A group interview with Andy Wilson, founder and CEO of Boston Duck Tours and Massachusetts entrepreneur of the year

Authors: Jennifer K. Hartwell, William R. Torbert

Persistent link: http://hdl.handle.net/2345/4247

This work is posted on eScholarship@BC, Boston College University Libraries.

Published in Journal of Management Inquiry, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 183-190, June 1999

Use of this resource is governed by the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons "Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States" (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/)
Meet the Person

A Group Interview With Andy Wilson, Founder and CEO of Boston Duck Tours and Massachusetts Entrepreneur of the Year

JENNIFER K. HARTWELL
WILLIAM R. TORBERT
Boston College

The following is a lightly edited interview between the participants of a Boston College Ph.D. consulting seminar and Andy Wilson, founder and CEO of Boston Duck Tours, which since 1994 has provided narrated historic tours of Boston in authentic World War II amphibious vehicles that travel on land and water. At the time of the interview, April 1997, Andy was considering opening nine new Duck Tour sites around the country. Two months later, President Clinton feted the “Entrepreneurs of the Year” from each of the 50 states, with Andy representing Massachusetts.

The consulting seminar focuses on personal and group developmental theory and on how developmental theory can be applied to organizations (e.g., readings include Argyris, 1994; Barrett & Cooperider, 1990; Brown & Isaacs, 1996-1997; Erikson, 1969; Fisher & Torbert, 1995; Harrison, 1995). Every minute of class time is regarded as inviting the consulting presence, awareness, and practice of each participant, no matter what the particular exercise (about 40% of each class session is taped, transcribed, analyzed, and “fed back” by participants on a rotating basis to the rest of the class, as was this interview). The seminar’s aim is to generate a mutual, developmental, ecological, and social alchemy (Abram, 1997; Hawken, 1993; Reason, 1994; Spretnak, 1997; Torbert, 1991, 1997a, 1997b) in each current meeting that gradually enables the development of transformational visioning, strategizing, performing, and assessing in more and more teams and subsystems of an organization, as well as at the organization’s interorganizational and environmental interfaces. In addition to the reading and the in-class interpersonal exercises, class participants engage in soul-searching autobiographical writing (Torbert & Fisher, 1992) and in organizational interventions.

For the class members, the interview with Andy constituted an opportunity to practice (a) interviewing an executive; (b) creating a mutual, transformational environment with a stranger; (c) clinically applying developmental theory in real time (as will be discussed in the analytical article following this interview); and (d) experimenting with one’s own pattern of inquiry and self-disclosure, support, and confrontation. Prior to the interview, there was no plan about who should say what or when. You, the reader, are invited to assess in what senses the class succeeded or
did not succeed in its intent (and to inquire into the data, theory, and assumptions that underlie your assessment).

Andy volunteered to be interviewed in part in the hope of receiving useful feedback as he navigates through a difficult personal and professional transition. He was intrigued by the environment of honest self-reflection that a close friend, who was a class member, had been mentioning during the prior 2 months. We think you will agree that what gradually emerges through the challenging questions that the class participants ask of Andy, as well as through the challenging questions he asks himself, is a portrait of a transformational leader whose charisma derives from a willingness to face his own transformational issues.2

Bill (the professor): Andy, welcome. Thanks a lot for being with us. We'll have some questioning by our class members, and I'll sit back and run the tape recorder here and pay attention to the interviewers and see how they are doing. Hopefully I won't create too intimidating a situation for them, and hopefully we won't create too intimidating a situation for you, Andy, though I guess you have a lot of experience with crowds!

Jennifer: I want to make a recommendation that we, as a class, stop if we feel like we're going on the wrong tangent and discuss that outwardly.

Ben: Well, as the only guy who voted against this session, I'll start! (Laughter.) I'm glad you're here, and I guess your company's sort of on a roll. My experience working with executives is that often times the hardest time to get them to be reflective is when things are going right. When things are going wrong, they see their own mortality in their job. That's the time when people have a tendency to say, "Now I've got to really think about what happened and reflect about what I did." But, you know, when they asked Ted Williams why he practiced so hard since he already was such a great hitter, he used to say, "If you don't know why things are going well, you'll never know why things are going wrong when your batting goes South." In your situation, given that things are going positively and they seem to be on a roll, why would this be a time for you, personally, to reflect?

