

The Joching Manifesto of Spiritual Knowledge Management

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Abstract

Purpose – This manifesto aims to redefine knowledge management by integrating spiritual, ethical, cognitive and aesthetic dimensions to address the complexities and challenges of a volatile and complex (VUCA) world. It seeks to move beyond instrumental and technological paradigms to foster human flourishing, organizational resilience and sustainable societal well-being by establishing the field of *Spiritual Knowledge Management* (SpKM).

Design/methodology/approach – This paper is the primary outcome of the 4th International Symposium on Spiritual Knowledge Management held in June 2025 in Joching, Austria. Twelve international experts engaged in intensive collaborative dialogue over two days to distill 12 foundational principles from previous research and real-time scholarly discourse.

Findings – The manifesto articulates 12 core principles of SpKM, including relational resonance, transformative processes and spaces (Ba and Ma), caring, future-orientedness and practical wisdom (phronesis). It positions knowing as a transformative process directed toward the “future best version” of individuals and collectives/organizations rather than a static transactional asset.

Research limitations/implications – As a manifesto, the contribution is primarily conceptual. It proposes constructs and avenues for empirical work (e.g. “transformation dashboards,” measures of resonance, agency and aesthetic/space effects) and calls for comparative, cross-context/-cultural studies to validate and extend the framework.

Practical implications – Guidance for leaders and facilitators to design enabling spaces, integrate reflective and narrative practices, align knowledge processes with purpose and the common good and steward long-term transformation beyond short-term efficiency.

Social implications – Spiritual Knowledge Management supports human flourishing, organizational resilience and societal well-being by cultivating trust, meaning and cross-boundary collaboration aimed at sustainable, just futures.

Originality/value – This work establishes an original integrative and interdisciplinary framework that emphasizes the spiritual and future-oriented dimensions of knowing within the KM field. It uniquely identifies aesthetics and “caring” as strategic resources and proposes a shift from simple knowledge transfer to the deep transformation of the knower.

Keywords Spiritual Knowledge Management, Wisdom, Resonance, Transformation, Organizational resilience, Ba/Ma, Enactive cognition

Paper type Viewpoint



1. Preamble: why a manifesto on spiritual knowledge management?

In June 2025, the 4th Symposium on *Spiritual Knowledge Management* in Joching in the Wachau region of Austria brought together 12 international scientists, practitioners and thought leaders to advance the emerging field of Spiritual Knowledge Management (SpKM). After three virtual symposia over the past two years, this was the first opportunity for researchers to meet in person for two days. The gathering aimed to establish a shared conceptual understanding and foundation, critically assess the current state of SpKM, and articulate possible future pathways for developing it further both theoretically and for practical applications.

1.1 Guiding questions

The guiding questions were:

- What is Spiritual Knowledge Management in its essence?
- What role can it play in shaping the future of organizations and society?
- What concrete next steps do we want to take together?

1.2 Manifesto on spiritual knowledge management

This *manifesto* is a tangible, condensed and integrated result of the intensive and inspiring discussions and collaboration during these two days and is intended to serve as further input and foundation for deepening the debate and expanding the dialogue on Spiritual Knowledge Management.

We live in an era of unprecedented complexity, global interdependence and accelerating change, in a VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) world (Baran & Woznyj, 2021). Knowing is not only more dynamic, but knowledge has also become more accessible than ever, yet the ability to transform knowledge into wisdom, meaning and purposeful action is increasingly scarce. Spiritual Knowledge Management addresses this gap by integrating the epistemic, ethical, aesthetic and transformative dimensions of knowing. It is not an alternative to conventional knowledge management but targets its deeper dimension: one that recognizes the interplay between information, embodied and enacted experience, purpose and values, and the inner development of individuals and collectives. Spiritual Knowledge Management emerges as a response: it is a *practice*, a discipline and a movement that integrates knowledge, purpose and transformation. It asks not only what we know, but *why* we know, *how* we know and *who* we become in the process of enacting ourselves and our world in a purposeful manner (and how we are enacted by this world). SpKM is both a scholarly domain and a practical endeavor: it seeks to cultivate environments in which knowledge serves human flourishing, organizational resilience and the sustainable stewardship of life.

