

DYNAMIC APPLICATION OF  
THOUGHTFUL INTELLIGENCE-A  
TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH TO  
MINDSET TRAINING

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## ABSTRACT

The article delves into the profound relationship between intentions and actions, as exemplified by the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the personal experience of Khizra, who navigated the ethical complexities of child labor while training Hussain, a young boy, in household chores and educational pursuits. While initially employing Hussain could be seen as child labor, Khizra's thoughtful approach resulted in an empowering experience for both her family and Hussain. Over fourteen years, Hussain not only acquired formal education but also valuable life skills, evolving into a morally upright and skilled individual. The article further explores the concept of thoughtful intelligence—a higher order of thinking that integrates intention, moral clarity, and practical action. Thoughtful intelligence is proposed as a transformative tool for mindset training, focusing on the long-term impact of decisions across time and space. It emphasizes the development of moral values, self-awareness, and social responsibility. Drawing from multiple intelligences (social, emotional, moral, and ethical), the article argues that thoughtful intelligence can be cultivated to resolve complex social issues, like child labor, by fostering both individual and collective growth. The concept of thoughtful intelligence is framed as a dynamic process that shapes not only individual lives but also the broader social fabric. Through practical examples and theoretical insights, the article highlights how thoughtful intelligence works to harmonize the moral, emotional, and cognitive aspects of human existence, ultimately contributing to societal progress. The narrative intertwines Khizra's personal journey, philosophical reflections, and ethical considerations to propose thoughtful intelligence as a powerful mechanism for social transformation and personal growth.

رسول الله خاتم النبيين صلى الله عليه وعلى آله (The Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) says: (واصحابه وسلم)

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Indeed there is relationship between intentions and actions.<sup>1</sup>

To elaborate the concept we start the discussion with a narration. Khizra was writing her M. Phil thesis in 1998 with a sub focus on child labor. Hussain a boy of nine years was introduced to her to help in household chores because she had to care for her daughter born in 1997 and a son born in 1998. In one view, it was of course child labor; Khizra should not have chosen Hussain to serve.

At once she got hooked to another thought. The parents of Hussain were not able to pay for his education. Khizra was unable to offer him free education and space. Hussain desired both as he was from the countryside. Khizra was in great need of a helping hand. She chose Hussain to manage the house chores in the morning, so she could study. In the evening Hussain was able to attend school. He passed grade 5 (primary school education) and qualified middle school education as well. He was called Hussain Bhai by the children; his meal plate was always equal to the children's meal plate. Khizra always ensured that he got eight hours of sleep daily. He was offered a monthly salary that his parents could prosper. He enjoyed T. V entertainment with the children. He became Quran and computer literate. He also got the opportunity in Abbottabad to learn Karate with Khizra's children, once her husband was posted there. He earned a 'green belt' (a level in karate). Khizra's mother taught Hussain the skills to make jams and pickles. He became a very good cook. Later on, he learned how to tailor gents' clothes. With all this he was encouraged to learn the skills of automobile repairs. In 2010 after fourteen years of service to Khizra, he was able to earn 25000 rupees per month, equaling the salary of a research assistant in any public sector university of Pakistan. Hussain had an excellent sense of *honesty, loyalty, cleanliness, sobriety, piety, and patience*. Khizra believes that her children's growth with Hussain was a blessing from 1997 to 2010.

This day, Khizra counts the results of her *thoughtful intelligence to train the mind-set*<sup>2</sup> regarding social issue of child labor and its practical management, the fulfillment of Hussain's, Khizra's and her children's education and moral training in a family institution to enhance profitability in the system of humanity.

Khizra's mentor Qareeb says that the thoughtful mind-set has more power than hands: hands grasp the material, but the mind-set changes it.

Every civilization depends upon the quality of individuals it produces.

Frank Herbert (American fiction writer, 1920-86)

Thoughtfulness is the capacity to show understanding of what impact any act or word has on other peoples and refraining from it if one feels the impact will be negative. This also includes making an effort to do it if the impact is to be positive.<sup>3</sup>

Human intelligence has been defined as one's capacity for logic, understanding, self awareness, learning, planning, creativity, and problem solving. It can be more generally described as the ability or inclination to perceive or deduce information, and to train it as knowledge to be applied towards adaptive behaviors within an environment or a context. "Intelligence is the whole of cognitive or intellectual abilities required to obtain knowledge, and to use that knowledge in a good way to solve problems that have a well described goal and structure."<sup>4</sup> Kutz<sup>5</sup> said that intelligence is the ability comprised of brainpower and aptitude to comprehend; and profit from thinking. Intelligence delineates the thinking/learning capacity of an individual. Intelligence is the ability to assimilate the knowledge into practice.