Andy: I think for two reasons. The first reason is I overanalyze everything, which is my strong point and my weak point. I use the tortoise and the hare story. I want to stay the tortoise. In other words, slow and steady and keep on going versus being the hare. I think that's what you're saying about somebody who's on a roll. They sit back and live the high life and think they're invincible. I don't believe that I'm invincible. I say in business you're only as good as you are at the moment. And I've truly come to believe that.

I think secondarily why I'm very reflective is that my business is only in Boston right now, and I'm looking to expand worldwide. And it's a major life commitment, in terms of looking at major transitions. You know, I've worked the last 4 years to build this business and didn't have a life. One of my goals is to have a life, and all of a sudden I'm saying, "OK, I have one of these operations, and now I'm growing it from one to maybe 20 or 30 worldwide." And looking at the travel, it all goes against my personal goal. Somehow or other I'm looking for balance, and I'm looking for a certain culture, which is so important. It's been so important to the success of our company. How can I spread that culture and maintain it, you know, when it's even difficult maintaining it locally?

Ben: So why would you expand? If you're looking for balance and looking to limit your travel and all those kinds of things, what would be the impetus to get you to think about expanding?

Andy: Well, predominantly because my company's met with such wild success, and it's a concept that can grow. If I don't grow it, somebody else will, and they won't do it as well as I can. If I don't grow it, what I have going on in Boston will probably be taken away. Right now in this industry I'm the front-runner. I mean, there's absolutely no doubt. I know that if I just stop, people are going to pass me by. And it's not so much that I mind people passing me by, it's that in business you need to stay in a position of strength.

Ben: Yeah. Standing still is not going to increase your advantage, right?

Andy: Exactly.

Vivian: So, your only choice is to go forward and to expand or to basically drop out of the business?

Andy: Well, not drop out, but I have an exclusive franchise in Boston right now, in essence, and as I grow this, I think that I can retain exclusivity. If I don't grow it, my conjecture is that somebody else will come in and try to do the same thing in Boston. But if I grow the business, keep my eye on the ball, that will continue to give me, in essence, political
strength in Boston, so I can say, "Hey, I'm the best in the world at what I'm doing." And it's a very highly regulated business, so it's part of my strategy to maintain what I have here. It's an odd business. It's highly government regulated and, as in any politics, it helps to come from a position of strength.

Jennifer: Have you seen going forward and growing it as fulfilling your dreams?

Andy: Uh, I'm still striving for that answer. And I don't have an answer to it yet, quite honestly. I've been in a relationship 15 years, and it had a lot of problems with me traveling a lot. You know, I'm trying to resolve that all right now, and it—it kind of goes against the grain of the whole thing. They don't seem to mesh real well right now, and that's really part of the whole issue—how I get that mesh. You know, I love to travel. I mean I am traveling. I'm working on starting others of these things elsewhere, and it's really a rush. I'll tell ya! When you land a deal or whatever, that's like critical, it's a rush, and I'm enjoying that part of it.

But then when you get back to the hotel room at night and you're sitting there looking for something to do, there's just something that I don't personally enjoy about that. And so I'm working through that issue. And part of it is I've got my other half involved, who works in the business right now. As I open these things and spend let's say 2 or 3 or 4 months predominantly in that city, I'm hoping that my other half can go with me and actually assist and that way my life can continue to go on. That's one of the answers. But in the interim, a lot of people are wanting me to consult them now. I can be traveling all the time right now, if I allow myself. So, it's an answer that I'm trying to develop.

Ming: I think I may be the only one that doesn't know exactly what you are doing. Please give me a brief history of your business—when you started and why.

Andy: OK. Well, in 1986 I joined the Boston Company. I worked there for 7 years, and it was during the go-go years of the financial expansions. They used to say, "Every year's worth of experience there is like getting 5 years of managerial experience." And looking back, that was true: dog years! But I was able to start two businesses from scratch while I was working there. I had the resources of the company, and it was pretty much a supportive environment. I was 30 at the time. Then all of a sudden I had a chance to really manage people for the first time. I was building systems, I was going down to Wall Street—it was amazing. But after a few more years, I finally went to them and said, look, if I'm going to continue to bring in new business, and that was my goal, then I want to have more of a direct correlation between what I produce versus what I earn. I went to them and I said, "If you don't want to do that, then you don't want me." And they said, "We're not going to do it." And I said, "Fine."

