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**Paradigms and Prisons: A Narrative of Translation and Transformation:
My Hero's Journey from "At-Risk" Youth to Teacher/Learner
In a Jail Setting**

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of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

All life is suffering. Life is the pursuit of happiness. These are two foundational Buddhist dictums that, in their simplicity, I have entirely misunderstood regarding their depth, misreading them as contradictory. Indeed, my superficial interpretations led me to Thoreau's *life of quiet desperation* and deep depression.

We come to know and bring understanding to our lives by storying them. My own Hero's Journey, the path from my egoic *self* toward the universal *Self*, can be understood as the resultant translations and transformations. Inevitably each of us is involved in such a story, though most are unaware of the stages along our own Hero's journey.

Narrative honours writing as a means of knowing. The contemplative reflection allows insight into our imprisoning paradigms, beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots. My research revisits and explores nodal experiences along my Hero's Journey through 4 categories: *self*, society, soil, and *Self*. While the value of this process of narrative inquiry lay in its ability to come to know and understand one's *self*, perhaps its greater value is of a more universal nature. My inquiry, while adding to the body of academic educational narrative literature, may also illuminate a path to educators, students, and all interested, encouraging a response to the call of their own Hero's journey.

I am a *teacher/learner* in a jail setting, working with youth between the ages of 12 and 18 who have committed crimes such as armed robbery, assault, rape, and murder. As this thesis follows my continual development from egoic *self/teacher/learner* to universal *Self/Teacher/Learner*, it also enables me to both consciously and unconsciously open the ways in which I expand my care, compassion, and love to work with at-risk youth.

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CHAPTER ONE: PARADIGMS AND PRISONS

What follows in *figure 1* is a poem that I wrote specifically as an overview of this thesis. I place it here, as an invitation and tool for the reader to better understand the way in which I typically communicate the meanings of my experiences. “Paradigms and Prisons” is an introduction to the stories chosen for this project. At first glance, those two words may seem interchangeable. However, they also relate directly to each other as almost all paradigms, or belief systems, create boundaries, or prisons, for our behaviours. A third aspect to this coupling of words is that I work as an educator within a prison setting, dealing with both paradigms and prisons on both a physical and a conceptual level daily. I hope you can appreciate and enjoy the meanings, both the overt and the covert, of this poetic arrangement as the first steps together on my Hero's journey of the *self/Self*.

The Buddha said “*All life is suffering*,” and that “*Life is the pursuit of happiness*.” According to Thomas Moore, our lives generally lack meaning as we “hunger for spirituality” (1992, p. xvi). He states that the most frequently heard psychological predicament of our time is the feeling of “emptiness.” We suffer from this emptiness. And the suffering is perpetuated every time we try to fill it. We try to be soothed or satisfied by eating food, buying things, seeking entertainment, but doing so exploits our confusion and our disillusionment. The more we seek this satisfaction, the greater is our potential for disappointment and disenchantment. The resultant disconnect from feeding one's *self* leaves us spiritually hungry along a path of self-indulgence rather than one of self-transformation. We want the quick fix, a silver bullet, rather than a clearer understanding of the work entailed in transforming one's *self*. Consequently, the less we

Well here I am with open upward hand
 Shoulders to my ears
 Trying to figure out who it is, this me
 While breaking shackles of life long fears
 Looking forward and back at the future and past
 Inward and outward my biography
 While moving toward a
 Future that only I can create and conceive
 There are paradigms and prisons
 With bars of iron and bars of gold
 I want to search them out
 Find what it is in me they hold
 There's a self we know and one we don't
 One a construct over all time
 The other based on illusions perceived
 Dividing everything into yours and mine
 Oh and there are two questions that occur to me
 Are we evolution or divinity?
 And then there's love and what does it mean, yeah
 Find one in faith and two in a better me, a better we
 It's in my mind this concept of time
 There's only now
 The present is my gift
 I open up and find I want to give out
 All of this is ours if we wish
 Reflecting with open heart and open eyes
 This love search can help
 With a more meaningful and richer life
 Oh and there are two questions that occur to me...

Figure 1. Paradigms and Prisons. (Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)

know of our paradigms, those created by our egoic *self*, our society and the soil/ecology, the less we are able to connect with and transform to our true *Self*. Initially, I labeled these divisions ego, everyone and environment. After hearing a lecture by Satish Kumar in 2002 and reading his book *You are therefore I am* (2002), I altered my paradigm. Kumar's Chapter 11 is titled "Soil, Soul, Society" (p. 74). From his lecture and chapter heading I renamed my own trilogy, *self/Self*, Society and Soil.

I'm a little undereducated when it comes to being me

There's no school of thought where I can get my degree

Know thy self, know thy god, know thy enemy

I wish that some one would introduce us all. (C. Smith, 2001a, Almost Sure)

The lowercase *self* refers to me and us all. It is the individual that Shakespeare said was to "suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." The study of the *self* has been in existence for thousands of years in religious and philosophical inquiries.

Abraham Maslow popularized self-psychology in the 20th century, concerned with the study of what the self is, what its functions and constituents are, and what developments it undergoes. Numerous theorists, and subsequent terminologies, bring contemporary attention to the study of the *self*. "Spearheaded by such theorists as Hartman, Sullivan, G. H. Mead, Erikson, Rogers, Fairbairn, Kohut, Loevinger, Maslow, and Branden, the study of the nature and function of the self-system has recently become of paramount importance" (Wilber, 2001, p. 253). The *self* is ego based; our name, our title, our body, our possessions, our achievements, and our reputations identify it.

When we live this consumer existence, we change "our ego, according to the principle: 'I am as you desire me'" (Fromm, 1976). Consequently, there is, as Fromm

says, “an identity crisis of modern society” (p. 147). Since we are ego based in our awareness, we believe that we are separate from everything while in competition with all others in the world. We are obsessed with self-importance, validating ourselves on the basis of what others think of us. The *self* searches for fulfillment, a meaning for life, through this consumptive experience. Campbell (1988) brings an intuitive twist to this search.

People say that what we're all seeking is a meaning for life. I don't think that's what we're really seeking. I think that what we're seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonance within our innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive. (p. 4)

The rapture of being alive comes from the connection of the egoic *self* to our innermost being, the uppercase *Self*. This *Self* refers to the inclusive spiritual energy of a higher consciousness. It is Thomas Merton's “True Self” which he says is not the “ego self,” but the higher collective consciousness, the “kingdom within” (Flake, 1993, p. 224). It is D.T. Suzuki's “Self-being” or Paul Tillich's decontaminated term for God, “The Ultimate Ground of Being” or Alan Watts's (1989) “the Self of the world.” Buddha once said, “To change the world, one only has to change one's mind.” From this perspective, the translation and transformation of this ego-consciousness begins from within. This journey begins with the *self* and ends with the *Self*.

By profession I am in the practice of education and have had the privilege to work with youth at risk for more than a decade. I currently work in a Phase One Custody setting, where bars of steel imprison the students. More important, they are imprisoned by

their beliefs, their behaviours, their thoughts, their emotions, and their worldview. It was their life situations that led me to the concept of paradigms and prisons. Though the bars in my workplace are real, they are not as restrictive or as oppressive as the ones each inmate has created in his/her mind and heart.

self/Self

We are all imprisoned by our paradigms, imprisoned because we are often unaware of them, unaware of personal suffering, as we live our lives through the social norm. This consumptive norm often confuses the notion of standard of living with quality of life. Within these prisons of confusion is a whisper, a hint that we are suffering within a sense of emptiness. The social paradigm is reinforced with our constant need to pursue superficial happiness and fulfillment. Edie Brickell (1988), in her song “Now,” sings, “I am filling up the negative spaces with positively everything,” poetically emphasizing this point. I live within this suffering, this imprisonment, through my own paradigms.

My personal journey of transcendence from the paradigms of my egoic *self* towards my universal *Self* has become both an intellectual and experiential practice. This *self/Self* consciousness is often thought of as a separate and self-indulgent activity; however, I would like to parallel this personal endeavour directly to my practice as *teacher-learner/Teacher-Learner*. The lower case *teacher-learner* refers to one who simply disseminates information; the upper case *Teacher-Learner* disseminates information with an intangibility that ignites a spark in the heart of the reciprocal learner. For the sake of simplicity, any time the concept of *self/Self* is mentioned, the parallel concept of *teacher-learner/Teacher-Learner* is implied. This *self*-transformation is solely a personal journey; however, lessons learned have implications for students, both

in the student–teacher relationship as well as in the creation of a profound learning environment. The conscious awareness of the *self/Self* has tremendous potential to radiate to other teachers and perhaps, in the situation that I am currently in, to the way the guards interact with the student–inmates. The *self–teacher–learner/Self–Teacher–Learner* transformation has the capability to affect society at large as well.

The one way that we can change these guiding paradigms is to transform our worldview—essentially to achieve a “paradigm shift” (Kuhn, 1970, p. 10). Our first step towards this “shift” is to understand that we are suffering, that our world is a prison, even though the way we interact in our world may be considered normal. For example, we will continue to suffer if we drive our car rather than walk or bicycle, if we work excessive hours each week, if we watch TV all night, every night, if we consume because it is easy. Our natural instinct to change can be triggered only by the knowledge that we are behind bars. It is vital to see that our world is a prison, despite the views of everyone else.

The awareness of any paradigm objectifies its possibility of being a prison. This awareness is a call for the movement from *self* to *Self*. Often the most captivating stories are those that help us to better understand that which is most common, most taken–for–granted, and concerns us most ordinarily and directly. To this end, “in drawing up personal descriptions of lived experiences, the phenomenologist knows that one's own experiences are also the possible experiences of others” (Van Manen, 1992, p. 54). My intent within this thesis is that my story will be understood as a shared experience. We learn from the stories of others, from how they act and who they are. We find meaning in them as they awaken, or resonate in, an awareness that we value. I am echoing a concept of Connelly and Clandinin (1990) who wrote, “We see teachers' narratives as metaphors

for teacher–learning relationships” (p. 3). We become more informed about others and, consequently, ourselves through this ritual of story and integrated interpretation.

I also believe that we have an intuitive drive to develop ourselves as wholly and completely as possible. While it seems easier to live the “norm” in the luxuries of materialism, the deep longing for completeness remains in whispers, reminding us of our movement towards our innermost being. In making ourselves the most beautiful, wondrous, intelligent, humorous, loving, and compassionate beings, we become capable of sharing our gifts with others. The greatest part of this sharing is that in the giving we lose nothing; we still have all that we are. In *The Courage to Teach* (1998), Parker Palmer describes the deep inquiry that “honors and challenges the teacher’s heart,” moving from the superficial to the “inner landscape of the teaching self” (p. 4). In essence, we teach who we are. If we are in denial of the Holocaust in World War II or have personal gender biases, then that is what we teach, both overtly and covertly. As we strive from *self* to *Self*, we teach, by way of our radiance and passion for life, of this transformation. My hope is that, through this work, I can illuminate a path to lessen this Buddhist sense of suffering and create a map towards personal translation and transformation that is helpful to all *teachers/Teachers*, from early childhood to university professors.

Society

We are a society bound by fear. For many of us this fear is related to attachment to the egoic *self* rather than the fear to follow the transformative call toward the *Self*. What is most private is most public. Whatever changes I make in my sense of *self*–

awareness and transformation have a ripple effect on others. I become the pebble thrown into the pond of those around me, which is the same for each individual.

“In our urban habitat, dominated by concrete and asphalt, or carefully manicured lawns, we find ourselves separated from the source of life” (Suzuki, 2002, p. 77). This separation of *self* and *Self* has become a living norm. In “The Trouble With Normal,” Bruce Cockburn (1987) sings, “that the trouble with normal is it always gets worse.” Yet this is our way of being, going along with the cultural norms and *self*/*Self* separation. In the movie *12 Monkeys*, Brad Pitt's character rants in an insane asylum that “there is no right, no wrong, only popular opinion” (Gilliam, 1995). Cockburn and Gilliam both underline the social paradigms of our collective suffering. Fromm (cited in Glendining, 1994) succinctly observed that when “millions of people share the same form of mental pathology it does not make those people sane” (p. 89).

I have valued and lived the dominant paradigms of my culture. I see these paradigms exhibited daily by the students I teach. I see them in abundance in our wasteful society—in adults who show symptoms of the suffering and disconnect. Capitalism manipulates our “emptiness” and markets to the feelings of want and envy. The more we consume, the less connected we are with the mindfulness of the higher *Self*. Palmer (2000) relates this social paradigm to teachers when he writes of distress and burnout as “a state of emptiness...but it does not result from giving all I have: it merely reveals the nothingness from which I was trying to give in the first place” (p. 49).

As adults and teachers we are role models for youth, and in that I feel we have an obligation to become better people, more whole, as we strive to reach *our* potential. We could begin to know the impact of the familiar grade report statement “does not work to

his/her potential” as it relates to us along our journey of awareness towards our potential. This journey imparts a greater sense of purpose and commitment as we gain knowledge of who we are and increase our commitment to the work we do for our society, students, and ourselves. The other side of the coin is individual and cultural *self*-indulgence. Both paths create the paradigms that guide our beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots.

Soil

Our political and social paradigms have allowed us to intellectually separate from nature. In doing so, we have destroyed more than we have spared and more than we have built. For example, we have reached a point that nears the extinction of about 100 species globally each year (DeMarcos & Bell, 1997). I use the word “man” intentionally because it is this gender that has “constructed the prevailing theories (paradigms), written history (his-story rather than her-story), and set values that have become the guiding principles (prisons) for men and women alike” (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986, p. 5).

The wonders of success that humankind has experienced, particularly in the world of science, have left Western society with a false sense of superiority and separation from the natural world and a theme of dominance within our social paradigm. In her book, *My Name is Chellis and I'm in Recovery From Western Civilization*, Chellis Glendinning (1994) describes the premise of Eco-psychology as the integration of two fields: psychology, the science dealing with the mind along with mental and emotional processes in relation to behaviour, and ecology, the study of living organisms in relation to their environment.

The ecosystem is the complex web linking animals, plants, air, water and every other life form together. The system is in a 'steady state' of dynamic balance, which means that by altering any one part you affect all the others. (p. 16)

This means that positive alterations to the *self/Self* will positively affect this dynamic balance, while negative paradigm alters the system negatively. This is the case if we are ill, at dis-ease, as we impose our illness onto others in society and onto the soil. The sickness of the *self* becomes the sickness of the soil. This premise of interrelatedness is the basis for Eco-psychology.

Gaia was the great deity of the early Greeks, the “deep-breasted Earth” (Suzuki, 2002, p. 84). In the early 1960s, NASA asked scientist James Lovelock to help design the Surveyor spacecraft that was to explore the moon. While ruminating on this task, Lovelock revisited the Gaia Myth and repopularized the concept for many, including environmentalists, Deep Ecologists, and Eco-psychologists. Suzuki points out how “Gaia is as indifferent to our fate as the stars” (p. 143). He paraphrases Lovelock,

Gaia's feedback mechanisms take place over time, without regard to which species ultimately survive or disappear. The idea of Gaia, or the totality of the living Earth, may provide the comforting thought that life will survive the current spam of human-induced extinction, but we should also remember that it will not ensure our own survival. (p. 144)

The Gaia Myth describes the living Earth as an interconnected system. Eco-psychology reconnects us to this system as Glendining (1994) describes,

Just about everybody I know who is serious about personal healing, social change, and ecological rebalancing is in recovery: recovery from personal addiction,

childhood abuse, childhood deprivation, the nuclear family, sexism, racism, urban alienation, trickle down economics, combat service in the trenches of gender wars, the threat of extinction, linear thinking, the mind/body split, technological progress, and the mechanistic worldview. (p. ix)

The transformative journey of the *self* inevitably affects the soil, the physical world, and integrates *Self* with Gaia without separation or dominance. Ecological devastation, emotional isolation, spiritual displacement, and the *self*/*Self* transformation have a very strong relationship for me. It was my own sense of separation between *self*, society, soil and *Self*, leading me to serious bouts of clinical depression, which called me along into this transformative *self*/*Self* journey.

Narrative Method

The narrative theory of Bruner (1996), as cited in Bosacki (2005), states that “children learn to make sense of their social world as they acquire the ability to tell stories about it” (p. 133). While this quote references children, I would suggest that all learners make sense of their social world as they acquire the ability to tell stories about it. I base my own narrative inquiry on the seminal writings of Dewey (1938) that “everything depends upon the interpretation given them as they are put into practice in the school and the home” (p. 20). The narrative method will allow me to use the interpretation of my experiences as shared stories towards a stronger personal awareness, opening possibilities for change and learning opportunities. These critical interpretations of personal story will also be used in relationship to the broader mysteries of humanity, the universal story.

My narrative research process will also integrate the philosophy presented by Richardson (1998), acknowledging “writing as a dynamic and creative process” (p. 517). This creative research method will be organic, evolving, and flexible; thus the emphasis will likely change throughout the study. This *self/Self* narrative study gives me the opportunity to retell and relive stories of my personal journey in the hope to add to the body of narrative educational knowledge.

In our culture, the tension between nature (genetics) and nurture (social environment) in character development is a common theoretical construct. The scientific paradigm that remained with me from my undergraduate courses led me to believe that quantitative research was the only path to follow with answers that were always clear-cut, black and white. With this in mind, and accepting the nature/nurture tension as a starting point, I journeyed through the examination of a number of paradigms—psychology, biology, physiology, and even more “ologies.” Yet somehow this nature/nurture paradigm did not give a broad enough perspective for my liking and comfort. Even though there was this formidable insistence that both our genes and our environment develop character, I felt that there had to be something more.

You can insist that there's...something more. But if you try to visualize the form this something would take, or articulate it clearly, you'll find the task impossible, for any force that is not in the genes or the environment is outside of physical reality, as we perceive it. It's beyond scientific discourse.... This doesn't mean it doesn't exist. (Hillman, 1997, p. x)

Adopting Hillman's position led me from quantitative inquiry to that of a qualitative nature. Narrative, as a qualitative inquiry method, allows me to gain insight into journals,

poetry, and stories of my lived experience while linking these insights to formal academic literature. This perspective initially allowed me to develop a more holistic perspective of the nature/nurture argument and add to it the concept of Namaste, which I will go into with much greater detail in the following chapters.

To study the *self/Self*, one must begin by studying one's biography, one's story. One can use peripheral vision to get glimpses of a different perspective, to see other insights that are not within our direct vision, paradigm, or consciousness. This contemplative reflection across time I describe as the Past, Present, and the Perhaps. My study of personal experience is based on Dewey's theory of "Experience." In his book *Experience and Education* (1938), Dewey wrote that "there is no intellectual growth without some reconstruction, some rethinking, of impulses and desires, in the form in which they first show themselves" (p. 64). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) take Dewey's thinking one step further into a concept of Narrative Inquiry. "Experience happens narratively. Narrative inquiry is a form of narrative experience. Therefore, educational experience should be studied narratively" (p. 19). Experience is not only what happens to us but also what we do with what happens to us and how we story what happens to us. Eisner (1993) states that "humans do not simply have experience; they have a hand in its creation, and the quality of their creation depends upon the ways they employ their minds....Education itself is a mind-making process" (p. 5). The educational value of narrative lies in its ability to allow the learner to thoughtfully and critically story their experience towards new and deeper learning.

Van Manen (1992) proposes four "existential" categories which relate to experiences affirming one's being. These four existentials are temporality, relationality,

corporality, and spatiality (p. 102). I use these themes of Dewey, Clandinin and Connelly, and Van Manen as a narrative foundational framework. I also use the Story Model presented by Drake et al. (1992) as the heuristic device for the stories in this thesis.

My storied journey, expressed through journal entries, poetry, and anecdotes, reflects a sense of movement across time, over many life situations and experiences. This inquiry into *self/Self* inevitably crosses through our concept of time, from past to present and from present to perhaps (anticipated or perceived future). An anticipated future, with all its paradigm shifts, is part of that story. It is in the present that our perhaps, our future, rests. We become in the future what we believe and practice in the present, freeing ourselves from the paradigms that have imprisoned us in the past.

Since much of human experience is constructed, as we constantly apply personal subjective meanings to things, it is easy to connect to each other through story. Denzin (1994) wrote, “truth is a textual production” (p. 505). A narrative self-study in essence is textual and therefore apt to produce greater thoughtfulness. We deconstruct our stories to interpret life through our experiences. Drake and Miller's (1991) notion of being a “reflective and contemplative practitioner” can be related to this thoughtfulness. Being a reflective practitioner “weaves together practice and theory at an intuitive level” (p. 321). The result of such a practice, for example, may enable us to say the right thing at delicate moments. In my own case, this may further enable me to be a better person and more effective educator. The “thoughtfulness” may still be temporal, but my reflective and contemplative abilities will nonetheless be improved to the extent that I will be better able to see the bars of my past and present paradigms.

Mooney, as cited in Bullough and Pinnegar (2001), said:

Research is a personal venture which, quite aside from social benefits, is worth doing for its direct contribution to one's own self-realization. It can be taken as a way of meeting life with the maximum of stops open to get out of experience its most poignant significance, its most full throated song. (p. 13)

The more that I can penetrate the mysteries of my own humanity and come to understand *myself*, the more that I am able to understand others. This understanding leads to an awareness of universal interrelatedness, a greater perception of inclusion and sense of the Higher *Self*. The development of the *self/Self* knowledge inevitably improves the manner in which I interact with my world personally, professionally, socially and ecologically.

Stipulative Definitions

Since many of the terms I utilize are common language, I feel it is necessary to relate how I will apply these specific words in this project.

Hero's Journey

The Hero's journey, according to Joseph Campbell (1988), is not “a courageous act.” It is “a life lived in self-discovery.” And its purpose is not self-aggrandizement, but “to redeem society” (p. xiv). Every person has the potential to undertake this dialectical journey at different stages in his or her life. There are three parts to the hero's journey. The first is the “Call,” followed by the “Initiation,” and third, the “Return.”

The call. Generally occurs at a moment of crisis, one that causes us to change our life, our paradigm. This phase begins once the Call has been accepted. If we are not prepared, not ready, we will not heed the call.

Often in actual life, and not infrequently in the myths and popular tales, we encounter the dull case of the call unanswered; for it is always possible to turn the ear to other interests. Refusal of the summons converts the adventure into its negative. Walled in boredom, hard work, or “culture,” the subject loses the power of significant affirmative action and becomes a victim to be saved, his flowing world becomes a wasteland of dry stones, and his life feels meaningless.

(Campbell, 1973, p. 59)

An alcoholic who hits rock bottom, for example, is called when s/he decides to end their debilitating lifestyle. For the hero, it is a signal “to participate in life courageously and decently, in the way of nature, not in the way of personal rancor, disappointment, or revenge” (Campbell, 1988, p. 82).

The initiation. This is the actual journey or the path we must take to transform, even if it is filled with difficulty and pain. The Initiation process begins the hero's journey, filled with obstacles. In myth, the hero is always directed along the way by some supernatural helper, but in our lives, we may have to achieve the paradigm shift on our own. We can begin the initiation process only when we are ready. The ordeals of the journey provide the opportunities to learn, to illuminate the hidden paradigms, to bring us to revelation. When we quit thinking primarily about our own preservation, “we undergo a truly heroic transformation of consciousness” (Campbell, 1988, pp. 154). A hero then is someone who, while working on his/her “self,” has given life to the “Self.”

The return. The final passage of the Hero's journey is to return to the place of origin. The return brings the transformation back full circle.

The norm of the Monomyth, requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom, the golden Fleece, or his sleeping princess, back into the kingdom of humanity, where the boon may redound to the renewing of the community, the nation, the planet, or the ten thousand worlds. (Campbell, 1973, p. 193)

The paradigm shift in personal values, beliefs, and ultimately identity moves the hero from the ego-based *self* to a more holistic life. We also find that selfless service is essential and meaningful. The hero does not gain the elixir of life to run off and hoard it, but brings it back so that others may share in its bounty.

Paradigms

Paradigm is derived from the Greek word “Paradeigma.” Plato, in his “Myth of Er,” used it to represent our life's patterns or our worldview (Hillman, 1997, p. 9). I use the term paradigm popularized by Thomas Kuhn (1970) in his groundbreaking book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. A paradigm is a belief system, a pattern of behaviour, or worldview that determines who we are as ego-based individuals (*self*). The “paradigm acts as a lens through which every observation is filtered” (Tarnas, 1991, p. 360).

Paradigm Shift

A paradigm shift can be thought of as a change from one kind of thinking to another kind of thinking. Kuhn (1970) said that advancement is not evolutionary but rather a “series of peaceful interludes punctuated by intellectually violent revolutions,” and in those revolutions “one conceptual world view is replaced by another” (p. 10). A “paradigm shift” is a revolution, a transformation, and a sort of metamorphosis, and in this paper, the shift that occurs through a transformation from the *self* to the *Self*.

Prisons

The “at-risk” youth whom I teach live within an actual prison. The title *Paradigms and Prisons* suggests also that there are patterns of beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots that in some form lead us, or in this case lead me, to predictable situations: our prisons. This parallels Van Dyke (cited in Bartlett & Kaplan, 1992), who states, “Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul” (p. 563). We are influenced to see the world a certain way. The problem is that this eventually becomes our world, filled with protective mechanisms afforded us to survive in it. We eat, spend, fight, kill, and waste to survive, or overcome, the ills of our world. These protective mechanisms become our prisons.

self-teacher-learner

This *self-teacher-learner* is the ego-based and separate individual identified by social constructs, names, titles, possessions, achievements, and so on.

Self-Teacher-Learner

This *Self-Teacher-Learner* is aware of, and inseparable from, the interconnectedness of self, soil, and society. This is the highest level of transcendence on the Hero's journey.

Transformation

Transformation implies absolute and irreversible change. “In order for an individual to transform to the next higher level, he or she has, in effect, to accept the *death* of the present level of adaptation, that is, to cease an *exclusive* identity with that level” (Wilber, 1999, p. 68). Each change transcends and includes its predecessor. It goes beyond its given level and is vertical–revolutionary–transcendent in nature.

Translation

“Translation apparently has one major function: to integrate, stabilize, and equilibrate its given level” (Wilber, 1999, p. 64). In contrast to transformation, it is horizontal–evolutionary–historic in nature. At each level of development we “fill in” and “flesh out” horizontally until we are ready to move on vertically in transformation.

Limitations

Paradigms and Prisons is a metaphor that affects all of us. This research specifically emerges from my own critical reflection upon my personal paradigms and worldview. As these personal paradigms are imprisoned by my beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots, so to is my critical reflection and ensuing research. Peshkin (1988) describes the need for one to be critically aware of their own subjectivity during the research process so that “they can at least disclose to the readers where self and subject have become one” (p. 17). This creates a paradox in that, as I write of paradigm shifts, it is always as seen through the lens of my current paradigm. “It [subjectivity] is an amalgam of the persuasions that stem from class, statuses, and values interacting with the particulars of one's object of investigation” (Peshkin, p. 17). As one becomes more aware of this amalgam, one is better able to see and critically reflect beyond it.

The wonders of qualitative research and of my rich narratives may also be the essential weaknesses of this paper. The object of this investigation is to reveal the translational and transformational events of my life. This often requires great critical reflection to see when “self and subject” become joined, as is the case in self–narrative. In postmodern jargon, I am, as Vienne (2000) would assert, an “unreliable narrator” (p. 87), a subjective eyewitness who does not know all the facts about himself and thus does

not grasp the full scope of their meanings. In an effort to make the data more trustworthy and to tame my subjectivity, I will continually consult and dialogue with family, friends, and guards at the jail to temper my own grandiosity. While this narrative may have great internal validity in its meaning to me, it is not easily replicable or transferable. My hope remains that through this storied discussion of translation and transformation, I am able to establish a sense of universality along the Hero's journey.

Chapter Outlines

**Well here I am with open upward hands
Shoulders to my ears
Trying to figure out who it is, this me
While breaking shackles of life long fears
Looking forward and back at the future and past
Inward and outward my biography
While moving toward a
Future that only I can create and conceive
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)**

Chapter Two

This chapter will discuss how I came to narrative as a method and the use of Drake's Story Model (1992) as the heuristic device for my thesis. A discussion of method is part of my personal journey and knowing and correlates with the stages of the Hero's journey. The usefulness of such intellectual research and information is in my ability to internalize and enact it. I hope that this can be achieved through reflection and contemplation, exploring areas of ambiguity in order to bring the unknown into the known.

Chapters Three–Six

There are paradigms and prisons
With bars of iron and bars of gold
I want to search them out
Find what it is in me they hold
There's a self we know and one we don't
One a construct over all time
The other based on illusions perceived
Dividing everything into yours and mine
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)

These chapters are situated in my educational setting and grounded in my personal experience described in Chapter Two. They will attempt to move my private experience into a public domain in an effort to create a universal message from my personal stories and their meanings. Descriptions of daily interactions and anecdotes from my professional life as a custody-setting educator underlie these chapters alongside my personal translations and transformations.

Chapter Three

Nodal Stories of Translation and Transformation: In Relation to *self*

Chapter Four

Nodal Stories of Translation and Transformation: In Relation to Society

Chapter Five

Nodal Stories of Translation and Transformation: In Relation to Soil

Chapter Six

Nodal Stories of Translation and Transformation: In Relation to *Self*

Chapter Seven

It's in my mind this concept of time
 There's only now
 The present is my gift
 I open up and find I want to give out
 All of this is ours if we wish
 Reflecting with open heart and open eyes
 This love search can help with
 A more meaningful and richer life
 Oh and there are two questions that occur to me
 Are we evolution or divinity?
 And then there's love and what does it mean, yeah
 Find one in faith and two in a better me, a better we
 (Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)

This final chapter will be a summary. I will articulate my movement from *self/Self* awareness, a movement that has been powerfully significant with deep and useful meaning to me. Fulfillment of the Hero's journey is in a return with a bounty that is useful for others. My hope is that the material in this document may be a guide in some way for students, fellow colleagues, as well others who have an interest in this quest.

Allow me to close this chapter with a thought about my egoic fears involved in this personal project. A part of me feels that this path of inquiry into the *self/Self* is a noble pursuit, perhaps the only purpose worthwhile. My understanding of the journeys that others have taken, Siddhartha Guatama, Jesus Christ, Socrates, Mother Teresa, and Gandhi to name a few, lead me to this path. Another part of me thinks that such a committed pursuit is worthless, that this notion of ultimate love is too elusive, only philosophical masturbation and rhetoric. The values of our current social paradigm lead

me to the notion that my inquiry is irresponsible, unattainable, and hence, an exercise in not doing, leaving me, once again, Mr. Non-Commitment, Mr. Non-Responsibility.

Mr. Non-Commitment, ah Mr. Non-Responsibility

The answers few to all the possibilities

The dreamer who can't dream past today

The lover who can't understand with no faith

The helper who pushes others but can't help himself

The philosopher who espouses what he has never felt

(Warren Albert Trimble, 1997)

A part of me wonders if I am experiencing the fear naturally associated with Campbell's (1988) journey inward, of ultimately feeling alone (p. 59). Or whether maybe my inquiry *is* the Hero's journey, disguised in my hesitation and uncertainty, as in the "preparation." I wonder if I search for definite answers to questions unanswerable in an attempt to know the elusive mystery of the *self/Self*. Perhaps one of the answers is to remain open in wonder to the journey and then we may come to understand, as Sam Keen (1994) suggests from his wonderful book *Hymns to an Unknown God*, that:

One day, as we move through the process of preparing ourselves, we will discover that, without realizing it, we have already come a long distance on the journey together. The preparation will have fused with the journey. Then we will find, to our surprise, that the theory and the practice have embraced each other, that our contemplation of self has become inseparable from our compassionate actions for others, that our patient waiting in the fertile darkness has become our manner of trusting in the Unknown God, that our questions have become our joy. (p. 8)

self/Self-teacher/Teacher inquiry is one way of attempting to ontologically know one's self. Deep reflection with contemplation is a process that can propel us into the

Hero's journey, and along the way “we will discover that...our contemplation of self has become inseparable from our compassionate actions for others.” This journey has become an inclusive journey involving society and soil, towards my larger and more encompassing *Self*. I hope that what I have written can be viewed with “open heart and open eyes” and that it, in fact, leads me, and others towards “a more meaningful and richer life.”

CHAPTER TWO: NARRATIVE METHOD

**Well here I am with open upward hands
Shoulders to my ears
Trying to figure out who it is, this me
While breaking shackles of life long fears
Looking forward and back at the future and past
Inward and outward my biography
While moving toward a
Future that only I can create and conceive
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)**

Confusion has been a companion and friend of mine for many years, always leading me to seek understanding towards new paradigms and stories. While often unsettling, I find comfort in knowing that I do not know. It is this not knowing and accompanying confusion and discontent that have been a guide in my personal journey. The familiar gesture of having one's shoulders to one's ears, signifying "I don't know," is what draws me on. I have this sense that there is another way, a better way, brought into my awareness through my admissions of not knowing the answer.

I like the idea that writers within a narrative framework cannot always make sense of every situation, experience, or life. This intangible attempt at understanding is valuable, even if uncertain in its outcomes. One thing narrative authors can do is to "make very clear their own narrative purpose" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1991, p. 278). In writing this thesis, sharing personal stories along my journey is an integral part of my own narrative purpose as, "I write because I want to find something out. I write in order to learn something that I didn't know before I wrote" (Richardson, 1998, p. 517).

I am comfortable with the discomfort within the unfolding of myself. As stated by Bullough and Pinnegar (2001), “The aim of self–study research is to provoke, challenge and illuminate rather than confirm and settle” (p. 20). The Story Model by Drake (1992) has evolved into a useful heuristic tool for the method of *self/Self* understanding. There will be further discussion of the use of The Story Model later in this chapter; however, I feel it necessary to articulate the narrative umbrella that The Story Model falls under and specifically my search for *self/Self*–understanding.

Paradigms and Prisons is an ontological pursuit of *self/Self*–knowledge. This knowledge comes by way of the examined life through reflection and contemplation. This personal journey potentially leads to an awareness of the interrelatedness, the greater inclusion, and an understanding of what has been called “The Ultimate Ground of Being” by Paul Tillich (cited in Watts, 1989, p. 18), Jung’s “Higher Order Consciousness” (Jung, 1971, p. 138), the “True Self” by Craig (1994, p. 51), Preskill’s “Second Self” (1998, p. 344), or Wilber’s (1997) “Real Self,” all of which I have termed *Self*.