In recent years, some work has started to bring questions of responsibility, sustainability and practical wisdom more explicitly into knowledge management debates. In particular, work on responsible knowledge management emphasizes responsibility, sustainability, inclusion and practical wisdom as central orientations of knowledge practices (e.g. Rocha, Kragulj, & Pinheiro, 2022; Durst, 2024; Kragulj, 2022). Related contributions further explore the role of practical wisdom (phronesis), organizational spirituality and purpose in shaping knowledge processes in organizations and higher education contexts (e.g. Rocha & Pinheiro, 2021; Rocha & Kragulj, 2025; Neves, Rocha, & Pinheiro, 2025). While these approaches provide important conceptual foundations and share concerns with ethics, meaning and responsibility, they are typically framed within responsible, spiritual or wisdom-oriented management discourses rather than articulated as an integrative knowledge

management framework. Spiritual Knowledge Management, as proposed in this manifesto, is positioned as an integrative perspective that foregrounds the spiritual, transformative and future-oriented dimensions of knowing within knowledge management research and practice.

What follows are 12 foundational *principles* that were distilled from the intensive discussions at the symposium and incorporating the initial work on spiritual knowledge management that has already been carried out over the recent years; not as final concepts and answers, but as an evolving and emerging novel framework to guide research, practice and the ongoing maturation of Spiritual Knowledge Management.

2. Principle 1: Knowing as relational resonance

Knowledge is neither a static asset nor a mere product of information processing; it is a process (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995), it is *knowing*. It is a living, relational phenomenon that emerges in resonance between individuals and the world, communities and their socio-material-cultural contexts. Resonance here refers to the dynamic, reciprocal exchange in which ideas, experiences and perspectives mutually shape (and are shaped) and transform each other (Rosa, 2019). This conception moves beyond the transactional view of knowledge as a commodity to be stored, transferred and retrieved. Instead, it foregrounds the quality of interaction, (co-)creation, mutual enaction, the depth of engagement and the openness to being changed through the process of knowing. The symposium's discussions emphasized that resonance has also a temporal dimension: it connects the current version of the self with the future best version (see below), creating a bridge for personal and collective transformation toward a thriving future ecosystem.

In this sense, relational resonance is the medium through which potential becomes actuality. It requires trust, presence and the willingness to enter into authentic dialogue – conditions that many current organizational structures fail to prioritize. Spiritual Knowledge Management recognizes resonance as both a condition for and an outcome of knowledge creation. It calls for cultivating the social and environmental contexts – what Nonaka called *Ba* (Nonaka & Konno, 1998) or Peschl and others refer to as an Enabling Space (Peschl & Fundeider, 2012) – in which resonance can emerge, while also respecting *Ma* (Pilgrim, 1986), a generative space of silence, reflection and stillness that allows new insights to surface and emerge. This reorientation has significant implications for practice: leaders, educators and facilitators must intentionally design spaces and processes that encourage resonance, acknowledge the embodied and emotional dimensions of knowing and sustain relationships over time. The challenge is to move from short-term, efficiency-driven interactions to long-term, trust-based engagements and enactments that nurture the relational field in which knowledge truly lives and profound novelty and innovation might emerge.

3. Principle 2: Integrating the spiritual dimension into knowledge practices

The integration of the spiritual dimension into knowledge management (Bratianu, 2024) is not an optional embellishment but a necessary enrichment. Spirituality here is understood not in confessional or dogmatic terms, but as the dimension of depth, meaning and purpose, that frames human engagement with the world (Kaiser, 2024). It invites questions such as: Why do we seek knowledge and knowing in the first place? For whose benefit? In service of what future? This orientation shifts the focus from purely instrumental objectives to *transformative purposes*. During the symposium, multiple speakers stressed that without such depth, knowledge risks becoming detached from ethics, aesthetics and human flourishing, especially in times where Artificial Intelligence takes over our intellectual/knowledge work processes. Integrating the spiritual dimension means acknowledging that

knowledge work is also *inner (transformation) work*: it shapes and is shaped by our world, values, identities and aspirations.

