

Working Journey Stories

The Working Journey of

Ayaan Hirsi Ali

A Jaquesian Analysis

“In reality, my life has been marked with by enormous good fortune. How many girls born in Digfeer Hospital in Mogadishu in November 1969 are even alive today? And how many have a real voice?”

by **Andrew Olivier.**

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Working Journey Stories

Introduction & Background

The story of Ayaan intrigued me since it is about a girl born into one of the most disadvantaged societies in the world. Ayaan's Journey is remarkable. Struggling against a prescribed role, dictated by the ancient values of the clan and the stifling subjugation of religious belief, she succeeded in breaking out of the mould, becoming an advocate for religious revival and a spokesperson for the emancipation and liberation of women. This is why Ayaan's story caught my attention. Here is a person whose capability not only drove her to overcome, but to encompass and then to provide transformational leadership.

Ayaan's central message like that of Nobel Laureate Winner Muhammad Yunus is that women hold the key to a sustainable, peaceful and prosperous future. This is why the Grameen Bank under Yunus's astute leadership focussed its lending strategy on that most vulnerable part of society. As Ayaan said in her book "Infidel" of how many girls born at the Digfeer hospital in Mogadishu have survived, made it out, become a parliamentarian? She has also been ranked in the top 100 influential people in the world? Why?

High level human capability manifests itself regardless of culture, gender or race. She did not grow up in a culture that valued education and more specifically, did not value education and especially not in women. Ayaan did not grow up and go to work in the western sense. Her capability did not actualise in the work place through markets, mentors, good management, entrepreneurship or formal education. No, her story is one of raw capability that powered her thinking, her need to actualise and her Journey. The need to "be me", to actualise, would later transform into a drive to empower others to be themselves, to transcend their circumstances and to challenge the status quo.

No much happens without a person having a vision about something. A vision creates purpose and purpose generates meaningful work. Human beings create visions and with varying degrees of success build structures, institutions and movements and sometimes revolutions to carry out that vision. Not everyone is able to create a vision that can be turned into reality. The reality is that only a small percentage can achieve this. Many of us dream of having our own business and many of us do, some of us may dream of leading a major corporation, fewer of us do and some of us may dream of a noble cause and changing the world in some better way, but even fewer do. Despite the bewildering array of human diversity and the multiplicity of work that takes place, in the east, the west, the south or in the north, paid or not, there are fundamental principles in place which govern the nature of work and vision.

We know that relatively few become CEOs and a much smaller group become CEOs of major and international corporations. Similarly in all key leadership roles, whether in politics, academia, the military, organized crime, government bureaucrats, religions, authors, international consultants, artists – those who are successful at the top of the work pyramid are normally exceptional people.

Why are they exceptional and what lies at the root of it? The answer lies in that deep order, which manifests itself in our "horsepower" – our ability to synthesize information, to be able to identify issues with clarity, to consider the ramifications and how they may or may not change and the consequences of those changes. We are talking about our ability to deal with complexity and those

exceptional people have it. This horsepower, which we will call cognitive capability or cognitive power (CP), is both measurable and predictive. According to Elliott Jaques (1917- 2003) and the years of research, people mature cognitively at different rates and that some people may find satisfaction with one type of work for very long periods of life while other may be on a more rapid track and want different and greater work challenges at fairly regular and *predictable* intervals. Jaques identified that this CP has a strong biological link and that it grows at a predictable rates over time along eight Growth Modes.

CP is a deep order, governing each person's own personal Working Journey. It is an order that is not prescriptive, but pervasive. CP, which we may call Human potential (we will refer to it as capability) is governed by a deep and emergent order that may well have evolved over millions of years, reflecting our physical evolution. This order like any large complex adaptive system rests upon a few key guiding principles.

CP is measurable and it allows us to predict, often with great accuracy, how an individual's Working Journeys may broadly develop over time. Not only this, but each time we move from one type of information processing capability to another move through a *Transition Point*. This Transition Point is when a time when we often make changes to our Work Journey. The Transition Point may take a number of years to complete but as we complete the transition from the one order of mental processing to another, we become driven to find new and bigger challenges associated with a new Level of Work to match our increased capability for complexity of thought. This manifests itself most commonly in us looking for bigger work challenges, bigger canvasses to work with, more room to move or increasing frustration and bitterness if we cannot find the new challenges....

Elliott Jaques held the view that our cognitive power (CP) or human capability is a deep order that manifests itself and provides the horsepower to our Working Journey, specifically how we find work that challenges us. Jaques¹ and colleagues have over the years found that our information processing skills (cognitive processes) fall into quintaves of increasing complexity and that the increasing complexity is grouped into **Orders of Information Complexity, each Order made up of four mental processing types (Declarative, Cumulative, Serial and Parallel)**. These cognitive processes may be defined as: *"the mental processes by means of which a person is able to organise information to make it available for doing work"*

The bulk of "normal people" with all the diversity that "normal" entails play out their Working Journey in what he refers to as **Ordinary Mortals** and this world of work is located in the 3rd Order of Information Processing. It here we also find Work Levels I – IV and Modes I - IV. The legacies we create at work may last years – from one year or more, to decades. In this Order of Information Processing people live out their lives, pursuing dreams and visions and filling a huge variety of roles in the pursuit work. For those lucky enough to escape the poverty trap or the older intolerant group value systems, we will seek to actualize our capability and as our capability increase, this means increasingly complex work.