This narrative research is my modest attempt to seek out those transformative experiences within my life through a contemplative reflection on personal story. This reflection will bring meaning to my experiences. This self–study will integrate the abstract notions of teaching and learning and experience and give voice to the immutable interconnectedness of these. I will use a narrative method approach in an attempt to present the personally poignant and significant *self/Self*–journey. Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) state that self–study researchers “stand at the intersection of biography and history” (p. 15). They talk about “nodal moments” of life learning and how it is enlightening and crucial to self–study work. It is the use of my nodal stories in relation to

their universal significance that intrigues me in this final project. Van Manen (1992) suggests that the method one chooses is greatly dependent upon the phenomena s/he determines to study. The notion of method is “charged with methodological considerations and implications of a particular philosophical or epistemological perspective” (p. 28). I recognized early in my personal journey and the journey of understanding educational research that I was attracted and intrigued by narrative inquiry as methodology and Drake's Story Model (1992) as method.

It has taken a great deal of time to shift my paradigm from a quantitative lens of fact and reasoning. I had to see beyond my initial solipsistic and narcissistic ideas of narrative into an understanding of the powerful and instructive nature of narrative towards insight and growth in personal and professional roles. I have come to this new paradigm in agreement with Bullough and Pinnegar (2001), to view self-study not as a “focus on the self per se but on the space between self and the practice engaged in” (p. 15). The purpose in the narrative *self*-search is to move towards the higher *Self* and in doing so move from the role of *teacher* to that of giving fully as a *Teacher*.

We story our own learning by finding its meaning in our lives. Narrative is the story, the datum. The attempt at finding meaning within the story is narrative research. The hope of the personal meaning found in the research is inevitably the hope of finding common meaning or the experience of being alive. This narrative *self*/*Self*-study moves from these assumptions. Van Manen (1992) comments on narrative inquiry as “the fundamental model of this approach is textual reflection on the lived experiences and practical actions of everyday life with the intent to increase one's thoughtfulness and practical resourcefulness or tact” (p. 4).

We learn what we need to know from the stories of others, from how they act and who they are. We find meaning in them as they awaken, or resonate, in an awareness that we value. We become, consequently, more informed about others and about ourselves through this ritual of story and integrated interpretation. In saying this, I am echoing the concept of Connelly and Clandinin, who wrote; “We see teachers' narratives as metaphors for teacher–learning relationships” (1990, p. 3).

Arriving at Narrative

For 20 years I have been writing in journals, yet for all the time and energy put into the writing of prose and poetry in those notebooks, it was a secretive affair. I had a personal sense of *self*, fraught with fears, with regard to how I acted, how I felt about my–*self*, how others perceived me, and how I wanted to be. I sense that these private fears are really public; we all feel this divisiveness to some degree. In his song “Almost Sure” (2001a), Chris Smith sings about this exact sentiment: “I'm almost sure/We all know the same pain it just comes in different words.” In fact, musical lyrics helped to support me at this time. I began the journey of attempting to live my life from the inside out, instead of from the outside in as I had been socialized to do.

In his book *Let Your Life Speak*, Parker Palmer (2000) wrote,

I must listen to my life telling me who I am. I must listen for the truths and values at the heart of my own identity, not the standards by which I must live—but the standards by which I cannot help but live if I am living my own life. (p. 4)

That recent outlook echoes that which I heard years ago on the radio from a pop artist by the name of Howard Jones.

Who wants to compare as if this was a competition

Leave that to teachers at school must preserve their tradition

'Bout time you realized you are a specialty

There is no one like you

Spend your life worrying 'bout what you could have been

Can't you like being you? (Jones, 1985, Specialty)

I heard the call to this journey of *self* that long ago but communicated only through my writing, books filled with confusion and poetry, my musings on the meaning of life and love, for an audience of one. These reflections were randomly written, never chronologically, into a number of journals, undated and unorganized. I felt that I couldn't share my writing, as I couldn't afford to have anyone speak over it or shape it at all. It was simply too important to me for that. Above all I feared that what I wrote, what I truly *was*, would not be confirmed or valued by others.

I was introduced to the idea of narrative inquiry as an academic tool by way of course work through Brock University with Carmen Shields in 2002. Richardson (1989) describes the fixed writing typically involved in quantitative research as that which “undermines the confidence of beginning qualitative researchers because their experience of research is inconsistent with the writing model” (p. 517). She continues to describe this “static writing model” as one which “requires writers to silence their own voices and view themselves as contaminants” (Richardson, p. 517). The coursework and readings resonated with me, giving me an excitement that there existed a clear and articulate narrative research framework that would allow me to address my thesis. I became aware of the research done by Clandinin and Connelly, and as I continued to reflect on their approach, I also deepened my reading on the related subjects of autobiography, writing,

self-study, and experience in order to more specifically articulate the niche I needed. In those readings I came across several pieces of supporting research that were pivotal in finally bringing me to a position where I felt comfortable within narrative research. Once I moved through my initial biases based on scientific inquiry, I felt at home with creation of value and meaning from my own experience as linked to writings, those of both my own and others.

Women's Ways of Knowing

From a very young age I was aware that I was different than other kids and that to be accepted I had to deny what I seemed to intuitively know and feel. In essence my voice had been shamefully silenced. Capra (1982) describes the imbalance that I felt as a child as it applies to Western culture. It is the imbalance of the yang (masculine) and the yin (feminine).

Looking at this list of opposites, it is easy to see our society has constantly favored the yang over the yin—rationality knowledge over intuition wisdom, science over religion, competition over cooperation, exploitation of natural resources over conservation, and so on. This emphasis, supported by the patriarchal system and further encouraged by the dominance of sensate culture during the past three centuries, has led to a profound cultural imbalance which lies at the very root of our cultural crisis—an imbalance in our thoughts and feelings, our values and attitudes, and our social and political structure. (Capra, p. 38)

Though I am an excellent athlete and played competitive sports, I was never interested in winning. I am not a “jock,” in that I have never enjoyed watching sport, reading about sport, or discussing sports. I remember often feeling poorly for the “losing”

team or the guy who just got cut. I just didn't think it was fair. I have always been demonstrative, affectionate and sensitive to other's feelings, with family, relative's, and partners. Music and reading provided some comprehension of these ways to me in my late 20s. This was most profound when I read the book *Women's Ways of Knowing* (Belenky et al., 1986). As I read the book, I identified with how the women, yin, described the oppressive and dominant masculine culture, yang, how it took away both their voice and their sense of self. Earlier I knew to hide my yin way of being. Later I would come to learn from Keirse and Bates (1978) and Keirse (1998) that these ways were to be accepted as part of my temperament. (This notion of temperament is discussed in Chapter Three.) At the time of reading Belenky et al. (1986), I kept saying to myself while shaking my head, "I am a woman, I am a woman," sharing a deep appreciation for being silenced and without a voice. The book suggested that *silent* women have little awareness of their intellectual abilities because they live selfless and voiceless at the will of those around them. This spoke directly to me, as I felt I was living a voiceless, inauthentic life. The authors wrote,

We became aware that it (voice) is a metaphor that can apply to many aspects of women's experience and development. In describing their lives, women commonly talked about voice and silence: "speaking up," "speaking out," "being silenced," not being heard, "really listening," "really talking," "words as weapons," "feeling deaf and dumb," "having no words," "saying what you mean," "listening to the heard," and so on in an endless variety of connotations all having to do with sense of mind, self-worth, and feelings of isolation from or connection to others. We found that women repeatedly used their metaphor of voice to depict

their intellectual and ethical development; and that the development of a sense of voice, mind, and self were intricately intertwined. (Belenky et al., p. 18)

I had no idea that my sense of *self*, or rather lack of that sense, was so intertwined with being silenced by my own fear of ridicule. In *The Culture of Classroom Silence* (2005), Bosacki suggests a link between voice and social context.

Overall, the metatheme gleaned from cross-cultural studies suggest that our identities and voices are constantly in process and may adapt to the particular context we live in. That is, adolescents may constantly create and recreate themselves through voice and voicing of self may develop as adolescents become responsive to change and to creating new means of self-expression. (p. 87)

I was self-silenced as an adolescent because I wanted desperately to fit into the immediate social context. Family, friends, teachers, and society all saw me as successful. I had an innate sense of relation to others—a strong intrapersonal intelligence (Gardner, 1983) and an Intuitive Feeler (Keirsey & Bates, 1978). This meant that I was quite effective at reading social cues. Bosacki (2005) describes a possible disparity between social competence and self-esteem, something that affected me directly.

The better boys were at reading social situations, the more likely they were to be rated as socially competent by their teachers and peers. Interestingly, this relation was not influenced by how the boys felt or thought about themselves. For example, a boy who was an effective interpreter was also rated as an effective or competent social communicator by his peers and teachers regardless of how he felt or thought about himself. Thus boys who had a negative sense of self-worth

or low self-esteem could still have been capable of understanding and interacting effectively with others. (p. 43)

My ability to both interpret and adapt to changing social context or paradigms created a vast chasm between my sense of personal values and those I saw as socially correct ones. Feeling this disparity as an adolescent through to my mid-20s, I chose to hide in silence for acceptance. *Women's Ways of Knowing* (Belenky et al., 1986) gave me an important insight into voice and being heard, while indirectly speaking to narrative and a “new” way of knowing, a women's way of knowing.

Writing as a Way of Knowing

This sense of discovery, of voice, led me to another work of research, a chapter entitled “Writing” by Laurel Richardson (1998). Richardson put forth an alternative view of qualitative research writing as “a way of knowing—a method of discovery and analysis” (p. 516), opposing this approach to the standard social-scientific view of research writing as “a mopping-up activity at the end of a research project” (p. 516).

Further reflection on my journal writing revealed that the process itself was a way of learning for me. It was the way in which I was first able to uncover and express certain thoughts and feelings that I may have previously been unaware of. This act of writing had become an act of discovery and of *self*-discovery. This concrete, initial articulation of the thought or feeling became a solid platform from which I could explore. Often this discovery of the thought or feeling came as an utter surprise to me. I finally found solace and comprehension in my writing. As Richardson (1998) expresses, “we are freed to write material in a variety of ways: to tell and retell. There is no such thing as 'getting it right', only 'getting it' differently contoured and nuanced” (p. 521).

From the beginning of my journaling, my writing had really been a way of learning about myself and of putting my world into perspective. It was a method which allowed me to uncover and express thoughts and feelings that I had not had the opportunity or skill to articulate. It also provided a means by which I learned to find both meaning in my writing and an expression of my voice. I had come to the realization that my writing of that period was not a “mopping-up” exercise. I wrote, as Richardson (1998) puts it, “to find something out...to learn something that I didn't know before” (p. 517). The researcher sees two important implications for qualitative writers in all of this. The first is that poststructuralism “directs us to understand ourselves reflexively as persons writing from particular positions at specific times” (p. 518). The second is that poststructuralism “frees us from trying to write a text in which everything is said to everyone” (p. 518). I found confirmation in both Richardson's poststructural approach and *Women's Ways of Knowing* (Belenky et al., 1986), validating my initial impulse to write so many years ago. This corroboration created confidence in the formation of my thesis, that what I wrote of had value and that I was on the right track.

Background to Narrative Theory

My study of personal experience is a narrative inquiry based on Dewey's foundational theory of “Experience,” Connelly and Clandinin's concept of “Narrative Inquiry,” Van Manen's “Four Existential Categories” and Drake's “Story Model.” In his book *Experience and Education* (1938), Dewey wrote, “there is no intellectual growth without some reconstruction, some rethinking, of impulses and desires, in the form in which they first show themselves” (p. 64). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) take Dewey's thinking one step further into a concept of “Narrative Inquiry.” “Experience happens

narratively. Narrative inquiry is a form of narrative experience. Therefore, educational experience should be studied narratively” (p. 19). The “Four Existentials” of Van Manen (1992) integrates the seminal works of the previous theorists into an intellectual framework that is aligned with my research. Drake et al's. (1992) “Story Model” provides a straightforward tool for personal narrative inquiry.

Dewey

Narrative inquiry is based on the concept of experience as determined by the work of Dewey (1938) and his three “principles of continuity, interaction, and situation” (p. 42). *Continuity* refers to temporal positioning, in which “every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after” (p. 27). A past belief or paradigm always requires reconstruction in order to remain useful for the present and into the future. *Interaction* is relational in that “experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what at the time, constitutes his environment” (p. 41). Clandinin and Connelly (1990) clarify this concept of interaction by saying that “interaction refers to the intersection of the internal and external conditions” (p. 7). We are social beings, and our environment always involves those around us. This is especially valid in an educational institution and the teacher–student relationship. Formed in this interaction between the internal conditions of the individual and the external objective conditions of the environment is what Dewey called *situation*. “Any normal experience is an interplay of these two sets of conditions. Taken together, or in their interaction, they form what we call a situation” (p. 39). I understand this concept as the free participation of an individual

within a controlled social setting where the rules that guide the individual are seen as a representation of the larger community.

Connelly and Clandinin

The research of Clandinin and Connelly (1990) led me to the understanding of narrative inquiry as “the study of the ways humans experience the world” (p. 2). From this understanding I employ their notion that education is “the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories” (p. 2). They continue in this spirit, explaining that the use of narrative in educational research focuses on the notion of humans as storytelling organisms who both individually and socially lead storied lives. The study of narrative, therefore, is the study of the ways in which humans experience the world.

From Dewey's principles of inquiry, Clandinin and Connelly derived their own terms: personal and social replaces *interaction*, past, present, and future replace *continuity*, and place replaces *situation*. They write that “this set of terms creates a metaphoric three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, with temporality along one dimension, the personal and social along a second dimension, and place along a third” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). Within the implementation of this three-dimensional narrative space, Clandinin and Connelly find that “studies have temporal dimensions and address temporal matters, they focus on the personal and social in a balance appropriate to the inquiry; and they occur in specific places or sequence or sequences of places” (p. 50).

Additionally, focusing on Dewey's two-dimensional principle of interaction, Clandinin and Connelly find that inquiry travels in four directions; inward, outward,

backward, and forward. Inward refers to the internal condition of the individual, be it hopes, dreams, feelings, in other words, self-referral. Outward is object referral and is toward the environment, or the existential, and one's perception of it. Backward and forward refer to temporality—past, present, and future. They write:

When one is positioned on this two-dimensional space... one asks questions, collects field notes, derives interpretations and writes a research text that addresses both personal and social issues by looking inward and outward, and addresses temporal issues by looking not only to the event but to its past and to its future. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50)

Van Manen

While I was directed to the previous authors through course work, I discovered the work of Van Manen (1992) on my own. His work with the “four existentials” is most appropriate in constructing my narrative as it allows me to better synthesize narrative research, bringing together the concepts with greater meaning. Van Manen begins from the premise that all phenomenological human sciences, especially narrative research, are about exploring the structure and meaning of the *lifeworld* as derived from Husserl's *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (as cited in Van Manen, p. 182). This *lifeworld* is the lived world, experienced in everyday situations and relations. Lifeworlds can be considered the roles that we play in daily life; each role occupies a different lifeworld. We may play roles such as student, parent, researcher, and teacher.

Van Manen (1992) created “four existentials,” *spatiality*, *relationality*, *temporality*, and *corporality*, which “pervade the lifeworlds of all human beings, regardless of their historical, cultural or social situatedness” (p. 101).

Lived space–spatiality. Spatiality is considered lived space or felt space.

We all know that the space in which we find ourselves affects the way we feel. The interesting factors become how the exterior space affects our interior space. The ancient Chinese art of Feng Shui is the search to live a harmonious life while reflecting the balance of nature in our daily lives. This is mirrored in the balanced physical layout of cities, villages, dwellings, indeed in all lived spaces. Zen gardens exemplify this concept, as it is difficult to discern where nature ends and art begins. This is in great contrast to the life in shopping malls or casinos, where it is always summer, always daytime, and always the right time to exchange money.

Another aspect of this lived space is personal body space; we feel uncomfortable when someone is too close or too far. Travel is another spatial aspect. An anecdote describes jetlag being the time that it takes the soul to catch up with the physical body.

Lived body–corporality. Corporality is considered lived body or our physical–bodily–presence.

The skin that we are covered by suggests a division of inside and outside, a conscious duality. There is much about this duality that has not been examined by each of us; this examination requires a huge paradigm shift. The language that informs our beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots creates the prison of this perceived duality. We simultaneously reveal and conceal something about ourselves all the time, whether

unconscious or deliberate. This brings to mind lyrics from a fun song by Pat McDonald and his group called Timbuk 3 (1986), called "Hairstyles and Attitudes":

Hairstyles and attitudes—are they connected

Are the styles we embrace a matter of taste, or values rejected

Hairstyles and attitudes—how do they relate?

How well do we use our freedom to choose the illusions we create? (McDonald)

We often become curious about the motives and behaviours of others, and as often we are disappointed by our limited perceptive abilities. Science proves that our perceptive and visual abilities are weak. These same abilities in animals are much greater. For example, bees are able to see much more than we are; they see in the ultraviolet range. So instead of seeing a nice, pink flower as we do, they see an enticing landing pad beneath the colors guiding them to the pollen. Dogs hear beyond our range; cats can see with less light; birds intuitively fly in formation to decrease the wind drag because of their keen sense of the wind pressure. However, I should mention that typically when humans lose one sense, others are heightened, as is often the case with the visually impaired person's increased senses of sound, of touch, and of smell.

The corporal body is present, yet is actually quite transitory. We all have an understanding of our experience based on our senses. Because we see little change over time, we cling to this body and say, "this is just who I am." Yet each of us has grown from a single-cell organism to where we are now, and we have gone through many changes to get there. I was born just under 7 pounds. Throughout school I used to have to work to get below the weight limit for many sports: 95lbs, 120lbs. In 1986 at McMaster University I weighed in at 175 lbs at 6 % body fat. A decade later I was living in serious

depression, unable to train, and weighed 195 lbs with 20 % body fat. I again train regularly, ride a bike to and from work, weigh 180 lbs, and am at a more healthy 12–14 % body fat. So many corporal changes over time, yet over and over we insist, “this is who I am.” With each breath we exchange the oxygen and the carbon dioxide that then rushes through our trillion cells to form new cells. Where does the plant end and the human begin? Deepak Chopra (1990) says this of our physical perception:

If you could see your body as it really is, you would never again see it the same way twice. Ninety–eight percent of the atoms in your body were not there a year ago. The skeleton that seems so solid was not there three months ago. The configuration of the bone cells remains somewhat constant, but the atoms of all kinds pass freely back and forth through the cell walls, and by that means you acquire a new skeleton every three months.

The skin is new every month. You have a new stomach lining every four days, with the actual surface cells that contact food being renewed every five minutes. The cells in the liver turn over very slowly, but new atoms still flow through them, like water in a river course, making a new liver every six weeks. Even within the brain, whose cells are not replaced once they die, the content of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, and so on is totally different from a year ago. (pp. 48–49)

We experience the world through both our senses and our interpretations of those perceptions. Alan Watts (1989) discusses the resultant suffering of our *self* due to this limited perceptual paradigm, including our use of language, in his exploration of Hindu philosophy.

Most of us have the sensation that “I myself” is a separate center of feeling and action, living inside and bounded by the physical body—a center which “confronts” an “external” world of people and things, making contact through the senses with a universe both alien and strange. Everyday figures of speech reflect this illusion. “I came into this world.” “You must *face* reality.” “The conquest of nature.” (p. 8)

Lived time—temporality. Temporality is considered lived time, subjective time, rather than objective time.

Temporality is the time that appears to speed up when we are having fun or passionately involved in an activity we love. This dimension aligns with Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) past, present, and future, and constitutes the horizons of a person's temporal landscape:

Whatever I have encountered in my past sticks to me as memories or as (near) forgotten experiences that somehow leave their traces on my being in the way I carry myself (hopeful, confident, defeated or worn-out), the gestures I have adopted and made my own (from my mother, father, teachers, friends), the words I speak and the language that ties me to my past (family, school, ethnicity), and so forth. (Van Manen, 1992, p.104)

It is always valuable to recognize that the influences, even pressures, of our present lives lead us to reinterpret or reinvent our past. We often romanticize or glorify the past. As I make something of myself, I may determine that a different me, an imagined me, was largely responsible. It is also true that our expectations, our hopes, and our dreams can distort our perspective of the past.

Working as an educator on a remote First Nations Reserve gave me an interesting view of time. The youth lived and played with the sun; that is to say that when the days became long and the sun set in the early morning, all ages of youth were outside taking full advantage of daylight to play or fish or hang out. The consequence from my perspective was that they were unable to get up and get to school on time. They wandered into school without the threat of parental pressure by late morning or early afternoon. The elders that I met displayed another example of this alternative view of time. Often their age would be represented in winters. At first this sounded strange to me. Upon reflection, and as I attempted to view their experience through their eyes, I came to understand that severe winters were the seasons that usually caused death through hypothermia and starvation. The harsh realities of surviving this season increased the significance of winter, qualifying it as the marker of age. I am now 42 winters old.

Lived other–relationality. Relationality is considered lived other, or the lived relations we maintain with others in the interpersonal space we share.

We have a corporal way of meeting others, be it a handshake, a kiss on either cheek, or a hug. We visually gain a perception of the other by the way they look physically. We have also developed a greater number of indirect relations. We e-mail and telephone other. Even books are a form of the lived other. We form physical, mental, and emotional impressions of characters, or of the authors, whether they're accurate or not.

An old proverb states that it takes two to see one. In Western society, the other that sees us, or hears us, is typically an individual or society itself. We are brought into this world by parents and consider ourselves part of a family unit, within a society, and in

relation to others. This is one of those common prisons of language that Watts (1989) speaks of. “We do not ‘come into’ this world; we come out of *it*, as leaves from trees.... Every individual is an expression of the whole realm of nature, a unique action of the total universe” (p. 9). As Watts suggests, Eastern traditions include a much larger other in this process of seeing, the whole realm of nature, the total universe. My articulations of this idea encompass four realms, those of *self*, *society*, *soil*, and *Self*. I move the proverb that it takes two to see one into an integrated topography of self, family, society, nature, and the universal *Self*.

Van Manen (1992) seems to take a similar stance as mine, and this is probably largely why he appeals to me. “In a larger existential sense human beings have searched in this experience of the other, the communal, the social for a sense of purpose in life, meaningfulness, grounds for living, as in the religious experiences of the absolute Other, God” (p. 105).

Conceptual theory attempts to take a complex concept and make a usable map, including what is useful without omitting content. In constructing these maps towards narrative inquiry, these theorists create stipulative terminology to help guide the inquirer along the learning path. In research, we temporarily separate and study these stipulatives in their individual aspects. The four existentials that Van Manen conceptualizes are generally similar to concepts discussed by both Dewey and Connelly and Clandinin, as illustrated in *Figure 2*. For example, Van Manen's Spatiality or Lived Space Existential refers to both Dewey's Principle of Situation and Connelly and Clandinin's reference to Place.

Van Manen's Existentials	Dewey's Principles	Connelly and Clandinin
Spatiality/Lived Space	Situation	Place
Corporality/Lived Body	Interaction (Internal)	Personal Interaction
Temporality/Lived Time	Continuity	Past, Present, Future
Relationality/Lived Other	Interaction (External)	Social Interaction

Figure 2. Comparative stipulative terminology.

We must keep in mind that although these concepts can be differentiated for simplicity's sake, they ultimately cannot be separated in the real sense. For example, we can examine corporality as a physical phenomenon while inherently knowing that the lived experience exists in and is as a result of continual interplay with temporality, spatiality, and relationality. They are all interconnected, if not one-and-the-same. In fact, they create one, one that we call our lived world, our *lifeworld*.

The outlined work of these four educational theorists provides the thread of relevance for a foundational framework in this thesis. This framework is the umbrella under which narrative methods, and specifically The Story Model, sit.

The Story Model

I would like to discuss and integrate the Story Model as presented by Susan Drake. The real beauty of this model is its simplicity, which incorporates as much complexity as the user wishes to introduce, serving as a heuristic device in this thesis. Drake's basic model from *Developing an Integral Curriculum Using the Story Model* (Drake et al. 1992, p. 40) is shown in *Figure 3*.

Much of what I have already discussed, foundational ideas both basic and complex, can be related to this simple representation. The expanding boxes of Drake's personal, cultural, global, and universal can correspond to my terms of *self*, society, soil or Gaia, and *Self* respectively. The figure does not indicate an outer, universal box. Resulting from class notes and lectures (1998) with Drake, I am adding this layer as she did then.

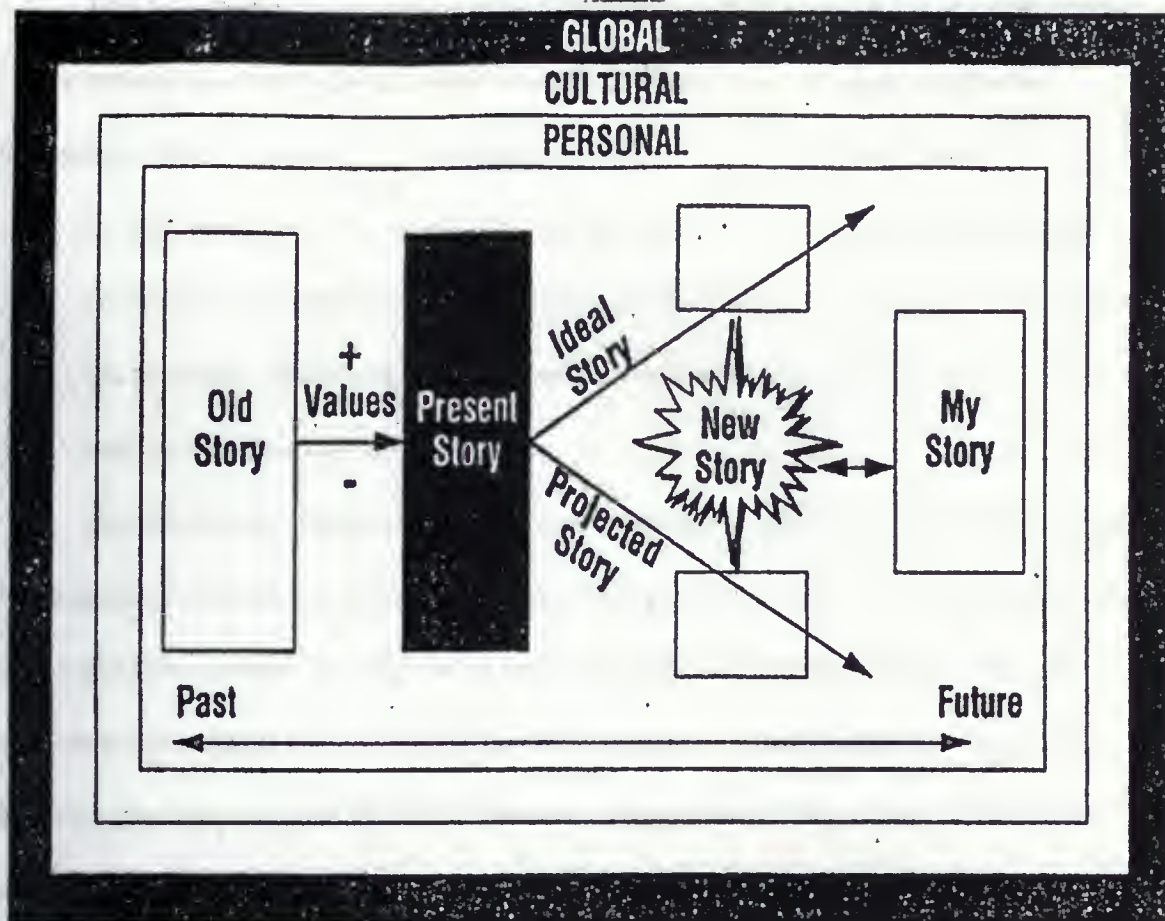


Figure 3. Drake's story model.

This layer is both a crucial aspect of Drake's model and relevant to my research as it demonstrates the interconnectedness of *self* to *Self* storied transformation. Drake (September, 2005) indicates this connection in a note on a draft of this thesis.

In "my" version of this there is the "Universal" layer. This is the part of us that connects to all other humans regardless of cultural or time in history. Mythology, art, music all connect us to the universal. I expect this is the Self in your definitions. (Journal entry, 2005)

To describe the notion of lived time, of temporality, (Drake et al., 1992) employs the terms past, present, and anticipated future; "the perceived past and anticipated future are a part of the present" (p. 40). I label these concepts past, present, and perhaps, the possible or anticipated future. It is the past that brings us to the present. As we unknowingly bring our past into the present we unconsciously allow past paradigms to imprison our behaviour, directing our future. As the introductory chapter verse said,

Here I am with open upward hands
Shoulders to my ears
Trying to figure out who it is, this me
While breaking shackles of life long fears
Looking forward and back at the future and past
Inward and outward my biography
While moving toward a
Future that only I can create and conceive
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)

How we perceive the past and the present creates values related to our perceptions. If all of our perceptions seem to be positive, comfortable, familiar, we tend to continue doing what it is we are doing. On the other hand if the old story and the

present story we are enacting are no longer useful, then change is needed in the form of translation or transformation.

Drake's Story Model looks at the Present Story (Present), based on the Old Story (Past), and moves toward a New Story (Anticipated Future). "The anticipated future may be the probable story, the ideal story or a new story that begins to reconcile the probable and the ideal" (Drake et al., 1992, p. 53). In my work, the 'probable story' means that we continue doing what it is we are doing, following the same path, without alteration. The 'ideal story' seems to be the natural one for a dreamer like me to delve into where transformation moves us from the prison we are in, expanding our awareness in an irreversible, more inclusive way.

Drake et al. (1992) continue, "versions of this story are emerging at this time from groups such as Greenpeace, Amnesty International, feminists, environmentalists, holistic educators and futurists" (p. 52). What emerges is an original story at an ideal developmental level. Drake's "new story" occurs in the starburst, where one "begins to reconcile the probable and the ideal" (p. 52). I use the term *translation* as a similar concept. To translate rather than transform is to work within a developmental stage reconciling issues that hinder growth within that stage. Translation is making ourselves the most we can be at that level of development. We tend not to be able to rise to new levels until we have the foundation of the levels below. The Story Model is particularly useful as a tool to look at our *selves* in relation to others in society, to the soil and our relation to Gaia, and to the ultimate or universal *Self*.

Conceptual and Hermeneutics as Aspects of Narrative

The simplicity of the Story Model allows the learner, or researcher in this case, to add as much complexity as desired. I would like to add aspects of both the conceptual and hermeneutic methods to the Story Model giving it more granularity for my use.

Conceptual as Story

My writing has a strong conceptual emphasis. I think of conceptual writing as following the philosophical conventions of academic research. This is the type of writing that I was educated in, that Canada's conventional education system relies on. We learn conceptual information in the classroom and, perhaps, some time later gain the relative experience to make that information personally meaningful. Many students question the value of taking calculus or French when they know they will never use it. I think that what they are intuitively saying is, "how does this conceptual information (of any kind) become useful to me *now*, other than towards my final grade?" We are taught the symptoms of a heart attack, of romantic love, and even death, so that when we come to experience the conceptual, we say "oh this must be a heart attack," or "this must be love," and so on. Conceptual research, like qualitative research, tells a story. It has a beginning, middle, and end while attempting to take the reader on an educational journey within some discipline.

In the past (my old story) I had never thought of conceptual writing as any form of story, yet now (present story) I believe the conceptual method to hold many of the same characteristics of story and of narrative. The conceptual method of research may begin as an intellectual exercise but is greatly enhanced when we can find personal meaning in it and with it.

A story is a map. A map is a representation of the actual concepts presented. The trick is to know how much to include or exclude from the map to make it an effective representation rather than an exact replica. A map of the world, of continents, and even of countries, leaves out streets, as they would be too confusing. I argue that the same is true for stories. We select aspects and incidents, purposeful (nodal) over the pedantic (mundane), to articulate and to make our point, rather than attempt to rewrite every single thing that relates to the story we are telling or to the map we are creating.

Maps and stories both attempt to move the hero through various tests or trials in order to come to some form of resolution regarding translation or transformation. Conceptual writing resembles story writing, considering the skills of a good storyteller or mapmaker. The story must have a beginning, middle, and end, taking the reader through a dialogue that proves or disproves the initial hypothesis and concludes with information that can be used in the future. Each point is reinforced with another as the reader is guided along a learning path. “Our appetite for story is a reflection of the profound human need to grasp the patterns of living, not merely as an intellectual exercise, but within a very personal, emotional experience” (McKee, 1997, p. 12).

Throughout this thesis, the conceptual will be intertwined with purposeful stories and poetry as an aspect of this narrative. The hope is that the process of making meaning by grasping the patterns of my lived experience will add greater value to this writing and be more useful to others. The conceptual or philosophical aspect of writing will, at times, stand on its own. I love to read books and articles that challenge and frustrate, disturb and destroy, because it is this process that has the proven power to awaken, to translate, and to transform my thoughts, my paradigms, my *self*. It is such literature that has, in effect,

been a mentor for me and brought to my awareness alternatives and possibilities that felt familiar the first time I read them: the feeling of being at home where I had never been. Much of the literature in my bibliography has been instrumental in guiding my journey.

I gladly use these conceptual friends and teachers to better clarify ideas. In no way do I claim right or sovereignty over any idea or concept I attempt to articulate. Herein lies my own paradox: When does an idea that I have learned (and I would include all that I have language for), as well as those that experience has taught me, become mine, and not one that needs academic verification? This point where my own meaning is valuable, regardless of the origination or seed of that concept, leads me to the value of my own life and experiences as phenomena.

The purpose of learning conceptually is to be able to implement that knowledge into practice as part of my being. I will improve my professional practice the more my awareness is in communion with *self/Self* re-search, knowing that this awakening is a caring act, as “we want to know that which is most essential to being” (Van Manen, 1992, p. 5). It will be of great interest to try to assemble the concepts in a way that is meaningful to me as well as others, especially teachers, who are on a similar quest.

Hermeneutics Within Story

The term *hermeneutics* is derived from the Greek word “hermeneutikos,” the art and science of interpretation. Hermes was the Greek god of invention, commerce, and eloquence and, more important in this inquiry, the messenger and scribe for the gods. In order to understand messages, regardless of whether they come from a friend, family, or the gods, one has to interpret them. Hermes's role in communicating on behalf of the gods left great room for personal and social interpretation. To be able to obtain a deeper and

richer understanding of messages, one must understand these personal and cultural symbols, approaching them with an empathetic interpretation, as Tarnas (1991) suggests.

The inherent human capacity for concept and symbol formation is recognized as a fundamental and necessary element in the human understanding, anticipation, and creation of reality. The mind is not the passive reflector of an external world and its intrinsic order, but is active and creative in the process of perception and cognition. Reality is in some sense constructed by the mind, not simply perceived by it, and many such constructions are possible, none necessarily sovereign. (p. 369)

Regardless of the explicit experience being interpreted, be it the text or the observable experience itself, the hermeneutic method seeks to interpret the deeper meaning of living within the data.