This calls for reflexivity: the capacity to examine not only what we know, but how we know, what are hidden premises of our knowing, what we might possibly know and the implications of knowing. From a methodological perspective, this integration demands pluralism: recognizing multiple ways and perspectives of knowing, including embodied and enacted, intuitive and relational forms alongside analytical and propositional knowledge. It also entails fostering practices that enable alignment between knowledge and action, between perceiving deeply, acting and enacting purposefully, between inner conviction and outer contribution. SpKM thus becomes a site where epistemology, ontology, ethics and existential inquiry intersect (Kaiser, 2023). Practically, this can be operationalized through reflective dialogues, narrative approaches, aesthetic experiences and participatory decision- and sense-making that honor the whole person in the context of an unfolding world respecting the common good. The integration of spirituality does not diminish rigor; rather, it expands the scope and responsibility of knowledge management to include the cultivation of *wisdom*. We define wisdom as context-sensitive, value-oriented judgment that integrates facts, meanings and consequences to enact the right action at the right time for these people in a specific situation – serving human flourishing and the common good (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2019; Sternberg & Glück, 2019). This is especially urgent in contexts where knowledge is abundant but wisdom is scarce, where technological acceleration outpaces ethical deliberation and where the global challenges we face require not only new solutions but new ways of thinking and, more importantly, being.

4. Principle 3: Honoring the sacred and wisdom in knowledge creation

Within Spiritual Knowledge Management, the concept of the *sacred* refers to that dimension of human experience and interaction which transcends instrumental utility, touching the deepest layers of meaning, dignity and interconnectedness (Harris, Howell, & Spurgeon, 2018). The sacred is not necessarily tied to institutional religion; rather, it signifies those moments, relationships and spaces where the boundaries between the personal, the communal and the transcendent dissolve, revealing a greater whole (Kaiser & Fordinal, 2010). It values the ungraspable and provides a space for mystery: not all is to be solved; some things and situations simply have to be held and cherished.

In knowledge creation, the sacred manifests as a profound respect for the sources of insight and novelty – whether they arise from lived experience, collective wisdom or intuitive revelation – and for the integrity of the processes that give them form. The symposium's discussions revealed that when participants encountered such sacred moments (in silence, in attentive dialogue, in the resonance with the world or others, etc.) there was a palpable shift in the quality of engagement. These were not simply “good conversations” or “productive sessions”; they were experiences imbued with a sense of presence and significance that invited participants to bring their full selves into a process of joint co-enactment.

Recognizing and honoring the sacred in knowledge work requires cultivating certain dispositions: *humility* toward the otherness of the world and other individuals as well as the unknown, *reverence* for the contributions of others and *gratitude* for the opportunity to participate in a shared journey of understanding, creating novel knowledge and co-shaping the world. It also demands that knowledge spaces be protected from purely utilitarian and capitalist pressures, allowing for the emergence of what might be called *kairos* moments – times of qualitative richness that cannot be scheduled or manufactured, yet can be invited through intention and care; they are simply “given” or “happening”. Practically, this might involve ritualized openings and closings of knowledge gatherings, the creation of physical

environments that evoke stillness and beauty and the integration of reflective practices that slow the pace and deepen the focus (“Enabling Spaces”; [Peschl & Fundneider, 2012](#)).

From a theoretical standpoint, the sacred dimension serves as an ethical anchor for SpKM. It resists the commodification of knowledge by affirming its intrinsic value and its role in the flourishing of life. It also aligns with the aesthetic and resonant qualities discussed in other principles, but adds an ontological depth: beauty and resonance are not only pleasing or effective, they are manifestations of a deeper order that invites purpose, participation and stewardship. In a world where knowledge is often instrumentalized for narrow ends, the sacred reminds us that to know is also to serve, to be accountable to more than immediate stakeholders and to act in ways that honor the interconnected web of life and the common good. By integrating the sacred into the core of SpKM, we ensure that our pursuit of knowledge remains not only intelligent and creative, but also *wise*.