Thoughtful intelligence is the higher order of thinking to train the mind-set to produce intention and actions. Thoughtful intelligence can be struggled for and acquired. It comprises of capacity to understand and realize the impact of one's thoughts, words and actions on the survival, dignity<sup>6</sup> and development of individuals, groups and nations. The impact can be realized in 'Time' (for how many days, weeks, months or years the impact will continue) and 'Space' (for how far geographical land with or without human beings will be effected). It establishes thoughtful thoughts. Per the inner paradigm<sup>7</sup>: Thoughtful intelligence establishes and defends moral values in the individual against internal and external threats. This defense includes detection, prevention and response to threats through the use of moral beliefs, values, rules and practices. Thoughtful intelligence visions the eyes to observe and gives the courage<sup>8</sup> to understand befittingly suited to difficult times; and reveals compassion<sup>9</sup> for moral development.

The individual is socially constructed. He or She expresses demand and supply of moral values in regulating and disposing of behavior in personal and public paradigms. Its acquisition and application becomes complex as it is tied to the below eleven questions. The individual's mind-set training has a collective aspect

as well because it contributes to collective construction of the society. The collective aspect enables the community as a whole to benefit from individual construction. There must be an appropriate balance between the individual and collective aspects.

1. What is the relationship of the individual to the concepts of time and space?
2. What are the *moral values*<sup>10</sup> of the individual?
3. What are the *internal* threats<sup>11</sup> to the moral values of the individual?
4. What are the *external* threats<sup>12</sup> to the moral values of the individual?
5. How does the individual think and practice the relationship to the past, present and future?
6. How does the individual think and practice the relationship to the *natural environment*<sup>13</sup>?
7. How does the individual think and practice the relationship to the *social environment*<sup>14</sup>?
8. How does the individual think and practice the relationship to the *economic environment*<sup>15</sup>?
9. How does the individual think and practice the relationship to the *political environment*<sup>16</sup>?
10. How does the individual think and practice the relationship to the *judicial behavioral environment*<sup>17</sup>?
11. How does the individual think and practice the relationship to the *community, province, and state he or she belongs*?

### **Exercise**

How many of the above questions do you realize in your being?

### **I. Relatives of thoughtful intelligence**

Studying thoughtful intelligence means establishing individual potential in the production of moral development. There is hardly any work on thoughtful intelligence. But the study may utilize the contiguous literature regarding, social intelligence, multiple intelligence, emotional intelligence, moral intelligence and ethical intelligence.

In 1920, for instance, E.L. Thorndike<sup>18</sup> described “*social intelligence*” as the skill of understanding and managing others.

In 1983 Gardner<sup>19</sup> introduced his theory of “*multiple intelligence*” in his book, ‘*Frames of Mind*’, which is known as systematic, multidisciplinary and scientific depicted from psychology, biology, sociology and the arts & humanities. According to Gardner<sup>20</sup>, intelligence is much more than ‘Intelligence quotient’ (IQ) because a high IQ in the absence of productivity does not equate to intelligence. In this description, “Intelligence is a bio-psychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture<sup>21</sup>.” Gardner also favors gathering ethnographic data and cross-cultural information to see intelligence in action and in context. Following this description it can be assumed that the decision makers try to perform in regards to their distinctive capacity and situation. “Monopoly of those who believe in a single general intelligence has come to an end<sup>22</sup>.” He emphasized that there are at least seven ways (intelligences) that people understand and perceive the world. Gardner lists the following:

- Linguistic: the ability to use spoken or written words.
- Logical-mathematical: inductive and deductive thinking and reasoning abilities (logic, as well as the use of numbers)
- Visual-spatial: the ability to mentally visualize objects and spatial dimensions.
- Body-kinesthetic: the wisdom of the body and the ability to control physical motion.
- Musical-rhythmic: the ability to master music as well as rhythms, tones and beats.
- Interpersonal: the ability to communicate effectively with other people and to develop relationships.
- Intrapersonal: the ability to understand one’s own emotions, motivations, inner states of being, and self-reflection.

The verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences are the ones most frequently used in traditional school curricula. A more balanced curriculum that incorporates the arts, self-awareness, communication, and physical education may be useful to leverage the intelligences that some students may have.

Historical data and historical records are readily available to assist in many decision problems, the application of this information is called *cumulative intelligence*. Often historical data is incorrectly managed and due to over complication of their weighting and

application in a decision making process is ignored. The management and effective use of cumulative intelligence in the decision making process is critical.