Hermeneutics is rooted in phenomenology, which is the attempt to “discover the nature and meaning of mental acts as mental acts, not merely as reduced to various objective, sensory, and empirical displays” (Wilber, 1999, p. 37). A mental act, concept, symbol, or map refers to other events and entities, including other symbols and maps which themselves refer to yet other symbols. This is, in a sense, a philosophy or “*theory of the unique*; it is interested in what is essentially not replaceable” (Van Manen, 1992, p. 7). Phenomenology is not necessarily interested in the concrete or factual aspects of some state of affairs; rather it is interested in the nature of the phenomenon as meaningful experience. It is interested in what is behind the veil.

As in poetry, it is inappropriate to ask for a conclusion or summary of a phenomenological study. To summarize a poem in order to present the result would

destroy the result, because the poem is the result. The poem is the thing. So phenomenology, not unlike poetry, is a poetizing project; it tries an incantative, evocative speaking, a primal telling, wherein we aim to involve the voice in an original experience and is thus speaking in a more primal sense (Van Manen, 1992, p. 13).

Phenomenology is the study of the development of human consciousness and self-awareness as a preface to one's own philosophy. For the purposes of this thesis, this development moves one from *self* to *Self*.

The spiritual quest requires only a short step over the void. Its basic assumption is: *My life is the text within which I must find the revelation of the sacred*. If there is some sacred ground and meaning of my life, it must be discovered here and now, if we have ears to hear, eyes to see, and bodies to feel, we are always being addressed. Certain moments, events, words, persons, or objects may suddenly become luminous to us. Where our lives seemed chaotic, a pattern emerges. A sign is no different from an ordinary event; it is the meaning we give to it that sacralizes it. As a believer in my personal life as a text, I can discern a hidden subtext that comes to light in special moments. (Keen, 1994, p. 41)

I will use the hermeneutic method in an effort to discern Keen's hidden subtext, the deeper inner world of *self*, in order to grasp its most essential message. The revelation of the sacred is often the connection to the universal, the mythic, the *Self*.

Hermeneutics and Myth

Drawing together the ideas of Van Manen (1995), Wilber (1998), and Campbell (1988), I understand that the aim of hermeneutics is to find meaning within or between words. This can also be referred to as the mythical interpretation. At one time story was

passed on by word of mouth through the generations. Many of these traditional stories were mythical in nature, while others were simple entertainment. Often the most captivating stories were those which help us to better understand the most common, most taken-for-granted, and that which concerns us both most ordinarily and directly. “Any story that explains the meaning of the world, the intentions of the gods, and the destiny of man is bound to be mythology” (Quinn, 1992, p. 42).

Mythological stories attempt to tell how things came to be “this way,” relating the physical world to divine intention in the world and human destiny. We attempt to find meaning in the story in order to grant us meaning; to make our everyday lives more meaningful. However, Campbell (1988) puts a twist onto this common conceptual expression. He uses his hermeneutic ability to gain deeper insight into what is actually felt.

People say that what we're all seeking is a meaning for life. I don't think that's what we're really seeking. I think that what we're seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonance within our innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive. (p. 4)

Watts (1989) reiterates Campbell by saying, “We need a new experience—a new feeling of what is to be ‘I’” (p. 12). Thomas Berry (as cited in Suzuki, 2002) discusses the experience that we are seeking in relation to the myth or story that we are living. He states,

It's all a question of story. We are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story. We are in between stories. The old story, the account of how we fit into it, is no longer effective. Yet we have not yet learned the new story.” (p. 9)

We gain insight into our *self*, our story, by the use of myth—that is, through metaphors, analogies, and images that say what it is *like* as distinct from what it *is*. The story or myth is the map: a scenario interrelating man, the world, and the gods.

Hermeneutic Foil and Historical Context

The interpretation of a phenomenon is always set within a particular historical context. The *self* is hopelessly interlocked with a *self*–history as well as with a social history. This interrelatedness constitutes a story of a people and a person, a text, with beginnings, middles, and ends.

Wilber (1999) suggests that hermeneutics requires two aspects towards interpretation, “the proper narrative foil (i.e., developmental hierarchy) and proper narrative and historical context (i.e., the relation of the individual text to society at large)” (p. 125). This is to say that hermeneutics is how we make meaning of the *texts* of life through reflection and contemplation of the past. Covey (1998) states that 93 % of communication is nonverbal. This includes exchanges of exterior signs, body posture, facial expressions, tone, and feeling. The actual exchange of words constitutes only 7 % of communication, this toward our efforts to share the interior realities of personal experience (p. 171). This attempt at expressing that which is inexpressible, the experience or phenomenon itself (be it love, anger, joy, or fear), will always leave something incredibly important out. These gaps in understanding create holes in the interpretation of the messages from all, be they the gods, mortals, or mice.

Integrating Hermeneutics, Conceptual and Narrative Towards a New Story

To be able to find our own meaning and subsequent new story to live by, we must begin to look at our paradigms, our beliefs and behaviours, in an attempt to uncover blind spots. We enact our story. We strive to live as to make the story our reality, to make it come true. This is as true for the individual as it is for a group. When a group of people enacts the same story, this is termed culture. Within this hermeneutic study, I will reflect and contemplate on my own paradigms in relation to those of my culture, the foil.

My accompanying poem “Paradigms and Prisons” is an example of how I use words and the spaces between words to gain understanding of my relation to this *self*, society, soil, and *Self*. Creating poetry and weaving it together with music brings another magical and emotional component to my life. When first writing in a journal I saw that I was including poetry. This was subconscious. I found that verse, with rhythm and rhyme, is often more natural for me than writing in paragraph form. Perhaps it is my dyslexia. Perhaps there are cracks and holes in verse that I can fill with metaphors, with my heart's meaning, rather than with just words. Poetry is not necessarily expletive. It gives the reader great room to add in their own feelings, meanings, and experiences. In my thesis, my poetry will supplement the philosophical or conceptual method; at other times my poetry will be the basis for the hermeneutic inquiry and interpretation; at other times it will stand on its own for the sake of its inherent meaning. I will use my journal entries as past data to enable in me a better understanding of my sense of *self/Self*-awareness and development. Various song lyrics will also be used as data, as they link personal concepts and experiences.

My examination of this collection of poetry through the hermeneutic lens will hopefully reveal greater insight into the mythical meanings between the lines and bars of verse. This same hermeneutic approach will be applied to the body of conceptual literature. I intuitively search to find these deeper meanings by way of interconnections between concepts. This sense of deeper meaning through hermeneutic study rests on the use of the phenomena under reflection, which leads us to my story and narrative method.

How Does One Study The *self*/*Self*?

This is an interesting point of departure that many have given their insight into. In his writings, *The Book: On the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are* (1989), Alan Watts makes reference to the relation between the ego, *self*, and who we really are, *Self*. “The most strongly enforced of all known taboos is the taboo against knowing who or what you really are behind the mask of your apparently separate, independent, and isolated ego” (p. 12).

To study the *self*/*Self*, one must begin by studying one's biography, one's story. It is the contemplative reflection of the Past, Present and Perhaps towards new insights. I feel comfortable using Dewey's, Connelly and Clandinin's, and Van Manen's work as a narrative framework, along with the Story Model presented by Drake et al. (1992). My storied journey, expressed through journal entries, poetry, and anecdotes, will reflect a sense of movement across time, over many life situations and experiences. My experience is based on both where I was and where I am now in my life. It is based on my past, how I felt in situations over time, and what my world was like at those times. And both my experience and my perception of that experience are based on how Van Manen's “existentials” integrate to shape my narrative, my story, or my lifeworld. This

inquiry into *self/Self* inevitably crosses through our concept of time from past to present, from present to perhaps. An anticipated future, with all its paradigm shifts, is part of that story. It is in the present that our perhaps or future rests. We become in the future what we practice and believe in the present, freeing ourselves from the paradigms that have imprisoned us in the past. My hope is to move from the *self* toward a more inclusive, compassionate, and loving *Self*.

One can also study the *self/Self* through a multimethod approach to academic writings in the field. “The aim of self–study research is to provoke, challenge, and illuminate rather than to confirm and settle (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001, p. 20). The academic literature that I have uncovered has given me confidence, knowing that there were others who had studied in this area of research before me, using methods that were rigorous, meaningful, and academically accepted.

One of those voices came to me in the writings of Parker Palmer. Palmer does not set out a method or map towards a search; rather he articulates the inspiration required for one to listen to her or his voice of vocation. He speaks clearly to me and articulates so many experiences that I have similarly gone through. In his writings I find the courage to attempt to do what he is doing by letting his life speak and letting his soul guide him in his pursuit of his vocation or calling. This thesis attempts to overcome the dull way I have envisioned my life and my relation to all. Palmer writes:

How are we to listen to our lives is a question worth exploring. In our culture, we tend to gather information in ways that do not work very well when the source is the human soul: the soul is not responsive to subpoenas or cross–examination.

The soul speaks its truth only under quiet, inviting, and trustworthy conditions.
(2000, p. 7)

James Hillman is another contemporary who perfectly echoes Palmer. Hillman (1997) writes, “We dull our lives by the way we conceive them. We have stopped imagining them with any sort of romance, any fictional flair” (p. 5). This writing adopts a romantic theme, daring to envision biography in terms of the very large ideas of beauty, mystery, and myth. In keeping with the romantic challenge, Hillman also risks with the inspiration of large words, vision, and calling, inviting the reader to do likewise.

I hope that the reader who sits with this book can hear the silence that always surrounds us in the writing of words. It is a silence that forever invites us to fathom the meaning of our lives—and forever reminds us of depths of meaning that words will never touch. (p. 8)

It is such writing that speaks of silence, soul, and depth of meaning that guides me through this form of research and towards a greater sense of connectedness and wonder. Bosacki (2005) has a wonderful quote about just this.

The majority of research suggests that spirituality deals with connections and relations to ourselves [self], others [society], and the world around us [soil]. Spirituality refers to both a sense of interiority or an inner reality and a sense of being connected to beyond one's own self, connected to something “greater” (Watson, 2000). Moreover, in line with other holistic thinkers such as Palmer (1999), I do not define spirituality in terms of any faith tradition, but I tend to think of the word “spiritual” in terms of a human quest for connectedness with something of more mystery and wonder than ourselves. As Palmer (1999)

suggests, “this life-long quest for connectedness, aims to explore the puzzle and intrigue around human life.” (p. 21)

Narrative inquiry seems the most useful method of hearing the whispers of my soul in between the words that I have written. I feel that to delve further into my self-study research I must continue with an integral, multimethod approach. This approach will allow me to examine and probe the metaphors, symbols, and poetry that have been a large part of my writings. Out of this examination will come the opportunity for deeper realizations of the meaning of my life experiences. Pinar (1994) speaks of the method of Currere, autobiographical consciousness,

This knowledge is the knowledge of the individual, a point of view that insists on the primacy of such knowledge, and upon the derivative status of generalization and social categorization. The method of Currere is a research method that is an alternative to contemporary social science, not only in procedure but in the order of knowledge thereby produced. This is knowledge that makes explicit the development as well as epistemological bases of its production. It is knowledge based in the concrete rather than abstract...it is a strategy whose aspiration is not only contribution to a “body of knowledge” but a contribution to the biographical-intellectual and thus political emancipation of those who employ it. (p. 61)

I now understand that to answer “How does one study the *self*/*Self*?” one would do well to study narrative inquiry in its most artful form. One requires a rigorous framework in order to meet the academic research requirements. I've constructed this narrative framework from the interconnections of the writings of Dewey, Van Manen,

and Connelly and Clandinin. To this strong body of educational philosophy I've added both conceptual and hermeneutic aspects of story. The purpose of this synthesis is to enrich the depth and meaning of experience shared. Drake's "Story Model" is the tool to guide reader and writer through the transformative *self/Self*-journey. The art of self-study remains accessible within each of us. This type of study, although guided by others, can be revealed and articulated only by one's own *self*, as gleaned from one's life.

My life is what I have done, my scientific work; the one inseparable from the other. The work is the expression of my inner development; for commitment to the contents of the unconscious forms the man and produces transformations. My works can be regarded as stations along my life's way. (Jung, 1963, in Pinar, 1994, p. 52)

For the purposes of this research, I will begin from the assumption that humans not operating from their highest level of potential (that of those spiritually enlightened souls) are living Thoreau's (1983) "lives of quiet desperation" (p. 50). I will be my own case study towards this assumption. Using a narrative approach in the examination of my own journal writings, poetry, and lived experiences, I will reveal the operational paradigms that I have constructed and that have, ultimately, imprisoned and silenced me.

What? So What? Now What?

In order to assess, examine, reflect, and contemplate the data for the third chapter, I will use the foil of *What?*, *So What?*, and *Now What?* The initial data, story, or poem are the *What?* and provides the place to begin the inquiry. For the purposes of this project the *What?* are the lived experiences to be examined. These experiences can be separated into two categories, pedantic or purposeful. The pedantic can be viewed as "slice of life"

or the “mundane;” these experiences do not have depth of meaning. The purposeful are those nodal moments filled with emotions and meaning; these experiences either paralyze us or propel us further on along the Hero's Journey.

The second step, the *So What?* begins to delve into the personal meaning of the chosen purposeful experiences. As an example, the *What?* could be alcoholism as a personal experience under study. The *So What?* focuses on the relevance of this experience in relation to personal meaning. If I am an alcoholic or if I am not, then *So What?* do these data have to do with me is reflected on, interpreted differently. It is in the *So What?* area of reflection that historical context is intertwined with the academic foil to give the rigor required for this methodology. I will use “textual reflection” to increase my “thoughtfulness and practical resourcefulness or tact” (Van Manen, 1992, p. 4) in order to understand and appreciate the significance of the experiences to their deeper meaning.

The third step of this inquiry around *self*-exploration is *Now What?* This takes the very personal meaning of my own experiences and perceived insights and attempts to use them in a broader sense. This is the final stage of the Hero's journey, the return and service, taking what is personal or private and becoming aware of its being public or universal. Any experience in life, be it sexual assault or enlightenment, is most certainly personal. Yet there is solace found in the fact that others have also had these experiences; the experience is indeed public or universal. As soon as something is put into a public context, it has a political aspect in relating to others. I can now attempt to take the significance of my experience and bring it into the universal realm where others can take meaning from it or use it along the path of their own. As I wrote in my opening poem, “The present is my gift, I open up and find I want to give out.”

CHAPTER THREE: NODAL STORIES OF TRANSLATION AND TRANSFORMATION: IN RELATION TO *self*

In the movie *The Matrix* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999), Morpheus, who has freed himself from the matrix, the dominating paradigm, is trying to encourage Neo (the One, mixed up) to take the Hero's journey. He says,

What you know you can't explain, but you feel it. You've felt it your entire life, that there's something wrong with the world. You don't know what it is, but it's there, like a splinter in your mind, driving you mad.

For me there has always been a whisper, at times a cry, usually inexplicable, to be set free from this human madness, suffering. I knew, however, that such freedom required greater responsibility, greater discipline, and greater fear. The reason is that, although we all have an intuitive drive to develop ourselves as wholly and as completely as possible, we pursue the cultural norms of our society. We pursue consumerism, striving to keep up with the Joneses along this egoic, outward existence. The more we conform to such paradigms, the more imprisoned we become by them.

My outward, conformist journey left me with an inward emptiness, a deep longing. My emergence from this longing, this prison, occurred as I moved more intuitively away from my *self* through reflection and contemplation. Study and meditation revealed my personal, social, ecological, and spiritual oneness with all. In essence, I became more aware of my *Self*. I learned that the element most required for this awareness is *love*—not romantic love, but universal *love*. My search for *love* was my call to undertake the Hero's journey. In heeding this call I unknowingly began a spiritual inquiry into my own paradigms and give deeper meaning and a richer purpose to my life.

My 20-year search has had a corresponding impact on my professional life. As Connelly and Clandinin (1988) wrote, “The kind of teacher we are reflects the kind of life that we lead” (p. 27). This *self/Self*-narrative is my attempt at a form of ontological understanding, informing my personal development and serving as a contextual foil to my vocation of *teacher/Teacher and learner/Learner*.

Epistemology and the Elephant

The term *epistemology* is derived from the Greek word for knowledge. This field of study is interested in understanding the limits and validity of knowledge. Knowledge is distinguished from belief by its justification, and much of epistemology is concerned with how true beliefs might be properly justified. There is a commonsense notion that we can believe things without knowing them. While *knowing x*, entails that *x* is true, *believing in x* does not, since we can have false beliefs. We may believe that the world is flat, or that Jesus is the Son of God, or that Pepsi is better than Coca Cola, yet each of these may or may not be true. Things that we *know* form a subset of the things that we *believe*. Therefore our perspective is founded on our knowledge base or our philosophy.

From Hume and Kant through Darwin, Marx, Freud, and beyond an unsettling conclusion was becoming inescapable: Human thought was determined, structured, and very probably distorted by a multitude of overlapping factors—innate but nonabsolute mental categories, habit, history, culture, social class, biology, language, imagination, emotion, the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious. (Tarnas, 1991, p. 353)

What this indicates is that one's cognitive ability is not always an accurate judge of reality. The mind does not definitively *know*, it only judges a perspective, our

perspective, based on a set of beliefs, our beliefs. My initial discipline of university study and subsequent beliefs were both based in the “hard” sciences, a training which has a prerequisite of knowledge towards reliable and verifiable conclusions. The knowledge base is different for each “hard” science; that is, the separate worlds of biology, chemistry, physics, quantum physics, and so on each tends to see the world from a distinct point of view, a different paradigm.

The world is a mystery, knowledge is limited, life is a journey of constant discoveries. One need not fear uncertainty and unpredictability. What we know is relative and constrained by the facts we need to discover ourselves in a fresh manner. (Kumar, 2002, p. 30)

I accept the mystery of the world and my inability to define it, as I do for much of my own life story. My brother, Jamie, is truly a wonderful storyteller. He creates a mood and setting, bringing the listener into his story as if they were actually there. Through his stories I have come to recognize that what I know is relative, constrained by my facts, memories and worldview. He can spin an entertaining and emotional tale that *I was a part of*, and I honestly cannot recall the incident; same situation, different experience.

What follows is a wonderful traditional story from Satish Kumar's *You Are, Therefore I Am* (2002) that describes this poignantly.

The Elephant And The Six Blind Men

Once there were six blind men, and one day they heard that the local prince had acquired a new elephant. The blind men had heard of elephants, but they had never met one. So they decided to go to the place of the prince and find out what an elephant was. When they reached the palace the guard let the six men in. The

first man touched the elephant's side, the second touched the trunk, the third the tusk, the fourth man the leg, the fifth the ear, and the sixth the tail.

"Now I know the elephant is like a wall," said the first man, who had touched the sides.

"Oh no! It is like a snake," replied the second man, who had touched the trunk.

"You both must be stupid," objected the third, who had touched the tusks. "The elephant is like a spear."

"Have you gone mad? The elephant is like a tree," cried the fourth man, who had touched the leg.

"You are all wrong. The elephant is like a fan," said the fifth man, who had touched the ears.

"No, no, it is like a rope," yelled the sixth man, who had felt the tail.

A huge row ensued. They were about to come to blows when the prince came to ride the elephant. He asked, "Why are you all so agitated?"

"We cannot agree on what an elephant is like," said one of the blind men. "We all touched the same animal, but to each of us the animal is completely different."

The prince laughed. "The elephant is a large animal; its side is like a wall, trunk like a snake, with tusks like spears, legs like tree trunks, ears like fans and a tail like a rope. You have to put all those aspects together, then it is the whole elephant." (Kumar, 2002, p. 31)

This story reveals that all knowledge is partial. Our background experiences and research philosophy contribute greatly to our perception. Realizing this, we can become free of fixed ideas, opinions, and paradigms. Free from fundamentalism. We can accept plurality of beliefs and yet be free of beliefs.

Each methodology of study has its own perspective or epistemology, be it the view of an organic chemist or a forensic scientist, perspectives that would influence one to perceive an elephant as a leaf or as a tree. As with the array of “hard” sciences, so it is with the “soft” sciences. In the human science approach to research, many epistemological methodologies exist, such as ethnography, action research, biography, autobiography, and narrative to name but a few.

My narrative *self*/*Self*-study is concerned with the analyses of my lived experience. My experience however, is not set forth in an isolated or hedonistic manner; rather gives way to another option, one that educators and students alike may use for their own journey and their own meaning.

It is the phenomenological and hermeneutical study of lived experience (phenomena) in the attempt to enrich lived experience by mining its meaning; hermeneutics because it is the interpretive study of the expressions and objectifications (texts) of lived experience in the attempt to determine the meaning embodied in them. (Van Manen, 1992, p. 38)

I will enrich this experience through the nodal stories I now share, as it is only with the awareness that *you are, therefore I am*. These stories will be presented as I have recalled them through my life experience when I first became aware of that whisper of discontent. I began this recollection by looking at my *self*. What follows are several

biographical stories in which I explain the causes of my paradigm and imprisonment, and to find “what it is in me” that these “bars of iron and bars of gold” most influence.

**There are paradigms and prisons
With bars of iron and bars of gold
I want to search them out
Find what it is in me they hold
There's a self we know and one we don't
One a construct over all time
The other based on illusions perceived
Dividing everything into yours and mine
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)**

There are paradigms and prisons at each expanding and encompassing level of awareness and development. They move from the personal, to family, to cultural, to global, and into Wilber's (1995) *Kosmic* consciousness (p. 38). This journey of awareness and development is our own Hero's journey and includes the *Call*, the *Initiation*, and the *Return*. As discussed, specific questions linked to this *self/Self*-study will provide the hermeneutic foil: “What?” deals with the *Call*, the stimulus to move us from the comfort of the norm to a journey of the unknown, “So What?” deals with the *Initiation*, and “Now What?” deals with the *Return*.

There is great learning potential in each of these three stages, especially on a personal level. We learn as much about ourselves in rejecting the call as we do in accepting it. But if we accept the call, we must learn to accept the painful experiences that inevitably accompany it. The journey is essential to our transformation. This is the time when we shed the duality of our nature, or of our relationship to society, to become one with all that is.

The true hero now does not gloat in this new state; s/he returns to share her/his knowledge and experience with others:

Keep progressing on the path of Dhamma, not only for your own benefit and liberation, but for the benefit and liberation of many.

May all suffering beings find pure Dhamma, and be liberated.

May all beings be happy! (Goenka, 1995, p. 53)

The term *Dhamma* is the Pali language's version of the more familiar Sanskrit language *Dharma*. In this quote, Dhamma refers to the “phenomenon; objects of the mind; nature; natural law; law of liberation” (Goenka, p. 90). The stories I will share will have the same ambition: to share my nodal experiences, not only for my own development but also for the “*benefit and liberation of many.*”

Situation One: The story of Avery Kidd

Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage. (Lovelace, cited in Bartlett & Kaplan, 1992, p. 267)

**I wish I had the eyes of Michael Angelo
So I could reach inside an paint my soul
Then I could see in colour not just black and white
Move away from my darkness back to the light
I wish I had the ways of Martin Luther King
The I could give to everyone their angel wings
Instead I live and in myself I don't believe
I wish that I were anybody other than me
(Warren Albert Trimble, 1999)**

Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul. (Van Dyke, cited in Bartlett & Kaplan, 1992, p. 563)

What?

It's just before 8:00 am, on Wednesday, May 19th 2004. I just locked my bike, and am about to enter the facility. Over my shoulder, I see a van pull up. The door in front of me opens just as the rear door of the van opens, and out pops Avery's head. His look is familiar, one that, if left alone, will never change.

He is slight, thinner than he was a month ago, but it's still Avery. He's wearing one of those trendy velour suits. It's baby blue with a white pinstripe down the side and some logo in the front that I don't recognize. In my day, any guy dressed in a baby blue anything would have been beat up. The top of this suit is too big for Avery; he's got the pants tucked below his ass, and the crotch is between his knees, causing the legs to be bunched up around his ankles atop his untied suede boots.

I wonder if he knows where that look came from. I recall that back in the early '80s, rappers began to wear jail-issue uniforms. Thinking now of Run DMC... they did a remake of Aerosmith's song "Walk this Way" dressed like that. They had high-top basketball shoes with the laces taken out, the tongue pushed forward, and their pants tucked inside them. The jackets were baggy, and their pants were a little low. In jail, under certain circumstances, inmates are not allowed to have shoelaces or belts. Both are considered dangerous.

He still looks awkward in his movements as he lands on the ground. That shuffle of his with no arm movement is typical. Head shaved bald to look tough, but I see that Avery is still just a 16-year-old kid.

As he begins to move, the officer holds the waist belt that connects the handcuffs and the ankle shackles. Avery's feet are 30 cm apart, and his hands are held tightly in front of his groin. Dressed from the subculture of rappers and gangster rap, this youth does his best to emulate Eminem, Snoop Dog, Fiddy cent—all of whom have had their own dealings with the law.

He will enter the facility today, but he won't be admitted to the school program for a few days, though he's been out for less than a month. Recidivism is so high with these kids. They spend most of their school careers in custody. They spend most of their childhood in custody.

Avery Kidd has done horrible things. He is the young man who was convicted for repeatedly beating and sexually assaulting a 66-year-old woman while his friend used her bank-card. He is the youth that just pleaded guilty to murdering another street kid and then raping her. He is also the kid who broke into a crack-dealer's house that his parents frequent to get back some money to buy groceries for himself and his sister.

Avery Kidd is a pseudonym and the name of every kid I work with. One such kid, on his release day, needed a ride because he couldn't get one from his parents. A guard drove him home, and just as Avery was about to get out, he turned back to the guard and said, "You think where I just came from was bad? You should come and live here."

This story is their story, yet it's mine too. I grew up in the same world, or the same prison. I was on the margin of gang-life; my friends were gang members. By grade 10, my friends were either in jail, on drugs, or dead. The only

thing that saved me was a strange awareness. Because I was able to see my world for what it was, to see the endgame of my friend's drug use, to see the future of my father's alcoholism, I was able to free myself from my paradigm and then from my prison. Though all of us are confronted with choices, my escape or salvation was not the result of making the right choice but the result of transforming, of seeing the world with new eyes. Only then was I able to discard the paradigms of my life. (Personal Journal, May 2004)

So What?

So what does this story have to do with me? A great deal, as I was on the path of *Avery Kidd*, and, at the time, I knew it.

In grade 5, my family moved, causing me to go from a middle-class elementary school to one on the “other side of the track”. I was afraid and scared. I recognize now that most of my anxiety was due to my introversion; I have always had difficulty making new friends. Within the first few weeks at Prince of Wales Public School, I was in a fight. This fight eventually, and ironically, lessened my loneliness.

And it actually wasn't really a fight. I was attacked from behind and, without thinking, I had the guy on the ground in a judo choke-hold. My months of training had actually worked, the only problem being that nobody ever taught me what to do *after* my attacker was brought down! We trained and trained to get the attacker down and into the choke-hold, but then would switch positions with our partner. So, there I was, on top of this kid, almost instinctively pinning and choking him. Eventually, I became a little panicked, not knowing whether to let go or not. Was I supposed to choke him until he

was unconscious? I longed for a teacher, any teacher, to come and break up my first real fight.

The fight was broken up, and the principal gave me consequences. There were other consequences though, in this tough school and neighborhood. I instantly became “one of them” because I had unknowingly taken on the toughest guy from the grade above me. I was “in” with the tough kids, the ones our mothers always warn us about. I did a lot of things to fit in, to be accepted, though I remained on the fringe. I was not a gang member but benefited from the security of it, as my friends were. And though I played sports and entered a world separate from theirs, I still wanted to be close to them. As a result, drugs, alcohol, and crime were all a part of my grade 6 world. By grade 10, some of those friends had dropped out of school. Others had been in and out of detention, and one had actually been shot during a drug deal gone wrong.

At the developmental, egocentric age of 16, I was to make a decision that seemed unusual for kids my age. Most of the friends I had were involved with alcohol and drugs as well as illegal activities. I decided that I would make new friends with youth who were not involved with such things and leave the old ones behind. Within my grade 11 and 12 years, the “new” friends began to experiment with both alcohol and drugs. I became the self-righteous designated driver, and the “new” friends chose to leave me behind. I had made the moral choice to alter my behaviour. It wasn't because those friends were in and out of custody, or that one had even been killed. This paradigm shift was sparked by a situation that had occurred in my family. Prior to summer break that year, my parents decided to separate. My father's alcoholism was becoming very problematic for my mother. This separation was an awesome blow to me, as it both shook my paradigm of

the family and highlighted another, the one that allowed me to use alcohol and illegal drugs. To get a better understanding of my behaviour alteration and transformation, it is now necessary to describe moral development.

Lawrence Kohlberg's (1984) Stages of Moral Development resulted from his work at Harvard's Center for Moral Education during the 1970s. His work relied on the thinking of James Baldwin, the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, and the American philosopher John Dewey (Wilber, 2000, p. 23), who all emphasized that human beings appear to develop philosophically and psychologically in a progressive hierarchy. Kohlberg would demonstrate this progress in moral reasoning through a series of stages. He defined six stages, classified into three levels.

Kohlberg...demonstrated that moral development goes through six or seven stages (spanning preconventional to conventional to postconventional to post-postconventional). The individual starts out amoral and egocentric ("whatever I want" is what is right), moves to sociocentric ("what the group, tribe, country wants" is what is right), to postconventional (what is fair for all peoples, regardless of race, color, creed). Kohlberg's highest stage—what he called stage seven—is "universal-spiritual" (post-postconventional). (Wilber, 2000, p. 45)

As a foil to assess and discuss my own moral behaviour and subsequent transformation, see *Figure 4*, which integrates Kohlberg's moral development stages with the findings of Hague (1995, p. 253), Good and Brophy (1986, p. 118), and Wilber (2000, p. 206).

Kohlberg's Levels	Stage	Social Orientation
Preconventional	0	Magic wish
	1	Punishment/obedience
	2	Naïve hedonism, individualism/exchange
Conventional	3	Approval of others, "Good boy/girl"
	4	Law and order
	4/5	Transition
Postconventional	5	Prior rights/social contracts
	6	Universal ethical, principled conscience
Post-postconventional	7	Universal spiritual

Figure 4. Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

According to Kohlberg, preconventional levels of morality are prevalent in elementary-aged students. Stage 1 children are highly egocentric, whereas stage 2 individuals, still concerned primarily with themselves, will also enter reciprocal agreements of a “you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours” nature. “Most stage 2 persons also are developing children, but some older children and adults (particularly psychopaths and criminals) never get beyond this stage” (Good & Brophy, p. 117). This is very interesting and relevant to me now in two ways. At 16 years old and involved in criminal activity, I was probably in this stage. Today, many of the teenage students that I teach are in this stage, all involved in criminal activity, and some I have sensed to be psychopathic.

The next level is the conventional level. People who reveal this level of moral thinking accept and internalize the moral socialization they receive from their families and from society in general. Middle- and upper-elementary students typically fall into stage 3, wanting to please their authority figures.

Older persons who are still characterized by stage 3 thinking display more adult forms of these same moral notions. Rather than use more general and abstract moral concepts, these people think in terms of doing their duty, living up to expectations, and displaying virtues. (Good & Brophy, 1986, p. 117)

In stage 4, that of law and order, social issues are seen in terms of black and white, wrong or right, and responses do not involve genuine reasoning. That is, one does not think through a problem situation carefully and arrive at their own considered judgment; instead they merely repeat moral norms that they have acquired, such as “you should not kill,” “you should not steal.” As a result of his studies, Kohlberg felt that the majority of adults do not develop beyond this second level termed conventional.

The postconventional level of stage 5 has developed a more abstract and integrated moral thinking, considering the genuine interests and welfare of others. This stage shows great interest in values “such as liberty, justice, and the pursuit of happiness that might take precedence over the law itself” (Good & Brophy, 1986, p. 117). Stage 6 is based on clear conceptions of abstract, universal principles that transcend the law, such as fairness, justice, and individual human dignity. These tend to be the historical moral teachers and leaders such as Socrates, Jesus, Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Mother Teresa.

I first encountered stage 7 in a lecture at the University of Alberta by Dr. William Hague in 1996 and now in the writings of Ken Wilber. This stage has a universal spiritual orientation and is described by Wilber (2000) as the post–postconventional level. He continues to illustrate stages 6 and 7:

If you identify with all human beings [stage 6], you will strive to treat all people fairly and compassionately, regardless of race, sex, color, or creed. If your identity expands to embrace the Kosmos [stage 7], you will treat all sentient beings with respect and kindness, for they are all perfect manifestations of the same radiant Self, which is your very own Self as well. (p. 116)

In grade 10 I was attempting to work out what I should do. My parents had separated because of my dad's alcoholism, while I traveled a parallel path to his. Reconciliation would include the agreement that my dad would stop drinking; he could then, once again, live at home. There was a cognitive dissonance in the crisis situation that I was in. My worldview suggested I could do what I wanted regardless of family and social values and norms. However, this new situation gave me a glimpse of the paradigm I held from a

higher moral perspective, revealing its cracks and inconsistencies. Suddenly it felt unfair and unjust that I could continue to live with those destructive behaviours while my father faced a severe ultimatum.

Kohlberg found that moral development comes about through the conflict created by exposure to higher-level reasoning, suggesting the idea that crisis, far from hindering, is actually necessary for development is emerging more and more in contemporary psychology. (Hague, 1995, p. 113)

At 16 years of age, many aspects of my life were at the moral developmental level of stage 4, although this was not the case regarding my situation with these selfish and destructive behaviours. This fleeting suggestion of stage 5 assessment, perhaps even stage 6, was enough to ignite a transformation. Unbeknownst to my parents, I entered into the same agreement. I stopped drinking alcohol and taking drugs.

Now What?

I now had to face the dilemma of my beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots. Even though in my daily life I wasn't operating from these higher moral concepts, I did feel very passionately about the unfairness of my father's exile, given that I was still allowed to live in our home. My mother had repeatedly told me that I should not hang around certain people. These pleas I had ignored until this crisis point. So, without any type of support group or counseling, I quit drinking alcohol, doing drugs, committing crimes, and hanging out with the "gang." At a time when many teens *begin* to experiment with alcohol and drugs, I was quitting. I had unknowingly made a moral decision based on justness for my family.

In each moment of our present story, we have a similar choice. We either continue living as we have, or we change. This choice may be instantaneous and transformational, as it was for me, as I have maintained this lifestyle for over 25 years alongside my father. It may also be a slower process of translation where our increased awareness eventually changes our beliefs and behaviours, erasing our blind spots. In each moment, we have the choice to maintain the present story or modify it into a new story. “Then said a teacher, Speak to us of teaching. And he said: No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge” (Gibran, 1986, p. 68). In other words, I can set the table for a feast; however it is up to each person to choose to eat or go hungry.