5. Principle 4: Creating and sustaining transformative spaces (Ba and Ma)

The quality of knowledge creation is inseparable from the quality of the *spaces* in which it occurs. Drawing from Nonaka’s concept of *Ba* ([Nonaka & Konno, 1998](#)) and Japanese aesthetic philosophy’s notion of *Ma* ([Pilgrim, 1986](#)), Spiritual Knowledge Management recognizes that both shared context (*Ba*) and meaningful emptiness (*Ma*) are indispensable for transformative knowing.

Ba refers to the physical, social and epistemological/mental spaces where interaction takes place, enabling the sharing and correspondence of experiences, the development of trust and the co-creation of meaning. *Ma* provides the generative gap: the silence, stillness and pause that allow insights to emerge and be integrated. The symposium repeatedly underscored that contemporary organizational life often overemphasizes speed, productivity and efficiency, constant activity and the filling of every temporal and spatial gap with information or tasks. In doing so, it erodes the very conditions under which creativity, profound novelty and deep understanding can arise. Sustaining transformative spaces requires a rebalancing: intentionally creating environments where *Ma* is protected and valued and where *Ba* fosters openness, mutual respect, a co-creative atmosphere and shared purpose. This involves *spatial* design (spaces and environments conducive to dialogue and reflection), *temporal* design (unhurried rhythms, reflective pauses) and *cultural* design (norms that legitimize silence, listening and serendipital exploration). Such spaces are not a luxury or optional add-ons but prerequisites for the kind of knowledge work that addresses complex challenges that can only be approached in a proactive and future-oriented manner (rather than by a problem-solving strategy). They allow participants to deal with uncertainty without rushing to premature obvious solutions and closures, to listen generatively rather than defensively, to establish a culture of trust instead of competition, to create an atmosphere of “contemplation” and reflection rather than efficiency and to welcome diverse contributions without forcing them into immediate consensus or final decisions. Leaders who understand the interplay of *Ba* and *Ma* can create conditions where knowledge becomes a living, evolving practice rather than a static asset – a shift that is central to the ethos of SpKM.

6. Principle 5: Aesthetics as a strategic resource in spiritual knowledge management

Aesthetics, the cultivation of beauty, harmony and sensory engagement, plays a strategic role in shaping how knowledge is created, shared and valued. The symposium’s discussions on organizational aesthetics ([Taylor & Hansen, 2005](#)) highlighted that environments imbued with aesthetic quality not only enhance well-being but also influence cognitive openness, trust and the capacity for collaborative meaning-making. Aesthetics and beauty here are not understood in the sense of superficial decoration; they are an expression of coherence between values, social practices and physical or symbolic forms ([Baldessarelli, Stigliani, &](#)

[Elsbach, 2022](#)). A workspace, a process or a conversation that is aesthetically attuned invites participation, fosters care and signals that the work being done is of intrinsic value and personal engagement. In SpKM, aesthetics operates on multiple levels: the physical (architecture, spatial arrangement, sensory atmosphere), the social (trust, grace in interaction, attentiveness and openness in listening) and the conceptual (elegance and novelty of ideas, clarity of expression). Empirical research increasingly supports the link between aesthetic environments and the capacities necessary for organizational learning, yet this dimension remains underexplored in mainstream KM literature.

Integrating aesthetics strategically means that knowledge leaders must attend not only to content and process but also to form and experience. This can involve curating organizational trust and rituals, designing knowledge-sharing events with attention to sensory and symbolic richness and fostering narratives that inspire rather than merely inform. From a spiritual perspective, aesthetics connects truth and goodness with beauty, reinforcing the integrity of knowledge practices ([Kerschbaum, 2025](#)). Such alignment creates resonance that is felt as well as understood, engaging both the rational and affective dimensions of participants. In contexts of SpKM, the aesthetic dimension becomes a medium through which meaning is not only communicated but embodied, enabling knowledge to move hearts as well as minds.

7. Principle 6: From knowledge transfer to transforming our knowing

Traditional knowledge management often emphasizes efficiency in the transfer of information or knowledge from one point/person to another or between employees and technology. While such transfer is necessary, it is insufficient for addressing the complex challenges of our time. SpKM shifts the emphasis from transfer to (personal) *transformation*: from moving content to cultivating change in those who engage with it ([Mezirow, 2008](#)).