So in April of 1992 I turned in my 6-month notice. I hired my replacement, and I quit in August of 1992 with about $50,000 in the bank. At the time, Bill Clinton was running for president, and he was taking a bus trip across the country, campaigning. And I said, "This looks like a good idea." I'm from the Midwest, and I bought a 90-day Greyhound pass with my frequent flyer miles from traveling with the Boston Company.

My mom had cancer at the time, and I stopped and spent 3 weeks with her. I had worked my way through school as a deputy sheriff in Lawrence, Kansas, where I went to Kansas University. I went to visit the then-sheriff, who was somebody I'd known. I also went to go see an aunt in Tennessee, outside of Memphis. I had always liked her, and I hadn't seen her for a long time—18 years. I was just rekindling a lot of important relationships and reconnecting with things that had been good in my life. I don't know if I knew that at the time. I was searching for something but had no idea what I was searching for. When I left corporate America, the last thing I thought about was starting my own business. My goal was to rescue my relationship, which is what I didn't end up doing, and also to try to find some truth.

So I pulled in to Memphis on the way to my aunt's at 5:30 in the morning. I'd been on the bus all night, and I stumbled across the street to a hotel, got a shower and a couple hours of shut-eye. Then I opened up the drapes and looked out, and there was a sightseeing tour using a World War II amphibious truck known as a Duck Tour. So I took the tour, and I thought, "This is real interesting." And I kept the brochure.

I came back to Boston and I asked myself the question, "Why is Boston called the Birthplace of Freedom?" Nobody could ever define that to me, and certainly existing sightseeing tours couldn't. I was living then on a boat in the harbor, as I had for 10 years. I have a little rubber dingy that I would take people up the Charles River and show views
from the Charles. I would see these people 2 years later, and they'd spend half an hour going off on that wonderful little trip with me and looking at this incredible skyline view. After I got back from Memphis I remember one day seeing 10 trolleys packed with people, and it hit me like a lightning bolt: "You know, this Duck Tours idea would work very well in Boston."

That took me down a path of 2 years of going through a hundred halls of government, raising money, and basically being told I was nuts. I did research and found out the original Boston tour company had been in business for 40 years, was carrying a quarter of a million people a year in a market that's very short in terms of their season, and then which had spread 25 years ago to Branson, Missouri, and Hot Springs, Arkansas. This made me feel very secure as a business start-up risk. After all, half the Fortune 500 companies in business in 1980 weren't in business in 1990. So I brought it to Boston, and last year we were the largest sightseeing tour in Boston. We carried a quarter million people, grossed three and a half million dollars, and netted three quarters of a million dollars on capital of about one and a quarter. Twenty-five percent of our profits were paid out in bonuses to employees. Ten percent of our profits were paid out for cleaning up the Charles. I had to become very political, and it's led me into a platform of making a difference in the world, which is important to me.

Jennifer: Sometimes when I tell stories about my own life, I try to remember all the good, and it makes me feel good about my life. When you're telling that story, are there certain parts of it that are not so good? I'm not talking about just the business, but as far as the personal side of your life throughout that time that may be something that you feel is relevant to your transition now.

Andy: Um, well, from a business standpoint, I think it's hard to separate the two because it becomes, you know, so intertwined, which is part of the problem of having a personal life. When I left the Boston Company, I was very despondent about the world for a variety of reasons. And it was a very negative experience to go through government. I was despondent about my personal life. And I said, "Let's just leave Boston and go away." Then I became engrossed in this enterprise, literally. I got up in the morning and worked all day long. If you can imagine living on a 26-foot sailboat with another person, trying to start a business—it ultimately led to us breaking up, or at least separating. And then, despite the people who said my idea would fail, once I got it up and running, people started lining up at 6:30 in the morning. We were selling out virtually 4 hours after we opened up and turned away more people than we carried. People said, "It won't last." Well, that public demand continues to go on. But because I had to work so hard I did lose a concept of myself, if that makes sense.

Jennifer: And is that something that you're still struggling with, with this new choice? I mean, it sounds like you're in a similar decision-making process now.