The problem, most will agree, is not to tell them what to do—but to help them attain some kind of clarity about how to choose, how to decide what to do...the problem in teaching is to empower persons to internalize and incarnate the kinds of principles that will enable them to make such choices. (Greene, 1978, p. 48)

My new question is now, *How do I teach this to others?*

Situation Two: Settling Into my self (INFP)

I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. (Thoreau, 1983, p.46)

What?

At age 23, less than a decade later, I began my second degree in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. It was a 2-year program that allowed me to continue my studies in Experiential Education, a passion I had developed from my Physical Education program at McMaster. My course work in Experiential Education

encouraged an awareness in me of the interconnectedness of all things, particularly that connection between the natural world and the egoic self. I had come to the understanding that we were living in a time of confusion, partially created by the chaos of a new and demanding moral dilemma, and also by the struggle of finding one's self in an ever-changing, fast-paced, scientifically based world.

Maslow's primary contribution to psychology is his *Hierarchy of Human Needs* (1970). His model is often presented as a pyramidal shape with the category of physiological needs at the base and that of self-actualization at the top. *Figure 5* presents the Hierarchy of Human Needs in chart form based on Maslow (1970) and Monte (1995, pp.647-689). Maslow suggested that the lower levels of Physiological, Safety, Love, and Esteem Needs were based on a sense of deficiency or emptiness. If these needs are not filled, one feels anxiety and attempts to fill them; a need does not become salient until the needs below it are met. Once those lower needs are filled, a sense of lacking remains, as the higher category of self-actualization (often termed *Being Needs*) remains. Perhaps this sense of lacking is what Thoreau wrote of in his famous quote, "the mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation" (Thoreau, 1983, p. 50). Maslow also proposed that,

people who have reached self-actualization might sometimes experience a further state of *Transcendence*. In this state, they become aware of not only their own fullest potential but also the fullest potential of human beings at large" (Wilber, 2001, p. 68).

There are *Being Needs*, which are based on a sense of fullness and people today all around the world strive towards: self-discovery, self-actualization, and self-transcendence. Their emphasis is on the "self," however it is defined, and "becoming" it.

Maslow's Needs	Descriptors
Self-Transcendence	To move beyond ego or to help others find self-fulfillment and realize their potential.
Self-Actualization	To find self-fulfillment and realize one's potential.
Aesthetic	Morality, creativity, spontaneity
Know and Understand	Problem solving, accepting of facts, lack of prejudice
Esteem	Self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others
Belonging and Love	Friendship, family, sexual intimacy
Safety	Security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of family, of health of property
Physiological	Breathing, nutrition, water, excretion, sleep, sex

Figure 5. Maslow's hierarchy of human needs.

In Exodus 3:2:14, Jesus said, “I am who I am”; William Shakespeare, in Sonnet 121, wrote, “I am that I am,” and Popeye (the cartoon character) was proud to say, “I yam what I yam and that’s what I yam.”

The majority of people in Western society today continue to strive for the fulfillment of their *deficiency needs*. In their sense of lacking they say, “I don’t know who I am, but what I think I am, I don’t like.” This plight is evident on the shelves of bookstores and on quick-fix TV shows, both filled with information about self-esteem, empowering oneself, weight loss, and self-worth. There is an underlying cry to be set free from all of this, but in the meantime we want the quick fix, a silver bullet rather than a clearer understanding of the work entailed in transforming one’s self. We take the easy paths for answers, wanting someone else to tell us how to do it, looking for answers “in the light of day,” when they are more often found within the rigour and darkness of a personal journey towards self—understanding and self-awareness.

I believe that half of knowing what we want is knowing what we have to give up. Our new story can begin inside the individual only when he or she assumes self-responsibility, trusting their inner *self* enough to depend on it, rather than on everything else of the external.

When the Doctor fails to heal you

When no medicine chest can make you well

When no counsel leads to comfort

When there are no more lies they can tell

When there is no information

And the compass turns to nowhere that you know well

Let your soul be your pilot

Let your soul guide you

It'll guide you well (Sting, 1996, Let Your Soul Be Your Pilot)

Man gets tired, Spirit don't

Man surrenders, Spirit won't

Man crawls, Spirit flies

Spirit lives when man dies

Man seems, Spirit is

Man dreams, Spirit lives

Man is tethered: Spirit is free

Spirit is what man can be

Spirit is what man can be (Scott, 1985, Spirit)

I am ... I cried, I am...said I

I am lost and I can't even say why

I am ... I said, I am ... I cried (Diamond, 1974, I Am, I Said)

So What?

One of my greatest leaps of self-understanding leading to self-practice came from a book called *Please Understand Me* (1978) by Keirsey and Bates. The authors used research from the Myers/Briggs Type Indicator, that tool based on Jungian psychology, towards a system of temperament classifications. This tool would become a complete eye-opener for me, as I had previously been unable to take the *call* to learn from such tools. I thought that these types of sorters were attempts to pigeonhole people. I was to learn, however, that they could give insight, gleaning overlooked aspects of the *self* that

had become blind spots and misunderstood behaviours. In my situation, this tool also distilled the beliefs related to my own temperament, teaching me confidence and self-value as I related to others. *Please Understand Me* taught me that I wasn't a loser even though my behaviours put me outside of the norm.

Figure 6 compares historic and contemporary attempts at the sorting of temperaments. This type of research exercise has been occurring since the time of Plato, continuing through to today with Sean Covey's work with youth and *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* (1998). That is, similar reflections on human temperaments have produced similar descriptions for almost 2,500 years. I have also included Don Lowery's *True Colors* (1979) as this temperament sorter is employed by the Hamilton–Wentworth District School Board in an attempt to aid teachers and learners in the educational process.

Keirsey and Bates (1978) taught me that success in school came readily to the temperament type *ESTJ* as “school, particularly the first 12 grades, was made for them” (p. 106). The *ESTJ* of Keirsey and Bates's model are Plato's *Guardians* and Jung's *SJs*, temperaments that protect the system in place. This was useful information as school was always a struggle for me, and while success was almost assured for others, I felt like a failure, worth *less* than my peers. My temperament, *INFP*, Plato's *Idealists* and Jung's *NFs*, does not match the model that conventional schooling is created for, creating a place that was actually antagonistic to my way of being.

Parker Palmer claims that we teach who we are. In fact, early in the introduction to his book, *The Courage to Teach* (1998), he emphasizes that “the work required to

Theorist	Date	Type One	Type Two	Type Three	Type Four
Plato	c 340 BC	Artisan	Guardian	Idealist	Rational
Aristotle	c 325 BC	Hedonic	Proprietary	Ethical	Dialectical
Galen	c 190 AD	Sanguine	Melancholic	Choleric	Phlegmatic
Paracelsus	c 1550	Changeable	Industrious	Inspired	Curious
Adickes	c 1905	Innovative	Traditional	Doctrinaire	Skeptical
Spranger	c 1914	Aesthetic	Economic	Religious	Theoretic
Kretschmer	c 1920	Hypomanic	Depressive	Hyperesthetic	Anesthetic
Jung	c 1940	SP	SJ	NF	NT
Fromm	1947	Exploitative	Hoarding	Receptive	Marketing
Myers	1958	Probing	Scheduling	Friendly	Tough-minded
Covey	1998	Oranges	Bananas	Grapes	Melons
Keirsey	1978	Dionysian	Epimethian	Apollonian	Promethean
Lowery	1979	Orange	Yellow	Blue	Green

Figure 6. Comparative temperament terminology.

'know thyself' is neither selfish nor narcissistic. Whatever self-knowledge we attain as teachers will serve our students and our scholarship well. Good teaching requires self-knowledge: it is a secret hidden in plain sight" (p. 3). It benefits both the teacher and learner for us, as teachers, to come to know and understand who we are. This knowledge and awareness brings insight into what is most comfortable for us, our operational paradigms, and how we teach. The temperament sorters help us to better understand how we tend to act and the beliefs that reinforce those actions. They also increase our appreciation for other temperaments, what is important to them, and how they learn. As our awareness of both others and ourselves grows, so does our potential to adapt our teaching style to meet the various temperaments and become better teachers.

Now What?

An excerpt from one of my journal entries in October 1999 follows. It was based on my awareness resulting from three books: *Please Understand Me* (Keirsey & Bates, 1978), *Do What You Are* (Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 1995), and *Please Understand Me II* (Keirsey, 1998). I had used the information gleaned from my reading as a tool for seeing not only differences in people but also the magic and value in ourselves. My journal writings became a letter, sent to a friend in 1999:

It's all right to struggle, heck I think its necessary in order to become more. I can talk similarities and what I perceive for me and for you in an empathetic way. I don't mean to pigeonhole you or claim to "know." I guess I just want to talk, to share in a loving manner that I have for you.

Extroversion (E) vs. Introversion (I)

Discusses how we tend to prefer one way of being when we interact with others, acknowledging that we move back and forth along this continuum.

(E) – make up about 75% of the population. They tend to be outgoing, enjoy the spotlight get energy from being in-groups; they are the social butterflies. This tendency is extremely valued and encouraged in school and society.

(I) – make up the other 25% of the population. These people prefer intense, intimate relationships with a few people. They get drained when having to be in large social settings.

It is seen as a poor trait and often misunderstood by (Es) who think their way of being is right because it is supported by Western culture.

I tend towards being introverted and need an intimate friend with me to function well in social settings. I have always felt “different” from the “norm,” often like a loser.

Sensing (S) vs. Intuition (N)

This puts into perspective how we view the world around us, which ultimately creates our paradigms. Once again the two perspectives are on a continuum within which we can fluctuate depending on the situation.

(S) – make up 75% of the population and tend to be reality based, status quo, believe in most systems and values and rules as they are. They perceive reality through the use of their keen, strong senses. School tends to promote the development of the skills that would fall under this view of the world.

(N) – are the dreamers, deep thinkers, artists, scientists and see the possibilities as more important than the status quo or how it is; 25% of the population is intuitive. They tend to perceive the world through the possibility of change filtered through their insights rather than the use of their senses.

Interesting enough, in the teaching profession 75% of educators fall under (S). I tend towards N, and again I'm not the "norm." I tried to "fit in" for so long, just be part of the group. My need for an authentic self always compromised by efforts to belong, be normal, and to be accepted. The system often runs me down with its emphasis on the qualities I do not tend towards and must be similar for many students.

Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F)

This refers to how one makes decisions, by rational logic or by gut emotion.

(T) – is the dominant trait taught in schools, although individuals of this kind are 50% of the population. It is the Cartesian method, where rationality and logic are favoured.

(F) – is given mention in our school system but is not as readily nurtured. Under times of fiscal restraint the arts are cut, not the sciences.

Once again my natural tendency was not the "norm" and I had to learn to learn the skill of the system of logic and rationality.

If one is supposed to move from emotion because of the soul's nature, and that one doesn't know how, it's like being empty and frustrated for being retarded. I work at nurturing feelings, finding where the feelings are manifested in this

body; fear is found in the stomach as butterflies, passion in the chest as a burning sensation, and so on. This awareness brings emotion to understanding and can then better be expressed and transformed.

The last guiding indicators are (J) Judging vs. (P) Perceiving.

Like thinking and feeling, perception is split 50/50 among people in terms of either judging or perceiving.

(J) – prefer routines, timelines, goal setting, and closure; they need to know where they are going, how they are going to get there and when. They find satisfaction in the completion of a task or job and are ready to move on.

(P) – prefer freedom from routine; no time constraints; have no problem leaving projects unfinished, and in fact do not enjoy finishing. The so-called completion of an activity leaves no more room for altering, which is difficult because the work is then what it is, not what it could be. They thrive on spontaneity.

Our culture and school systems teach, encourage, and show greater value for the qualities of the Judging; time, bells, and routine run us. The artist temperament, seen as flakey, is pushed to the fringes and forced underground. All kids in Kindergarten are artists, but very quickly we are taught and come to know that we are not, because we are less.

I tend toward the P but am very well trained in the J by strong family values as well as the expectations of school and work in our Western culture.

The school's social norm, ESTJ

We are so well taught to value and in a sense be an ESTJ, that I feel our self is lost to the shame of not living up to “their” expectations. To open to the self, to love oneself again is to nurture, harness, and be the self we were destined to be. I believe the crazy-ness of the culture has restrained these natural tendencies of our nature.

Sting (1987a) in the song History Will Teach Us Nothing, sang “know your human right; be what you came here for”.

I remember a friend at University in the exploration class, crying because he couldn't figure out his typology. His lifestyle, family, military training, and self-avoidance left him shaped by them to the point he could not decide for himself, himself.

Risk is learning, it is living.

This is a tool to be used to appreciate our magical self and the perceived oddities and differences of others to better understand, appreciate, and accept them.

My summary INFP and me

To sum up then, I tend towards INFP. This group, is said to be found in only 1% of the population. That means that one out of every 100 people would fall under this temperament. Furthermore, 60% of INFPs are female, which means that 4 of every 1,000 or 1 in 4,000 people surveyed would be male INFPs. It is no wonder I have always felt so different, so alone, like such a loser.

The book says the purpose of the INFP is difficult to say “for the NF pursue a strange end, a self-reflective end which defies itself: becoming.” Like a

constant struggle for more of my self—more meaning in life—deeper feelings felt—greater intuition and awareness—ENLIGHTENMENT.

This book and psychology from Jung were liberating for me. I found out that I was not fucked up but different and that there were others who were like me. It gave me a much greater appreciation for other typologies and a way to better understand and accept differences from language to actions.

I have found that I tend to date SPs and SJs. The SP is so full of life, charismatically doing, in the moment, wanting to experience the sensations. The SJs know where they are going, have goals, wants, likes, and know how to get what they want.

Because I spend so much time in my head dreaming and thinking, with spinning thoughts, I do not always do well in the reality of daily decisions or for goals and wants. I can then be with someone who will take me along with them and his or her love and passion. I can live in this world's reality with their way.

The trouble with this though is that I have this ache to fill that always gets mad at them for not helping me be “me.” They always ask, what would you like to do, to be, to go to eat.... My answer is usually “doesn't matter,” because I want nothing short of sainthood, enlightenment.

My friends are of two types it seems. I thrive on the interaction with other INFPs as we philosophize the possibilities and hug every 10 seconds even though we constantly touch each other. The second seem to be a group that finds my uniqueness and way of being interesting, although they don't really get it. I usually have to teach the males in this category to hug comfortably. This group

seems much better as working partners than the INFPs. The others tend to take concepts that we talk of and implement them. They probably are better at doing what I spew out than I am. My analysis often leads to a paralysis. Often can't get an idea to the point that I can do it because it is not complete, but to complete something is unwanted because I can't alter it then. The result is I have piles of unfinished business all over.

To become aware is necessary to be able to choose if the actions and behaviours are useful and desired by the self and the SELF. The struggle becomes “becoming Me” and not blaming them for my difficulties, tendencies. Love is letting go of fear. Acceptance of them is easy; it's the acceptance of myself that causes resentment towards them.

Just because I tend towards different characteristics should not give me privilege to claim superiority over their way of being. If I don't like someone doesn't mean they are evil—bad—or anything negative, but reflects my own lack of true love and acceptance. (Journal, Sept. 1999)

Situation Three: Dumb to Dyslexic

It has been said, “our biography becomes our biology;” (Myss, 1996, p. xiii) “we define our habits and then our habits define us” (S. Covey, 1998, p. 3).

Oz never gave nothing to the Tin man that he didn't, didn't already have.

(Burnell, 1974, Tin Man)

What?

“I am a loser, so why don't you kill me” is a disturbing and haunting line from a 1994 song written by Beck and Stephenson, especially to those who have never felt like a

loser. My failures and struggles in school, particularly when compared to my peers and brothers, made me understand and feel that I was a loser. We seem to learn about ourselves by comparing ourselves to others (self to society). The very sad aspect of this self-understanding as Coudert (1965) wrote in her book interestingly enough called *Advice from a Failure*, is:

It takes an enormous amount of energy, creative energy withdrawn from the total economy of the person, to hold a trait underground, and, unfortunately, needs and drives do not go underground alone; they carry with them useful parts of the personality, depriving it of richness and the possibility of a variety of responses.
(p. 15)

There is value then in knowing that each comparison and subsequent label we give to ourselves or get from others has the potential to take aspects and correlates of our wonderful personalities underground, limiting our ability to respond in alternative and creative ways. This has certainly been the case in my experience as a student as well as an educator.

Teachers

Comparisons by teachers at school
Fit this mold don't break these rules
Remember anything you want you can be
Don't play it my way and you will get a fifty
We're often mind messed by elders
Because they re right, yah sure
Prophets visions demand conformity
End up stunting character and identity
I say there's too many giving too little
Life's headhunters with us in the middle

School teaches not of essential skills
 But of Pythagorean's principle and chlorophyll
 Don't get me completely wrong, I agree
 It's just too many are too little I believe
 Forgive my attacks on this profession
 I'm a teacher and I've learned my lesson
 Education's more than school in our lives
 Too often equated with years of school gone by
 A university degree doesn't negate ignorance
 It's our perceptions that make all the difference
 (Warren Albert Trimble, circa 1989)

“What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would still smell as sweet” (Bartlett & Kaplan, 1992, p. 175). What is in a name? Nothing, if we speak of an objective thing such as a rose. However this is not the case for an evolving ego, a developing sense of *self*, in terms of concept and esteem. We are taught into much of our self-understanding. We are conditioned into much of who we understand ourselves to be. We are imprisoned by the paradigms that we train ourselves to live within. What's in a name? As Howard Jones (1984) sang,

Well you're not who you think you are
 Did you think that you were John or Dave?
 But you're not, you're not who you think you are
 Jumbled mass of preconceived ideas
 From our birth we were given an identity
 People told us we were great or small
 From our birth we were given rules of right and wrong
 Not to mention the bullies at school

The world teaches us to think that life is full of limitations

The world tries to make us think that there are loads of limits

Welcome to conditioning, welcome to conditioning

Welcome to conditioning. (Jones, 1984, *Welcome To Conditioning*)

In kindergarten we all think that we are great artists, only to learn soon in elementary grades that we are not. We are conditioned to believe that we are not as good as others by comparison and build concepts of ourselves based on those paradigms. These concepts become our prisons. The same is true for so many, if not all, of the skills we learn. The education system emphasizes some skills while ignoring others. It is often too bad for you if your skill set does not fit in with what is taught or professed to be important.

Howard Gardner, author of such books as *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983) *Multiple intelligences: The Theory in Practice* (1993), and *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (1999) popularized this idea that we all excel in some areas and struggle in others. He called these specific areas intelligences, and named eight: linguistic, logical–mathematical, bodily–kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, spatial, and naturalist.

Linguistic intelligence is the “capacity to use words effectively, whether orally or written” (Armstrong, 2000, p. 2). Logical–mathematical is the capacity to work with numbers effectively and the ability for “categorization, classification, inference, generalization calculation and hypothesis testing” (Armstrong, p. 2). Spatial intelligence includes the “capacity to visualize, to graphically represent visual or spatial ideas, and to orient oneself appropriately in a spatial matrix” (Armstrong, p. 2). The fourth intelligence

is bodily–kinesthetic, and includes “specific physical skills such as coordination, balance, dexterity, strength, flexibility, and speed, as well as proprioceptive, tactile, and hepatic capacities” (Armstrong, p. 2). Musical intelligence displays “sensitivity to the rhythm, pitch or melody, and timbre or tone color of a musical piece” (Armstrong, p. 2). “The ability to perceive and make distinctions in the moods, intentions, motivations, and feelings of other people” Gardner named interpersonal intelligence (Armstrong, p. 2). On the other hand, intrapersonal intelligence refers to self–knowledge, which includes having an accurate picture of oneself, “one’s strengths and limitations; awareness of inner moods, intentions, motivations, temperaments, and desires; and the capacity for self–discipline, self–understanding, and self–esteem” (Armstrong, p. 2). Gardner’s final intelligence is naturalist, the expertise recognition and classification of the numerous phenomena of an individual’s environment (Armstrong).

The point of this clarification of intelligences is to create a series of comparisons that can be employed by one to evaluate themselves or others. As a teacher, I am continually required to evaluate students against some norm. More often than not, the students whom I work with in this custody setting have learned that they are not artists, so to speak. They have learned that what they are is not valued in Western society, leading them to prison both physically and mentally. As I write, a musical phrase by Howard Jones (1985) runs through my head: “Who wants to compare, as if this was a competition. Leave that to teachers at school who must preserve their tradition.” The language that I use with these youth, with others, and with myself has great potentiality to both transform or to drive traits underground. These two paths lead in very different

directions, either liberating the ego or retarding the evolution of the ego and dragging the self underground with it.

What is in a name? After all, “you are not who you think you, just a jumbled mess of preconceived ideas.” In our basic essence, each of us is a rose. However, many of us have lost our sense of the essential and fall into the illusion that we are who we think we are. One *becomes* a loser being called it enough, always finding oneself on the low side of normal and less than others through names and words. This process is where we come to know that “words are like weapons; they wound sometimes” (Warren, 1998, *If I Could Turn Back Time*).

So What?

I am no exception to the scenario just presented. From a very young age I knew that I was dumb. I am the third son of three sons. My eldest brother, Laird, is 3 years older than I. Three years is a huge gap to a child looking up to his brother/idol, so skilled, competent, and bright. He skipped a year of school, this process academically termed *accelerated*, to become a part of the grade 7 and 8 Enrichment Program at our school. He excelled in Gardner's logical-mathematical and spatial intelligences. These skills gave him the opportunity to proceed quickly through his postsecondary studies and complete a Ph.D. in organic chemistry. Jamie is the middle son and almost 2 years older than I. He too was accelerated in elementary school; his gifts were in linguistic intelligence, which spilled his strength over from English into other courses such as history and other general arts-based academics. Jamie has a diligent work ethic, completing a Master's degree in history and continuing on to law school. I was never accelerated and, in fact, almost failed grade 3 as I had such difficulty multiplying. It was very easy for me to understand.

They both skipped grades and I did not; I was not as smart as they were. It seemed to me that they had all the talent, abilities, and brains.

I was to learn later that I was not alone with these sorts of feelings, as “these are typical feelings of the last-born child...from the time they are old enough to start figuring things out, last borns are acutely aware they are youngest, smallest, weakest, and least equipped to cope with life” (Leman, 1985, p. 135). However, at the time, I knew that I was less than them; I knew that I was a loser. I knew that I couldn't read well and by grade 3 was aware I could not do math as well. The rudiments of school are reading, writing, and arithmetic, and I was proving that I could do none of them. My big gift was bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, but I could see no value in it.

But what is it they think of me, a has been who never was

Hopefully it's what I feel, an unconditional love

Because towards me I'm no more than my failures

Hoping this life is more than these simple pleasures

But what is it they think of me, a has been who never was

Hopefully it's what I feel, an unconditional love

(Warren Albert Trimble, circa 1988)

To avoid the comparison and sense of feeling “worth-less” compared with my brothers I became a kid who did not enjoy going to school. Early on, I faked illness to stay home. I learned that I could put the thermometer on a light bulb to raise the mercury level. When it was too high, I would shake it down. I can't remember if I figured it out or my eldest brother showed me that the same way the thermometer could be shaken down, it could be shaken up, giving a much quicker and more accurate way to cheat my temperature.

This fear of school was most apparent in the dread I felt waiting for my mandatory turn to read as the teacher went up and down the rows asking each student to

read. I would try to figure out how many paragraphs into the reading I was away in relation to my seating position. I would spend the rest of the short time trying to read and reread the paragraph. I heard none of what was being read by others because I was too wrapped in my fear of having to soon read out loud myself. I passed third grade after months of rote training of multiplication at nights with my mother. My only arenas of success in elementary school were athletics and clowning around.

My eldest brother was off to university as I was entering grade 9. My parents were encouraging me to attend tech school as an alternative to composite high school. It is truly unfortunate that the trades (or tech school) had and continue to have such a stigma to them in our education system. My parents made great efforts to equate tech with composite high school, but society told me both covertly and overtly in terms of dollars and prestige what careers were valued. I chose to attend the same high school that my brothers attended, wanting to be like them, wanting to be as good as them.

The pattern that I followed in elementary school continued on into high school. The difference was that I knew that I was dumb, hearing it regularly from teachers who compared me to one or both of my brothers. In English I continually received conditional passes, or at least that is what I felt it was, in the low 50s. The same held true for history, geography, or any other class that involved a great deal of writing. In math I learned that I did best as I wrote less. I could often figure questions out in my head but had difficulty writing down my answers. My eldest brother often showed me shortcuts with higher math concepts to make it easier for me. I learned that I could do multiple-choice questions much better than essays, moving me towards academic courses in the sciences.

The construct of self is so difficult to break. Regardless of any success, I could not feel it. I also could not take any pride in the things I was good at. These skills really came with absolutely no effort. I had such a high kinesthetic-awareness, I received 99% grades in physical education class throughout high school. For electives I took trades courses that were often paced by the student. By midterm I would often have completed the course requirements and received grades in the high 90s for these classes.

I would actually finish high school with a higher grade point average than both of my brothers. Of course I did not value it. In grade 12 I was part of a group called Club 80, made for students who had an average of 80% or higher. I disliked that I was part of a group that my friends were not a part of. I was bothered because I still did not feel smart, and especially not as smart as either of my brothers, again, reinforced by teachers. I knew I was the loser of our family, regardless of my membership in Club 80.

Near the end of high school my parents made a generous offer to buy a truck and help establish a handyman business for me. To this day I continue this as a running joke and keep asking for the truck, even though I could not accept the offer at the time. And why couldn't I? Why not? I could not go to tech school when both of my brothers went to high school and each excelled in their own academic way. I could not go off to the working world with a grade 12 education when my eldest brother was off to do a Master's degree in organic chemistry and the other was completing his Master's degree in history. Wasn't there already enough there to say I was a loser and dumb? Not going to university would only compound this self-conditioning of worthlessness.

Admittedly, university studies truly were a struggle for me. I did everything possible not to miss a lecture and created study groups with friends. I made attempts at

reading, the required texts and readings but it was a continual, albeit personal, fight. The readings were incomprehensible for me. I took as many science-oriented courses as I could, reveling in multiple-choice tests and exams.

One of the greatest realizations of the time for me, which only added to my sense of being dumb and a loser, was how much my girlfriend helped me with my assignments. I felt that I never could have made it through undergraduate studies if not for her. I felt that she wrote my papers. I would get some information together and write the essay, but after her “editing,” what I had written was transformed into academic prose, something she could be proud of. I felt a failure knowing I could never do what she did and that she should have received a combined degree in English and Physical Education for her work.

When I went off to the University of Alberta to do a second degree in Education, my brother Laird became my essay writer. I still was the dumb loser I had always been, relying on “them” to do it for me. Even when I wrote home to my mom, she would call my girlfriend in Hamilton to come over to decipher the letter. During one of our regular phone calls, my mom told me that she had just seen a show on Oprah about this thing called DYSLEXIA. She thought that I might have it and should get tested.

So I reluctantly did.

On campus there was an educational testing area as part of university services. I made an appointment for dyslexic testing. Halfway through the session the assessor said that I was in fact dyslexic and wondered why, at 25 years old and with two university degrees, I was now coming in. He told me I must have developed learning strategies to be able to get this far. I knew that he was referring to my manipulative study groups and team of editors.

I was transformed in that assessment and by those words.

I went from being self-diagnosed as dumb to being other-diagnosed as dyslexic.

In a few minutes I was no longer who I thought I was. Welcome to conditioning. I no longer held the loser paradigm that had imprisoned me for 25 years all because I had trouble reading. I now had a learning disability.

Now What?

I have worked with imprisoning language as labels and continue to do so. I have moved from dumb to dyslexic. Occasionally I fall back into dumb. I was conditioned into who I am, and this conditioning continues to a great extent. While words can be weapons, they can also have the power of liberation and freedom, opening the gates on our self and society imprisonment. After all, what's really in a name? Loser, winner, stupid, brainer, queer, straight, goof (in jail lingo this means child molester), success, failure, beauty, ugly, and so the list goes on. Each of these words or phrases shapes the paradigm from which we come to accept our *self*. This paradigm is in some way a prison.

In Buddhist philosophy, one strives to take the bad and make it good, then take the good and make it indifferent. One of our tasks as humans as I see it is to search out the paradigms we have and find out what is it they hold. The bars of steel I described earlier are the prisons that we consider to be negative, whereas the bars of gold are the paradigms we value as positive. In my mind, *translation* is the movement from bars of steel to bars of gold. We translate from the bad to the good. *Transformation* is the subsequent movement from the good to the indifferent. This indifference means that one has no attachment to the situation. To be indifferent is to live with equanimity; to live with the same love for all that arises. Equanimity is enacted when one is not moved

differently by being labeled with either a negative or positive term. This level of transformation exists on a high level and would be identified by Maslow (1970) as a Being Need. At this level of being, language cannot be used as a weapon against you.

My job as an educator is to learn and educate, that is, to teach math skills, the rudiments of English, and health studies. Far more than that, though, my purpose, even within my job, is to love. So many of the students whom I teach can read in their report cards that they "Do not work to his/her potential." This may be true, but nor do I. Many of us live lives of suffering, created partially by society and partially by our own doing. We create our own prisons with the labels that we believe to be true. Personally, I do all I can to be aware of the labels I impose on others, as well as on myself, and make efforts to nurture the *self* that I am with. For the most part, I do not see a student as a label or a criminal, but rather a person acting out of fear and suffering. My teaching is my effort to take the bad, the concepts these people have of themselves, and bring to their awareness the good and the potential.

I'm going to make a change for once in my life

It's gonna feel real good, gonna make a difference, gonna feel right

I've been a victim of some kind of selfish love

It's time I realize

I'm starting with the man in the mirror

I'm asking him to change his ways

And no message could have been any clearer

If you wanna make the world a better place

Take a look in the mirror and then make the change (Jackson, Ballard,& Garrette, 1987, *Man In The Mirror*)

Voices Through the Cracks

It seems far easier to hold onto and thus, continue the paradigms that imprison us than question them. Most of us are too busy and too loud to be aware of our own suffering. This suffering occurs as we lead a “normal” life, following the model that our society sets for us. Occasionally something will happen to us, some sort of crisis situation that makes it seem as though we have fallen into the cracks of life.

We'd been swallowed by the cracks

Fallen so far down

Like the rest of those clowns

Begging bus fare back

Swallowed by the cracks of our pride worn down

Talking times gone by like everybody else

Swallowed by the cracks (Baerwald, 1986, *Swallowed By The Cracks*)

It is these crisis situations which crack our shells of practiced, comfortable, and imprisoning paradigms. Learning of dyslexia cracked my own shell of “dumb.” Annie Dillard wrote, “The gaps are the thing. The gaps are the spirit's one home, the altitudes and latitudes so dazzlingly spare and clean that the spirit can discover itself like a once-blind man unbound” (Cited in Schiller, 1994, p. 27). As Leonard Cohen (1992) explains so poetically, the cracks and gaps lead one to the light of discovery.

Ring the bells that still can ring

Forget your perfect offering

There is a crack, in everything

That's so the light gets in (Cohen, 1992, Anthem)

My journey became an intellectual practice to verify my want and an attempt to overcome my debilitating fear. “Remember our rule of thumb: the more scared we are of a work or calling, the more sure we can be that we have to do it” (Pressfield, 2002, p. 40). This quote gives some comfort. I am also reassured that I am not alone in my suffering and in my journey when I reflect on the notion that that which is most private is most public. That this is our universal journey—to find the *self/Self*. My familiar intellectual/academic search inspired greater cracks in my fear. Moreover, those who have suffered similarly, Siddhartha Guatama, Lao Tsu, K'ung Fu–Tsu, Socrates, Plato, and many others, strengthened my voice, my intellectual and ethical development. Their personal transformations have provided guidance for me and for many others. Regardless of the familiar fear that accompanies me on this journey, I take comfort in these voices. “Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the men of old: seek what they sought” (Basho, quoted in Schiller, 1994, p. 107). *Figure 7* of shows some of these guiding voices.

This is my life purpose, the seeking of this *self*. It is what gives my life meaning. Development in the form of both translation and transformation in my individual self/teacher no doubt have the ripple effect of a pebble tossed in a pond. I resonate with Buscaglia that as adults, we must create adult dictionaries, in order to redefine who we are by the paradigms of language that imprison us.

The world is full of talk. It seems that most of us are continually, often even in our sleep, engaged in some sort of communicative activity, mainly talking (even if it is to ourselves). We have joy talk, guilt talk, hope talk, threat talk, fear talk,

Name	Date	Quote	Text
Siddhartha Guatama	563-483 B.C.	Buddha, the “enlightened one,” lived in India and founded Buddhism. “Only the yogi whose joy is inward, inward his peace, and his vision inward, shall come to Brahman and know Nirvana.”	Bhagavad-Gita, Chi. VI
Lao-Tsu	604-531 B.C.	“The five colors can blind, the five tones deafen, the five tastes cloy. The race, the hunt, can drive men mad. And their booty leaves them no place. Therefore a sensible man prefers the inner to the outer eye.”	The Book of Tao, Ch. 12
K’ung Fu-Tsu K’ung,	551-479 B.C.	“If a man put duty first and success after, will not that improve his character? If he attacks his own failings instead of those of others, will he not remedy his personal faults?”	Smith, 1992, p. 241
Socrates	469-399 B.C.	“A life without this sort of examination is not worth living.” This was said at his trial defense, referring to the ongoing self-examination that public philosophy involved.	Kaplan, 1959, p. 3
Plato	427-347 B.C.	Student and writer of Socrates’ actions and teachings. Plato said, “Then tell me, O	Smith, 1992, p. 252

		Critias, how will a man choose the ruler over him? Will he not choose a ruler who has first established order in himself?"	
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	Plato's most famous student who became known as the "father of Science." He developed the Organon of logic, the strict mother text of scholastic philosophy that formulated the test and correction of thought.	
Jesus Christ	33 B.C.- 0 A.D.	His contemporaries nicknamed followers, Christians, literally "the Messiah-folk."	Smith, 1992, p. 434
Descartes	1596-1650	Advocated the "primacy of consciousness." "The mind knows itself more immediately and directly than it knows the external world only through that world's impress upon the mind in sensation and perception; That all philosophy must in consequence begin with the individual mind and self, and make its first argument in these three words (Latin): I think therefore I am (Cogito ergo sum)."	Durant, 1961, p. 11551
Kant	1724-1804	His critical philosophy roused the world from "dogmatic slumber." His famous	Durant, 1961, p. 265

		Critique of Pure reason: "For pure reason is to mean knowledge that does not come through our senses, but is independent of all sense experience; knowledge belongs to us by inherent nature and structure of the mind."	
Nietzsche	1844-1900	A critical thinker who ridiculed those who had most influence on him. "Philosophical systems are shinning mirages; what we see is not the long-sought truth, but the reflections or our own desires.	Durant, 1961, p. 421
Freud	1856-1939	The father of modern day psychology. No area of human existence has not been touched by his numerous concepts including, art, religion, and developmental psychology. Our language is filled with Freudian terms like, "slip of the tongue" and Ego.	
Jung	1875-1961	A pioneer of psychology. "To this question (of self-knowledge) there is a positive answer only when the individual is willing to fulfill the demands of rigorous self-examination and self-	C.G. Jung, 1957, p. 101

		knowledge.”	
Rogers	1902-1987	The father of humanism, moving psychology away from psychiatric care and psychoanalysis. “It is a richly rewarding experience to be what one deeply is.”	Kovel, 1976, p. 114
Mother Teresa	1910-1997	If you are happy with the idea that God calls you to serve him and your neighbour, this will be the proof of your vocation. Profound joy of the heart is like a magnet that indicates the path of life. One has to follow it, even though one enters into a way full of difficulties.	Gonzalez-Balado, 1987, p. 2

Figure 7. Voices through the cracks.

peace talk, esthetic talk, envy talk, spite talk, pure information talk and, among it all hopefully some love talk. (Buscaglia, 1984, p. 53)

Our own words, language, and talk both polish and tarnish our ego. Words and language raise sensations in our bodies, causing a chemical bath to each and every one of our trillions of cells. When scared, we may feel the sensation of butterflies in our stomach. When affectionately in love, perhaps there is a warm, burning sensation in our chest. These describe the first situations that led to a deeper awareness of how others' and my own words affect similar sensations to my body. Buddhist tradition suggests that this resultant sensation is actually the desire associated with rather than the object that we seek. We may want chocolate to ease an emotional situation; however it is the resultant sensation at the cellular level, what I have called the chemical bath, that draws us in.