The next major grouping is much, much smaller; the talent pool shrinking significantly to what Jaques refers to as **Exceptional Mortals** – those found in the 4th Order of Information Processing and which includes Work Levels V – VIII and whose legacies may last multiple decades. Here we find high potential individuals arranged on along a continuum, at the one end we find roles such as single business CEO's, a brigadier- generals, deputy director generals, chief specialists, while at the other end we find four star generals, high profile politicians, thought leaders and CEOs of international organisations. We are able to recognize in these people those characteristic which make them different and are often attracted to them because of this power. It is a sense of knowing or

prescience, often manifested through a clarity of thought and purpose that is different and this difference is salient to others.

Hand in hand with this deep order of how human capability emerges is Jaques view on work and the relationship between the work complexity and our capability or CP to handle that complexity. Table I provides an overview of the model of Levels of Work Complexity. Complexity in this model may be defined in terms of the *number of variables operating in a situation, the clarity and precision with which they can be identified, and their rate of change.* Work is defined as the exercise of *individual judgment in making decisions and acting on them within limits in order to achieve a productive purpose within a given time frame.*

Table I
Levels of Work Complexity: Work Levels I - VI^{ii, iii}

Work Level	Essential Tasks / Unique Value Add of each Work Level.	Time Span (before outcome of most complex decision apparent to level above)	Example of Roles	Human Cognitive Capability Processes (CP)
Stratum I / Level I (Work theme Quality)	Accomplish Direct Tasks / Hands on Skills Quality in what is done	3 Months	e.g. Retail shop assistant, Call Centre Operator, Artisan, NCO / Lieutenant	<i>Declarative Processing</i> - (Touch and feel) – direct outcomes, judgement in how best.
Stratum II (Work theme Service)	Supervise Direct Work or Do Specialist Work Ensure pride, purpose and commitment to quality.	1 Years	e.g. Specialist – doctor, researcher, lawyer, first line manager/ supervisor, Army Captain, Priest	<i>Cumulative Processing</i> - decisions based on history, precedent, tradition, trends, variances – specialist knowledge.
Stratum III (Work Theme Practice)	Direct a program, Blending Components to meet Specified Goals / Objectives. Constructing, connecting and fine tuning systems, making most of resources.	2 Years	e.g. Manager, Principal Specialist, WO, Major, Colonel, Practice Manager	<i>Serial Processing</i> - (“connecting”) – Outcomes given, way up to individual, options to achieving it. Linear process of linking it up efficiently
Stratum IV / Level IV (Work theme Strategic Development)	Coordinate and Resource Multiple Programs Integrating, modelling new futures, new services, products, positioning the organisation	5 Years	e.g. General Manager, Chief Specialist, Research Programme Leader, Brigadier-General, US One Star	<i>Parallel Processing</i> (“modelling”) – holding in mind different processes and connections between – envisaged outcome.

Stratum V / Level V (Work Theme Strategic Intent).	Direct a Unified Work System to its internal and external environments and Set Policy Accountability for sustainability of a unified work system	10 Years	e.g. Autonomous Business Unit CEO; Divisional CEO, Major General, US Two Star General / CEO	New Order of Info Processing. <i>Declarative Processing</i> - “Weaving” sensed intangibles (e.g. culture and values, markets, industry trends, foreign policy, currency markets) become key parts of judgement making. Interconnectedness of events across a broad spectrum creates options.
Stratum/ Level VI	Coordinate Multiple Unified Work Systems in the Global Environment Reading international contexts to support / alert Level V strategic business units	20 Years	e.g. Lieutenant General, US Three Star General, Group Executive: International,, CEO Multi-national	4th Order of Info Processing. <i>Cumulative Processing.</i> - intangibles characterised by thoughts, words and ideas that refer to other thoughts and ideas rather than to things, but can always be connected directly to large-scale particulars and trends or patterns made known. They are made tangible to wide audiences with the idea of informing, warning or identifying a wave of opportunity, often predictive.
Stratum VII / Level VII	Direct Multiple Unified Systems in the Global Environment Sustaining long term viability, defining values, moulding contexts	50 Years	General, US Four Star General. CEO Inter-national, International Thought Leader.	4th Order of Info Processing. <i>Serial Processing....</i>

To be effective in any specific level of work, or to capitalise on an initiative or idea, we need to meet the requirements of the following equation. Elliott Jaques’s formulae of $CAC = f.CP+V+Wi(EQ) + K/S (-T)$ is a very useful guide to individual effectiveness. In this equation **CAC is our Current Actual Capability – i.e. where can we comfortably operate at a given moment.** CAC is a function of our **Cognitive Power** or CP, which is defined as “*the potential strength of cognitive processes in a person and is therefore the maximum level of task complexity that someone can handle at any give point in his or her development*”. CP is dynamic and increases at different rates with maturity. CP allows us to be able to get our head around the complexities of work and to use our judgment to find solutions or pathways. CP is how we make sense of ambiguity, uncertainty and the unknown. CP unfolds for us individually along one of eight+ Growth Modes.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience (K/S/E) can be learned and is useless if applied inappropriately or incorrectly, for example at the wrong Work Level. V is for Value and refers to how motivated we are and our passion for particular work. Wi is Wisdom (or EQ), which is emotional maturity expressed through sound relationship management and the ability to learn through experience. CP without V is horsepower without direction, and without Wi, it becomes potentially destructive. CP, without the appropriate K/S/E, can become destructive, as the person may be

doomed to frustration through under-utilisation. When these factors all come together you have focused effective energy.