Daniel Goleman's model focuses on '*Emotional Intelligence*' (EI) as a wide array of competencies and skills that drive leadership performance. It consists of the following five areas:

- Self-awareness: one knows one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, drives, values and goals and recognizes one's impact on others while using gut feelings to guide decisions.
- Self-regulation: manages or redirects one's disruptive emotions and impulses and adapts to changing circumstances.
- Social skills: one manages others' emotions to move people in the desired direction.
- Empathy: one recognizes, understands, and considers other people's feelings especially when making decisions
- Motivation: one motivates oneself to achieve for the sake of achievement.

To Goleman, emotional competencies are not innate talents, but learned capabilities that must be worked on and can be developed to achieve outstanding performance. Goleman believes that individuals are born with a general emotional intelligence that determines their potential for learning emotional competencies<sup>23</sup>. Goleman's model of EI, has been criticized in the research literature as being merely "pop psychology." However, EI is still considered by many to be a useful framework especially for businesses.

Bruce Weinstein<sup>24</sup> premises that '*Ethical intelligence*' indeed creates the most fulfilling life. Weinstein lists principles of ethical intelligence as follows:

- Do no harm: harm is from minor harm to death. Prevent harm and minimize preventable harm.
- Make things better: flight attendant tells us, 'should the cabin lose pressure, oxygen masks will drop down from the overhead area. Please put one over your own mouth before you attempt to help others.' Why? Because the only way we can hope to be of service to others is we are in good shape of ourselves.
- Respect others: ethically intelligent people show respect in the deeper sense by honoring the values, preferences, and most important, the rights of others.

- Be fair: fairness is about giving others their due resources.
- Be-loving: It seems hard to fathom in a business context, just think of care, for example petty gestures at work.

In fact, all five principles mentioned above provide the guidelines for making the best possible decisions in every area of life. These principles have legal, financial and psychological implications; and they are the core of ethical intelligence.

## **II. Essentials of thoughtful intelligence**

The essentials of thoughtful intelligence are as follow:

1. Observation: observing self for self assessment.
2. Cleansing inside: (Greater Jihad).
3. Recognition: of relationship with human and natural resources.
4. Realization: of future effects of decisions in time and space.
5. Moral clarity: by an articulate human conception of moral justice.
6. Action: An ultimate sense of action and not of inefficient action
7. Righteousness: Thinking and comprehending that where the actions are counted; in the list of good deeds or bad deeds.

## **III. Supremacy of morals**

Ethics are generally *accepted* moral principles; whereas morals are universally *appreciated* principles of righteousness. Values are described as individual or personal standards of what is valuable or important to an individual.

Moral values are those preferences that are integral to the moral reasoning process. A moral decision is a choice based on an individual's ethics, manners, character and what he believes is righteous behavior. Moral reasoning is the mental process that is set in motion to some decision of right or wrong in any moral dilemma.

*Morals are universal in time and space:* They have been appreciated in the past, are appreciated at present and it is assumed that they will be appreciated in future as well. In fact, morals may be defined as the conduct that reflects universal principles essential to leading a worthwhile life and for effective self-governance. For many leading founders of the nation state system, attributes of character such as justice, responsibility, perseverance, and others were thought to flow from an understanding of the rights and obligations of men<sup>25</sup>.

'*Moral intelligence*' is the capacity to differentiate right from wrong and to behave based on the value that is believed to be right. Moral intelligence was first developed as a concept in 2005 by Doug



Lennick and Fred Kiel<sup>26</sup>. Most of the research involved with moral intelligence agrees that this characteristic is ability-based. Therefore, moral intelligence is seen as a skill that can be further developed with practice. Moral intelligence is the central intelligence for all humans. Moral intelligence is distinct from emotional and cognitive intelligence<sup>27</sup>.

There are two models of moral intelligence one was presented by Doug Lennick and Fred Kiel, authors of *Moral Intelligence* and the originators of the term. Both of them identified four competencies of moral intelligence in their models: integrity, responsibility, forgiveness, and compassion. The other model of moral intelligence was proposed by Michele Borba in her book '*Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues that Teach Kids to Do the Right Thing*'. Borba registered seven essential virtues of moral intelligence: empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance, and fairness. She gives a step-by-step plan for parents to teach their children these virtues in order to enhance their moral intelligence.

In shades of above content I move on *thoughtful intelligence* (see Table 1.1). It pertains to beliefs, values, rules and practices in past-present-future vis-à-vis moral capacity of an individual. Thoughtfulness has significant relationship with righteousness. It has been implied that different people take different decisions in a similar situation because of different levels of thoughtfulness. Thoughtful intelligence based on righteousness, assents to care for human & natural resources and norms of creative thinking to manage the present and future.

