort My waiting, loving, longing Heart by claiming My Help, Guidance and Miracle-working Power.'*  
(September 27 reading from the book 'God Calling')

*'Though the fig tree does not blossom, and there be no fruit on the vine; though the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no fruit; though the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stall. YET will I rejoice in the Lord. I will JOY in the God of my salvation, God the Lord is my Strength.'* (Habbakuk Chapter 3)

*'Just as there is only one Life and Source of Life, so also is there only one Source of Supply and in each case, this One Source is God.'* (February 15 reading from the book 'The Hamblin Book of Daily Readings')

*'When we put our whole trust in God for temporal supply instead of putting our faith in material means, we cease to be at the mercy of the things which are soon exhausted and which pass away, but instead, we are established in That which is eternal and inexhaustible. There come times to most of us when all that we usually depend upon fails and we can only fall back upon God. We may find ourselves in great danger, when all precautions and defences fail and nothing but a miraculous escape can save us. Then,*

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because God is the only One who can deliver us, we put our *whole* trust in Him and we are delivered (February 18 reading from the book: 'The Hamblin Book of Daily Readings')

*'Well-developed trust will bring you many blessings, not the least of which is My Peace. I have promised to keep you in perfect peace to the extent that you trust in Me. The world has it backwards, teaching that peace is the result of having enough money, possessions, insurance, and security systems. My Peace, however, is such an all-encompassing gift that it is independent of all circumstances. Though you lost everything else, if you gain My Peace you are rich indeed.'* (March 1 reading from the book 'Jesus Calling')

#### **4.8.2 'Thing'-consciousness to God-consciousness**

*'(Mankind)...demands an answer from God, instead of seeking God Who gives the answer.'* (February 7 reading from the book My Utmost for His Highest, by Oswald Chambers)

*'When ever the insistence is on the point that God answers prayers, we are off the track. The meaning of prayer is that we get hold of God, not of the answer.'* (February 7 reading from the book My Utmost for His Highest, by Oswald Chambers).

*'If you need a miracle, get in tune with the Miracle-Worker. We enjoy the Life of the Vine by our perfect union with the Vine. Asking for healing, while refusing to be led by the Spirit, is like asking a carpenter to repair the house while refusing to let him into the house.'* (excerpt from the book Christ The Healer, by F.F. Bosworth)

#### **4.8.3 Society's Rules to God's Rules**

We think we have been playing according to God's rules, but it is only when we look at His rules we see how much we need to re-align. Eg the Beatitudes; and looking after widows and orphans (this is the kind of fast God wants).

Scientific discoveries are proving the importance of living acc to God's rules eg Dean Ornish; Candace Pert; Heartmath Insititute; Quantum Physics

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#### ***4.8.4 Religion to Worship in Spirit and in Truth***

It used to be that we could identify a 'man or woman of God' ie monk, priest, nun by the robes they wore. Today, scientists have discovered that every attitude emits a frequency and this frequency can be given a numeric value. Professor William Tiller of Stanford University has developed a scanning device that identifies all the frequencies coming from a person. The new 'robe' is the set of frequencies coming from a person. Jesus said *'The father is looking for people who will worship him in spirit and in truth.'* (John Chapter 4 v 23, 24) Psychologists tell us that it takes only twenty one days of exposure to anything for that 'anything' to influence our behaviour. According to Dr David Hawkin, frequencies are emitted not only from attitude, but also from television programmes, adverts, magazines, sports. Therefore, we need to consider the impact of these on our attitudes. This is one of the reasons we have witnessed the 'dumbing down' of Western Societies. Because there has been little or no understanding of these scientific discoveries, the 'dumbing down' process has been taking place without any censoring. 'Low frequency' people are more difficult to manage as a society, as employees, as members of community.

#### ***4.8.5 Focus on Intellectual to Focus on Heart***

The Institute of HeartMath's breakthrough scientific research has proven that **the heart is 60 times stronger electrically than the brain** as the dominant rhythm generator to align body and spirit. Therefore, we cannot any longer ignore emotion. Also, this discovery shows the importance of engaging and motivating people as well as creating an emotionally nurturing environment – whether that is a family environment, a community environment, a work environment. In Medicine, visualization programmes are more effective and show faster results when a patient's feelings match the new thoughts they are being encouraged to picture. In Quantum Physics, feelings are considered a 'feedback mechanism' letting the individual know exactly what his/her subconscious mind is actually creating. Negative, down states mean the individual is creating negative outcomes. Positive, upbeat states means the individual is creating positive outcomes.

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#### ***4.8.6 Things as the Positive Focus to God as the Positive Focus***

*'Do not weigh your spirits down with the sins and sorrows of the world. Only a Christ can do that and live. Look for the loving, the true, the kindly, the brave in the many all around you.'* (July 3 reading from the book, God Calling)

Some people have been compelled by life's adversities to seek God.

*'Let Me be your positive focus. When you look to Me knowing Me as God With You, you experience joy....Modern man seeks his positive focus elsewhere: in sports, sensations, acquiring new possessions. Advertising capitalizes on the longing of people for a positive focus in their lives. I planted that longing in human souls, knowing that only I could fully satisfy it. Delight yourself in Me; let Me become the Desire of your heart.'*  
(February 12 reading from the book, Jesus Calling)

#### **Conclusion**

It is clear that the uncertainty and volatility of the global credit crunch have created an experience for most people that feels like they are 'walking on a moving carpet'. It is hugely uncomfortable and worrying. It doesn't put them in a place of maximum personal and work effectiveness.

Many studies of Science are pointing the way to the importance of giving people the tools to make their minds more resilient. While people may not be able to change the fact that there has been an economic collapse, they CAN change how they respond to that. Other scientific studies have shown the importance of 'beingness' in the form of the frequencies emitted by a person's attitudes. What these scientific discoveries show is that our thoughts create reality.

*That* being the case, surely it is time for each nation to look at the Maker's Ethics – the highest Ethical Standards as set down by God – and in that way, not only shall we create the highest possible experience for people, a Heaven on Earth, but also we shall begin to tread our way out of this economic meltdown towards the Abundance that God the Father made so evident through Jesus, to be His plan for us. After all, did Jesus not say 'Seek FIRST the Kingdom of God (Love, Mercy) and His Righteousness (the gift that Jesus has bought for us by His Cross and shed Blood and hands freely to us) and ALL THESE THINGS shall be added to you.' (Matthew Chapter 6)

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