So in summary, as our capability grows (our CP) and we acquire the K/S/E we become comfortable and effective (CAC) in a specific Work Level. When our CP changes, (and we have no control over this and the rate of change differs from person to person), we **transition** into a new type of cognitive processing and start looking for work challenges in this Level of Work. This change and its rate of change is measurable and predictive.

Technically, Transitions Points are *when we move from one order of mental processing to another and into a new level of work ability*. Transition points are critical for everyone, because it is a time when we experience an involuntary new Call to Adventure; to new and bigger challenges, maybe new horizons and sometimes complete reformulations of our Journey. It may not impact on us if we are challenged and recognized in our current role. Some of us may only experience one transition in our life, others two or more and a rapidly decreasing number will experience an increasingly greater number of transitions. These are the individuals we refer to as high potentials.

We may choose to ignore these Calls to Adventure at great personal cost since it represents that deep order calling on us to actualize our capability, to seek challenges to find fulfillment and a sense of destiny and as Mihály Csíkszentmihályi says, flow.

Flow is defined *as a high level of engagement in what we are doing, when our capabilities and skills are matched with work we value and we feel energized and enthused by our work*. If we are not in flow with our work, we all know it immediately. We become bored and underutilized over time or conversely, if promoted or have grown into a work level we are not able to cope with, we may become anxious and worried and eventually overextended. Our intuition deserts us in both scenarios and we may end up very stressed out and potential at risk of illness.

The general principle is *people make a change to their Working Journey when they transition from one type of mental processing to a higher level*.

If we have advance warning on when we may transition, at what possible ages, what the next stage may be like, how many more are there likely to be, where am I now *vis a vis* where I should or might be, we have navigation beacons and a broad direction into the future. This compass bearing enables us to plan how we may optimize our journey for enjoyment and purpose, what detours are not worth the risk, what skills and experience we should seek and when. This model of predetermined cognitive growth, age and transition points gives validity to that age old concept of predestination, but the bearing will not reveal the multiple destinations possible, the outcomes – the successes and failures, good or evil, actualization or not. It does give us advance knowledge about the fundamental nature of ourselves; it is an essential part of planning; it is forewarning and allows us to use our limited resources better.

An Exceptional Life -

Transition to Cognitive Challenges Associated with Work Level III Capability - at approximately 12 – 15 years of age

*The capability of people in flow with this level of work is summarised by the term **CONNECTING** or **SERIAL PROCESSING**. Here the person weighs up the current situation against that which is planned. Alternative paths are created and weighed up for the most favourable solution to meet future needs and to ensure continuity of what is. A dynamic picture is thus created looking for alternative ways of achieving goals, which consider the principles of how different parts of the work system connect together to ensure workflow both present and future. Here one uses symbolic Sequential Thought Processes for dealing with one issue at a time. The alternatives are real and tangible.*

Ayaan's childhood was a journey of uncertainty and change. Africa is tumultuous and for many of its inhabitants, their Journeys are often dictated by the proverbial toss of a dice. All three Waves of change and their associated value systems compete against each other on the continent. Ayaan's grandmother grew up in what was essentially a nomadic tribal community in a colonial Africa. Post Colonial Africa was struggling to emerge in Ayaan's childhood. By the age of 14 Ayaan had lived through what she referred to as three political systems. As a child she questioned and challenged, comparing - wanting to understand why things were as they were. An observant child, she sought answers, for example questioning the unfairness of a woman's lot – such as why do they need to pray behind men... why could she not grow up and do important work, just because you were a girl?. As a child she compared the merits of alternative pathways – why was it different for men and women, what was faith and obedience and why was obedience different for women if Allah loved them all?

Born in Somalia, Ayaan left with mother and siblings for Saudi Arabia when eight years old. In Saudi Arabia the family reconnected with their father, Abeh. Abeh was involved in a liberation struggle for Somalia and later, the struggle against dictatorship. He played a key role in her development as he encouraged questioning and provided an enlighten view of the world. The discussion at home, his absence, the comings and goings of different players, the refugee status of the family, the eventual fall of Mogadishu and the larger political setting provided context through her formative years. Ayaan grew up aware of a wider world and of other countries and other ways of life. Often she was in the thick of adult political discussions and meetings, saw the wounded and felt the general sense of urgency that such activities generate.

From Saudi Arabia the family moved to Ethiopia and Ayaan attended a Christian school. After a short sojourn, the family moved to Kenya, to Nairobi where their father had refugee status. Here Ayaan learnt English and Swahili. It was in Nairobi she discovered reading and the school library opened up the world of Western thinking, romance and the belief in the individual to her. At 14 she was enrolled in a Muslim school. Life was difficult; Abeh was away for long periods and had taken another wife. Ayaan's mother saw herself as a victim and had grown increasingly resentful, violent and deeply depressed. She probably had a great deal of underutilised capability herself and this frustration and lack of "flow" manifested itself in depression and which became chronic anxiety. She too was trapped in a cage. She had shown her capability and independence in the early part of life, but later succumbed to the very culture and the values that Ayaan would later rail against. Many women also in Western Society, from the "frugal" generations and earlier showed similar symptoms of underutilisation and its accompanying frustrations.