**Table: 1 Thoughtful intelligence**

Thoughtful intelligence is the higher order of thinking to train the mind-set to produce intention and actions. Thoughtful intelligence can be struggled for and acquired. It comprises of capacity to understand and realize the impact of one's thoughts, words and actions on the survival, dignity<sup>28</sup> and development of individuals, groups and nations. The impact can be realized in 'Time' (for how many days, weeks, months or years the impact will continue) and 'Space' (for how far geographical land with or without human beings will be effected). It establishes thoughtful thoughts. Per the inner paradigm<sup>29</sup>: Thoughtful intelligence establishes and defends moral values in the individual against internal and external threats. This defense includes detection, prevention and response to threats through the use of moral beliefs, values, rules and practices. Thoughtful intelligence visions the eyes to observe and gives the courage<sup>30</sup> to understand befittingly suited to difficult times; and reveals compassion<sup>31</sup> for moral development.

#### IV. Thoughtful intelligence works

Thoughtful intelligence bases the shared value<sup>32</sup> of profit for the system of humanity, as this value is revealed and appreciated over time and space in all the human civilizations. It thoroughly benchmarks and fares contentment; it works with sorrow and happiness for a change by utilizing connectivity between the creator and his creations. It establishes respect of human beings means of humanity<sup>33</sup>.

Iqbal says:

آدمیت احترام آدمی  
باخبر شو از مقام آدمی

Humanity means respect of the mankind-learn to appreciate the true worth of man.

Thoughtful intelligence *builds thinking habits* that impact mental, emotional and physical states of the individual.

Thoughtfulness consists of specific capacity whereby the decision-maker longs for *sustainability of his/her decision* in time and space, whether his/her leadership status continues or not.

Thoughtful intelligence *evolves the thoughts* in the individual that eliminates everything extra to profitability to the system of humanity through inside cleansing.

Thoughtful intelligence *expands the human sensors* so that the individual becomes sensitive about others and flourishes in the greater sense of belonging.

Thoughtful intelligence is *aspired by wisdom*, supported by knowledge, uttered by tongue and displayed through practice.



Thoughtful intelligence *insinuates the sense of environmental sustainability*. It reminds the “7th generation” principle taught by Native Americans: that in every decision, be it personal,

governmental or corporate, we must consider how it will affect our descendents seven generations into the future; so that the pristine sky, field and mountains in this photo will still be here for them to enjoy. Thoughtful intelligence offers capacity of decision making, inquiring and *learning*.

Thoughtful intelligence *graces a variety of cloaks*<sup>34</sup> (See Table. 1.2) fit into all scenarios of righteousness vs wrong, sorrow vs happiness, and good vs evil.

Table 2 Thoughtful intelligence and the variety of cloaks

1.	<i>Cloak of <b>Patience</b></i>
2.	<i>Cloak of <b>Generosity</b></i>
3.	<i>Cloak of <b>Commitment</b></i>
4.	<i>Cloak of <b>Appreciation</b></i>
5.	<i>Cloak of <b>Hospitality</b></i>
6.	<i>Cloak of <b>Confession</b></i>
7.	<i>Cloak of <b>Covering the others faults</b></i>
8.	<i>Cloak of <b>Condemnation</b></i>
9.	<i>Cloak of <b>Contributing the best to humanity</b></i>

\*What the individual would like to wear and when to wear?  
Source: Self extract

### Exercise

Count, how many cloaks you have as your belonging.

Thoughtful intelligence *empowers* because realization of the greater being and connections; makes an individual prismatic. *Thoughtful intelligence facilitates to acquire 'Khudi' as per the concept of 'Self' given by Allama Iqbal.*

Contentment is always evolved through the practices of chastity, piety, love and compassion. It happens when the individual wears the cloaks of appreciation, generosity, forgiveness, patience, hospitality, philanthropy and confession. Following are required to achieve this:

The standard operating methods to acquire thoughtful intelligence

The (*Tazkia Nafs-----Inside Cleansing*) inside cleansing of the individual's physical and metaphysical mechanisms. It erects the purity of self-submission to the system of humanity

Thought resolutions for the cleaned mind-set

Mutuality with nature and human beings as a source of change.

Informal moral development

Formal moral development.

**Moral:** Being thoughtless is the real threat to mankind's livability<sup>35</sup> on earth!

### **Exercise**

Reserve the best quality of yours' to make the world livable for others.

Please rise to say:

May we are able to grow in thoughtful intelligence beyond material way of life.