Transformation here refers to shifts in perspective, deep assumptions and world views, identity and practice that occur when knowledge is internalized, embodied and applied in ways that alter both the knower and the known in the sense of an engaged epistemology ([De Jaeger, 2021](#)) and as is suggested by the enactive approach in cognitive science ([Gallagher, 2023](#)). The symposium participants repeatedly stressed that in the absence of transformation, knowledge risks remaining abstract (devoid of meaning and of calling for purposeful action), inert and static, failing to influence behavior or systems meaningfully. This shift in emphasis demands different pedagogical and organizational approaches: ones that encourage critical reflection, leaving behind an understanding of knowledge as an object, establishing knowing as a process, experiential and embodied engagement and iterative experimentation. It also requires acknowledging the role of unlearning – letting go of outdated assumptions, habits, mental models and organizational predictive mind – as an integral part of knowledge processes ([Grisold & Peschl, 2017](#); [Peschl, 2019](#)).

In the transformative paradigm, success is not measured solely by quantities and the volume of information disseminated but by the depth of change achieved on every level. Metrics might include increased capacities for systems thinking, enhanced ethical awareness, future-orientedness and an attitude of radical openness toward emerging future potentials or the emergence of innovative practices aligned with shared purpose (i.e. qualitative metrics). Such transformation often requires discomfort and the capability of dealing with uncertainty: encountering the unfamiliar, questioning the taken-for-granted and engaging with difference and the unexpected. In this light, the role of the knowledge leader is not simply to distribute resources but to design and facilitate experiences that catalyze growth and mutual understanding and habits in correspondence with values, goals and purpose, but also to provide “spaces of epistemic and social trust”, to design “enabling spaces”. SpKM provides

both the philosophical grounding and the practical tools for this work, positioning knowing as a living force in the ongoing evolution of individuals and collectives.

8. Principle 7: Agency and empowerment as core prerequisites and outcomes of spiritual knowledge management

A central aim of SpKM is to cultivate *agency*: the capacity of individuals and groups to act intentionally, meaningfully and in alignment with their values and aspirations (Thompson, 2010). Agency is not merely about choice or autonomy; it involves the ability to navigate complexity, exercise discernment, to bring wisdom into the world and influence outcomes in ways that serve both personal and collective flourishing and the common good. Empowerment in this sense is not something bestowed from above but emerges from *within*, supported by relational and structural conditions that affirm competence, voice and belonging. The symposium highlighted that agency is both a driver and a product of resonance: as people engage deeply with others, with the world and with meaningful knowledge, they discover and refine their capacity to act purposefully. SpKM fosters this process by encouraging reflexivity, dialogue and shared ownership of knowledge processes in Ba.

This stands in contrast to hierarchical or technocratic approaches that concentrate decision-making power and treat knowledge workers as passive recipients who merely implement rules and processes. By embedding empowerment and agency into the design of KM systems, organizations can unlock latent creativity and commitment, enabling adaptive responses as well as pro-active action to emerging challenges and potentials. On the individual level, agency nurtured through SpKM can lead to heightened purpose, resilience and ethical clarity. On the collective level, it can foster cultures of participation, innovation, future-orientation and mutual accountability. Importantly, agency in SpKM is oriented toward the *common good*: it seeks to harmonize personal initiative with the well-being of the whole, recognizing that in an interconnected world, empowerment divorced from responsibility risks becoming destructive. Cultivating agency thus requires a balance of freedom and constraint, autonomy and interdependence, a balance that SpKM is uniquely positioned to sustain.

9. Principle 8: Measuring transformation without reducing complexity

The desire to evaluate the effectiveness of knowledge initiatives is legitimate and necessary. However, conventional metrics often fail to capture the qualitative, emergent and deeply personal dimensions of transformation that SpKM prioritizes. Measuring transformation without reducing complexity is a methodological and philosophical challenge. It requires tools and frameworks that respect the multi-layered nature of change – cognitive, emotional, relational, personal/existential, behavioral and organizational – while avoiding the oversimplification inherent in purely quantitative indicators.