The young Ayaan rebelled against the beatings, the discipline and housework that were forced on her. The Ma'alim's (teacher) beating saw her admitted to hospital for an emergency operation to deal with a fractured skull and the resultant bleeding.

At school a new teacher, Sister Aziza, ushered in an important period in her life, in which she experimented with the faith. Ayaan was subconsciously experimenting in creating a dynamic picture

of her faith and then seeing how she could live within it. She was looking to find an acceptable path within which she might live; a way that would resonate with her and her emerging, fragile, belief system. The young Ayaan was constructing a dynamic moving picture of her faith; of what it might be like and how life may be for her, living within an externally imposed belief framework. Was it possible? She was connecting possibilities together to see how they might offer a path forward into the unknown. Most of this evaluation and testing was probably going on at a largely sub-conscious level.

It was not a happy time, everything was in collapse, her mother had little or no control over her life and her sister was in rebellion. The country was falling apart. Against this backdrop of increasing chaos, Ayaan was increasingly questioning the treatment and subjugation of women. Forced marriage was beginning to loom as a reality in life, as girls were already leaving school to be married and she did not desire a similar, enforced future. The pathway she had constructed was not proving enticing as a life time of subjugation and servitude seemed inescapable.

“I was beginning to rebel internally against women’s traditional subjugation. In those days I was still wearing a hijab. I thought a lot about God, how to be good in his eyes, and about the beauty of obedience and submission... but my mind seemed bent on being distracted from the Straight Path. Something inside me resisted the moral values behind Sister Aziza’s lectures; a small spark of independence. Perhaps it was a reaction to the stark gap between the behaviour demanded...and the realities of daily life... How could a just God – a God so just that almost every page of the Quran praises His fairness – desire that women be treated so unfairly?”

Ayaan’s continued questioning was fuelled by her reading and the idea of individual choice so prevalent in the western literature she was reading at school. She tried to weight up these two opposing views. Fadumo provided a sort of role model, offering some clues to the seventeen year old. Fadumo was a woman who had made her own money and as a result, was in charge of her own journey to a much greater extent than anyone else Ayaan knew. The conclusion Ayaan reached was that it was better for a woman to have their own money so as to ensure some form of independence.

It was also during this time she briefly had a non Muslim boyfriend, who caused her a great deal of guilt. Girls were by now leaving school to be married and most were forced into marriage, and became very unhappy. Ayaan started to collect all the verses in the Quran that said God was just and God was fair. The gap continued to widen.

Her Journey was developing into a crisis. In order to try and resolve this conflict she went deeper into the faith, for example going to listen to Boqol Sawm’s lectures, a fanatic who had gathered a large following. His teaching involved shouting out the words loudly, with an intonation of what was permitted and what was not. No attempt to explain the underlying intentions was offered. Ayaan needed to resolve the concept of God being one of mercy and caring on the one hand and the conflict caused of how God demanded women to behave and their worth on the other. Women were seen as being worth half a man and were required to cover their skin to avoid tempting men. Ayaan was rebelling against the idea that the Quran was written by God and therefore could be changed or its interpretations challenged. She stood up to Boqol Sawm, suggesting men cover themselves. In protest she stopped wearing her black robe and soon started skipping the Islamic debates.

At 18 finished she completed O levels and against her mothers wishes, went to secretarial college, determined to work. This was during the time that Rushdie’s book “Satanic verses” came onto the market and Ayaan witnessed copies of the book being burned on the streets. She continued to read avidly and this fuelled the conflict between the world of daring, freedom and imagination shown in the Western literature and the value systems she was part of.

At 20, with great excitement Ayaan went to Somalia and Mogadishu, filled with a sense of going “home”. This visit was to be deeply disappointing as she felt caged and did not fit in. There were so many limitations about what was permissible and what was not and the price of belonging to the clan and the family was just too high. The crises of faith deepened. Ayaan found work but it was boring with a lack of development and stimulation. The air of entitlement and corruption shown by her Somali colleagues in the workplace was deeply disturbing.

Ayaan “violated all the codes” when she fell in love and married in great secrecy, her new husband leaving the country almost straight away. The marriage would later be regarded as not having taken place by her father, because proper protocol had not been observed.

As the civil war intensified in Mogadishu, life became increasingly unsafe as clan turned on clan and the dictatorship of Siad Barré ended. Ayaan returned safely to Kenya after a knife was held to her throat in a robbery attempt and the law and order crumbled in Mogadishu. People fled as clan fighting took over and law and order collapsed. Refugees streamed towards Kenya, gathering on its borders. Ayaan went to the refugee camps to search for family members and remarked, walking through the refugees everywhere was prayer, but no compassion. Women on their own were seen as fair targets for rape and abuse. Ayaan was now twenty years old

In 1992, her father arranged her marriage to Canadian Muslim, the nightmare come true... she was not consulted. She was to go to Canada to become the good wife.