My point? What is in a name? In the beginning everything is in a name. We are what we think we are, as I was a loser.

People make fun they joke and jest
Ridicule my feelings and condemn my best
To say I can ignore it is an outright lie
When people hurt me our trust slowly dies
So I too joke about my petty lines
It's how I deal with anger and emotional times
They throw pain in the most outrageous forms
Once we agree that then becomes the norm
For sacred are family and magic are friends
To alter norms we must all agree again
More open more accepting more change
When more is encouraged we are all the same
(Warren Albert Trimble, circa 1985)

We are as others tell us we are. We remain imprisoned by our paradigms until we can crack through the armoured shell of ego that we have come so dearly to hold as our *self*. My fears and failings have led me to a place where my intention of talk and dialogue is in accord with that of Buber (as cited in Buscaglia, 1984).

I want what I say to stimulate you, to bring you peace, to help you to grow to your ultimate potential. I want what I say to bring us totally together. You have dignity and therefore my interaction with you must offer you all that you deserve, the *total me* at the moment. (p. 62)

This ends the nodal stories of the *self*, mostly of my *self*, while it opens another aspect of *self*-translation and *self*-transformation. This doorway takes us into the relationship of *self* to society.

CHAPTER FOUR: NODAL STORIES OF TRANSLATION AND TRANSFORMATION: IN RELATION TO SOCIETY

The seeds of dualistic thought are to be found in Descartes' famous dictum “I think, therefore I am”: Cogito, ergo sum.

However I hold an emergent worldview, encapsulated in a Sanskrit dictum *So Hum*. I translate *So Hum* as “You are, therefore I am” : Estis, ergo sum.

(Kumar, 2002, p. 10)

It Takes Two To See One - Society

I have discussed in some detail the value I place in my need to seek, to become more aware of, to translate and transform my *self*. I had earlier come to an epiphany of the interconnectedness of self to soil, of the ego to nature. I have now awoken to an awareness that this line has always continued through to society, through to all those around me. Many sacred traditions speak to the firm idea of service to others at the end of the hero's quest. This notion of service to others is what I have termed *society* and grows into the Kosmic realm as we move towards our higher *Self*.

At birth we are brought into the world in instant relation to others. Within this paradigm we are derived from our biological parents, cast into a social setting, often at the breast of our mother. In his book, *Magical Child*, Joseph Chilton Pearce (1986) suggests an extension of this paradigm. “Matrix Shifts: Known to Unknown” is the title of the second chapter of Pearce's book. The Latin origin of our word *matrix* is womb.

Everyday English words such as matter, material, and mother are derived from this origin, each intimating the basic physical substance out of which comes life. Pearce asserts that we develop through ever-expanding matrix shifts that begin with mother.

After an infant is born from the womb, the mother becomes the source of energy, the possibility, and the safe place on which to stand, so mother rightly means matrix. Later in development, the earth itself should become the matrix, and we have always referred to mother earth. (p. 18)

We begin our awareness in life as infants. Our awareness then expands to mother, to immediate family, to extended family, to friends and cultural society, to broad society, to the world, and into Kosmic consciousness.

Jane Loevinger's (1976) research on ego development closely follows this concept of a shifting matrix. Loevinger uses the term *ego* to refer to a person's core frame of reference. *Ego development* thus represents a change in one's frame of reference. Loevinger identified 10 developmental levels, and each level is defined by "conscious preoccupations," or characteristic ways of perceiving and responding to the social world as illustrated in *Figure 8*.

Loevinger's (1976) Stages of Ego Development represent an ever-expanding sense of ego and give greater clarification to what Pearce (1986) called matrix shifts. The terms translation and transformation also are more fully clarified as a result. Translation refers to the development, balancing, and harmonizing of all the particulars at any given stage. Transformation refers to an actual shift of stages. Each transformative stage change both moves one through the stages while including the balances achieved at earlier stages. Both models can be viewed as a process of psychological development, where the "I" of one stage becomes the "me" at the next. Wilber (2000) describes this transformative shift in the following.

Loevinger's Levels of Self Development		Conscious Preoccupations
Autistic		Pre-social
Symbolic		Self vs. Non-self
Impulsive		Bodily Feelings, Sexual & Aggression
Self Protective		Trouble, Wishes, Things, Control
Conformist		Appearance, Social Acceptability
Conscientious		Adjustment, Reasons, Problems
Conformist		
Conscientious		Differentiated Feelings, Self-Respect
Individualistic		Differentiation of inner life from outer
Autonomous		Integration of physiological/ psychological, Self-fulfillment
Integrated		Identity

Figure 8. Loevinger's stages of ego development.

What you are identified with (or embedded in) at one stage of development (and what you therefore experience very intimately as an “I”) tends to become transcended, or dis-identified with, or de-embedded at the next, so you can see it more objectively, with some distance and detachment. In other words, the *subject* of one stage becomes the *object* of the next. (p. 34)

Each of these stage models is a useful tool to increase one's awareness of one's own ego development. The idea behind employing them as tools is not to pigeonhole, label, or create a duality of good or bad. Rather, I have come to appreciate them and use them as a means of *self/Self*-awareness assessment towards personal translation and transformation.

Situation One: About Society

If you waste your time a-talkin' to the people who don't listen

To the things that you are sayin', who do you think's gonna hear.

And if you should die explainin' how the things that they complain about,

Are things they could be changin', who do you think's gonna care?

I was born a lonely singer, and I'm bound to die the same

But I've got to feed the hunger in my soul.

And if I never have a nickel, I won't ever die ashamed

'Cos I don't believe that no-one wants to know (Kristofferson, 1990, To Beat The Devil)

The transformative process or paradigm shift “demands an internal revolution in which we live out individually what is needed collectively.

(Ashford, 1996, p. 6)

What?

There has always existed an inner awkwardness in me between whom I was behaving as (*self*) and who was whispering to me (*Self*). As a teenager, I worked at being something and someone, trying to fit in, even knowing I was fitting into the *wrong* crowd. I can now relate this behaviour to a matrix near to Loevinger's (1976) fifth stage of *conformist*. Needing to belong, I was something of a tough guy, sometimes cruel and violent, even a thief. This stage of conformity requires us to belong somehow, be it through a dysfunctional relationship, a gang, or abusive love, or through a nurturing relationship. Maslow (1970) describes these Belonging Needs (level 3) as an essential developmental phase that moves one from Safety Needs (level 2) to Esteem Needs (level 4). Loevinger (1976) describes a similar matrix shift from "self protection" to "conformist" and onto "conscientious conformist" and "conscientious."

Even though I made the transformative choice to stop hanging around with the *wrong* crowd, I was still known to others as *tough*, and therefore still imprisoned by that label. I was accepted as a tough athlete and often fought to protect other teammates after games. I continued to live in the paradigm of that persona while trying to be someone whom my new friend group would accept. Also important was the idea that I was someone whom I could accept and who would behave more in line with the inner concepts of *myself*, freed from the shackles of my past beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots that held me to the labels placed on me.

This quiet inner awareness of another way of being constantly whispered to me of something else, somebody other. Too busy, too loud, and too afraid, I was left feeling like an imposter because how I was was not congruent with how I wanted to be. Then I

experienced my first “Aha!” moment, one of those clear nodal moments when clarity and certainty filled my being. The year was 1983, and my Mom introduced me to an orator on Public Television. (My Mom has been instrumental in many of my translativ and transformative discoveries.) The orator was Leo Buscaglia, and his talk was called “What is Essential is Invisible to the Eye.” Through that program, I truly came to understand that, “what is essential is invisible to the eye....One sees clearly only with the heart” (Saint-Exupery, 2000, p. 63). The whisper I had been pushing aside I now understood as the purpose for my life.

As Buscaglia spoke, I became certain that I was to do what he was doing. He told powerful, ordinary stories about his life with family, friends, and his experiences on his journey in the process of becoming. I too wanted to be on this path to become the embodiment of Love. I sat alone watching the program, continuously looking around for someone to either verify or share this experience with me! I was filled with the excitement of possibility; the deep meaning of these faint whispers, an awareness of love, became lucid. Buscaglia's book *Living Loving, and Learning* (1982) became the first book that I ever truly read, and I did so over, and over trying to find ways of becoming what he spoke of within each story. This was quite an act for an undiagnosed dyslexic.

So What?

Leo Buscaglia stirred a knowing and a feeling of authenticity in me that I had never known, leaving me with a newfound a sense of self-respect. I was transforming to Loevinger's conscientious stage of ego development (1976), focusing on a differentiation of my own feelings from the social norm. Up to then, being a tough guy was the norm, rather than a sensitive, caring, affectionate, and loving man. I did not know how to *be*

love. As my feelings of desire towards this loving way grew, so did my egoic *self's* rationale of self-doubt. Not only did I not know how to be love, I still held onto the paradigm that I was dumb, not smart enough to be able to learn, to do a Ph.D. like Buscaglia, orate like Buscaglia, or teach at a university. The paradigm continued to imprison me even though I had experienced a glimpse through the cracks.

The combination of that paradigm with my ego's fear of change removed the path towards academia for me. However, I still wanted to be able to follow this whisper of uncertainty, to live this love within my fears. I was left to struggle with the concept of love that our culture cultivates through popular media, on television, in magazines and on the radio, romantic or sexual love. This creation was far from the conceptual love that Buscaglia had so perfectly woven into his tapestry of rich stories. So I attempted to do some of the things that he had done. I began by simply paying truthful compliments to friends and family. Then I, as Buscaglia did, went out of my way to compliment strangers. At the end of the program, Buscaglia stayed and hugged people. The entire audience lined up waiting for a hug from this man. This astonished me. I soon replaced a handshake with a hug as my way of greeting people.

I did fall into some new prisons along the way. My attempts to emulate the higher love that Buscaglia lived often resulted in brokenhearted friends. I have always had more female than male friends. I attempted to act the same with each; I gave out compliments, hugged, and generally became more demonstrative. Men were initially uncomfortable with these actions due, I'm sure in part, to overwhelming homophobia in Western society. Those same behaviours with females were also often misread; the norms of Western society tend to link any physical or emotional sharing to sexual intimacy. I fell into a

pattern of not knowing how to respond when my acts of affection led others to the assumption that sexual intimacy was my goal. Once again I was acting in a way to belong, to be liked and wanted, while sensing another me who was patiently watching and whispering guidance.

Life Begins Now

Life's what happens while you're busy making other plans (Lennon)

**It's all these silly days that pass and the millions of demands
Can't wait to change and start new when everything is perfect**

Keep thinking that one day my puzzle pieces will finally fit

When I was a young boy I had it all planned out

I'd grow up, ride a motorcycle and wear a leather coat

Maybe sometimes I should have begun to live this life

Instead I ran wild, broke rules never cared for what's right

Humble me, teach me lessons of life's reality

No more looking to the future for what I may never see

So now what is possible only through hindsight and error

Forget plans of a Disney, life begins now, not sometime later

In my teens I became an ego superstar in my mind

I took many girls, was uncaring, hurtful, and unkind

One shock of life, as I planned my ego speech

Knew I'd get it, didn't, and was set back in my seat

Then in my 20s I had a following of teens

What I spoke, gospel, but really had no meaning

But take it to heart as young lads plan for their power

They had an image of me and all my sins became ours

(Warren Albert Trimble, circa 1989)

I found that I was encountering very slow progress at becoming the *love* that Buscaglia wrote and spoke of. During these attempts, I began to note authors and books referred to within his writings, such as Carl Jung and Eastern philosophies, especially

Buddhism. My prison of being too dumb arose once again as I believed that I could not understand these sources. Now I am able to see that I was, in fact, too educated and imprisoned in a logical, factual, and quantitative method of Cartesian understanding. I was unable to process this information towards a new way of being, unable to transform and enact my new paradigm and story. Upon reflection, I realize that I was immersed in translation, working to alter held attitudes and learn new patterns towards true change.

We have not paused long enough to consider the simple truth that we humans are not born with particular attitudinal sets regarding other persons; we are taught into them. We are the future generation's teachers. We are, therefore, the perpetuators of the confusion and the alienation we abhor and which keep us impotent in finding new alternatives. It is up to us to diligently discover new solutions and learn new patterns of relating, ways more conducive to growth, peace, hope, and loving coexistence. "Anything that is learned can be unlearned and relearned. In this process called change *lies* our real hope" (Buscaglia, 1984, pp. 30–31).

I was deep in this process that Buscaglia speaks of, one of unlearning and relearning towards change. I just wasn't yet able to articulate it.

In 1985 I found great meaning, inspiration, and resolve in another of Buscaglia's books. In *Loving Each Other: The Challenge of Human Relationships* (1984), Buscaglia defined 10 characteristics of loving relationships. He created the list from a qualitative survey of thousands of readers. Readers were asked to define the qualities that make up a loving relationship. The themes from this study were then made into a list. The list gave me actual attributes to practice, assess, and alter. I no longer had to define love through the prisons of Hollywood entertainment, which in many ways had failed me up to this

point. I learned a paradigm involving hugging, affection, and meaningful conversations and appreciated the impact it had both on my female friends and on me. I was able to see the friendship aspect of these relationships creating serious attachment. I was also able to discuss the philosophy behind my actions rather than becoming sexually intimate. This understanding destroyed my prison of breaking the hearts of friends.

New solutions, behaviours, or paradigms were embedded in the list that Buscaglia (1984) compiled. These solutions seemed very natural to me, as I believed in a peaceful, hopeful, and loving coexistence with all. I knew from my own experience with drugs, alcohol, and violence that anything learned truly could be unlearned, that once a paradigm no longer imprisoned me I could relearn something new to take its place. Buscaglia's (1984, pp. 36-37) list of these essential qualities is in *Figure 9*. This list is accompanied by his list of the ten most destructive qualities to a loving, growing relationship. Both lists move from the most common response to the least common response.

Each concept presented by Buscaglia was to become part of this lifelong study for me. This man had become a very important figure in my life. He prompted my first “Aha” realization of love as a purpose leading to a transformational matrix shift. He also gave me tools towards a concrete translation of that sense of purpose, creating a practical and evolving realization of my *self* to *Self* and my self to others: family, friends, and society.

Qualities Essential to a Loving Relationship	Qualities Destructive to a Loving Relationship
Communications	Lack of communication
Affection	Selfishness/Unforgiving
Compassion/Forgiveness	Dishonesty
Honesty	Jealousy
Acceptance	Lack of trust
Dependability	Perfectionism
Sense of Humor	Lack of flexibility (not open to change)
Romance (including sex)	Lack of understanding
Patience and Freedom (p. 36)	Lack of respect and Apathy (p. 37)

Figure 9. Buscaglia's qualities essential to a loving relationship and qualities destructive to a loving relationship.

Now What?

The more I know, the less I understand

All the things I thought I knew I'm learning again

I've been trying to get down to the heart of the matter

But my will gets weak and my thoughts seem to scatter

But I think it's about forgiveness, forgiveness

Even if, even if, you don't love me anymore (Henley, 1989, *The Heart Of The Matter*)

I longed to follow my own patient whispers of love (*Self*). Leo Buscaglia gave me validation, teaching university courses with a curriculum of love. He provoked an approval in me to value the whisper and make an effort to enact a new way, my new story.

Buscaglia's writings also led me to Buddhist philosophy, which would literally become lifesaving to me in the coming years. This experience is discussed in the section of *Self*. I studied Eastern philosophy in and out of the academic setting. My first notion for thesis research was love. My second notion would combine my two passions, filtering Eastern philosophical principles through my understanding of psychological concepts. I had just completed a course with Dr. Susan Drake (1998) through Brock University, and she suggested I look into the work of Ken Wilber. I read *No Boundary* (1985) by Wilber and found that he had done just that, creating a multilayered model of sorts through varied philosophies. I thought I had to give up yet another topic and find another area of research not yet covered in such depth.

The position of society in my study was the last to fall into place. While entrenched in a paradigm, we often overlook our own belief systems and behaviours. Rarely do we shine insight onto our own blind spots. My whispers were the call to begin an in-depth *self*-search of the hold of my own paradigms and prisons. In an unknowing way I was deconstructing those beliefs and behaviours to reveal the assumptions of a University educated, upper middle class white male within this Western society. The seeds of guidance on this search had come from Buscaglia and found a strong ally in Outdoor and Experiential/ Environmental Education studies with Bob Henderson at McMaster University. At that time of deconstruction, I understood this journey to move from *self* to soil (earth) to higher *Self* and then to society. I now truly understand that the *self* I have studied is so entwined with society that I have been blind to its impact. I knew early that I wanted to love others but did not recognize that others implicitly meant society. I now believe that we all seek the *Self*. This search may begin with the concept of the ego *self*, and in such a case the soul will find another way to be heard through the call of service in *self*, society, soil, or *Self*. One understands that

It is not and either/or, but an “and” process, a way we learn through experience of adding dimensions to our life rather than trying to replace one way with another.

(Kofalk, 1996, p. 3)

We often are unaware of the whispers and quiet callings, but we still have that crack that can be eased and filled only by the love of and with others.

Situation Two: The Golden Rule

Free me from satirical put downs, I'm no better than those I curse

Disengaged my vicious overtones. I realize now I may be worse.

I condemn those who are different. It's so easy to disagree.

It's hard to be accepting letting people be who they want to be.

(Warren Albert Trimble 1988)

What?

The Golden Rule, “love thy neighbour as thyself,” is the second of the Ten Commandments. The mythology of these commandments, moral rules to live by, is that they were written by God and given directly to Moses so he might share them with his people. The love referred to by the disciple Mark in the Bible is not of the romantic or sexual variety. This is the love that Leo Buscaglia spoke of, the same love that I had found to be the purpose for my life. This love is the love of the *Self*. We all begin at *self*-discovery and awareness and move towards *Self*-discovery and awareness.

“What is most private is most public” (Glendining, 1994). I have come to understand this idea that no actual separation exists between *self* and society, although we may create a division by way of the paradigms we live. The translations and transformations any individual makes have an instant impact on those around him or her. With every thought, intention, and action, we drop the pebble of that moment into the pond of those around us. They continually feel the ripple effects. The main thesis posed by Moore's *Care of the Soul* (1992), is that collectively, our culture has the same complaints as the individuals in it. He says,

The emotional complaints of our time, complaints we therapists hear every day in our practice, include emptiness, meaninglessness, vague depression, disillusionment about marriage, family and relationships, loss of values, yearning for personal fulfillment, and a hunger for spirituality. (p. xvi)

Because of our insistence on separation, the individual feels sickness. However, this private sickness reflects public sickness. The Golden Rule gives us the guidance to look beyond our own *self* into that of society.

So What?

Societies are traditionally based upon principles from their founding philosophies, religions, and myths. Joseph Campbell (1988) wrote that the “guiding idea” of his work was to find “the commonality of themes in world myths, pointing to a constant requirement in the human psyche for a centering in terms of deep principles” (p. xvi). One of these common themes from within our various mythologies concerns the “Golden Rule” describing one's obligation to others in society. *Figure 10* is an anecdotal summary of this collection given to me by my partner's parents, who have worked as lay ministers within the Roman Catholic community for the past 12 years. I have also come across numerous sources of this sort of information throughout my research.

The Golden Rule illustrates how various cultures adhere to a common ethic even though they have differing founding mythologies. It is a reminder that that which is most personal, loving ourselves, is also most public, loving one another, regardless of culture, race, heritage, and creed. Each tradition asks this of its followers; to love the other as they love themselves. This examination of the Golden Rule also highlights the broad similarities in the development of foundational human paradigms, stories, or myths around the world. How interesting it is that so many world traditions are built on the declaration of *love* for all in one's society, for all of humanity. Through this lens, we can see, as Moore (1992), saw that the complaints and yearnings of the individual reflect those of their society. We can now extend that reflection between societies and

Tradition	Text	Quote
Christianity	Matthew 7:12	In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law of the prophets.
Confucianism	Analects 15:35	Is there one maxim, which ought to be acted upon throughout one's whole life? Surely it is the maxim of loving kindness: Do not unto others what you would not have them do to you.
Hinduism	Mahabharata	This is the sum of duty: do not unto others that which would cause you pain if done to you.
Islam	Sunnah	No person among you is a believer until that person desires for their neighbor what she/he desires for her/himself.
Judaism	Talmud, Shabbat 3id	What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellowmen. That is the entire law; all the rest are commentary.
Sikhism	Sikh holy writings	As you deem for yourself, so deem for others. Then you shall become a partner in heaven.
Taoism	Tai Shan Kan Ying Pine	Regard your neighbor's gain as your own, and your neighbor's loss as your loss.
Zoroastrianism	Dadisten-I-dinik, 94:5	That nature alone is good which refrains from doing unto another whatsoever is not good for itself.
Baha'i	Baha'u'llah	Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.
Buddhism	Udana-Varga 5:18	Hurt not others in ways that yourself would find hurtful.

Figure 10. The Golden rule throughout various traditions.

understand that it does take two to see one.

Now What?

One of the greatest stumbling blocks to the enactment of the Golden Rule is the ability of the individual *self* to understand what is prophesized through their cultural paradigm filters. We journey through translations and transformations along many developmental lines. Humans are all born at a developmental level equivalent to ground zero, developing through stages along this journey as circumstance and choice dictate.

Society has an extensive influence along the way, extending a magnetic effect capable of pulling the individual up to a level that allows comprehension of its paradigms. The perceptions we hold are based on these paradigms, which in turn form our worldview. This can be seen through the Golden Rule, which suggests universal love, care, and compassion. These attributes are also seen in the theories already examined, existing in Loevinger's (1976) Integral stage, Maslow's (1970) Being Needs of Self-actualization and Self-transcendence, or Kohlberg's (1984) postconventional stages of Universal Ethical and Universal Spiritual.

Each successive developmental stage both transcends and includes previous ones. Often the analogy of these developmental hierarchies involves a ladder where upward movement in the form of transformation involves stepping up one rung, leaving the last one behind. We may metaphorically move up the ladder; however, the lower rungs or stages do not vanish. In fact those lower levels are necessary for the stability and the height of the ladder. We continue to have access to the teaching and foundational perspectives of these earlier stages.

Just after we completed our studies in Physical Education at McMaster University, my childhood friend Gus described to me how amazing life was now that he knew everything. I kept waiting for a punch line that never came. Years later we were talking, and I revisited this statement. He began his defense by saying, "I was foolish back then to think that I knew it all." I felt a relief at his paradigm shift when he continued with, "Because *now* I do know it all." Another friend once said that his learning was like finally breaking out of a box just to find himself in another larger box. He was articulating metaphorically the notion of movement from a small box or paradigm towards the ever-increasing understanding and awareness of transformation. Further development of our *self* within this new box, the new paradigm, becomes tricky, as translation again becomes our responsibility through the balancing and integration of all we have gained to that point in our development. This journey becomes a never-ending movement through boxes and paradigms that involves continuous assessment and integration. Wilber (2000) describes this intentional and tedious movement through developmental levels in the following.

Empirical evidence has consistently demonstrated that the self's center of gravity, so to speak, tends to hover around one basic level of consciousness at any given time. This means, for example, that if you give individuals a test, about 50 percent of their answers will come from one level, and about 25 percent from the level immediately above or below it. (p. 35)

This idea of one hovering around a single level at any time is valuable towards *self*-assessment as well as coming to appreciate the differences in those around us. Using Maslow's (1970) Needs Hierarchy, we can see how those who live with deficiencies of

physiological needs (food, water) or safety needs (shelter, security) cannot develop sufficiently through to any of the higher needs. Most of their decision-making will come from this place where lower needs are satisfied. This helps to explain various basics of our current “street” society, from the actions of youth to those of homeless squatters, afraid to sleep for fear of sexual abuse. It also helps us appreciate the position of the other who may not live within our own paradigms. Can we blame the mother who steals food for her starving child? How about a kid who steals from the family drug dealer to get the essentials that he and his little sister need? What about the mass stealing of satellite signals and personal information from the Internet? Through this type of examination, I have arrived at a place where judgment of the students I work with no longer comes easily.

Regardless of the tool we choose to use in order to increase our awareness of *self* and others, while we remain in one of the lower levels of self-absorption we cannot take the perspective of the other. If we cannot take the perspective of the other, because of our own egocentric necessities, we cannot love them like we love ourselves, as the Golden Rule would have us do. It is often said that “we should walk a mile in their shoes” before we judge them. The following Buddhist story that I heard while engaged in a Vipassana meditation retreat will shine a light on this idea.

There is a story about a young mother who brings her son to the Buddha to ask a favour of him. She walks for days to meet with the Buddha. She waits in line for hours, and hours and when she finally gets to him, she asks if he would tell her son to stop eating so many sweets because they are so bad for him. The Buddha nods, smiles, and asks her and her son to come back in a week's time. She makes

the long journey home and waits once again in line until she is back in the Buddha's presence. He looks at the boy; he nods, smiles, and says to the young boy, "Stop eating so many sweets." The mother on one hand is happy that the Buddha talked to her son, while at the same time unhappy as she felt she wasted so much of her time in travel and waiting in line. A little frustrated, she asks the Buddha, "Why did you not say that a week ago when we were here?" The Buddha nods, smiles, and says, "Last time you were here I too was eating sweets."

(Journal entry, circa 1997)

As teachers we evaluate others, and as individuals we continually judge others. This is all done through our current worldview, our current operating paradigm. It plays out vividly for teachers, as our job involves evaluation of students against some norm or social standard. Our curriculum is filled with expectations and outcomes based on information and skills. My own evaluations of the youth I have taught include phrases such as "needs to apply himself," "does not work to her potential," "needs to stay focused," and other such demeaning lines. All the while, I continued "eating sweets." If I am not applying myself as best I can or I am not working to my potential as an individual or as a teacher, I feel I have no right to tell another that they should. How often do we as educators truly walk in the shoes of our students?

I currently work with a recidivist student who, when leaving the facility this last time, was uncomfortable with the task ahead of him at home. His mother wanted him to get rid of her boyfriend who was living there. He and I talked about this situation, and I did the right "teacher" thing, telling him it was the mother's responsibility to deal with her own relationship and adult problems, not his. He is 15 years old. When he returned to

the facility, I asked him what was up. He told me that he came home one day to find the boyfriend beating his mom with a baseball bat. His two sisters were present. This 15-year-old grabbed a knife and jumped in front of the boyfriend. The boyfriend began to hit him with the bat. The youth finally jumped towards the man, towards a fight, and in the fight cut the boyfriend's throat, severing his jugular vein. An ambulance was called and the police were contacted. For whatever reason, the mother would say nothing against her boyfriend. Neither did the boyfriend. The youth was charged by the police and returned to our facility.

I tried to put myself in his shoes. What would I do if I walked into my home and a man was attacking my mother, my partner, or my father? I'm quite sure that I would do anything necessary to protect them. In fact, I'd probably do the same as he did if, in fact, I were that courageous. I suspect I would be able even to kill in the name of protection.

We live amongst cultural clichés and values that are often created at a developmental level higher than many of us operate from. "Do unto others." "Love thy neighbour." "It is better to give than receive." Universal love is attainable at a point at which we *do* love the other as we love our *self*. This is the point where we can put our *self* in another's position, in their own stage of development, where we can figuratively walk in someone else's shoes. This requires the ability to take a third person perspective, when one is no longer attached to the event or its outcome, an orientation that involves progression on many individual developmental lines. The development of the *self*, increasing one's ability to take this perspective, is crucial to the development of society. The more pebbles of translation and transformation we drop into the pond of society, the greater the ripple effect to raise our society into the next developmental stage.

Situation Three: Society's Magnetic Pull

I'm not an activist or a radical you know I don't need a cause

I know where I stand when push comes to shove

Don't have to tell me how it is you know I see it every day

Sex sells and violence entertains

It's not the way things are and the way they're supposed to be

Half the world sold into some kind of slavery

They don't teach you that in school or tell you on T.V.

You've got to find out for yourself what it means to be free

After the last tree is cut down and the last fish is eaten

After the last river is diverted and the last woman beaten

We'll find out what money can buy

Yes we'll find out what money can buy

Yah I'd go deaf if words were shame

Ain't it sad how all the first world complains (C. Smith, 2001b, Trees For Anna)

What?

Society creates and influences the paradigms that imprison us. Societal standards, norms, values all have a magnetic effect, pulling members towards the level of the paradigm enacted. Western society pulls toward the cognitive rational, whereas Tibetan society pulls toward the spiritual. We are guided by these social myths, which often influence our beliefs, our behaviours, and our blind spots. In the world I am engaged in, science seems to play the role of saviour, complete with the powerful ability to show results. Our capitalistic economic system is another myth that has power over our

behaviours while hiding our blind spots. We purchase and consume increasingly to fill our sense of empty-ness. We value consumption over community and communion (common-union). Our guiding social values have become economic based rather than community based, and this paradigm pulls one to it like a magnet. There is enough food produced to feed all the people in the world, yet the dialogue revolves around who has the responsibility to pay for it. The Golden Rule takes back seat to the dollar. The magnet also has the negative effect of holding us close to its norm when we attempt change (translate) or develop (transform) beyond it.

In the novel *Ishmael* (Quinn, 1992) there is a dialogue between a teacher and a pupil. The teacher is a telepathic gorilla named Ishmael, and the pupil is an American writer. At one point in the novel, Ishmael communicates a story about the early exploration of flying and its reliance on trial and error. The underlying message is one of cultural blind spots.

“All right. I want to follow one of those early trials in detail. Let's suppose that his trial is being made in one of those wonderful pedal-driven contraptions with flapping wings, based on a mistaken understanding of avian flight.”

“Okay.”

“As the flight begins, all is well. Our would-be airman has been pushed off the edge of the cliff and is pedaling away, and the wings of his craft are flapping like crazy. He's feeling wonderful, ecstatic. He's experiencing the freedom of the air. What he doesn't realize, however, is that this craft is aerodynamically incapable of flight. It simply isn't in compliance with the laws that make flight possible—but he would laugh if you told him this. He's never

heard of such laws, knowing nothing about them. He would point at those flapping wings and say, 'See? Just like a bird!' Nevertheless, whatever he thinks, he's not in flight. He's an unsupported object falling toward the center of the earth. He's not in flight; he's in free fall. Are you with me so far?"

"Yes."

"Fortunately—or, rather unfortunately for our airman—he chose a very high cliff to launch his craft from. His disillusionment is a long way off in time and space. There he is in free fall, feeling wonderful and congratulating himself on his triumph. He's like the man in the joke who jumps out of a ninetieth-floor window on a bet. As he passes the tenth floor, he says to himself, 'Well, so far so good!'

There he is in free fall, experiencing the exhilaration of what he takes to be flight. From his great height he can see for miles around, and one thing he sees puzzles him: the floor of the valley is dotted with crafts just like his—not crashed, simply abandoned. 'Why,' he wonders, 'aren't these craft in the air instead of sitting on the ground? What sort of fools would abandon their aircraft when they could be enjoying the freedom of the air?' Ah, well, the behavioral quirks of less talented, earthbound mortals are none of his concern. However, looking down into the valley has brought something else to his attention. He doesn't seem to be maintaining his altitude. In fact, the earth seems to be rising up toward him. Well, he's not very worried about that. After all, his flight has been a complete success up to now, and there's no reason why it shouldn't go on being a success. He just has to pedal a little harder, that's all.

“So far so good. He thinks with amusement of those who predicted that his flight would end in disaster, broken bones, and death. Here he is, he’s come all this way, and he hasn’t even gotten a bruise, much less a broken bone. But then he looks down again, and what he sees really disturbs him. The law of gravity is catching up to him at the rate of thirty-two feet per second squared—at an accelerating rate. The ground is now rushing up toward him in an alarming way. He’s disturbed but far from desperate. ‘My craft has brought me this far in safety,’ he tells himself. ‘I just have to keep going.’ And so he starts pedaling with all his might. Which of course does him no good at all, because his craft simply isn’t in accord with the laws of aerodynamics. Even if he had the power of a thousand men in his legs—ten thousand, a million—that craft is not going to achieve flight. That craft is doomed—and so is he unless he abandons it.” (pp. 105–107)

So What?

We too are on such a flight. Our paradigms imprison us from seeing the ground rising beneath us. Ishmael warns his pupil that, unlike the laws of man, the laws of nature are not negotiable. If we refuse to free ourselves, to see with new eyes, the paradigms we create are destined to crash, just the same as the self-confident pilot.