### **Notes and Reference**

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- <sup>1</sup> "Islamic center for research and academics," accessed March 5, 2018 <http://icraa.org/hadith>
  - <sup>2</sup> A mindset is described as the mental inertia of an individual. It is a set of ideas, beliefs, values, rules and practices used as the bases for making judgments and decisions. Mindset is a mental attitude that benchmarks an individual's intentions, words, and actions that impact the growth, expansion and success.
  - <sup>3</sup> Zubeida Mustafa is a Journalist who worked for DAWN from 1975 to 2008 and now writes a weekly column for Daily DAWN), Pakistan.
  - <sup>4</sup> Nicholas. Mackintosh, *IQ and Human Intelligence* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2011), 55.
  - <sup>5</sup> Matthew R. Kutz, "Toward a Conceptual Model of Contextual Intelligence: A Transferable Leadership Construct" *Leadership Review*, Vol. 8 (Winter 2008): 18-31.
  - <sup>6</sup> Al-Quran, Bani Israel, Ayat: 70 'And We have certainly honored the children of Adam.'
  - <sup>7</sup> The inner paradigm is a framework containing all the accepted views of an individual about human life (past, present, and future); inclusive social, economic, political, and security dimensions.
  - <sup>8</sup> Courage is the ability to do something that frightens one: bravery.
  - <sup>9</sup> Compassion is the ability to give and to forgive.
  - <sup>10</sup> Moral values include: humbleness, love, kindness and modesty.
  - <sup>11</sup> Internal threats include: arrogance, anger, vengefulness and lust in-side the individual.
  - <sup>12</sup> External threats: arrogance, anger, vengefulness and lust in-others around the individual.
  - <sup>13</sup> The natural *environment* encompasses the interaction of all living species, climate, weather, and *natural* resources that affect human survival and economic activity.
  - <sup>14</sup> The *social environment* includes the immediate physical and *social* setting in which individual lives with certain developments. It includes the material and non material culture that the individual is educated.
  - <sup>15</sup> The economic environment includes the totality of *economic* factors, such as employment, income, inflation, interest rates, productivity, and wealth that influence the politico-economic institutions and the buying behavior of consumers.
  - <sup>16</sup> The *political environment* includes government and its institutions and legislations and the public and private stakeholders who operate and interact with or influence the social, economic and decision making systems of the state.

- <sup>17</sup> The *Judicial behavioral environment* is best understood as a function of the incentives and constraints that legal systems place on their judges in certain communities or states to impart justice to the individuals.
- <sup>18</sup> R.L. Thorndike, "Factor analysis of social and abstract intelligence." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 231-233. (1986): 27
- <sup>19</sup> H.Gardner, *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).
- <sup>20</sup> H. Gardner, *Intelligence reframed: Multiple intelligences for the 21st century* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid
- <sup>22</sup> Gardner (1999) Op cit
- <sup>23</sup> Daniel, Goleman. *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. (New York: Bantam Books, 2005).
- <sup>24</sup> Weinstein, B. *Ethical Intelligence: Five Principles for Untangling Your Toughest Problems at Work and Beyond*. (California: New World Library, 2011).
- <sup>25</sup> "Defining Civic Virtue: Launching Heroes & Villains with your Students," accessed on Dec 16, 2016, <http://billofrightsinstitute.org>
- <sup>26</sup> M. Borba, *Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues that Teach Kids to Do the Right Thing*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid
- <sup>28</sup> Al-Quran, Bani Israel, Ayat: 70 'And We have certainly honored the children of Adam.'
- <sup>29</sup> The inner paradigm is a framework containing all the accepted views of an individual about human life (past, present, and future); inclusive social, economic, political, and security dimensions.
- <sup>30</sup> Courage is the ability to do something that frightens one: bravery.
- <sup>31</sup> Compassion is the ability to give and to forgive.
- <sup>32</sup> Value of profit for the system of humanity is holistic, universal and sustainable.
- <sup>33</sup> The quality of being human is comprised of two qualities:
- a. Benevolence: compassion, brotherly love, fellow feeling, humanness, kindness, kindheartedness, consideration, understand-ing, sympathy, tolerance, goodness, good-heartedness, gentleness, leniency.
  - b. Mercy: mercifulness, pity, tenderness, benevolence, charity, generosity, magnanimity.
- <sup>34</sup> A loose outer garment, as a cape or coat that covers body or mindset for example, "He conducts his wealth under a *cloak* of generosity."
- <sup>35</sup> **Liveability** is the sum of the factors that add up to a community's quality of life—including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social stability and equity, educational opportunity, and cultural, entertainment and recreation possibilities.