Andy: Well, but I need to do it differently this time. I did it on a shoestring before, and, you know, I'm not willing to do it the same way I did it the first time around. I want to get people in to assist me. I mean, there isn't anything I haven't done to start this business and to keep it running. For example, we had an old man who couldn't hold his bladder, and I'm the one cleaning up after him. I installed the land wiring. I was a bookkeeper up until recently. I've physically worked on the ducks, even though I have four mechanics. I've gotten very involved—the list goes on and on. And it allowed me to get where I am today.

But the whole issue is that I enjoy the creative aspects of it. I just got back from Chicago—I'm working on opening in Chicago—and in 2 days I accomplished more than I had accomplished in a year or more in Boston. By the end of those 2 days, I was physically shaking with excitement. It was fun. I like business, and my dad was extremely passionate the same way—not about making money but about the excitement of accomplishing things. There are a lot of negatives—it's been exhausting, it's been dispiriting. But I'm a dreamer, and it hardened me up a little bit to know that I can overcome any odds and do anything.

Tess: When you originally talked about leaving the Boston Company, you talked about presenting them with some alternatives. I took away that you left because you were working too hard and not getting paid enough, and that was why you left. So now you're talking about despair and your relationship and searching for the truth, and I was wondering if you can shed a little light on the truth that you thought you were looking for and where the despair was coming from, where your personal life fits into this.
Andy: Well, are you interested in the business side?
Tess: No, I'm more interested in you.

Andy: Well, on the business side, one of the things that I use quite often now as a line is, in the 1980s you have Gordon Gecco from Wall Street who says, "Greed is good." And if you remember the story of what he did, he was going out and leveraging buy-outs, and then he'd go and write the company's pension funds to pay it off and ultimately leave these people without pensions. I feel very strongly that greed isn't good. But I picked up the front page of the Wall Street Journal one day, and it was just filled with despair: baby suppliers of infant formulas convicted, and Sears Auto Centers indicted for overcharging customers, and then aircraft parts manufacturers convicted for defective parts. After reading that I said, "I've had it."

Jennifer: That's the day that you quit?
Andy: No, that was the day that I started looking at it. I went out and started talking about it to people, and of course, people didn't share my views because most people don't want to look—they just shut themselves off to a lot of it. There's nothing wrong with making a lot of money, but it doesn't have to be at the expense of others. Freedom is all about living your life without taking anything away from someone else.

Jennifer: How do you think you became so much more able to see the reality as you might call it while other people couldn't? Have you always been like that? Have you always been able to see what others couldn't?
Andy: I think I have, even in stupid things. I look at clothing: Something I buy today that I like becomes the rage 2 years later. I do see things that other people don't see, I don't know why. It's something that I would like to figure out how to capitalize on better, which in several instances I did with the Duck Tours. Now if somebody tells me I'm crazy, I know I have a good idea.

One of the senior executives at the Boston Company knew that I could get things done that other people couldn't—I saw things that other people didn't see. Well, at one point his ass was on the line to get something accomplished, and he came to me and said, "Will you do this project for me?" He promised, "If you do this for me, I will promote you and make you a senior in New York." So I pulled off this project with absolute clarity and success. It'd never been done before in the mutual fund industry.

Tess: You said that you've been given a platform for your politics. What's your message?
Andy: Well, I go back to freedom. I strive to feel good about myself, and there are a lot of people in the world that want to take that away from me. I don't want anybody telling me what to do in terms of how to lead my life, as long as I'm not taking anybody else's right away from them. We seem to have a very strong difficulty in this country understanding what that's all about.

One of the other things I reconnected with when I went back that time to visit my mother was my late grandfather. I knew my grandfather had written a book, but I never knew my grandfather. It was a book that was published in 1943 called New Schools for a New Culture. He was a progressive educator, and the whole concept was about teaching democratic principles in the school. And this book is filled with this freedom concept. The first paragraph talks about basic worth and dignity of every human being. Then I got these World War II vehicles and I started to ask myself, "Well, what was World War II all about?" I started looking at the extermination of the Jews and the gypsies and the atrocities more recently in Bosnia. It's a basic debate of human dignity and the right to personal religious freedom. I have the right to believe what I want to believe. And I have the right, from my perspective, to end my life if I'm terminally ill. I have the right—to use the extreme example of the Heaven's Gate cult—to castrate myself if I want to, you know?

Vivian: Andy, I feel as if you have such an interesting life and there's so much to talk about and so much to share, but I'm afraid that the hour is going to come to a close, and we're not going to hit on something in particular that you want to hit on.