The symposium introduced the idea of a “transformation dashboard” as a potential approach: a set of indicators co-created with stakeholders that track progress toward the future best version of individuals and collectives (see below). Such dashboards would blend quantitative and qualitative measures, incorporating narrative accounts, reflective self-assessments, peer feedback and observational data alongside conventional performance metrics. The purpose of such measurement is not control but learning: to provide early warning when alignment with purpose is weakening, to celebrate positive movement and to inform the adaptation of practices. Methodologically, this calls for participatory evaluation, combining qualitative and quantitative parameters, iterative refinement of indicators and an openness to revising goals as understanding deepens. Philosophically, it acknowledges that

transformation is non-linear, context-dependent, emergent and often unpredictable by transforming (future) potentials into actuals. SpKM embraces this complexity rather than trying to eliminate it, positioning measurement as a *reflective practice* embedded within the knowledge process itself. In doing so, it transforms assessment from a static judgement into a dynamic dialogue about meaning, purpose and development.

10. Principle 9:Phronetically enacted self: the future best version as an orienting principle

The concept of the *future best version* (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006; Peschl, Kaiser, & Fordinal, 2023) offers a powerful orientation for both individual and collective development. Rather than being a fixed endpoint, it is an *evolving horizon* that guides decisions, inspires action and provides a framework for evaluating development. In SpKM, the future best version bridges the present and the possible, integrating aspiration with grounded reality by “learning from the future as it emerges” (Scharmer, 2016). It functions both as motivational force and an orientation and design criterion for practices of knowing: what kinds of knowledge, relationships and environments will move us closer to this envisioned dynamic future state?

Symposium contributions emphasized that engaging with the future best version (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006) requires imagination, courage and the willingness to confront current limitations. It also demands resonance as the sensed connection between who we are now and who we might become as well as the energy that sustains long-term commitment. Practically, this principle can be operationalized through visioning exercises, scenario planning, reflective dialogues, presencing processes (Scharmer, 2016) and iterative prototyping of new practices (Kaiser & Fordinal, 2010). Organizationally, it can inform strategic planning, talent development and innovation initiatives, ensuring that they are aligned with deeper purposes rather than short-term gains. At the societal level, the future best version can inspire collaborative efforts toward sustainable, just and flourishing futures. Importantly, this principle resists the reduction of success to predefined metrics: because the future best version is *dynamic*, its pursuit must remain adaptive, responsive and open-ended. In this way, it anchors SpKM in a future-oriented yet present-anchored praxis, linking meaning-making with concrete pathways for transformation.

11. Principle 10:Organizational and societal implications of spiritual knowledge management

The adoption of SpKM carries profound implications for both organizations and the wider society. Organizationally, it challenges the dominance of technocratic, mechanistic, efficiency- and technology-driven models of knowledge management, advocating instead for approaches that prioritize meaning, purpose, collaboration and human development. This reorientation affects leadership styles, governance structures, performance evaluation and cultural norms. It invites organizations to see themselves as communities of meaning-making, co-creation/-enaction and communities of practice and, not merely production systems.

Societally, SpKM addresses the fragmentation of knowledge and the erosion of trust in institutions by fostering spaces where diverse perspectives can be reflected and integrated into coherent, purpose- and action-oriented understandings. In an age of polarization, fake knowledge and information overload, the capacity to hold complexity, listen across differences and co-create shared narratives becomes a critical public good. The symposium discussions suggested that SpKM could serve as a bridge between sectors, academia, business, civil society and government, facilitating cross-boundary collaboration grounded in shared values. It could also contribute to addressing global challenges such as climate change, inequality and social fragmentation by aligning knowledge creation with the common good.

However, realizing these implications requires systemic change: rethinking incentive structures, reallocating resources and cultivating leadership that values depth over speed,

integration over compartmentalization, deep understanding and “contemplation” over efficiency, engagement over mechanistic execution and stewardship over exploitation. SpKM thus emerges not only as an organizational strategy but as a societal movement toward a more conscious, connected and compassionate world.