Transition to Cognitive Challenges Associated with Work Level IV Capability - at approximately 22 – 25 years of age.

This new type of capability is what we refer to as “Parallel Processing” and the cognitive processes is to construct a mental model of how things may work and assume that the gaps in knowledge are either not important, because the general outcome is envisaged or that the gaps offer opportunities. With this thinking comes the ability to hold an outcome or picture in mind and compare the merits of alternative processes, systems and approaches to achieving that mental model, and to alter the mental model as reality unfolds. Thinking often takes place within constructed frameworks guided by hypothesis. The individual can conceptually hold in mind a number of actual or envisage different processes, operating independently or linked, aimed at achieving the constructed mental models.

“I could just see, very clearly and dispassionately, the bars closing in on me”¹ – She met her husband to be and quickly realised it was not possible to marry him. But how to get out of it? By refusing to marry she was challenging not only her father, but her entire culture. She tried in vain to discuss this with her father. Ayaan knew it was up to her to take control of her life.

A bifurcation point had been reached. This crisis was compounded by her transition to the cognitive capability we refer to as “Modelling” or “Parallel Processing”. The cognitive transition was the catalyst required to make a life change. People when in crisis or when out of flow with work, will make changes to their Work Journey when entering a transition point.

A new idea became possible, one of escape. Ayaan did not want to go to Canada. She wanted control over her own life – “to be me”. The arrangements were all made, her airline ticket to Canada

¹ pg 171. Infidel.

paid by her husband not to be. The young woman flew to Canada via Frankfurt. While in Frankfurt she decided she would not go through with the marriage. She could see no future for herself. Having made the decision she navigated her way in this new, vast, unfamiliar landscape to Holland, where she had a contact. She would come to regard 24 July 1992 as her true birthday, the date she stepped onto the train for Holland. At 22 years of age she applied for refugee status. She settled in quickly - unlike other refugees Ayaan boldly experimented in this new society, learning to ride a bicycle for independence, she travelling around, trying to understand how the society worked, revelling in its order, its cleanliness, its freedom and how efficient and ordered it was and how the government looked after its people.

Her refugee status assured, a new way of living was emerging from the shattered past. This new cycle of life would be challenging, scary but one filled with promise, of what might be; of what could be – one laden with promise of growth and learning. She began to unconsciously follow a process of constructing a new mental model of the world and how she might fit in. For the first time Ayaan was moving into a zone of “flow” as she took control of her life. This period of life was one of trying to create her space as well as dealing with your demons of deserting the family, guilt about Abeh and becoming “*gaolo*”.

Ayaan knew the clan would be looking for her after failing to arrive in Canada and subsequent disappearance. This was brought to a head at the meeting of the Somali elders, the Tolka in January 1993. The elders accepted what she had done when she profoundly and simply said it was “*The will of the soul*”. This acceptance by the Tolka meant breaking ties with her clan and family. As a result of her actions, Abeh rejected her.

Ayaan started to build a new life, working as an interpreter, getting out and about and learning the Dutch language. Her natural curiosity was absorbed with questions of why things worked differently on a large scale and why in countries that practiced and followed the Quran faithfully, society was disordered, poor and harsh and lacking in compassion and why the infidel lived in such an ordered, wealthy and prosperous society, where the government served the people. This occupied a great deal of her thinking. Ayaan although battling the guilt, experimented with a new lifestyle and value system. She observed how the Dutch lived. Maarten and Joanna, a Dutch couple acted as mentors, showing through example what collaborative decision making was and how it worked for the family and the planning and logic behind their decisions.

A vocational test informed Ayaan that she was suited to roles in admin or bookkeeping or as a receptionist. Had her capability been understood, it would have been apparent that her CP or cognitive power had moved into the challenges associated with formal work in Work Level IVSD or that of a chief specialist (who would be responsible for coordinating multiple research programs and/or general manager equivalent). She obviously did not have the Knowledge / Experience / Skills to add value in such formal work and thus there existed a huge gap between her Current Actual Capability for work and her theoretical ability of abstraction for thought (her CP). For Ayaan, to have occupied a role in Work Level II would have been disastrous, but your background had not equipped her with the knowledge, skills or experience required to operate at a higher work level at that stage.

This is the tragedy of developing countries. Human capability is not actualised, since the vast majority of people battle to fight poverty and in meeting the physiological demands at the base of Maslow’s pyramid. Gradually as society develops, education levels rise and so does prosperity. Old value systems wither and are replaced by new dominant values. As the CAC equation becomes more balanced for more people, so the complexity of society increases. This growth in societal complexity creates our current dilemma; because of the dominant value created by the free market system and its

focus and promotion of materialism and the mantra of “growth”. This is unfortunately closely allied to the CAC equation; as can be seen in resource hungry China and India for example and in the developed nations around the world.

Ayaan knew she would need to make her own way. In June 1995, at the age of twenty six she passed the Dutch language test and became an official Dutch interpreter. She also passed the requirement to attend University and chose to study Political Science at Leiden University. She had become focussed on why societies differed and her mind was filled with questions of how large scale systems worked or did not – why was it so different in Africa, why was there peace and security and wealth in Europe. She commented that; “*drinking wine and wearing trousers were nothing compared to reading the ideas of history.*” How did one build peace? This is a clear example of her attempting to create a mental model to provide a framework for seeking answers. She knew what the outcomes looked like, the question was why and how and what could one do.