Andy: Well, I didn't come with a laundry list, but the thing I struggle with is what everybody struggles with: to feel good about themselves. I've kind of been going through a question, you know, is there life after death? I've come to learn recently that the Jewish faith basically doesn't believe in life after death, and the Christian faith does, obviously. When I'm finally at that moment that I'm dying, the one regret I don't want to have is that I spent any time feeling bad about myself. That's where my balance comes from, but the question is, how do I
move forward? It's a whole question of, "OK, I can't solve all the world's problems. The world's not going to be what I want it to be, either in a macrosense or a microsense, by the time I die." I want to see the world change, whether I'm the catalyst for it or not, and I want to continue to feel good about myself. I don't want to end up in slavery. I like living as a free person, and I want those free choices, and I don't want anybody to take them away from me. But in starting this business, it's been a struggle. Now I'm a success. Now people want to take it away from me. Before all they wanted to do is just say, "You're nuts, and so we're going to keep you down."

It just seems like there's always this constant pressure. And so that really kind of summarizes where I'm at in my life. I want a good life. I want to feel good about myself. I want to be successful. I want to balance that all out. And I want to be able to influence the world and still meet my obligations to myself, my investors, my employees, and my lover, and that's where I think I have the biggest struggle in my life, you know, finding a balance. And that's really the biggest issue where I'm at right now—finding that balance, to make it all work.

Andy: Well, it was never that. The one woman in government who really held this thing up influenced the business to be the way it is today. Part of it was negativity, but part of it was just government doing their job. We would literally butt heads, and ultimately I had to get the governor to step on her, basically. And it was painful for her. So now I've reconciled with her. Part of it is, again, listening and being open-minded enough. Ultimately, I had to listen to them and address all their concerns and adjust my way of thinking. Going to the basic worth and dignity of every human being—everybody has a shred of truth. And what is reality? What is the truth, and where does it all come from? I don't have all the answers on that. But I do believe there's an ultimate truth.

Bill: You've almost quoted Gandhi's phrase, "You must become the change you wish to see in the world." You've almost said that exact thing here in the last several minutes.

Andy: Right! I'm very strong about my views, and if I say I have one fear in my life, it's that it's impossible to achieve the standard that I've set for myself or the world, if that makes any sense. The most important thing that I'm trying to learn is to listen to other people and let other people influence my life. The single most important thing that I learned in starting this business is the ability to listen and the ability to be influenced by another person.

Jennifer: Well, the interesting thing is that you have found that probably 90% of the people are not worth listening to. I mean, they're saying negative things or trying to pull you down. Maybe it's making you that much more willing to put everything on the line to show them that they're wrong.

Andy: Over time, the answer is yes. We're reopening for the season, and I just gave a talk on the subject of values. I opened up talking about my grandfather's book. I talked about the basic worth and dignity of every human being and the fact that I'm a human being too. And just because I'm the owner, I'm the boss, don't think that I have all the answers. And that we need to work together, and I defined what the common core values were that I thought were important. I tried to define those, and the term that I came up with that we should especially work together to avoid was "random acts of violence." People commit random acts of violence. You know, you walk down the street and you get clubbed over the head, and you're just walking down the street. Well, people do that to you in the workplace, in your private life, just by the things they do to you that are nonphysical. It's been done to me since I've started this company as the employer, random acts of violence committed against me by employees.

I talked about sexual harassment, and I said, "My whole issue is let's take the sex out of it and let's just talk about harassment." For the first time I've tried in a concise way to get involved with all my employees and have training and define this world
that I'm trying to create. Even though we'll never believe the same thing, because our values are like fingerprints, at least we need to define common values. And if we all can't live in an acceptable boundary, then try and let the group come up with what that boundary should be.

Jennifer: When you say "values are like fingerprints," are you suggesting that values can't be changed?

Andy: No, it's just that everybody's values are unique, and they'll always be unique. But you can sort fingerprints into categories. With my employees, what I'm trying to get is that, "You know, I may be wrong." And so, "Understand that debate is good." I support debate because out of debate comes new forms of thought or new perspectives for people. And so the whole issue is how you respect somebody else's views to encourage debate.