Jean Gebser’s (1985) *The Ever-Present Origin* is paradigmatic: In this work, he sees cultural worldviews evolving over epochs. He has labeled these structures Archaic, Magic, Mythic, Mental, and Integral. The Archaic epoch lasted from man’s beginnings until about 50,000 years ago. The Magical epoch took over and held until 10,000 BC and is characterized by the belief that the individual had the power to control the other, as in the use of the voodoo doll. The Mythical epoch saw a shift in this power away from the

individual to deities and a development of a patriarchal society. The Mental epoch began in the Age of Enlightenment of the 18th century, when rationality, perspective, and scientific knowledge created the basis for ethics, aesthetics, and knowledge. The Integral epoch seeks a holistic perspective on human development, and Wilber (2000) suggests that we are currently evolving towards this structure.

Figure 11 explains these structures more fully. The first column, *Structure*, labels and organizes the epochs in a chronological and evolutionary order. The second column, *Perspective*, defines that epoch's ability to perceive and depict reality. The third column, *Objective Emphasis*, describes how they see themselves in relation to the physical world. The fourth column, *Manifestation*, defines each epoch's creation process. The fifth column, *Relationships*, speaks to social interactions. The final column, *Economy*, describes the prevailing means of wealth distribution. These categories are drawn from the work of Gebser (1985, pp. 117-149), as they seem to be most relevant in distinguishing levels of social evolution. Defining these characteristics allows us to see situations when societies actually draw their members up to the operating level while dissuading others from reaching beyond that level, up to the next. It is also important to note that, while a society may evolve into a new epoch, traits of the "old" may remain. For example, remnants of the patriarchal society of the Mythic Epoch remain today.

Gebser's structures, though linked through broad levels of cultural evolution, can also be related to individual development. Wilber (2000) links these two, individual and social developments, pairing the epochs with actual age. The Archaic structure lasts until around age 2 when Magic takes over. The Mythic begins to take hold around age 10, remaining often through adulthood, although there is potential to move out of the Mythic

Structure	Perspective	Objective	Manifestation	Relationships	Economy
Emphasis					
Archaic	Zero, No dimension	Unconscious, Spirit	None		Foraging, Hunters and Gatherers
Magic	One Dimensional, Cave art, Pre-Perspectival	Nature, Egoless	Witchcraft, Spell-casting	Tribal, Clan/kin	Horticulture, digging stick, hoe
Mythic	Two Dimensional, Icons, Un-Perspectival	Soul, Psyche, we-oriented, psychic	Mythology, Spoken myth	Parental, Ancestor-worship, matriarchal	Agrarian, Animal-drawn plough
Rational/Mental	Three Dimensional, Perspective art	Space, World Egocentric, materialistic	Menos, Directive, discursive, thought	First born son, Child adulation, Patriarchal	Modern-Industrial, Scientific
Integral	Four Dimensional, A-Perspectival	Conscious, Spirit, ego-free	Diaphainon, Open, spiritual	Mankind-neither matriarchal nor patriarchal, integrum	Informational

Figure 11. Gebser's structures in cultural development.

and into the Mental/ Rational around age 11 or 12. The Integral structure is also open-ended, as its inception occurs around 19 or 20, but its nurturing and evolution may not take place. The movement from structure to structure requires a complete shift in paradigm requiring translation or transformation. Both processes require impetus and energy to sustain the continuous growth and expansion, and as long as one's current paradigm meets one's needs, why bother?

Now What?

When I filter my own experiences through Gebser's (1985) structures, I can rebuild my perspective, a worldview. When I was a child, I believed in the omnipotent powers of superheroes and of myself. I later realized that I alone could not alter the world regardless of my own heroic efforts but came to believe that either my parents or God could. My transformative choice at 16 years old was a direct result of being able to take a third-person perspective, to walk in my father's shoes. Society assisted in pulling this self-proclaimed "loser" up and into the predominant social structure, into Gebser's Mental/ Rational epoch of development.

Wilber (2000) continues from where Gebser's Integral structure ends. "It should be noted, however, that Gebser's Integral Structure refers basically to the overall vision–logic wave, and does not adequately cover the higher, truly transpersonal stages (psychic, subtle, causal, and nondual)" (p. 148). Prior to the development of this *vision–logic* stage, Wilber often refers to a Pluralistic/ Postmodern stage. This stage is characterized by the diversity that pluralism allows and lands between Gebser's Mental/Rational epoch and Wilber's own Integral. This Integral, or vision–logic, attempts a holistic perspective of all the previous levels ranging from Archaic through to Pluralistic.

While society pulled me up to the rational stage, it was reluctant to allow me to go on into the higher stages. The whisper of what was calling to me was considered wrong in my social setting. Love is not the paradigm, myth, answer, or purpose that the Western world runs on. Locating sources of this “new” value of love through philosophical and spiritual writings, I spent the next several years deconstructing the prison that society had created in me. I stripped myself of many of the norms of social paradigms. A poem I wrote in the early 1990s speaks of this process.

Learn to Let Go

**Climb the ladder, climb the pole, of all that matters, learn to let go
Give in, give up, give the heave ho, to all that matters, learn to let go**

More than this, what's left of that

The guilt and burdens we haul on our backs

Hold child-like to our once upon a time

Lost to our reality we are all too blind

Faith unexplained technology praised

Climbing the latter wherever it's raised

**Climb the ladder, climb the pole, of all that matters, learn to let go
Give in, give up, give the heave ho, to all that matters, learn to let go**

Success what is it our money's worth

How we get it doesn't seem to really matter

Escape the numbers the pursuit in the game

Forward and on from where you once came

Back to naked the nothingness of youth

Forgetting all you think to be your truth

**Climb the ladder, climb the pole, of all that matters, learn to let go
Give in, give up, give the heave ho, to all that matters, learn to let go**

Pride twists fear from flight to fight

The justification to prove our own right

Our words take the place of true thought

Too often don't enact and simply stays talk
Climb the ladder, climb the pole, of all that matters, learn to let go
Give in, give up, give the heave ho, to all that matters, learn to let go
We learn to protect by building Ego
The best we can do is learn to let go
Hold to habits and hold to hurt
Hold to drugs and hold to the sure
Hold to wrongs and to our pain
Hold on to those we always blame
Hold on to whatever you want to go
Hold on to the love of status quo
Climb the ladder, climb the pole, of all that matters, learn to let go
Give in, give up, give the heave ho, to all that matters, learn to let go
(Warren Albert Trimble, circa 1991)

The value of letting go of paradigms is that we are no longer imprisoned or ruled by them. This relates back to the ability to take the bad, making it good, and then making them indifferent. An important aspect of this process requires that we are aware of the paradigms. It is hard to know what to let go of if you do not know what you are holding onto. It often takes a different perspective to learn about our paradigms than that which created them. Spending time in a strange, foreign country has this liberating awareness potential. We see representations of beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots that are so different than our own. We compare our way, that which we feel is normal, to their way, that which appears to be unusual. This dialogue is uniquely portrayed in the movie, *The Matrix* (1999). The scene is of an interrogation between Agent Smith and Morpheus, when Smith gives his perspective, that of one of the machines, to his human counterpart.

I'd like to share a revelation that I've had during my time here. It came to me when I tried to classify your species. I realized that you're not actually mammals.

Every mammal on this planet instinctively develops a natural equilibrium with the surrounding environment, but you humans do not. You move to an area, and you multiply, and multiply, until every natural resource is consumed. The only way you can survive is to spread to another area. There is another organism on this planet that follows the same pattern. A virus. Human beings are a disease, a cancer of this planet, you are a plague, and we are the cure. (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999)

As the pilot in *Ishmael* and the humans in the *Matrix*, this “test run” of ours on earth may be coming to an end as we continue to consume like a virus or disease, unaware of our impending collision in our flying machine.

Our hope for a balanced survival depends on a New Story, a new mythology, a new paradigm. Like cancer in the body, we destroy the earth. Not one of us wants specifically to destroy the world. And yet each of us does exactly this, contributing daily to the destruction of the world. We are captives of a civilization's paradigm that compels us to continue in this manner in order to live the life we have chosen and become accustomed to. Our myths, our stories that link modern man to his world and his gods, tell us that this is the way. Enacting that story is an attempt to make it come true. A culture is a group of people enacting a story. “Any story that explains the meaning of the world, the intentions of the gods, and the destiny of man is bound to be mythology” (Quinn, 1992, p. 45). Joseph Campbell wrote, “What we have today is a demythologized world” (1988, p. 10). Our loss of a cultural myth that accounts for man (*self*), humanity (*society*), the world (*soil*), and the gods (*Self*) has left us to our myth of self-indulgent, consumptive ways.

So again, our hope for a balanced survival depends on a New Story. What is that story? How do we discover what to believe in before we plunge to our death in our aerodynamically incapable craft?

On this immediate level of life and structure, myth offers life models. But the models have to be appropriate to the time in which you are living, and our times have changed so fast that what was proper fifty years ago is not proper today. The virtues of the past are the vices of today. And many of what were thought to be the vices of the past are the necessities of today. Moral order has to catch up moral necessities of actual life in time, here and now. (Campbell, 1988, p. 16)

I believe that this “catch up” of moral order to the moral necessities today refers to the need for a social paradigm shift and the development of a New Social and Global Story. The Old Story of consumptive capitalism, of technology and science as saviour, has not met our moral needs. I agree with the philosophies and writings thus presented and sense that the New Story will move us towards the Integral, harmonizing and incorporating all preceding structures. This Integral Story needs to make accommodation for the *self* (as discussed in Chapter Three), for *society* (as discussed in this chapter), as well as *soil* or ecology (to be discussed in Chapter Five) and *Self* (as explored through Buddhist spirituality, discussed in Chapter Six).

CHAPTER FIVE: NODAL STORIES OF TRANSLATION AND TRANSFORMATION: IN RELATION TO SOIL

Perhaps the greatest threat of our time exists within that which I have termed soil, That is, the ecological and environmental devastation which humans have caused to this planet. I appreciate that the concern and awareness of such issues were made public by Rachel Carson (1962) in her book *Silent Spring* and acknowledge that we have made progress as a global society in our environmental vision by way of such agreements as the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change in 1997. I continue to feel strongly that, as members of Western society, we continue this impact to the eventual detriment of ourselves. The steps that we have taken are not enough. We truly do require a paradigm shift in order to realize and do what is best for both mankind and this planet.

What follows is the story of my evolution from inner-city kid through the realm of eco-psychology into Integral psychologies, philosophies, and practices that I continue to work towards.

Situation One: Whitehead's Phase of Romance

I must listen to my life telling me who I am. I must listen for the truths and values at the heart of my own identity, not the standards by which we must live—but the standards by which I cannot help but live if I am living my own life. (Palmer, 2000, p. 4)

If you are not a part of nature...Then you are apart from nature
(Anonymous)

What?

Sometimes it feels like this world spinning faster
 Than it did in the old days
 So naturally we have more natural disasters
 From the strain of a fast past
 Sunday was a day of rest
 Now it's one more day for progress
 We can't slow down
 Cause more is best
 It's all it is a process (Smith, A., 2002, I Miss Mayberry)

The lyrics from this song describe a process similar to that which has evolved into the division for Western society to exist as “apart from nature.” As this story goes, at one time we were like any other animal living in the Garden of Eden, living by the laws of nature, nature itself. As we ate of the tree of knowledge, we became self-aware, self-conscious, and self-separated from all other creatures in the garden. Dr. J. Livingstone, (as cited in Cayley 1991), a lifelong naturalist at York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies, stated:

All animals, I will assert, are largely if not almost entirely unaware of self and self-interest. Interspecies, that is to say, actions of animals across species lines, between different kinds of animals, all seem to me to demonstrate a mutual and reciprocal and cooperative level of mutual understanding that is quite difficult to find between human individuals of the same species, let alone across species. (p. 11)

As we became more self-aware, we became less reciprocal. Our self-understanding removed us from this interspecies reciprocity, from being a part of nature/soil to being apart from nature/soil.

This is a social myth that Westerners tend to follow blindly, that nature and the environment are commodities for our want and desire. This old story or myth of the *self* as separate from environment allows us to continue to live the consumptive capitalistic way we have. However, the laws of nature do not separate any species from the environment. The environment is so fundamental to our existence and survival “that it must transcend politics by becoming central in the values of all members of society” (Suzuki, 2002, p. viii). Somehow we do not see or acknowledge this inextricable attachment as our imprisoning paradigms have created these incredible blind spots. We took a mythical bite from the fruit and clothed ourselves out of shame. We now cloak ourselves in paradigms, complete with the language that allows for distorted beliefs and behaviours to be enacted, as is evident in the following story.

Koyaanisqatsi

As I left the university library one December evening, a young girl of six or seven caught my attention. Because of the unseasonably warm weather, I was taking off my sweater, and seeing her drew my thoughts away from my actions of getting ready to cycle. The young girl seemed out of place here in the university, yet she seemed simultaneously to be a reminder of the wonders of youth, a refreshing situation. She was speaking with an older woman, and she was within earshot distance, so I heard her say, “I am not a nature person.” My initial thought was, “Don’t you breathe?” and if so, then you *are* a part of nature. In my subsequent

stream of thought, a movie titled *Koyaanisqatsi* (1983) came to mind.

Koyaanisqatsi is a Native American Hopi term that loosely translates to “a life out of step with nature.” My original joy at pondering the innocence of a little girl in a university setting was taken away. Instead, I felt sad that she had become a product of our societal problem. Here is where the problem begins: Children are the future. I doubt the child created the “nature person” concept (PARADIGM) on her own; it is probable that she learned it from one of her caregivers.

Consequently, the child's views are symptomatic of the caregiver's worldview, one that has lost its connection to nature, to people, and possibly to the holistic idea that all is one. (Journal entry, circa 1986)

This girl perfectly displayed to me the power of language within this paradigm. Through the simple use of words, “I am not a nature person,” she set herself apart from the natural world. She learned this language somewhere, probably through her daily interactions with friends, family, and cartoons, all reinforcing our dominant social paradigms.

So What?

I believe the children are the future

Teach them well and let them lead the way

Show them all the beauty they possess inside

Give them a sense of pride, to make it easier

Let the children's laughter remind us how it used to be

(Masser & Creed, 1981, *The Greatest Love Of All*)

Children, as students, learn from what we teach as well as how we teach it. All the while, they teach us. They especially teach us about ourselves. Upon some reflection, I was to find that I was raised with an attitude no different than this young girl with whom I had the chance encounter on the university campus.

I grew up in the inner city of Hamilton, Ontario, raised on concrete, steel, and Gage Park. I did not know that just to the west of the city was the Dundas Valley Conservation Area. Nor did I know the top of the “mountain” (as locals call the Niagara Escarpment). Nor did I appreciate the uniqueness of the Niagara Escarpment in the world, as the United Nations would bestow upon it a World Biosphere Reserve designation in 1990. I was all but ignorant to the fact that my hometown was on one of the Great Lakes. My family occasionally ventured down to the beach area of Hamilton, most often for a meal of fish and chips at *Hutch's*. I was not a nature person. I walked the streets, not the woods. We played Frisbee across any number of traffic lanes. We played hockey and football on the street in our neighbourhood, chase and tag from rooftop to rooftop. I never thought of air pollution, noise pollution, recycling, acid rain, or any other of the environmental “issues.” We did not have a garden for vegetables, and grass-cutting on our corner lot house was always a constant burden when compared to other things I wanted to do. The soil was nothing more than dirt. I did not know there was a natural environment or that I was apart from it.

Tragedy isn't something that can happen within the privacy of consciousness—to an actor in a play or to an individual running afoul of significant world realities in daily life. A tragedy must be witnessed. It involves an educational relationship between the person who acts and those who witness the actions. It is an extensive

social activity. The protagonist suffers the consequences, the witness learns about world realities and how to deal with them. If the world realities aren't recognized, there's no extension, and no tragedy. (Fawcett, 1990, p. 58)

I was imprisoned within this tragedy, within the realities of my world. My role as both protagonist and witness in the everyday life of childhood solidified this paradigm of my culture, of being apart from the natural world.

As Leo Buscaglia (1982) brought an awareness and transformational process to my *self* and my relation with others, *society*, something similar was to happen in my relation to the earth, *soil*, through Dr. Bob Henderson's Outdoor and Environmental Education Courses at McMaster University. During 1985–86, my final year in the exercise physiology stream of the Physical Education program at McMaster, a good friend told me that I should take this wilderness living course that Dr. Henderson offered. I was reluctant to stray from the sciences, but as I trusted her a lot, I assented. This was an elective course, and so I thought that I would just have some fun with it. As mentioned, I knew the streets and had no idea of any wilderness. I did have some exposure in Cubs and Scouts, but that experience only reinforced my idea that the soil was nothing more than dirt, as those camping weekends were more about not getting wet or dirty than exploring or being part of nature.

In his book *The Aims of Education* (1967), Alfred North Whitehead outlined his three stages to education: Romance, Precision, and Generalization. He described the Romance stage as a time when the subject matter has newness and novelty and “holds within itself unexplored connections with possibilities half-disclosed by glimpses and half-concealed by the wealth of material” (p. 17). He felt that education was essentially

stirring what was already in the mind. During the educational Romance period, one truly falls in love with the material, as one does in the romance of intimate love. This period is not concerned with systemic procedures, as these would follow later.

Precision, Whitehead's second stage, is where “width of relationship is subordinate to exactness of formation” (p. 18). This is the practice of presenting new material and analyzing facts bit by bit. This is the stage that our present school system typically emphasizes, often resulting in a sense of disconnection and uselessness from students. This reaction reflects how I felt as a student, that I was just going through the motions of “learning” facts by rote that I would never again use.

A very strong relationship exists between Romance and Precision. We learn conceptually what love is, what a heart attack is, and what death is but it is through the actual during the actual experience that we can finally come to truly understand what is meant by the concept presented. Whitehead (1967) speaks to this relationship in the following.

It is evident that a stage of precision is barren without a previous stage of romance: unless there are facts which have already been vaguely apprehended in their broad generality, the previous analysis is an analysis of nothing. It is simply a series of meaningless statements about bare facts, produced artificially and without any further relevance. The facts of romance have disclosed ideas with possibilities of wide significance, and in the stage of precise progress we acquire other facts in a systematic order, which thereby form both a disclosure and an analysis of the general subject-matter of romance. (p. 19)

We fall in love with the subject–matter (Romance), and then we want to learn as much as we can about it (Precision). The final stage, Whitehead termed Generalization, returns the learner “to romanticism with added advantage of classified ideas and relevant techniques” (p. 19). We take the passion we learned from the Romance period and the informational and academic foundations added to the material at the Precision stage to enrich and develop a more holistic understanding of the subject–matter and its relevance to us during Generalization.

Dr. Henderson teaches from the Romance stage of Whitehead's philosophy (1967). The curriculum of the Physical Education Program at McMaster University (1982–86) was interesting and useful, full of facts and scientific “truths,” delivered from Whitehead's Precision stage. The content of physiology, anatomy, and biology courses was particularly powerful for me, translatable in fact. However, the difference between my keen interest in the science–based program and the experientially based outdoor program lay in the transformative powers of the latter.

It was the last week of August 1985, just prior to my final year of undergraduate studies at McMaster, when I went on my first canoe trip in the Canadian Shield. I was to move in the wild without my familiar creature comforts, completely out of my element and with no idea how I would survive without a toilet. In those 10 days I fell in love with wilderness travel; I fell in love with how this situation made available opportunities to enact those qualities that Leo Buscaglia (1984) had attached to successful relationships; and I fell in love with Bob. He became a friend, mentor, and guru. I would guess that most students feel similar things of the course, experience, and Bob.

Our first day in this unfamiliar, but comforting, environment closed with an activity called an Oriental Tea walk. The essence of this activity was having tea in silence. My very first ever journal recording happened afterwards.

There was the tea walk, an Oriental ritual to promote serenity and awareness.

From the second we began walking in silence from the main house into the wilderness I was fascinated. The fears that were in my mind settled. The beauty of the area overtook me. In a small clearing a group of us sat amongst deep bush.

The dark blueness of night was interrupted only by the flicker of the lantern I wasn't scared, my lightening mind stopped, I was excited, calm, relaxed, and alive, silently looking into space and into the eyes of those with me. (Journal entry, circa 1985)

Whitehead's Romance stage was so vividly set with this type of activity, and reaction on my part, for what was the first wilderness experience for many. Each tripping group had 10 people who became very close, in some cases forming lifelong bonds. This small group experience also translates to the larger group (some 40 people—students and staff) as they shared a strong common bond of Romance in this wilderness experience and the classes that followed.

As did Buscaglia with his writing, Henderson provided me with an experience that would prove life altering, life transforming. His own words describe how he pictures his role as a travel guide, a facilitator of sorts, in these situations.

I would never presume to know precisely which experiences are new to them or which experiences have the most meaning in the short term or the long term. In other words, I cannot claim to be accountable for all their learning. In fact, despite

years of travel guiding, I am continually surprised by what is actually learned and where it comes from. Perhaps teachers need to feel compelled to be held accountable for what is learned, but the travel guide is more able to provide a context or ambience of travel and let the learning unfold with the relationships that evolve. Most often the guide will not come to know all that was learned. (Henderson, 1998, p. 6)

Later in the course, I would come to understand that this program was “life according to Bob.” The canoe trip and subsequent cross-county ski trip were vehicles of romance that could draw us in to written material and paradigms that Bob felt worthy of examination. This wilderness experience with its necessity for community gave me a venue to enact the concepts of love I had so strongly felt yet had been unable to express. My worldview had truly expanded by way of the trip, academic concepts found in readings, and the material presented in lectures. In previous courses I had written in terms of translation through efforts of physical fitness or eating to gain muscle while losing body fat. During Henderson's courses I attempted to write a very personal and meaningful university paper, allowing the whisper of my inner *self* to work at merging with the actions of my mind. This paper was titled “ $C_6H_{12}O_6 + O_2 = H_2O + Co_2 + \text{Energy} + \text{Waste}$: Re-humanize Yourself.” My intention was to bend my analytic, scientific, rational mind around the concept that we are nothing but air, water, soil, and sunlight, working with an idea new to me that we actually are a part of nature rather than “apart from it.” My grade did not reflect my effort or desire; however I loved the opportunity to articulate during that period of Romance concepts that were to facilitate my own transition from the quantitative to qualitative. Later I would read Dr. David

Suzuki's (2002) *The Sacred Balance*, which articulated that same point with vivid clarity. American singer-songwriter David Wilcox (1987) achieves similar ends in the chorus of his tune, "Sunshine on the Land": "He said I am the sunshine, you are the sunshine we are the sunshine, help me understand. We are the sunshine on the land."

My essay was an attempt to relate my past knowledge of biology and physiology to the new material that held such passion for me. Photosynthesis is represented in the equations in the title and describes the ability of plants to capture the sun's energy. This energy is then held in the form of the plant-based things that we eat: fruits, vegetables, and grains. The plants give up the sun's energy to the herbivores and then in turn to the carnivore, leaving one with an awareness of the unquestionable connection between the sun, plants, and animals. I was recreating my old story into a new map to guide my mind while struggling with this alteration. A sense of this shifting reality is revealed through an excerpt from Henderson's contribution to *Chicken Soup for the Canadian Soul* (1998) and my own journal passage (1985) around our final day of that original canoe trip. Bob, Gus, and I were traveling in one canoe together.

We are nearing the end of our canoe trip experience on the Canadian Shield. Our canoe of three is quiet. The sun is hot. The lake calm. The mood idle, reflective, perhaps even a bit somber but content as we approach our final portages and lake hopping. The other canoes are elsewhere on the water and as it often happens when all is wonderfully right in the universe, our canoe of three is "lost in space," lost in our own space of "being" together in this place, working with each other, with time to ourselves.

Ah, the relationship of self, others and place harmoniously creating a space of utter contentment. It was a long paddle. We'd been silent for a while, when Gus said, "You know, I finally understand it." The question encouraged a response. "Understand what?" I said, never one to lose the opportunity to learn about learning. I remember his words verbatim, "All the blue and green on all those maps of Canada. This is it. Canada mostly looks like this. I never knew that before." (Henderson, 1998)

Gus said something today that I did not get, and then I did. Here we are, two lifelong friends, two inner-city kids paddling with our wilderness Guru, on our last day of this awesome trip. I was so excited for what I had done, what I had learned spending time with old friends and new. I had this amazing affection for Bob after just a few days. I was a little sad knowing this was our last day out, and I guess others felt the same as the canoe was quiet and had been for a long time. Then it happened, Gus said something like, "I finally get it. All the blue and green on the maps of Canada, this is it."

I had spent days trying to learn how to read these topographic maps with their two colours of blue and green. There was a little brown, but that was to signify the 1 kilometer grid and the lines of elevation that were imposed on the green. I mean I knew the green represented the land and the blue the water, but I didn't really understand it until Gus broke the silence with his insight. I understood the map was a two-dimensional representation of the Earth, but I did not put it all together that most of Canada and most of the world for that matter

was water. It shows how egocentric we are naming the planet Earth rather than Water.

Thanks once again Gus for helping me understand something bigger that I thought I understood, love you Blood. (Journal entry, circa 1985)

As was the young girl, I was not a nature person. In this brief wilderness trip I learned that although I was quite far from being “part of nature,” it was the paradigms that I clung to that defined my situation as “apart from nature.” I began to understand that this view imprisoned me, and I desperately wanted to be free of it.

Now What?

Changes were set in motion by Henderson's ability to romance me with the subject-matter of a human wilderness experience and the Canadian Shield. One of the requirements for these courses was to keep a journal. I had never kept a journal of any sort, and this requirement has led me to a long-lasting conversation with myself, which I continue to this day. Writing gave me a venue to work through the array of complex, new ideas of others as well as a place to express my evolving understanding in safety.

Journaling was probably a lifesaving activity in my late 20s and 30s. As I wrote, I often found that thoughts came out in rhyme. I included poetry subconsciously. I found that verse, with rhythm and rhyme, was an intuitive means of communication for me. I could fill cracks and holes in verse with metaphors, with my heart's meaning, rather than with just words. Poetry is not necessarily explicative, giving the reader room to add in their own experience. This journaling and poetry writing gave me the freedom to communicate my thoughts, my emotions, and most valuable, with my self.

An evolution from this poetic writing was an inspired sense of singing. On the canoe trip, Bob sang as a wakeup call in the morning as well as anytime he had a chance. I grew up with the paradigm that I could not sing and was told I could not carry a note. I realized that if Bob could sing and get away with it (much as Bob Dylan has been doing for years), then regardless of my abilities, I too could sing. After all it, it was simply a method of expression and a way to have fun, with others joining in. It took years before I actually felt I could sing, but creating poetry and weaving it together with music became a method of developing a sense of voice, another way for my learning *self* to be heard.

Another interesting requirement of the course was reaction papers as opposed to the formalized conceptual and academically researched ones. These papers were usually one or two pages in length and were highly personal reactions to academic literature and other experiences in the course. These papers were my first real form of expressing my thoughts and feelings, finding my voice within the university setting. It allowed me to return to, re-search, the Romance aspect of my experience and intertwine this personal with academic concepts to form a richer and more meaningful experience. Clandinin and Connelly (1992) refer to journal entries as smaller “fragments of experience” (p. 42). This writing exercise, on the experience itself and thoughts related to it, opened the floodgates of questioning and processes of self and societal value examination and soil relations investigation.

Reflection on my writing reveals that it contributes greatly to my way of learning. It is how I am able to first uncover and express certain thoughts or feelings that I may have been unaware of, often coming to me in utter surprise. The act of writing was an act of discovery, of self-discovery. The initial articulation of the thought or feeling leads to

something concrete upon which to attend. I now have the opportunity to learn from the act of writing itself and go over it later for more meaning.

The whisper that has often eluded me seems to be the feminine of my being and my paradigms. In my journals I do not have to project any persona. I do not have to be tough, independent, self-sufficient, competitive, or any other socially constructed masculine trait. The co-operative aspect of wilderness travel allowed me to share my temperament and evolving traits in a caring and compassionate venue. I was not in competition with others. Daily requirements for living were distributed amongst the group. I quickly came to understand that for me, the trip per se was not as important as the people. The setting was an opportunity for me to develop my sense of “being” love. I have paddled across Canada yet can't really tell you what rivers I have been on. I take part in the wilderness trip to commune with, to be a part of, others and nature.

Situation Two: The Problem of Whitehead's Phase of Precision

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life. (Thoreau, 1983, p. 135)

What?

Bob Henderson drew me into this course fully through the use of A. N.

Whitehead's (1967) Romance stage of education. I had been searching for a way to better understand myself as well as to express the love Buscaglia spoke of. I now knew that I

was on the right track but unsure as to where would it take me. The path of my further pursuit into these connections, to self and to nature, took me to the University of Alberta, where Bob had completed his graduate studies under the mentorship of Dr. Harvey Scott. I enrolled in the 2 year Education Degree program at that university, and my interest in formal studies moved into structured psychological theories. The required courses in Education often seemed mundane, whereas these electives in psychology and philosophy were opening avenues towards understanding and insight. My motivation was to “be love” through my sense of self-development, and it seemed a natural progression to expand from the pure hard sciences to these softer sciences. This notion itself was a learning experience, as I had been so critical towards courses like these from within my earlier university studies at McMaster. During this time I explored those traditions and teachers espoused by Leo Buscaglia, Carl Rogers, Jung, Freud, Buddhism, and Taoism.

I had completed the required course work within Education by the end 1987 and was able to fill my final term with electives. This created an opportunity for me to follow up my studies in outdoor and experiential education, strengthening that Romance phase of study with Bob Henderson with the Precision stage facilitated by Dr. Harvey Scott. I completed the term and received my teaching certificate in April of 1988 but decided to continue on with spring and summer wilderness courses and another year of full-time studies. The full year course work was collectively called Explorations and involved a group of senior interdisciplinary undergraduate students who custom-designed a wilderness travel program to satisfy the research needs of the individuals. This program seemed to be a natural fit to my present study interests in psychology, philosophy, Eastern religions, and our connection to nature, Ecopsychology.

Dr. Scott was affectionately known amongst the students as Dr. Vague. This very large ex-CFL football player, turned Zen philosopher, became my next guide in an unusual way as he was officially on sabbatical the year that I was in the Explorations group. However, he was regularly on campus and the two of us often shared insightful philosophical, environmental, and spiritual discussions. By way of those chats alone, I was blessed to have gone west to study. I really loved that his name was Harvey, for that was the title of a favorite movie of mine in which James Stewart played a gentle and compassionate man with a very special friend, an invisible rabbit named Harvey (Koster, 1950). Harvey the rabbit, as may have been the case with Harvey the professor, turns out to be a Pooka, a mythical figure of good fortune and playfulness. From the movie: "From old Celtic mythology, a fairy spirit in animal form, always very large, the Pooka appears here and there, now and then, to this one and that one. A benign but mischievous creature." Harvey the professor had the mischievous quality of vagueness, allowing the group to wallow through the difficulties of self-directed learning. This year-long program was as much an exploration of the self as it was an exploration of the wilderness and of Canadiana.

Love as a purpose for my life was given a setting in the wilderness experience. I had been romanced by and fallen in love with the wilderness and my ability to connect to others. A. N. Whitehead's (1967) next stage of learning, precision, some sort of factual analysis, was to follow. I was to encounter the problem of precision. During our canoe trip with Bob in the Canadian Shield, we had paddled for days on crystal clear, waters in northern Ontario. These lakes were so clear, so blue and so beautiful in the romance of the experience. I was to learn later that they were acid rain lakes but never really

understood the effect acid rain has on the waters, actually killing lakes. This was a concept that I could only vaguely comprehend, having heard of acid rain in high school. But somehow the bare facts had very little relevance to this inner-city kid. It was only through my experience in the Explorations program, under the tutelage of Harvey Scott, that I would follow through on learning, applying scientific knowledge, precision, to the experience on the canoe trip, romance. Now I would learn to bridge the divide between my formal and rational learning and my experiences, which had become larger than life. *So What?*

My new academic life completed circles of inquiry, which had begun within the realms of quantitative studies. For example, I was exposed to environmental education findings that moved me from the area of biology into ecology into psychology, leading me to diverse personal behavioural changes. A main area of change that I would encounter began with a realization of man's incredible impact on planet Earth and the subsequent account of my own "footprint". I was to realize that my footprint and its residual effects, both physical and mental, could be changed through my own lifestyle choices. One strong moment of realization came to me by way of an interesting narrative describing this impact by way of compressing seventeen billion years of the universe's history into a single year. In this story, each month is equal to a little over a billion years, creating a time period more relevant and comprehensible for most. This particular version of the compressed story of planet Earth has been compiled through a number of sources as indicated.

The Life Of Our Planet In One Year

In a tiny fraction of the first second of January, matter came into being. Resulting from the momentum of a mysterious explosion, matter expanded against its own gravity and then began to cool. Elementary particles, and immediately after that, the simplest nuclei, hydrogen and helium were born. By the end of January, matter and radiation divided and the galaxies emerged. Sometime around the middle of August our solar system formed from a collapsing cloud of gas and dust. Our Earth soon witnessed the arrival of the first complicated chemical. This was followed by biological structures. The oldest rocks on the Earth's surface were formed by the middle of September.

On December 19th, plants were able to live and then grow on land. By December 20th, landmasses became covered with forests, creating an oxygen-rich atmosphere, and hence life. On the 22nd and 23rd of December, fish evolved into four-footed amphibians, and came to inhabit the moist surface of the earth. These then evolved into reptiles on the 24th. On the 25th, the first warm-blooded creatures came into existence. Late in the evening of that same day, the first mammals appeared alongside the dominant saurians. On the night of the 30th, the European Alps began to fold upward (Suzuki, 2002, p. 152). Finally, on the night of December 31st, humans branched off from their ancestral apes. The human species arrived 35 seconds before midnight. Sixteen seconds later, the Jesus myth was created. With about a second to go before midnight, humans began the process of domestication, moving from the wilderness into collectives (Glendining, 1994, p. 14). With about one half second left before 12:00 midnight, the technological age commenced (Willigis, 1989), and with about 5 milliseconds left in that year, the industrial revolution began.

This one-year time span communicates the relatively short period of man's time of domestication on this planet. Again, I use the term "man's time" intentionally as it is this gender that "constructed the prevailing theories (*paradigms*), written history (*his-story rather than her-story*), and set values that have become the guiding principles (*prisons*), for men and women alike" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 5). In Canada alone, 264 species are on the endangered or threatened list. This devastation has been 80% attributed to habitat destruction (DeMarcos & Bell, 1997). Theodore Roszak writes, "as these animals become extinct and fade from our vision, will our children view the extinct tiger as we view the dinosaurs, wondering if such a creature ever really existed?" (Roszak, 1996, p. 85)

Daniel Quinn's (1992), novel, *Ishmael*, describes the specific point when humans were separated from our connection to the godly domain as the eating of the forbidden fruit in the garden, the original sin. Ishmael articulates that this was the mythical point that we left the garden in order to live according to our own civility. Through mathematics and science, we have developed the abstract concept of linear thinking. We are no longer part of the vibrant life rituals and interconnections occurring in the natural world. Instead, we have constructed human paradigms and a worldview designed to control nature within this civility.