The work as an interpreter with refugees was a stark and harsh education in the suffering, abuse and misery and evils of ignorance caused by the very subjugation Ayaan had rebelled against. She was deeply concerned about the isolation of Muslim immigrants to Holland and that women were still suffering abuse, repression and in some cases death, right there in Holland, with the active support and tolerance of the Dutch. Multiculturalism was not working. Ayaan was looking at how one could address these gaps, what could be done and what options were or might be available.

Her personal and private Journeys were simultaneously becoming fuller and more satisfying. She had moved into student digs and became involved in a deep personal relationship. She was now eligible for Dutch citizenship and in 2000 graduated from Leiden University.

Ayaan decided she wanted a proper job and went into the job market, where she had a number of roles, mostly it would appear at the high end of Work Level I or the low end of Work Level II. Not unsurprisingly, these jobs did not work for her as her value system was neither entrepreneurial nor corporate and her CP or cognitive ability was certainly not suited to repetitive clearly defined work with few moving parts and those part that did move were clearly scripted in terms of desired outcome.

Eventually she found a role as a junior researcher with the Labour Party. This was enjoyable and stimulating and allowed for a measure of work “flow” to emerge. A letter in June 2001 to the newspaper would be the event Ayaan would come to regard as her “Political coming out”. This event took place at about the time another transition was beginning.

Ayaan’s Working Journey was for the first time starting to become attuned to her personal purpose and the issues that had concerned her as a child could finally become focal points for action. When personal purpose is coupled with significant cognitive capability, impacts can be considerable and lasting.

Transition to Cognitive Challenges Associated with Work Level V Capability: - at approximately 32 – 35 years of age.

This transition marks a quantum shift in processing power as the individual moves into a new order of information processing. Each order is grouped into four processes of increasing information processing power.

*In summary, the capability associated with this Work Level is the first level where fourth order sensed intangibles (e.g. culture and values, markets, industry trends, foreign policy, currency markets, free trade, globalism) **become key parts of judgement making.** Judgement making is based on the interconnectedness of events across a broad spectrum of political, social, economic and the spiritual.*

The capability at this level sees potential links between events or changes and the impact on the unified system.

Judgment is the ability to discern which links may have ramifications or hold opportunities and how they may unfold in the future. Links are seen between apparently unrelated issues or events and these may be as interesting as the issues themselves. New knowledge may be created at this level through new configurations and patterns of understanding. Such capability allows redefining previously relationships and boundaries and even holding that redefinition open as it creates new fields of knowledge or in the reformulation of frameworks for achieving innovative progress.

Ayaan's transition to the cognitive capability that is often referred to as "weaving" took place at a melting point in world history. It was the time of the 9/11 attacks and it served to usher in a new way of looking at the world and would herald another tumultuous period in her young life. It would be a time of forging and shaping for her in a cauldron of world ferment.

"*Oh Allah, please let it not be a Muslim who did this*" was Ayaan's first thought on hearing the news. The attacks brought her face to face with a major decision. War had been declared on the Infidel and what side was she on? Because of 9/11 there was a great deal of focus on the Muslim world. Debates raged about radical and moderate Muslims, the nature of Jihad and its ramifications. Ayaan felt the war was about belief and the range of arguments was missing the point in trying to explain the attacks and Islam. She felt that by declaring the Prophet infallible and not questioning the Quran or his work Muslims were living in a static tyranny "*we were not the servants of Allah, we were his slaves*"² pg 272.

Ayaan became furiously busy; involved in debates, discussion and writing letters, sometimes without the full support of the Labour party as she felt the need to bring to people's attention to the true nature of Muslim belief. It didn't have to be that way, Islam could reinvent itself. At the request of the Labour party she embarked on a path that was to play a major role her future. She was asked to study immigration and integration of different societies and why Muslims appeared to be integrating the least successfully. It was apparent to Ayaan that the answer was "*...because being Muslim stops it*" Muslims were a society within a society. This needed to be changed and a starting point was to stimulate debate. The question was how - issues such as the funding of Muslim or faith based schools was one the agenda. Ayaan's thinking was making the think tank nervous.

In 2002 while on a short holiday she came to the conclusion she had moved so far from her culture and beliefs that she had become an atheist. God was not necessary in the equation of progress. The decision brought with it a sense of real clarity. Ayaan attempted to frame a new morality for herself that that did not come from external guidelines and turned to the works of the great thinkers, Spinoza, Locke, Kant, Mill, Voltaire and the modern ones – Russell, Popper to inform her views. Not surprisingly, logical thought and the need to challenge assumptions were cornerstones. Progress she agreed comes from critical thought.

Ayaan's message changed; not only was it necessary to reviewing integration policies; Islam needed a renaissance. When Pym Fortune was murdered, the matter became even more serious. Ayaan's message was conveyed it on TV, in debates and in letters; Islam was backward. Death threats were issued and for the first time, bodyguards were assigned to her. Her home address was posted on the internet. In an attempt to break this increasing spiral towards violence, Ayaan was sent to writers retreat in California.