One of the examples I use is that in college, almost 20 years ago, I took a women's studies class, and one of the things that we had to do was something similar to this, except we spent a whole weekend talking about issues. And there was a guy that seemed very normal to me, but he said he thought he had the right to rape women. That was the first time I kind of woke up in the world and realized that people don't share common values. He was a normal college student. Twenty years ago, that view was probably very commonly held by men.

This is what the whole world's all about, is debating these issues, but debating them so you don't have war, and debating them so you don't end up having animosities with other people. That's what I'm trying to stress. How do you debate issues? How do you debate values? And how do you come to some reasonably common set of values in an organization, and in your own life, and then practice those without being a hypocrite, and not have people accuse you of being a hypocrite? But if they do accuse you of being a hypocrite, how do you put yourself in the position to say, "Hey, you know, I'll change my views. Don't hold it against me because I was wrong. Only hold it against me if I'm not willing to change my views, or at least be open to other possibilities."

Jennifer: You have these very strict or clear values, and it's so easy to fall off the value train. You seem to think that if you do, someone will be there to point a finger at you.

Andy: Yeah. It's not so much that I'm fearful of what they're going to think of me; I just want to feel good about myself. I've been a hypocrite and probably still am on certain things. In fact, I know I'm a hypocrite in things. The environment concerns me, and every time I go out and get a cup of coffee and I'm throwing a cup away, I'm saying "What the hell am I doing?"

AUTHORS' POSTSCRIPT

In the hope of taking steps toward aligning his personal and professional directions and desires, Andy volunteered to participate in this interview. He invited the seminar members to share in his struggle with some of the more challenging incongruities in his life and approached the interview as a frame-challenging inquiry. Through participating in the interview itself and listening to the seminar members' reactions and feedback, Andy hoped to gain useful insights for guiding his transformation. He sought to learn how his frame can be problematic and to discover alternative perspectives.

Now we encourage you to ask yourself what you interpret as evidence in this interview of genuine inquiry and what you interpret as intentional or unintentional deflecting of inquiry. There is an implicit power to an inquiry that interrelates the personal and the professional, the ideal and the practical. Andy's responses touch on all of these notions, and there is clear evidence that he has interwoven his personal concern for freedom into his business of entertaining tourists with the story of Boston as a birthplace of freedom. But does inquiry permeate all his action? Is there evidence here of sincere inquiry during the interview itself?

At one point, for example, Tess asked Andy to shed a little light on his despair and where his personal life fits into his story. Andy replies, "Are you interested in the business side?" Tess responds, "No, I'm more interested in you." How do you understand Andy then addressing only the business side? On the other hand, when challenged by Jennifer about whether he tells only those stories about his life that make him feel good, Andy immediately offers some examples of the "bad" side of his life. At another point, Andy shares that one of his aims is to pacify the conflict between his desire to work hard and his partner's desire to spend more time with Andy.
ing toward a conversation that may change either or both partners' minds and goals?

Whatever your conclusion on these specific pieces of evidence about the kind of inquiry Andy engages in, the interview, with its challenging questions, provides us with the rare opportunity to listen into the heart and mind of an unusually successful entrepreneur. What we hear, it seems to us, is a person who is actively engaged with many elements of the good life (Torbert, 1994):

1. with issues of life-embracing vision and principle;
2. with making his own performance increasingly consistent with his vision while acknowledging continuing incongruities;
3. with creating an enabling, inquiring working environment for others; and
4. with providing truly entertaining and educational experiences for clients, as much or more than he
5. with profit.

Yet he clearly recognizes that hard work and profit are also essential ingredients in making a visionary company grow (Collins & Porras, 1994, 1996).

We invite you not only to develop your own analysis of this interview but also to turn to the accompanying analytical article. It discusses our understandings of Andy's action-logicsª based on the interview, shares Andy's reactions during a later feedback session, and, in closing, discusses how our interview-and-feedback methodology helps establish the validity of the analysis we offer.

NOTES

1. See autobiographical items at the following Web site: http://www2.bc.edu/~torbert.
2. Other than Andy and the two authors, Jennifer and Bill, the names of participants are fictitious.
3. A person's action-logic is the systematic set of assumptions—only rarely clear, explicit, and relatively accurate in the person's own mind—that guide his or her thinking, feeling, perceiving, and acting. As Argyris and Schon's work (1974, 1978) has shown, there are often significant incongruities between espoused theories of their own practice and their actual pattern of behavior.

REFERENCES