12. Principle 11: Caring as the heart of spiritual knowledge management

At the core of Spiritual Knowledge Management lies an often-overlooked but foundational principle: *caring*. Caring is more than attending, maintaining or managing; it is to enter into a personal relationship marked by responsibility, responsiveness, resonance and love – not in the romantic sense (*eros*), but as *agape* (Pieper, 1974): valuing the other (person, idea or phenomenon) for its own sake. Caring has an ethical, epistemological, as well as an ontological and existential dimension of mutual transformation. Thus, in the context of SpKM, caring signifies a personal and ethical commitment to the otherness of the world, of the other person, to the unfolding of life in its multiplicity and to the cultivation of the (common) good (spiritual, intellectual, sensory, relational and ecological/planetary). In terms of knowing, caring implies what De Jaegher (2021) refers to as an *engaged epistemology*.

Caring is an *embodied* stance of mutual *enaction* (Gallagher, 2023). It is enacted through (physical) presence, attentiveness and the willingness to be affected by what and whom one encounters. It entails a receptivity to the needs, dignity and potential of others (and the self), be they persons, ideas or ecosystems and a readiness to respond with wisdom and integrity. This contrasts sharply with the dominant managerial ethos that often privileges control, optimization and abstraction over relation, vulnerability and love. In some cases, it might require giving up well-established worldviews and premises that have led our actions in the past.

To care is to engage – with others, with the (unfolding) world, with knowledge, with the future – not from a distance, but with one’s whole self. In this way, caring restores agency and personal engagement in knowledge work (see above). Knowledge becomes generative rather than merely representational: the knower is transformed through a sustained and loving encounter with what is and what is possible.

In an age of increasing technological mediation and *cognitive technologies*, the notion of caring becomes all the more critical. While artificial intelligence/LLMs can simulate cognitive processes or even emulate emotional responses (Peschl, Wageneder, Kaiser, & Kerschbaum, 2025), it *cannot* care. Machines may calculate and simulate, but they cannot suffer, hope or love (in a more profound human sense). Caring is rooted in our *embodied vulnerability*; it is through this very fragility and precarious state that we are capable of experiencing and living resonance, compassion and responsibility. To overlook this is to dissociate knowing from its embodied and ethical ground.

Caring is not a soft ideal, it is a rigorous discipline. It requires patience and the courage to remain open amid the complexity and ambiguity of our VUCA world. Yet, it is also a source of *vitality*: it fuels the commitment necessary to sustain long-term inquiry, to hold space for personal and others’ growth and to steward knowledge as a sacred trust.

SpKM, in recognizing caring as a foundational principle, reclaims knowing as a profoundly human and spiritual act. To care is to remember that knowing is not just about what we know, how we can act successfully, but how we *relate*: to others, to the world and to the possible thriving futures we are called to co-create.

13. Principle 12: A Call for a global research and practice agenda on spiritual knowledge management

For Spiritual Knowledge Management to realize its potential, it must be developed both as a field of scholarly inquiry and a domain of professional practice. This requires

a coordinated global agenda that bridges disciplines, sectors and cultures. On the research side, priorities include conceptual development and clarification, theoretical integration, empirical validation and methodological innovation. Studies are needed to explore the interplay of spirituality, knowledge processes and transformation across diverse contexts, as well as to examine the impacts of SpKM on individual well-being, organizational performance and societal outcomes.

On the practice side, priorities include the development of tools, frameworks and training programs that make SpKM principles actionable. International networks, conferences and publications can serve as platforms for sharing insights, building community and advancing the state of the art. The symposium itself stands as a model: a gathering that combined rigorous dialogue with experiential learning, bridging theory and practice, reflection and action, as well as trustful social interaction. A global agenda should also include mechanisms for mutual learning between cultures, recognizing that spirituality and knowledge take different forms and meanings across contexts. By fostering such exchanges, SpKM can become a truly inclusive interdisciplinary field that honors diversity while seeking universal principles.

This manifesto therefore concludes with an invitation: to scholars, practitioners, leaders, policy/decision/governance makers and communities worldwide to join in shaping the next chapter of knowledge management: one that is grounded in spirituality as sketched in this paper, ethically oriented, aesthetically enriched, radically future-oriented, open-ended and transformation-driven.

Declaration of AI use

AI-assisted tools (large language models) were used solely for initial screening, thematic clustering and preliminary summaries of materials from the 4th International Symposium on Spiritual Knowledge Management (June 2025). All analysis, interpretation and final writing were conducted by the authors.

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