² pg 272. Infidel

In early August 2002 Ayaan was asked to make a film about women in Islam and in the same year she was asked to run for Parliament for the Labour party. This caused her to consider which would have more value, a PhD or shifting the lives of Muslim women. Ayaan decided she wanted to achieve three things through going into politics;

- ✪ Wake Holland up to the intolerance and oppression taking place in its midst
- ✪ Spark debate among Muslims for reform
- ✪ Make Muslim women more aware.

She accepted the challenge and that people would need to live with the fact she would be a one issue politician. Driven by the belief that societies which accepted and respected the rights of women were peaceful and wealthy, she wanted to start by addressing the issues of migrant women, living right in the heart of such a tolerant society as Holland. After a grilling by party members she was accepted as a candidate and in 2003 at the age of 34, became a Dutch parliamentarian.

Her immediate agenda was to change article 23 which would stop finance for the building of new Muslim schools. She wanted a register kept of honour killings, something currently not recorded under Dutch law. In November 2004 the video on women in Islam was finally made. The film was directed by Theo Van Gogh and was called “Submission – Part I”. The film was a call to Muslim women to question the blind obedience of the Quran and the need for them to shift from total submission to a dialogue. The message was clear, if blind obedience requires flogging for adultery, beatings, being given in marriage to a man she loathes, or being shunned or stoned to death for being raped, all in the name of service to God, then maybe women should stop submitting. Ayaan’s call was clear. Evolution and Renewal was needed.

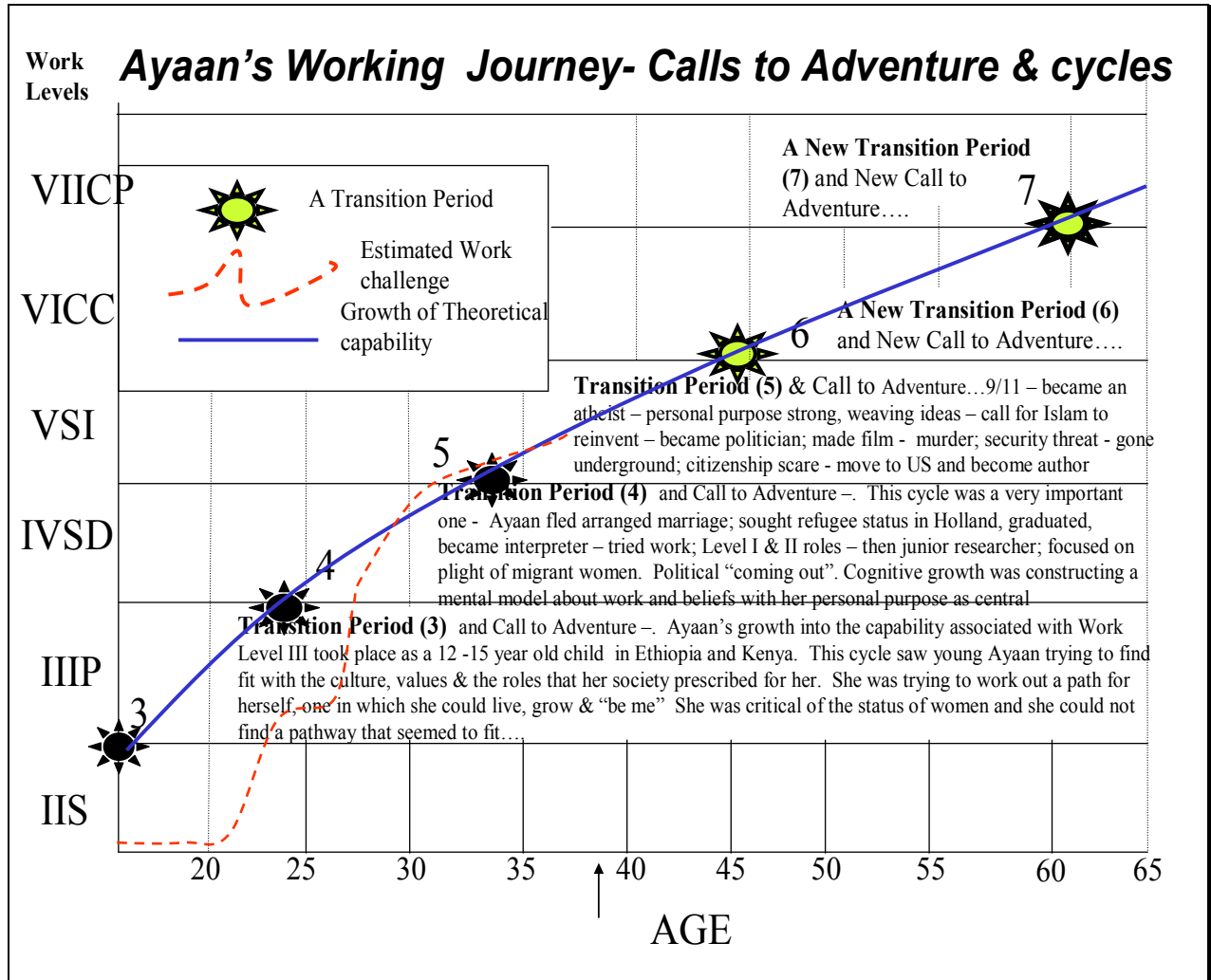
Theo was brutally and publically murdered shortly afterwards, shot, stabbed and a knife stuck in his chest with a note addressed to Ayaan. The ensuing tight security made life untenable. She went underground to safeguard her life. After seventy days of living in anonymous hotel rooms, losing contact with friends, denied research facilities and even losing her mobile phone, she said enough and returned to Holland. It was 2006.