The result is division; fences are built to separate the wild from the domestic, to separate plants and animals and people. This notion of separation, of duality, has become more and more dominant over the years, resulting in divisions such as good and bad, ugly and beautiful, wild and civil. It eventually affected our psyche as it "grew in intensity with the emergence of large-scale civilizations, and has developed to pathological

proportion with mass technology.... It is the psychic displacement, the exile that is inherent in civilized life. It is our homelessness" (Glendinning, 1994, p. 64). Glendinning suggests that this idea of homelessness is part of our modern Western culture. We view planet Earth not as a home but rather as a great ball of resources ready for extraction and refinement into products designed to quench our consumptive thirst. We are no longer a harmonious part of it, and it is no longer our home, providing emotional and mystical comfort. Territorial disputes involving annexation or separation, wars, and occupations are also manifestations of this homelessness. These situations promote nationalism or patriotism at the expense of undermining our human attachment to the Earth. We all have the whisper that I speak of.

Existing in this way, on this planet, without any sense of contemplative reflection, has caused incredible physical devastation. It has also created a strong sense of alienation amongst ourselves. The more that I learned of these divisions, the more driven towards lifestyle choices. As Mallonee (1992) sings in "The Weak One Now," that when we live this life of alienation "we sell our souls to feed the flesh and amuse ourselves to death." I became. I began to point the finger of rightness in my new role as an evangelical environmentalist. It became my place to not only deconstruct my paradigms and my own meaning but to also rattle the cages of others who did not realize their own prisons. Brown-Walker (1992) suggests that in the process of human development, "it is inevitable that people will display varying levels of spiritual understanding. It is not our duty to condemn or correct others, but to simply go on developing ourselves" (p. 23). I came to an awareness that this also held true for environmental understanding: that people are invariably at different levels. I was simply moving through my life

condemning others who weren't on my path of making “good” environmental choices. I had not yet learned Brown–Walker's simple lesson of active self–development.

I *had* moved into a level of *self*–awareness sometimes termed ego consciousness; I believed that I was separate from everything else, in competition with others and the rest of the world. Even though I felt that I was speaking for the natural world, I remained apart from it. As humans, we are obsessed with self–importance; we validate ourselves on the basis of what others think of us, tell us, and what possessions we have. As we begin to consciously see ourselves as “apart of nature” we paradoxically begin our return to ecology and Eden. This return is the hero's journey back to the *Self*. As we presently cause the extinction of multiple species, habitat destruction, and ozone depletion, we must strive to understand and develop our own *selves* in order to create greater meaning in our lives. Wilber (1981) in his book *Up from Eden; A transpersonal view of human evolution*, describes this development as a responsibility to be self–conscious as we collectively evolve towards superconsciousness. My own fall from grace resulted from my eating from the Tree of Knowledge.

By eating from the Tree of Knowledge, not only did men and women realize their already mortal and finite state, they realized they had to leave Eden's subconsciousness and begin the actual life of true self–conscious responsibility (on the way to superconsciousness, or Actual return). They did not get thrown out of the Garden of Eden; they grew up and walked out. (Incidentally, for this courageous act, we have Eve to thank, not blame).” (Wilber, 1981, p. 314)

I had built a bridge between Romance and Precision. Now I would realize that in order to rebuild other connections I would need to return to a conscious journey towards my *self/Self*. My only duty towards meaning in my life was to be found on this journey.

Now What?

How can you say that you're not responsible?

What does this have to do with me?

What is my reaction, what should it be?

Protest is futile wishing wells in my throat

My life is reduced to a shallow meaningless party

Driven to tears, driven to tears (Sting, 1980, Driven To Tears)

This 10 year, long period of life found me studying writings in psychology, ecology, and Eastern spirituality as I deconstructed my foundational paradigms. The contradictions between those foundations and the soulful gleanings of my studies led me to a sort of self-destruction and a prolonged period of depression. For some time, I lived in an unfinished basement, sleeping on the floor on a camping mat in my sleeping bag. Every time one of the roommates would flush the toilet upstairs, the sewer would back up just feet away from me. My surroundings were a reflection of my inner confusion. I was sick and my journals were filled with the confusion of “being” versus “doing.” I came to understand that my heroes had been creations of pop culture, two action actors and two pop singers, Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Howard Jones, and Sting. I stopped valuing them and their traits. I removed all of my binding prisons, the influence of my family and my social foundation, leaving me with nothing. I had not developed or

planned a precise understanding of the new story and paradigms to govern my life, one that would fill in the void left from the old,

**Walking down roads our forefathers construct
In hope of finding some reason to rip them up
Like somehow we thing our generation's so smart
Full of knowledge, information, yet still in the dark
(Warren Albert Trimble, circa 1989)**

The blackness and emptiness of my depression continued as I struggled just to survive, to stay alive. I remained sleepless for days, with a certainty of death had I closed my eyes. For months I ate nothing but chocolate muffins and drank chocolate milk. I was semi functional while I worked, in carpentry and general contracting, as a substitute teacher, and as a wilderness trip guide. While I was home, I fell into paralysis. Today, I am unsure how I was able to do the work that I was doing. When I was capable, I wrote in journals, trying desperately to feel again. The analyses and deconstruction of my paradigms left me in an emotionless and suicidal void. Years of this mental suffering and self-torture led to my trying to find a way to die without causing grief to my family and friends. I am still sure that the process of journaling, along with the care and compassion of a few close friends, gave me the ability to live. One incident stands out clearly as a pivotal learning experience. I will share a powerful and painful experience that I had while guiding a wilderness canoe trip, coupled with highlights of Frank Capra's classic movie *It's A Wonderful Life* (1946).

“No one is born to be a failure. No one is poor who has friends.” This is the descriptive blurb of the movie. George Bailey, the lead character played by Jimmy Stewart, is visited on Christmas Eve by a guardian angel named Clarence. Bailey is a

man who gave of himself so that others could reach their dreams and potential. At some point he realizes that he is worth more money dead than alive and decides to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge. Clarence decides to hurl himself off the bridge just before George kills himself, knowing that George would forget about his own suffering in order to help the suffering of another. I too had a chance encounter with a guardian angel, a young woman whose name I never knew but whose suffering partially saved me.

I had agreed to take over as the head canoe trip guide for a couple of friends who were to go on their honeymoon. I was in no shape physically or mentally to be in such a position. This quickly became apparent at our drop-off site. The trip consisted of eight youth, 12 to 14 years of age, under the guidance of a leader-in-training and me. It was to be a week-long canoe trip on one of Alberta's glacier-fed rivers. We were hundreds of kilometers away from civilization and the camp itself. The trip's end was just upstream of a serious set of rapids in this icy water.

It's a Wonderful Life—My Clarence

We had just been dropped off and waved goodbye to the shuttle van. Getting organized and ready to put into the river, the leader-in-training noticed that one of the youth did not have a life jacket. I felt that this was my fault as I hadn't checked this before the van drove off. Having confidence in my paddling ability, and knowing the legalities of guiding youth, I gave my own life jacket to the youth. Some may consider this respectful or even noble, but the truth was I ultimately did not care if I died.

Not having a life jacket myself removed me from any scenario of river rescue that might occur. We had practiced canoe rescues back at camp in the

warm lake but experienced the real thing on the second bend of this icy river as one of the canoes tipped. I was left out of the physical rescue as I had given up my life jacket. I could not risk getting involved and being knocked unconscious by a boat or paddle unless it was a last resort and I perceived the situation as life-threatening. I was capable of making these quick decisions and was able to guide the youth and staff into a secure and safe rescue before retrieving the lost canoe. Our next step was to get the kids changed into warm gear and set up a fire.

I was crazy at the time. I had been plagued by depression and suicidal thoughts for some time and should have realized earlier that I was not truly capable of leading this trip. It was coming to know this that I decided instantly to finish this week-long canoe trip as quickly as these kids could be pushed. The trip proper was uneventful, and we eddied our canoes into our final destination on the riverbank, finishing the trip more than 2 days early. Of course the shuttle van was not there to pick us up and I sent the other staff off to find a phone at some nearby farm or ranch. We had pulled out just before the bridge and dangerous rapids. I then asked the participants to pack up and get ready for the pickup. That done they played some games as I went to lie down with all my anxieties, fears, and thoughts of death. A few seconds later, a couple of the youth came over to tell me that there was a woman sitting in the river. I made some fun about it, thinking that you would have to be crazy to sit in the glacier-fed icy river, just meters upstream of rocks and rapids. I saw in their young faces that they were serious and scared. I tried to pull myself together enough to go and check it out. Walking over a small hill, I saw the back of a young woman clothed in one of those green hospital

dresses that tie up at the back. As I walked closer I had this sixth sense of her being sexually abused. I also turned to see all of the program youth standing behind me frozen in fear as they watched their fearless leader take care of yet another situation.

I began talking quietly to this young woman, letting her know that I was near. This kept on until I was sitting just slightly behind her. I continually talked, giving her my full attention, with my right hand extended out around her so if she chose to take it she could. I glanced back toward the kids to see that our female leader-in-training was back with our van driver, all with eyes wide open. Still quietly talking, I turned back to the young woman. For no apparent reason she decided to take my hand. She stood up from the rock where she had been waist deep in this frigid river. She turned to me, put her head on my shoulder and began to cry. I walked her back towards the others, who were all now smiling. I then instructed the female leader-in-training to take this girl behind the van and get her dried off and into all the warm gear that I had, while the van driver and youth packed up. With everything and everyone ready, we piled into the van, this young suicidal girl between the female guide and me.

For the hour that it took to drive to the hospital in the nearest town, we talked as I continually tried to hold back my tears. We left her at the hospital with the attendants who had been wondering where she had gone. For the entire drive to the hospital and back to the camp, I was hailed as some kind of a hero. I knew I was anything but that. No one there knew how suicidal I was. I was dead inside before getting to the young woman. Like George Bailey, I was looking for a way

out of my paralysis and mental torture. This situation and this young woman was my chance. While talking to her I continually kept feeling that if she had decided to jump into the icy river rapids I was going with her. What I did not know was that she was my Clarence, my guardian angel. I could not neglect her needs regardless of my own self-indulgent suffering. I could do nothing but what I did, be present, open, caring, and compassionate. (Journal entry, August 1991)

Fromm succinctly observed that when “millions of people share the same form of mental pathology it does not make those people sane” (as quoted in Glendining, 1994, p. 89). We all have heard the whisper that I speak of. We each have experienced a call to our higher self which underlies the common pathology of our so-called sanity. This is the sanity of Western society, one that subscribes to an incredible level of consumption that mutes the whispers of the *Self*.

I know that compassion is all out of fashion, and anger is all the rage...

Grow up and give in to that cynical spin that you see on most every page.

We all know what's wrong with the system,

How the people are puppets and fools.

If they're not strong, it will trick them,

They'll get used up like factory tools:

The kids just give up in those schools...

Yeah, but what is it, that's keeping me from living a life that's true?

When worries speak louder than wisdom,

It drowns out all the answers I knew,

So I'm tossed on the waves of the surface, still

The mystery is dark and deep,

With a much more frightening stillness...Underneath (Wilcox, 1999, Underneath)

Situation Three: Towards Whitehead's Phase of Generalization

The present is my gift

I open up and find I want to give out

All of this is ours if we wish

Reflecting with open heart and open eyes

This love search can help

With a more meaningful and richer life

Oh and there are two questions that occur to me

(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)

That's the basic motif of the universal hero's journey—leaving one condition and finding the source of life to bring you forth into a richer or mature condition. (Campbell, 198, p.153)

What?

The Romance of the wilderness combined with topics from early courses led me to the problems of Precision. As I spiraled down toward self-understanding, self-separation, and eventually self-destruction, I was to be saved by my own contemplative reflections in journals, intimate friends, and Clarence, my guardian angel. Unknowingly, my next stage was to move from Precision towards what A. N. Whitehead termed Generalization. We fall in love with the subject matter during Romance, linking facts, information, knowledge, and deeper understanding of the subject matter during Precision. Generalization involves returning to the subject matter with the same passion found in the Romance stage, now more fully equipped to integrate the initial learning with all the related learning. We learn in our past to prepare for a new present. Whitehead (1967)

said, “I would only remark that the understanding which we want is an understanding of an insistent present. The only use of a knowledge of the past is to equip us for the present” (p. 2).

Henderson armed me with the Romance of wilderness experience towards transformative learning. Harvey “Pooka” Scott encouraged incredible translations within my Precision period of Explorations, which I then further combined with academically and personally driven studies. Generalization allows a richer, in-depth experience of the present experience. In the stage of Generalization, we have to continue to learn, assess, and adapt along our path of translation and transformation, along what A.N. Whitehead (1967) termed the “rhythmic cycle of education” (p. 19). Generalization is not a stagnant act but a continuous evolution of our relationship to the subject matter. It is a case in which you think you've got it all and suddenly you are forced to reconsider this and to think again.

What follows is an excerpt from the book edited by Doug McKown (2004), *Up the Creek; True Stories of Canoeists in Trouble*. Bob and I cowrote this entry after one story of our being “up the creek.” More than a decade had passed since I had begun my romance with canoe tripping; for Henderson, it had been over 30 years.

We had flown in near the headwaters of the Notakowon River on the Quebec side of the height of land marking the Quebec–Labrador border. We had given ourselves 20 days to reach Davis Inlet on the Labrador coast.

Warren: I am a bit anxious, but satisfied with our pre-trip prep and the time we've had as a group. Would like another boat, though. Three canoes and six people are safer than four people and two canoes for a river like this.

The day was a succession of rapids (each requiring a portage, line or shoot decision), outflow bay; rapids, outflow bay; and so on for fifteen kilometers or so. Late in the day we faced one more long (two kilometers) stretch of whitewater to line or run; it led directly to a falls, where we had planned to camp. (Henderson & Trimble, 2004, p. 110)

I remind the reader that I was now a long way from the days when Gus and I realized that, on the topographical map, blue represented water and green the land. I had some experience leading trips in remote places where knowing how to read such a map is crucial to one's successful journey. I thought of myself as a skilled paddler and had even greater confidence in Bob. We both had been *Romanced* by the experience of canoe tripping, and we both had amassed great knowledge in terms of Whitehead's Precision stage. We were confident in our ability to use our past learning in this new situation, that we were able to *Generalize* our knowledge and experience. We failed in Whitehead's understanding of an "insistent present."

Warren: After scouting the first 300 meters section (of the two kilometers), we decided we could run that piece, then read the rest as we traversed an intervening stretch of flatter water.

We came to our appropriate "out." But instead of scouting and making the decision to line or shoot the rapids we arrogantly stay "in" the current. Probably our egos are doing our thinking for us. We make for the middle and indeed the water is readable, though faster than we imagined. Bob and I are in the lead canoe and find ourselves too much toward the middle, too far down stream without

scouting, rounding a broader corner without knowledge of flow, and as luck would have it facing fear. (Henderson & Trimble, 2004, p. 110)

One of the skills I had learned in my travels included the telltale signs of a waterfall: a rushing sound of water, a pooling of water, and a drop in the horizon line. Reading the map, I felt the falls were hours away. Reading the land, I felt the falls were immediate. There are stories of people falling to their death in falls like these. The map indicated them to be higher than Niagara Falls.

We find ourselves too much toward the middle, too far downstream without scouting, rounding a broader corner without knowledge of flow, and I see the telltale signs of a waterfalls and am facing the fear of going over the falls as we are too far into the middle now to ferry out.

With this knowledge and fear we paddle as hard as possible, hopefully getting out from the debris at the bottom. It turns out to be a ledge, only a 6 foot drop. We swamp! (Journal entry, 1995)

Bob: The canoe didn't have a spray skirt on or packs tied in yet because we haven't reached the falls, the place after which we figured we would need to get set up for running (?) or long-lining whitewater. (Sheepishly, we admit to reading the map more than the river.). (Henderson & Trimble, 2004, p. 110)

So What?

On that same trip there was another occasion when we read the map rather than the terrain. We met an elder on his way to Davis Inlet to help the youth as they were shipped out to Alberta for drug rehabilitation. (We found out later that he was a well-respected shaman for the people.) Though he could not speak English, we showed him

our route on the map. It took several attempts before he understood us. It seems that he read the terrain, not the map. He pointed for us to go one way around an island, but we kept expressing that we were going the shorter route. He finally left, going the way that he had suggested we go. We soon left on our own way. What we had not accounted for was the tidal effects to the water. As we paddled around the inside of the island, water began to run like a river against us due to the tide. We finally pulled off to the shore and waited the hours for the tide to reverse. If we had listened to and understood the elder, the tide would have pulled us out and around the island, easing our journey considerably.

Our ability to choose an appropriate map and read it well is part of this great journey of wilderness travel as well as that of the self. I used the love of Buscaglia as my new map and then wilderness tripping. Later I studied psychology and found some useful maps to guide my evolving story, be it in translation or transformation. However I did not find an adequate map in the area of psychotherapy. It seemed to me that the models all led to a point of blame and resolution rather than love. I also did not agree with the isolated notions of the human psyche separate from the passions I had for both the wilderness and other sentient beings. I then came across the maps of Deep Ecology and Ecopsychology in the early 1990s.

Now What?

Generalization, then, is our ability to choose an appropriate map and interpret its meaning as part of our great journey into the wilderness. This choice of map and its interpretation is also a wonderful metaphor for the Hero's journey of the self. Buscaglia gave me my first alternative map, if you will, of love being the purpose for a life. I used what I interpreted from his love map in my translational and transformational wilderness

experiences. My search for the self later attempted to incorporate maps from studies in psychology. Though I found many insightful maps that helped to break old paradigms through translation and transformation, I did not find anything wholly adequate. It seemed that these maps became excuses, finding external fault and pointing to others for blame, rather than acting from a place of love.

I continued my journey, searching into other areas of psychology. I did not agree with the isolated notions of the human psyche so separate from everything else. I found some solace in the theories, maps, and interpretations within Deep Ecology and Ecopsychology. This combining of the individual self with nature proved critical to my acceptance of a new paradigm. I truly came to believe that if we are not a part of nature then we are apart from nature, losing our intimate connection to Gaia and the soil. We breathe plants and eat the sun. I needed to find a path that allowed me to expand my awareness of the individual self to incorporate soil/Gaia. Our current social paradigm of separation from nature allows us to take what we want, using nature as a commodity without awareness of its innate value. As the worldwide environmental situation moves closer to a crisis, it would do us well to begin to see the earth as a breathing whole, as Gaia.

This implies that rather than focusing on single issues, such as protecting birds, promoting organic agriculture, stopping road building, encouraging renewable energy or practicing vegetarianism, we need to broaden our concerns. We need to go beyond building organizations and reach out to build 'The Movement'. This can be done only if we are prepared to see social justice, economic equity, fair

trade, debt relief, spirituality, ethics, sustainability and peace as part of the broader environmental agenda. (Juniper, 2003, p. 3)

The self is, and should be understood in A. N. Whitehead's (1967) notion of generalization, inseparable from the soil. Whatever we do to transform ourselves within will work towards a transformation *with-out*, affecting the soil and the all-but-forgotten Sacred Earth.

Fifty million years ago...You walked upon the planet so
 Lord of all that you could see...Just a little bit like me
 Hey Mr. Dinosaur...You really couldn't ask for more
 You were God's favourite creature...But you didn't have a future
 Walking in your footsteps
 Hey mighty Brontosaurus...Don't you have a message for us
 You thought your rule would always last...There were no lessons in your past
 You were built three stories high...They say you would not hurt a fly
 If we explode the atom bomb...Would they say that we were dumb?
 Walking in your footsteps...They say the meek shall inherit the earth (Sting,
 1983, Walking In Your Footsteps)

CHAPTER SIX: NODAL STORIES OF TRANSLATION AND

TRANSFORMATION: IN RELATION TO Self

**What will you find when I open my palms
Can you read the wounds and tell me how come
I've been lost to the Black-Dog for oh so long
Trained it, thought it was coming along
But the damn thing turned and attacked
Now I'm struggling against it pulling back
Teach it to sit and then keep it at bay
Then make me more able to do the same
Can you help me, please, help me
Help me tame my own beast
The Black-Dog clouds my mind's insight
It's either ignore it, or it's a continual fight
(Warren Albert Trimble, The Black-Dog, circa 1990)**

Situation One: In The Jaws Of The Black Dog-Depression

Depression is the ultimate state of disconnection—it deprives one of the relatedness that is the lifeline of every living being. (Palmer, 2000, p. 61)

While those aged 15–24 suffer the highest rate of depression and suicidal thoughts they are also the least likely to seek help. (Dowsett Johnson, 2005, p. 112)

Depression is the ultimate state of disconnection, not just between people but between one's mind and one's feelings. (Palmer, 2000, p. 62)

While suicide is the second highest cause of death for ages 10–24, it's the No. 1 killer of men aged 25 to 29. (Dowsett & Johnson, 2005, p. 112)

Many young people today journey in the dark, as the young always have, and we elders do them a disservice when we withhold the shadowy part of our lives. (Palmer, 2000, p. 18)

September 10th is World Suicide day. (Dowsett & Johnson, 2005, p. 118)

What?

I didn't know there was a world suicide day.

So What?

The facts above regarding depression and suicide come from two sources. The first source is a *Maclean's* magazine (Dowsett & Johnson, November 14, 2005) article titled, "Stalking a Silent Killer," which describes two youth, Gavin Craig and Kelty Denny, who took their own lives. The second source is Parker Palmer's book *Let Your Life Speak* (2000), which reveals the author's personal experience with depression. While reading the article about the two young men, I continually found myself clenching my fists, experiencing an all-too-familiar tightness of fear in my chest, and fighting the silent screams that surged through my body. This reaction is familiar to me when I see, read, or am present with the agony and disconnect of depression that touches my mind and soul. These experiences bring me right back to the depression that I struggled with for a decade. What follows is the story of my transformation out of depression and the jaws of the Black Dog.

By 1991 I was fully aware of my mind and the spiral of disintegration that had consumed me since the mid-1980s. My experience with the writings of Leo Buscaglia along with the wilderness trips at McMaster and U of A had provided me with the impetus to examine and change the paradigms that I felt were prisons. I deconstructed

until I eventually disintegrated. I was taking courses in university, receiving personal counseling, and reading anything that I could around spirituality and philosophy. Another change was about to happen. Though I cannot recall the title, I read an article by James Hillman in the popular publication, *Psychology Today*, discussing how one could use philosophy to work through depression. This notion appealed to me, as I had always felt that, with the right tools, I could do the work of self-recovery on my own.

I was pleased to find that Hillman was trained in Jungian psychology, making it much easier for me to connect Hillman's concepts to ones that I was forming, heavily influenced by Jung. My experience with counselors and therapy left me with the sense that psychology could be misused as a system of blame. I correlated this idea with what I saw as a cultural epidemic of *the victim*. The Eagles nicely shed some light onto this idea in the lyrics from their song *Get Over It*.

I turn on the tube and what do I see
 A whole lotta people crying don't blame me
 They point their crooked little finger at everybody else
 Spend all their time feeling sorry for themselves
 Victim of this victim of that,
 Complain about the present and blame it on the past
 I'd like to find your inner child and kick its little ass
 Get over it. Get over it
 All your whining and crying and pitching a fit
 Get over it. Get over it (Henley & Frey, 1994, *Get Over It*)

Hillman affirmed my ideas that the eastern philosophies I had been studying could be as useful as any psychology or counseling. Up to this point my efforts were rooted in disappointing psychological theories that did not satisfy my search to soothe my depression, no matter who I pointed my crooked little finger at.

This intellectual endeavor would later be reinforced by my studies of the Bhagavad-Gita and traditional Yoga, which involves four distinct paths: Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Raja. Since our individual temperaments and personalities differ, we may prefer one path to another. The matching or aligning of the foundational path to the one on the journey is what is essential. That is to say, if I am an outward and active person, Karma Yoga is well suited for me. On the other hand, if I were more introverted and prone to internal dialogue and mindful philosophical discussions, Jnana Yoga would be a more appropriate path. It is suggested that it is best to have one basic practice or preferred path while we draw from other techniques as well. One-sided development can lead to an imbalance in the personality. A descriptive chart of these Yoga paths from Whitelaw's (1996) book *Yoga: Mind and Body* is in *Figure 12*.

This tradition brought to my awareness that Jnana Yoga, the philosophical path, could guide me through depression's darkness. It is suggested that this may be the most difficult of the four paths. I continued along my dark inward journey of my soul with more trust in my intuition that I was on the right path. I never could have imagined what would happen next.

I had fearfully left my life in Ontario to seek a new one, a new self, in western Canada. During this time, my Mom would use the most delightful introduction when describing her three sons. It often went something like this. "Our eldest son, Laird, is a

Traditional Path	Translation of Path	Summary
Karma	Active Path	Selfless service in an effort to eliminate the ego and its attachments. Giving of oneself without expectation of return (p.6).
Jnana	Philosophical Path	Using the intellectual techniques of Viveka (discrimination) and Vairagya (dispassion) this spiritual path lifts what are said to be the veils of illusion (p.6).
Bhakti	Devotional Path	Various practices, such as chanting, prayer, and repetition of mantra (sacred sounds), channels emotional energy into devotion (p.7).
Raja	Scientific Path	A psychological approach based on a practical system of concentration and mind control. Hatha yoga emphasizes asanas (postures) and pranayama (Breath/Energy control) (p.7).

Figure 12. The four paths of Yoga.

research scientist, our middle son, Jamie, is a lawyer, and our youngest, Warren, is finding himself.” Though playfully given, it was painfully true. At the time I felt this to be a negative phrase, as I often felt that what I was doing was not valued by my family, and by my parents in particular.

In the movie *City Slickers* (1991), the three main characters discuss their best and worst days as they bring in the cattle herd. The first two men tell stories we expect. The final friend tells just one story to explain both the worst and best day of his life. The same thing was about to happen to me.

Best and Worst Day

August 1991 life up to now my Reader's Digest version.

I arrived back at base camp after a week-long canoe trip. The trip is the same one that the suicidal girl situation took place with all its rumble of my heroics. I get a message to call my partner; she is solemn and lets me know of the terrible news. My mom has a brain tumor and is to be operated on this coming Friday.

I am no hero like the rumours have been saying. I have been almost intolerable to live with as the depression drags me to a living paralysis of emotion and feeling. Yet I am struck with the fear of my mother's death. Without a good-bye or any real explanation I leave the camp to drive back to Edmonton. For the 2 hours I cried, trying to deal with my fears, as well as the realization that I was going home my partner; knowing she wasn't emotionally there. Her inability to be present with me and loving was a direct result of the past years of my depression and disintegrating cycle. So by the time I got there I had to be in control. When I

arrive she is kind, she is also caring, but she is not close. I call my brother Jamie to get more of the story and try desperately not to cry in front of my partner. He talks of the possible complications, focusing on blindness and death. My mom has always been an avid reader, choosing this activity over watching television. She feared the loss of sight more than death, Jamie said. He ended by saying she would not go into the operation until she saw me, in case it was her last time.

I hang up from him and want closeness, some comfort, some escape but she cannot share anything like that. The next day she goes off to work and I do the flight arrangements. An emergency ticket is four times the cost of a normal one, but they were kind enough to say that if she dies, I can submit a claim then for a reduced price.

I get on the plane aware that this may be the last time that she and I are a couple. I rationally understand it, as well as the affair she told me of while I was on trip. My life with depression has crushed her and me also, but as I board the plane I think I have to let all of that rest in me; the greater issue is my mom and the brain tumor fears. Saying nothing about my relationship to my brother who met me at the airport; we went back to his house until my father came in to take me to Hamilton.

My dad arrived to pick me up. He grabbed me and hugged me. This is the first time he has ever done that. I could only imagine the emotional state he was in. The traffic was terrible and the drive took more than 2 hours, which usually was a bad thing but not this time. This gave my dad time to vent. He talked about the tumour, he talked about mom's fears, but more amazingly he talked of his own

fears. He went on at one point of “why waiting so long to live.” For that time, those 2 hours, I was his support, I actually gave to him. Just before arriving in the driveway he said something that broke my heart and filled it all at once. He said that I was the only one in the family that could do this and my mom needed me.

(Journal, August 1991)

At the time it was both the worst and best experience of my life. For 6 years, I had been living in depression, pushing my partner away and our relationship to destruction as I boarded the plane. All this surrounded with the fear of my mom dying. I lived my life knowing that I did not live up to either the family standard or the social norm. Laird really was a Ph.D. in organic chemistry and a research scientist, and Jamie had completed a Master's degree in History and law school to become a partner in a prestigious Toronto law firm. Both were also married and busy with families. All this while I continued finding myself. There in the tension, fear, pain, and love of a car ride from Toronto to Hamilton, my dad validated me. I was not the loser that I had thought was seen through my family's eyes.

The surgery had been delayed for some reason on the Friday to the Monday, which was very emotional for my mom. We had been together, with only a few hours sleep. Like my father she shared her fears and thought. This was not unusual for her to do with me, but this time it was a little different, as if I had something of value that she could use. We spoke for hours of the psychology and spirituality that I had been learning. We also spent time going over some concepts of meditation and getting her to practice one again.

Laird is in from Montreal and Jamie from Toronto early Sunday morning in preparation for mom's operation on Monday. By noon Sunday strange news began to emerge of an abduction of a young woman who was the daughter of a prominent surgeon in town. It was Dr. Devilliers, my mom's neurosurgeon. An incredible scene follows. My mother completely breaks down like I have never seen before. Exhausted from little sleep, filled with the fears and anxiety over her own surgery, stricken with empathy for the Devilliers, as she runs off to the solace and privacy of her own room I hear her saying, "Oh my god, that poor man, and his family." (Journal entry, September 1991)

This situation showed me the greatest form of compassion that I had ever experienced. My mom was still full of her own fears to be sure. She was also able to put some perspective on what was happening, acknowledging that her suffering was far less and could be put on hold in the face of what was happening for the Devilliers family.

Following a successful operation, both of my brothers went back to their lives. Mine was now situated in Hamilton, in an effort to accept and love my mom as fully and completely as possible. Looking back I find it interesting that I was looking for, and perhaps needing, family acceptance of my new story and paradigms, beliefs, and behaviours at the age of 28 years. I now deal with imprisoned troubled youth who also search for acceptance within the crazy worlds that they call normal. Most of us would not believe the stories and lives they live. For the longest time I was heartbroken with what I was told about their lives. Now my efforts in teaching those students are towards giving them the same thing that I gave my mother 15 years ago: care, compassion, acceptance, and love without judgment.

Now What?

This unconditional giving is a form of serving others, Karma Yoga. It is one practice that has truly helped me to move away from the debilitating power of depression. I feel that my depression was caused by the emotional and cognitive dissonance between the paradigms I grew up with and the whispers of intuition of something else: the journey inward toward a higher love. It was perpetuated because I felt like such a loser, so far away from the norm of family and social values. As I deconstructed these earlier paradigms I became worth less and less until I was fully paralyzed in the jaws of the black dog. I found by having what seemed to be unusual dreams and drives that, just as society lifts us like a magnet to expected norm, it also pulls one back, retarding one's movement beyond.

Think about it, there must be higher love

Down in the heart or hidden in the stars above

Without it, life is a wasted time

Look inside your heart, I'll look inside mine

Worlds are turning and we're just hanging on

Facing our fear and standing out there alone

A yearning, and it's real to me

There must be someone who's feeling for me

Things look so bad everywhere

In this whole world, what is fair?

We walk blind and we try to see

Falling behind in what could be

Bring me a higher love (3X)

Where's that higher love I keep thinking of? (Winwood & Jennings, 1986, Higher Love)

I had also come to an intuitive understanding that my journey thus far had been one only of the intellect. This intellectual practice of psychology opened many doors of self-awareness and self-understanding but left me wondering who to blame and who to point a finger at. I slowly came to understand that each time I judged another, pointing a finger at them, was only an imposition of what I valued. As we all know, pointing a finger away leaves three fingers pointing back towards one's self. Each accusation then required that I make three times the effort inward to understand rather than to perpetuate a blame and victim paradigm. The intellectual search truly was crucial to my journey however, as I became able to enact these philosophies and principles into "right action" that is when the transformation accelerated.

Hillman's (1997) writings allowed me to *use* my intellectual studies to translate familiar paradigms. This translation accompanied by the philosophy opened to me a new worldview that allowed me to see beyond the old and through into the new paradigms I was forming. One example of this translation into transformation was through the psychological importance of the nature/nurture story. This nature/nurture story is often used in psychology as a hermeneutic foil and has been a part of my life. Scientific reductionism produces the nature side of this story, where all traits and growth are accredited to genetics. The nurture side attributes one's development onto their caregivers, traditionally the mother. I found a balance by way of a nature/nurture hybrid that proved useful for a long time. However as I became more inclined towards the

spiritual aspect of being, its expressions and explanations didn't take into account the shift from *self* to *Self* for me. To broaden the reach of this didactic duo, I came to add a third concept, *Namaste*.

Namaste is an East Indian prayer and greeting that suggests we are all divine. Once uttered, *Namaste* generally translates to “the divine in me blesses and honors the divine in you.” There is a common saying that states we are what we eat. I have also come to believe that we are what we think. Our intentions, often limited by our understanding, our environment, and our inherent way of being, or Jung's “temperament.” sets out our individual path. *Namaste* acknowledges these individual paths as divine. The new paradigm or story shuffles the roles that both our genetics and our temperament play to accommodate *Namaste*, for it is through this third concept that we can recognize our *self* as part of a higher *Self*. This triad corresponds with Jager's (1995) ideas of vision and the

Threefold eye of man: The eye of the flesh, the eye of reason, the eye of contemplation. The eye of the flesh grasps outer things, while the eye of reason grasps intellectual things, and the eye of contemplation grasps divine things. (p. 84)

I feel that we dull our lives by the way in which we conceive of them. In our desire and drive to disassemble and understand through logic, the scientific method, we have cut off our ability to know the *Self*. In his article, “*True Self, False Self*,” Craig (1994) comments on this separation of *Self* and self-importance.

We cling to achievements, success, power as models of self-verification. In other words, we become the center of all things and relegate everything else, except our

own projects to the fringes. We are obsessed with a kind of verification of our self-proclaimed reality. (p. 52)

We have stopped imagining our lives to have any sense of divinity, and yet we remain reticent to be addressed as cogs fitting the machine. That same flying machine remains in free fall and now has no parachute on board. I agree with Hillman (1997) as he describes the journey undertaken in *The Soul's Code* as a “romantic theme, daring to envision biography in terms of very large ideas such as beauty, mystery, and myth... inspiration of big words, such as 'vision' and calling” (p. 6).