It was at this point she heard about the plan to nullify her Dutch citizenship because of lying when applying for refugee status. This was subsequently overturned but it had raised the question of where was home? If unsuccessful where would she have gone? The legislative process had been slow, frustrating and Ayaan had become disenchanted with Dutch politics. It was during this time her first book “Caged Virgin”, a book of essays had been published. She wanted to write and spend more time on this creativity, rather the toe party lines.

In 2006 she accepted a job with an American think tank. In your subsequent public speaking campaign she makes the point that life is better in the West then in it is in the Muslim world because human relations are better, and one reason human relations are better is that in the West, life on earth is valued in the here and now, and individuals enjoy rights and freedoms that are recognized and protected by the state. To accept subordination and abuse because Allah willed it is why Islam needs to renewed.

In 2007 Ayaan published her next book, “Infidel”, which not only tell her story but acts as a beacon for others. She is now engaged on a working journey that is one with her personal purpose.

Figure I below shows Ayaan’s Cognitive Growth and Transitions.



Next Transitions at approximately 43 – 45

This transition is moving closer.... Work at this level calls for a wide understanding of global events and trends, it calls for multidimensional thinking and requires the individual to integrate a variety of societal, environmental, spiritual and business needs and issues into a holistic plan or context for decision making. Influencing, shaping and steering value systems become the dominant theme of work.

Global issues means that interests must be contextualised within an increasingly wide and often international sphere of influence. Jobholders normally base their judgement upon taking account of the known, the expected and the unexpected. All sources and trends may be considered. This is a

fractal of the Modelling Capability of IVSD and here multiple business systems (comprised of many work systems) are coordinated using conceptual models. Both the expected and unexpected provide input into creating understanding of likely sources of strategic opportunities, options, potential instabilities and vulnerabilities. The capability of people in flow with this level of complexity is summarised by the term **REVEALING** or world-wide **DIAGNOSTIC ACCUMULATION**.

The primary tools of this approach are the intangibles characterised by thoughts, words and ideas that refer to other thoughts and ideas rather than to things. The “intangibles” can always be connected directly to large-scale particulars and trends or patterns made known.

They are made tangible to wide audiences with the idea of informing, warning or identifying a wave of opportunity. Judgement at this level may take one or more decades to materialise or be found to have been predictive.³ Though leaders, high level policy advisors and group executive of true international companies are found to exist in this work level.

Another transition will come into play around the ages of 58-62 years of age.

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Politics are almost as exciting as war, and quite as dangerous. In war you can only be killed once, but in politics many times. Sir Winston Churchill

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Endnotes

¹ The late Dr Elliott Jaques is the author of more than 20 books, including *The Life and Behavior of Living Organisms* (2002), *Social Power and the CEO* (2002), *Requisite Organization* (1996), *Human Capability* (1994) with Kathryn Cason, and *General Theory of Bureaucracy* (1976). Dr. Jaques is recognized throughout the world for the discoveries he made in the social sciences, contributing in a significant way to our understanding of human nature and social institutions. Noteworthy awards

³ Page 100. Olivier, A. *The Working Journey*, (2003). MacOlive Publishing. www.theworkingjourney.com and www.workcomplexity.com

include the Joint Staff Certificate of Appreciation presented by General Colin Powell on behalf of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. Armed Forces for "outstanding contributions in the field of military leadership theory and instruction to all of the service departments of the United States" and the Harry Levinson Award of the Consulting Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association for "a distinguished career and impressive accomplishments."

Dr. Jaques' contributions are multi-disciplinary and include fundamental developments in our understanding of the meaning of work and in the evaluation and development of individuals engaged in work, as well a method for objectively measuring the complexity of work roles. Further, his contribution to the social sciences include an objective understanding of the nature of human potential capability and of its maturation throughout life from infancy through old age.

Nearly 60 theses have been developed based on the work of Dr. Jaques and more continue to be developed and written around the world. His work has changed and advanced family and business relationships dramatically over the past half century. From: <http://www.requisite.org/biography.html>.

This site is not up-to-date, if you require current global information, go www.globalro.org

ⁱⁱ Adapted from various sources; including: Lewis, P., Transformational Change using Stratified Systems Theory. *International Journal of Public Administration*. Volume. 19 (6), pp. 801 – 826.

Acknowledgements to Jaques, E., *Requisite Organisation*. Cason Hall. 1989.

ⁱⁱⁱ Adapted from Mant, A., *Intelligent Leadership*. Pg 275 and Olivier, A. *A Practitioners Guide to level of Work Audits and Organisational Mapping*. 1996. Revised 1998, 2000. Third Foundation Systems. Unpublished manuscript. With acknowledgement to Bioss Southern Africa. See also - Stamp G & Stamp C: *Well-being at Work: Aligning Purposes, People, Strategies and Structures*. *International Journal of Career Management*, Vol.5, No 3 1993.