In each of us is far more potential than we actually think that we have at any given time, yet our lives of quiet desperation are adhered to while the whisper calls us to our soulful journey of *self/Self*. I lived for a decade in conflict with the perception of my depression. Society says depression is a chemical imbalance. Society says take the drugs and get back in the game. I feel that being held in the jaws of the black dog of depression was actually melancholy of my soul. I now believe that Western society has entirely dismissed the idea of soul regardless of the notion that it has been addressed throughout the history of mankind.

The Romans named it your *genius*; the Greeks, your *daimon*; and the Christians your guardian angel. The Romantics, like Keats, said the call came from the heart, and Michelangelo's intuitive eye saw an image in the heart of the person he was sculpting. The Neoplatonists referred to an imaginal body, the *ochema*. For some its Lady Luck or Fortune. Among the people we refer to as Eskimos and others who follow shamanistic practices, it is your spirit, your free-soul, your animal-soul, your breath-soul. (Hillman, 1997, p. 9)

Because I did not listen to the whisper of my soul, it found a way to get my attention. At the time, I was not trying to heal from it as much as be with it and understand what it offered. This journey through the teeth of the black dog was painful, complete with dreams of taking my own life. However, my desire to train or tame it kept me going. Through my readings, I was able to begin the construction of a new paradigm, a new story. The theme of *Namaste* became more and more prominent as my journey deepened and my acceptance of the divinity in those around me grew. My next stop along the way would be the discipline of a contemplative practice.

Situation Two: Vipassana Meditation

It's just another day in paradise

As you stumble to your bed

You'd give anything to silence

Those voices in your head

You thought you could find happiness

Just over that green hill

You thought you would be satisfied

But you never will—

Learn to be still (Henley/Frey, 1994, *Learn To Be Still*)

What?

In the Western world, a type of meditation, scientific meditation, has been practiced and perfected. This meditation is used as a tool for logical reasons, as a relaxation response or stress reducer. Researchers such as Lemonick (2005) point to the benefits it brings to the immune system as it “appears to reduce the risk or limit the

severity of cardiovascular disease, pulmonary disease, diabetes, hypertension, colds and upper-respiratory infections” (p. 50). These facts are true. However, I find that the Western paradigm focuses almost exclusively on supporting the *self*, the little ego. Eastern traditions suggest that, as its primary intention, meditation is not about the *self* but rather about the *Self*. Meditation practice breaks through our identity with the egoic *self*, giving access to the higher *Self*.

Almost 30 years ago I was introduced to Transcendental Meditation and the use of a mantra, a practice which I used to settle my racing and fearful mind. Over 20 years ago I began seriously to pursue my personal meaning, mainly through the intellectual study of various Eastern philosophies, trying repeatedly to make sense out of the contradictions between them. During this time period, my depression became more and more debilitating. This period of paralysis with periods of suicidal tendencies persisted for more than a decade. Prozac was prescribed for me, and with it came an elimination of my emotions. This meant no more lows, deadly thoughts, or periods of paralysis. It also meant no more highs, joys, or physical passion. I hated this sense of life even more than the manic sense of depression I was so familiar with.

In August of 1997, in conjunction with my studies at Brock University, I attended a Vipassana Meditation Retreat in Ethal, Washington. The school year had ended in Ontario, and I was on my way to meet up with my partner before going to the retreat. My depression had set up a familiar paradigm of great tension, emotional separation, lack of libido, and a dull apathy. The jaws of the black dog of depression had destroyed much of me years before, breaking up a relationship around the time of my mother's brain tumour. My present joyful partner was no match for my depression and apathy and decided she

could no longer take the suffering that I brought into her life. When I arrived at her door in Jasper, she greeted at the door me by saying that she “could no longer be with me.” The main reason she gave was that I “was not enough, not happy enough.” I was a little stunned, but fully appreciated her statement. After all, the life of depression was mine and I fully knew the difficulty of living with the black dog. I was not even able to recall if I ever had been happy. Now I was about to head off to the retreat, without Prozac and with the knowledge that my depression had ruined another relationship. I assumed at that point that I was to live the lay life of a monk but really did not know what that entailed. What I knew was that the retreat consisted of 10 to 12 hours of meditation a day and that Vipassana philosophy states, “the cause of all suffering lies within and for this reason we have to explore this reality ourselves.”

The morning gong sounded. It was 4 a.m. The retreat had begun, and, as I would come to understand later, so too had my transformative learning.

So What?

We have only to follow the thread of the hero path, and where we had thought to find abomination we shall find a god. And where we had thought to slay another, we shall slay ourselves. Where we had thought to travel outward, we will come to the center of our own existence. And where we had thought to be alone, we will be with all be the world. (Campbell, 1988, p. 151)

The Noble Eightfold Path. The framework of the *Noble Eightfold Path* will be used as an outline to articulate some of the Buddhist principles alongside my intellectual and practical experience with them. The technique of Vipassana meditation is a simple, practical way to achieve real peace of mind, ultimately leading one to a happy and

productive life. In the ancient Pali language, Vipassana means “insight or to see things as they really are” and is a logical process of mental purification through self-observation (Hart, 1986, p. 6).

Although Vipassana has been preserved in the Buddhist tradition, it is not sectarian in nature and can be accepted and practiced by all people regardless of religion. The reasoning for this is that malady of the self is universal and therefore the remedy too has to be. For example, when we experience anger, this is not a Christian anger or a Muslim anger, Chinese anger or American anger. Similarly, care, compassion, and love are not the strict province of any community or creed. Rather, they are universal qualities resulting from the purifying of the mind. This purifying is what I have termed the processes of translation or transformation from *self* to *Self*. From time to time we all experience agitation, frustration, and disharmony. This can be understood as a way in which we suffer. When we suffer, we do not necessarily keep our misery to ourselves. We often distribute it. Though this type of behaviour may be considered normal, it is certainly not a proper way to live. Whenever we meet others, we automatically give to them. We choose what it is we give. Our intentions, words, and actions consciously set the stage for the life we wish to lead.

The “Ariya Atthangika Megga” or the *Noble Eightfold Path*, is said to be the path leading to self-liberation from suffering (Hart, 1986, p. 58). It is divided into three trainings, namely—*Sila*, *Samadhi*, and *Panna*.

Sila. The first training is towards moral conduct or *Sila*. This is the practice of abstaining from any action, physical or vocal, which disturbs the peace and harmony of others. One cannot work to liberate oneself from impurities of the mind while continuing

to perform deeds of body and speech, as these deeds only multiply the impurities. While the practice of *Sila* affects actions that disrupt or harm others, even more valuable is the awareness that comes from understanding how harming others first harms oneself. “It is impossible to commit an unwholesome action—to insult, kill, steal, or rape—without generating great agitation in the mind, great craving or aversion” (Hart, 1986, p. 59).

During the retreat, this simple code of moral conduct, along with maintaining Noble Silence, serves to calm the mind. Noble Silence refers to silence of speech, body, and mind. From the beginning of the retreat, students are asked to refrain from any communication with fellow students, whether verbal or gestural, even eye contact. This concept of silence also encompasses reading and writing. The only exception is communication with the teacher. By abstaining from these acts, one is better able to focus attention on the practice. One allows the body and the mind to quiet down sufficiently in order to further the task of self-observation. It is also asked that each person take great care that their actions do not disturb others.

The translation and transformation of the principles of *Sila* are accomplished through: (a) *Samma-vaca*—right speech, (b) *Samm-kanmanta*—right action, and (c) *Samma-ajiva*—right livelihood. These are the first three practices of the Noble Eightfold Path. The word “right” in this context is not the common one we use within the duality of right and wrong. Rather, “the word right is equivalent to the Latin *Summum* or highest, the quality in its most perfect form” (Humphreys, 1962, p. 110). “Telling lies...carrying tales that set friends at odds; backbiting and slander; speaking harsh words that disturb others and have not beneficial effect; and idle gossip” (Hart, 1986, p. 59) are not a part of right speech. As a youth I recall my parents saying, “If you don't have anything nice to

say, then say nothing at all.” Funny enough, my father was a quiet man and still is. He rarely, if ever, says a negative thing about anyone. In fact, he will often interject on behalf of an absent person who is being demeaned. I continually work on my own abilities towards *Summa-vaca*.

Right action is the second practice of the Eightfold Path. It involves observation of the following Five Precepts, and all who attend a Vipassana course must consciously abide by them for the duration of the retreat. As taught by S. N. Goenka (Hart, 1986, p. 61), they are: to abstain from killing; to abstain from stealing; to abstain from sexual activity; to abstain from telling lies; and to abstain from all intoxicants. The Golden Rule was earlier presented which, reflects this practice of right action, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

The practice of right action becomes evident as well in the workplace. Right livelihood can be discussed in terms of vocation and occupation. A vocation is a calling with a passion for the activity or practice one does. It involves a contribution of the unique and higher *Self*. “Follow your bliss,” said Joseph Campbell (1988); “To thine own self be true,” wrote William Shakespeare; James Hillman's practice of “following the souls code.” These are all commentaries on the pursuit of one's vocation. On the other hand, occupation is work done to fulfill needs. The hope is often that one can work at an occupation that pays the bills while allowing the time and money to practice one's vocation. Keen (1991) wrote, as long as “the occupation does not violate your vocation, there will be no spiritual harm done by separating the two” (p. 170). As an educator I choose to work with youth-at-risk in alternative settings. This setting allows me a way to develop my vocation of care, compassion, and love through service to others.

All should practice *Samma-vaca—or right speech*, *Samm-kanmanta—or right action* and *Samma-ajiva—or right livelihood*, because they make sense. Blind faith is not required. The 10 days allows the opportunity for intense practice of these aspects of *Sila*.

Samadhi. By practicing *Sila* we attempt to control our speech and physical body, providing a basis for the second training step, *Samadhi*, the concentration and control of one's own mind. The cause of our suffering lies in mental actions. Merely restraining our words and actions is not enough, as our minds continue to toil over objects of desire through cravings or aversions. *Samadhi* is divided into the next three practices of the Eightfold Noble Path as (d) *Samma-vayama* or right effort, (e) *Samma-sati* or right awareness, and (f) *Samma-samadhi* or right concentration.

Right effort is the practice of *anapana-sati* or “awareness of respiration” (Hart, 1986, p. 72). By fixing one's attention on the natural reality of the flow of breath as it enters and exits the nostrils, one is able to develop a more stable and concentrated mind. This is not a breathing exercise, as one does not regulate the breath. Instead, one observes natural respiration, *as it is*, as it comes in, as it goes out. One is able to further calm the mind so that it is no longer overpowered by intense negativities and desires. Meditation allows us to change our mental habits and learn to remain with reality as we fix our attention on our breath. When we notice that our attention has wandered, patiently, happily, and calmly we bring our awareness back to the breath. We fail and try again, over and over. After all, the habit of a lifetime is not necessarily changed in a few minutes. The following journal entry reflects my own difficulty with right effort.

Anapana or awareness of respiration was the practice for the first few days; the attention is on the breath. Well, easier said than done. After 30 years of self-

taught mantra meditation, I was far more efficient at using a mantra to focus my mind and it continually arose in my thoughts. After sitting for just a short while, I found my mind would wander. Back to thinking of a failed relationship and a failed man over and over, all the while holding back tears of sadness. Other times I would get lost in singing in my head, or get caught in sexual fantasies.

Sometimes I would get so afraid and so frustrated that I wanted to quit and just get up and leave. (Journal entry, August 1999)

Right awareness is also related to the breath and the certainty of it. The mind spends most time in fantasies and illusions, reliving pleasant or unpleasant past experiences, and anticipating the future with eagerness or fear. While lost in such thoughts of cravings and aversions we are actually lost to the reality of the now. This awareness of the present moment is one of the foundational principals of Buddhism. In *The Art of Living*, Goenka (Hart, 1986) discusses right awareness.

If we are unaware of our present actions, we are condemned to repeating the mistakes of the past and can never succeed in attaining our dreams for the future. But if we can develop the ability to be aware of the present moment, we can use the past as a guide for ordering our actions in the future. (p. 74)

After the retreat I remember talking with my octogenarian aunt, being struck by the idea that Buddha was the first psychologist through teachings such as right awareness.

Fixing our attention on the breath *as it is* develops awareness of the present moment, the present reality. Maintaining this awareness from moment to moment, for as long as possible, is right concentration. From my journal:

I did not get it at first, and it was so difficult to focus on the breath, Anapana, but after countless hours of sensing my breath, and releasing thoughts, combined with numerous meetings with the teachers, on day four I began to clue in to the fact that I was learning how to pay attention to attention itself. (Journal entry, 1999)

Each of the three practices of *Samadhi* lead to the next. The control of the mind begins with right effort. This practice leads to right awareness of one's present reality and sustained awareness comes through right concentration.

Panna. The first two steps, *Sila*, or living a moral life through the practice of right speech, right action, and right livelihood, and *Samadhi*, controlling the wild mind by way of right effort, right awareness, and right concentration, are very useful and beneficial in and of themselves. However, without the third step of *Panna*, or wisdom, their practice will only lead to suppression of negativities. "By developing Panna we find a true middle path between the extremes of self-indulgence and self-repression" (Hart, 1986, p. 89). The final two practices of the Noble Eightfold Path are included in wisdom training: (g) *Samma-sankappa* or right thought and (h) *Samma-ditthi* or right understanding.

On day five we moved away from Anapana to actual Vipassana meditation. This form of meditation, instead of being aware of the breath, takes that trained awareness and places it on sensations. This awareness is developed through introspection into impermanence, suffering, and the egoless nature of one's mental and physical structure. This is accomplished with the systematic development of insight through the technique of observing the reality of oneself by observing sensations within the body. (Journal entry, August 1999)

Right thought is the practice of Vipassana itself: experiencing one's own reality by internal systematic and dispassionate observation of the ever-changing phenomena, manifested as sensations. This observation of mind-matter phenomena leads to the final practice of right understanding, further subdivided into three forms of wisdom. *Sutts-maya panna* is wisdom understood through reading or by hearing. I understand this loosely to be faith, sometimes adopting another person's wisdom out of ignorance. *Cinta-maya panna*, intellectual wisdom, is understood through reasoning. My perception of this form of wisdom is not blind faith, but rather faith accompanied by reason. This results from an intellectualization of the wisdom one has heard or read by way of others.

On day six something interesting happened. Up to this point in the retreat there was a gong to awaken us and a second to inform us that it was time to be in the meditation hall. On this day the room was filled before the second gong went; there were no stragglers. Not only that, but there was complete stillness and silence where there once was coughing, clearing of throats, and shifting of bodies. (Journal entry, August 1999)

The final form of wisdom is *bhavana-maya panna*, found through direct experience. Outside of the body, truth cannot be experienced, only intellectualized. Therefore one must develop the ability to experience the truth within oneself. Vipassana practice allows one to observe bodily sensations, come to an experiential understanding of their changing nature, and develop a balanced mind by learning not to react to them moment by moment. One experiences the universal truths of impermanence, suffering,

and egolessness. This is accomplished through the experiential wisdom of *bhavana-maya panna*, further articulated in the wisdom of *annicca*, *annatta*, and *dukkha*.

The wisdom of *annicca*, “this will pass,” reminds us that everything is temporary, changing, ephemeral, arising, and passing. One can direct one's attention to a pinpoint anywhere on or in the body and feel the sensation present there: hot, cold, tingly, ticklish, sharp pain, dull pain, and vibration. One learns to stay with that sensation with the equanimity of *annicca*. When one's attention is taken off that specific area and moved to another, a different sensation fills the attention. Again, this sensation is observed without judgment, with equanimity and *annicca*, and the process recurs.

Observing reality *as it is*, by witnessing the truth of the sensations within is to know oneself directly and experientially. As one practices, one continues freeing oneself from the misery of mental impurities, stripping away our attachment to our egoic self, the conditioned field of our gross reality. This freeing is *annatta* and understood in the Buddhist saying, “No I, no Me, no Mine,” in which state one penetrates to the ultimate truth of mind and matter. It is said that through this practice, one can transcend to experience a truth, which is beyond duality, beyond mind and matter, beyond time and space. As Goenka (Hart, 1986) states, “there is only an impersonal phenomenon, changing beyond one's control” (p. 94).

Attachment to what is temporary, changing, ephemeral, illusory, and beyond one's control is suffering, *dukkha*. Once the wisdoms of *annicca* and *annatta* are understood experientially, then *dukkha* becomes clear. Any effort to secure onto something by way of the labels of I, me, or mine eventually brings cravings,

aversions, and unhappiness. Sooner or later the thing that one clings to will pass, as will each of us.

“All life is suffering,” is a Buddhist saying. Upon reading this years ago I felt it meant that one had to create hardship in one's life to move toward enlightenment. I did not understand through experience—*dukkha*—that the suffering of life was my own fault for clinging and craving to I, me, my. (Journal entry, August 1999)

Vipassana is a practice leading to freedom from all suffering. It eradicates the cravings, aversions, and ignorances responsible for all of our miseries. Those who practice Vipassana remove, little by little, the root causes of their suffering and steadily emerge from their former tensions to lead happy, healthy, productive lives.

Now What?

The entire practice of Vipassana is actually mental training. Just as physical exercises are used to develop and improve the body, this practice can be used to develop insight of the mind. I came to this wisdom through my own experience.

I would walk now and notice I rarely had to hold back the tears and then would be aware of the emotional attachment and with equanimity and *annicca* let the moment go. No longer holding onto that past sadness, I began to see beauty I had not seen in years. I saw blades of grass for the first time, spider webs, cried now for the beauty in the leaves I touched, and for the first time in ages smiled for just being alive.

The years of intellectual philosophical information *Cinta-maya panna*, were now beginning to make sense. It was like flashes, fireworks going off inside of me

whenever one of the intellectual concepts I had studied came in contact with an actual inner experience of it—bhavana-maya panna. (Journal entry, August 1999)

Then, at sometime near the end which I was not fully aware of at the moment, the black dog of depression left. It was after the retreat I recognized it had gone. At that time there was more time spent in care, compassion, and love, with almost full attention in the moment. As I became better able to be aware, the more time I spend doing so and the less time I spent walking and thinking in circles. (Journal entry, August 1999)

The final day was interesting, as the extroverted people finally could talk again and communicate with others. It was like an assault on my senses, so ended up spending hours alone still. I would stand outside the group to be as much part of it as possible. I heard people comparing sensations, angry because they experienced a wonderful sensation and could not get it back. Others, I found out, had been using their cell phones to call home nightly. Others talked of the trouble they had meditating with the women being so close, while others were talking of tantric sex and meeting at the local bar. There I stood, just outside the group, shaking my head with my “holier than thou ego” puffing me up by putting them down, when I realized that, I was holding onto “I, Me, My” and that like with any skill development, one must be cautious that one does not take what is learned in order to inflate one's ego self. At that moment the Buddhist saying “to know and not to do is not yet to know” came into awareness, big smile, and I put my attention back into the present sensation I was holding to my ego's desire. With equanimity and annicca, away went better than attitude. Despite the fact that

unwanted things keep happening, it is not what happens to us but what we do with what happens to us that matters. With this practice, following the Noble Eightfold Path, I went from a decade of depression to a lifetime of purpose. (Journal entry, August 1999)

In *The Power of Myth* television series, Joseph Campbell (1988) suggested that we ought to, “read other people's myths, not your own religion in terms of fact—if you read other ones, you begin to get the message.” We are often so imbedded in our own sacred and secular paradigms that we take them as fact, missing out the poetry and guidance in them. By reading and experiencing other stories, we step out of our paradigm. Like the hero on his/her journey, we return to our origin with a new perspective. Buddhism and Vipassana meditation did this for me. It is through this experience and story that I began to get the message. I was thrilled to later read the following writings of Wilber and Killam Wilber (1991).

Indeed, the whole point of meditation or contemplation—whether it appears in the East or in the West, whether Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, or Hindu—is to free ourselves from the 'optical delusion' that we are merely separate egos set apart from each other and from eternal Spirit, and to discover instead that, once released from the prison of individuality we are one with godhead and thus one with all manifestation, in a perfect timeless and eternal fashion. (p.18)

Meditation was instrumental in releasing me from my 10-year prison sentence of depression. Depression remains an instrumental piece of the journey, as my call to this search of self and spiritual awareness and understanding. That call led me to study Eastern philosophies, with an emphasis on Buddhism.

The question to myself now is what is the bounty that I return with? My answer is contained within this thesis and my attempt to articulate my evolving life journey towards “Integral Spirituality.”

Situation Three: Towards An Integral Spirituality

We thrust ourselves into life and make a difference. We declare “I Am” when we touch the lonely ones and comfort the broken hearted. We declare “I Am” when we share with the poor and hungry, counsel the lost, and open the eyes of the spiritually blind. We declare “I Am” when we act from our compassion, stand up for our convictions, and dare to live lives with hope. (Quezada, 1995, p. 22)

What?

Religion at its best is a search for wholeness, a quest for ultimates, the ineffable, the transpersonal, and the highest of moral endeavors. Only a holistic theory with a sense of this quest for the highest of human endeavors has within itself the measure of these goals and the potential to draw a life map for the pilgrim.

(Hague, 1995, p. 119)

Raised without a family religion, spirituality has provided a starting point in my search for wholeness, my own hero's journey. This has been my narrative, my path along this journey toward wholeness. The depression that imprisoned me for more than a decade was a curse and a blessing. It was during this time in the jaws of the black dog that I became a passionate reader. My suffering led me to seek understanding and answers by way of the psychological theories presented throughout this paper. The orators and authors my mother introduced me to, Buscaglia being one of them, opened windows to their paths and mentors. I then began to find my own: Abraham Maslow,

Jean Piaget, C. G. Jung, Freud, Carl Rogers, Lawrence Kohlberg, Erik Erikson, Joseph Campbell, and Sam Keen. I was not raised in any faith tradition. I had been socialized by the predominant Western morals and values of Christianity, capitalism, and the faith of science.

Psychological theories and writers pushed me along my path, each with their own stage theories and understanding of the *self*, but they were not enough. Reflection and contemplation would be the key for me. Academic courses that I took often encouraged the use of a journal towards self-improvement, yet there was no provision for reflection on those writings. Like the love of Narcissus, our journal's stories can inflate us with feelings of grandeur, but alone they do not provide enough towards an understanding of our paradigm. A deeper awareness must be cultivated in order for us to effect a more informed response to the paradigm. "The individual has to be actively engaged in his learning, and critical reflection is very important" (Leicester & Pearce, 1997, p. 448). Buscaglia's references, reinforced by Jung and Campbell, literally shoved me onto a search of Eastern philosophy. These theories, philosophies, and authors were my guiding companions, interacting with me in my journal writing.

I had been living in a soul-less paradigm in which psychology settled for studying behaviours and assessing blame regardless of the intuition that I had as a child that life was about acceptance, compassion, and love. My studies of Eastern philosophies, Buddhism in particular, gave me footing towards a new paradigm, a new story, a new map. I began to understand that through deep reflection and contemplation of *self* I would move towards *Self*. I intellectually understood this *Self* to be separate and unaffected by any human contact, the essence of our greatness and potential. The teachings of the

Buddha described to me that to know and not to do is not yet to know, leaving me in the latter group of not yet knowing. I had the conceptual, academic underpinnings of this way, yet I had no experience to bring the teachings to life. Thus, when we awaken to the *Self*, and realize a paradigm shift, we have achieved personal and social transformation. “It is not only the learner's cognitive abilities that are important, but also aesthetic, moral, physical, and spiritual needs” (Russell, 1997, p. 36). It is interesting that, when I was given the opportunity to learn two new related psycho/spiritual theories during this time period, I was unable to appreciate what they had to offer.

I began coursework towards my Master's degree in 1996 at the University of Alberta. One course titled *Evolving Spirituality*, introduced me to the work of Kazimier Dabrowski and James Fowler. Dabrowski was a well-educated Polish academic with an M.D. and a Ph.D. in Psychology. Like Viktor Frankl, Dabrowski was greatly influenced by his imprisonment within Nazi concentration camps. Dabrowski came to America to study under Piaget and would eventually create his Theory of Positive Disintegration (TPD). William Hague, the professor of *Evolving Spirituality*, completed his doctoral work under Dabrowski. Hague himself was a retired professor who continued to lecture graduate-level courses only to impart this knowledge he found so valuable. He truly had a contagious passion for Dabrowski's TPD. He also had an equal passion for Fowler's Stages of Faith Theory. Fowler came from a Methodist background (his father was a minister), and his seminary studies and doctorate work gave rise to this evolutionary theory. All three scholars were greatly influenced by the seminal works of Piaget, Erik Erikson, and Lawrence Kohlberg.

In retrospect, my movement through and with stage theories is interesting. I have typically existed on the fringe of mainstream society. I have been exposed to the popular world of cognitive psychology. In high school I was introduced to the first five stages of Maslow's Needs Hierarchy. This was the first stage theory I was introduced to, and my understanding of it was an indifferent one. I memorized the key points of the hierarchy, its levels and corresponding characteristics. Personally I was at a firmly egocentric stage, trying desperately to belong. I had no true comprehension of these concepts, miles beyond my operating paradigm.

During my undergraduate studies, I was introduced to the stage theories of Freud, Piaget, Erikson, and Kohlberg. While I appreciated the foundational work of these psychologists, the theories did not satisfy my own search towards a higher *Self*. The opportunity that I had to learn from these theorists was lost due to my current imprisoning paradigm. Regardless of this, I continued to conform to academic authority, integrating these researchers into my coursework. This is the kind of behaviour that highlights the rational level of development that I occupied. Those in authority, the professors, spoke the gospel of knowledge, all that was considered to be true, while I remained silenced. This perception slowly changed in the early 1990s as my eldest brother finished his Ph.D. work. I knew him intimately and had the realization that all professors were just someone's brother or sister, not philosophical enigmas but humans, no better or worse than me. This awareness, along with my continued passion for theoretical learning and application, transformed my paradigm. This shift brought along new bars of imprisonment by way of beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots. It was a rich time of learning for me where I saw value in each different theory, unable to place one

above the other. I held all people equal and, in fact, began to question the entire concept of *hierarchical* theories. Reflecting on this time, I would now label that stage as one with a pluralistic perspective. Wilber (2000) describes the pluralist in the following.

Against hierarchy; establishes lateral bonding and linking. Permeable self, relational self, group intermeshing. Emphasis on dialogue, relationships. Basis of *collective communities* (i.e., freely chosen affiliations based on shared sentiments). Reaches decisions through reconciliation and consensus (downside; interminable “processing” and incapacity to reach decisions). Refresh spirituality, bringing harmony, pluralistic values, social construction of reality, diversity, multiculturalism, relativistic values system; this worldview is often called *pluralistic relativism*. Subjectivity, nonlinear thinking; shows a greater degree of affective warmth, sensitivity, and caring, for earth and all its inhabitants. (p. 50)

It's almost as if Wilber had written this description specifically about me during that time! This paradigm of pluralistic relativism imprisoned me just as I was given the opportunity to explore Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration and Fowler's Stages of Faith. I spent so much time through the course arguing pluralistic values that I was unable to appreciate much of the work. Instead of learning the value of the terms and the concepts within each stage of hierarchical development, I was arguing that the development could be horizontal, or downward, that we construct hierarchy and value the top and devalue the bottom. When I was in what Wilber defines as the pluralistic stage I was unable to see it. He argues that with self-development, as we move up stages we actually separate from that stage, we are no longer part of the subject. We can reflect back with an objective perspective on the old paradigm.

The Theory of Positive Disintegration would offer an opportunity for me to correlate my depression as a form of disintegration, giving it a usefulness and shifting my perception of depression from bad to good. This left me feeling like the mythical Phoenix, that I too could rise from the flames and jaws of the black dog. The TPD has at its psychological foundation the principle that one must disintegrate or go through crisis in order to develop. It is an awareness that which does not kill you makes you stronger. Dabrowski's theory also claimed that steps in the hierarchy could be missed, that is to say they were not automatically sequential. This I found valuable. Hague (1995) wrote,

Dabrowski's conception of development stands in sharp contrast to those theories that are based on the principle that humans are motivated by a desire for homeostasis or equilibrium, that the optimum state of well-being is to exist in some sort of quiescent, conflict-free situation where one can be at rest. Instead, it says that life, both from outside the psyche and from intrapsychic dynamics, forces conflicts on individuals that can be disintegrative of lower-level functioning and offer the opportunity of rising to higher levels of development. (p. 159)

While the theory could legitimize my experience of depression, I had come to a place where I was unable to accept the hierarchical structure of the theory. I could not understand why positive developmental movement had to be considered upward rather than an egalitarian, horizontal motion. I continually spent my energy arguing the side of pluralist technicalities rather than being open to the possibility that development may just be hierarchical.

I was unable to accept any of Fowler's Stages of Faith, as my paradigm was constructed with a strong bar against Christian mythology. I could not accept any topic or theory presented by a person, be it a priest, pastor, or professor, which had religious overtones. Fowler's ideas were founded on his work in religious ministry. I could not see into the model beyond the word *faith*, dismissing it as too "religion oriented." I thought that religious doctrine created paradigms that were more harmful than constructive, preferring the terms spirituality, connectedness, wholeness, or oneness.

Reflection now reveals a paradigm that imprisoned me just a few years earlier, restricting any horizontal translation from the theory and barring the potential for the vertical transformation of awareness. We translate and transform, eventually arriving at a point where we have to step outside of our own myth, our familiar paradigms that imprison us. This leave of the Old Myth, or Old Story of religion, is key. This familiar story is often so insidious that we are unaware of the literality we place on its myths. Part of my journey brought me into an alignment with Buddhism. Learning a variety of religious myths allowed me to view others through a more open lens, ultimately seeing the stories in what Campbell termed *as if* for their guiding moral aspects. A few years later, I was once again presented with the opportunity to restory my learning of Fowler's Stages of Faith. I was then able to open to the Old Cultural Story of Christianity and arrived with a new clarity and understanding of the parallel paradigms.

This New Story also brings into my awareness the affinity that I have for those philosophers who seem to exist outside the mainstream. In the movie *Shadowlands* (Nicholson, 1993), the C.S. Lewis character states that "we read to know that we are not alone." Much of my own character does not conform with social norms. Perhaps this

accounts for some of the connection that I have with theorists such as Fowler and Dabrowski.

So What?

I hear them say someone is so brilliant
 I want it to be me that they complement
 Other's humour will make you fall off your chair
 And if said to me, I can't hear; it's just not fair
 So often other success seems my failure
 I stumble drunk in pity you rise above yours
 Sit silently while talking with some mates
 To take another swig of this envy I hate
 Wanting to be someone others will cherish
 Incoherently babble more often embarrassed
 Other people I touch life sober so vibrant
 Well me, I beg for change and some of them
 Wanting to scream, "Save me I'm almost alive"
 Instead in this bottle of insecurities I hide
 Feeling I'll never be better than the next guy
 Try to stay, can't and I don't know why
 So often other success seems my failure
 I stumble drunk in pity you rise above yours
 Sit silently while talking with some mates
 To take another swig of this envy I hate
 Next day more sober, ache with shame
 Knowing it's their success that I've tried to drain
 The lovable drunk pitied by friends again
 Not what I want to be, but under able to abstain
 So often other success seems my failure
 I stumble drunk in pity you rise above yours...

(Warren Albert Trimble, 1990)

Theory of Positive Disintegration. The Theory of Positive Disintegration (TPD) greatly lends itself to the narrative of my story. The question now arises, what is Positive Disintegration? We often perceive disintegration as a bad or negative thing, because it is the breakdown of what is, be it a rusting car body or a nervous breakdown. It can also be the breakdown of the paradigms that have imprisoned us. Recall the Buddha's First Noble Truth that "all life is suffering" (Schiller, 1994, p. 123). We can perceive life's suffering, change and disintegration, translation and transformation as negative, or we can recognize "that the way we see the problem is the problem" (S. R. Covey, 1990, p. 40).

To repeat the adage, experience is not what happens to us but what we do with what happens to us, how we story it. We have the habit to perceive disintegration as negative, but we have the same potential to perceive it as positive. Campbell (1988) wrote extensively about the trials of the *Mythic Journey* and the necessity for the individual to transcend themselves, as "the courage to face the trials and to bring back a whole new body of possibilities into the field of interpreted experience for the other people to experience—that is the hero's deed" (p. 49). We must disintegrate, rattle, and take down the prison bars of our paradigms in order to critically reflect on and rewrite our story towards a higher, more connected and more positive level. We experience this not only for ourselves but also for the benefit of others. We are the pebble tossed into the pond to foster the ripple effect towards the mystery and wonder of life.

Dabrowski's TPD is a five-level hierarchy, where Level I is the lowest and Level V is the highest and a better level to exist at. The theory is quality based, established on a measurement of the worthiness of values.

It can be described as a “higher end” theory. Clearly it does give much attention to the upper reaches of human development. It is unabashedly idealistic in the sense of aiming at higher levels of development, but not in any Pollyanna-ish sense that says, “You can be whatever you want to be.” It is concerned primarily with what “ought” to be because it is better. Basically, the movement from “is” to “ought” calls for a passage: what is (Realism), to what can be (Imagination), to what ought to be (Idealism). (Hague, 1995, p. 136)

The levels of the hierarchy can be related to stages of human growth into full adulthood. Discrepancy lies in the adult's manner of being where behaviours determine which stage they are operating at. A graphic representation of Dabrowski's TPD is in *Figure 13*.

Level V, or Secondary Integration, is what Dabrowski called the highest level of consciousness. Hague (1995) articulates this transcendent level in the following passage.

Through its centripetal force the spiral of development is drawn towards a single mindedness that will have nothing less. Initially perceived intuitively in a broad outline, it becomes later the model for shaping one's personality, the criterion of value. It is defined in meditation, prayer, and contemplation in which the individual perceives gradually the existence of hierarchical design of personality that must go above and beyond self. This idea proves to be a lure to what is highest and best. This is mysticism in its purest sense; clearly its domain is the transcendent and its object nothing short of God. (p. 151)

According to Dabrowski very few have realized this mystical level; a short list could include Mother Teresa, Christ, the Buddha, and Gandhi.

Level	Key Phrase	Characteristics
I. Primary Integration	A Rock, an Island	What is, egocentric, unreflective, self-satisfied, stagnation, gang type
II. Unilevel Disintegration	Pulled in Every Direction	What is good is what works, chaotic, reactive, rebellious, vacillations, delinquent behavior
III. Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration	Evaluating the Self	What should be, reflective, existential anxiety, moral, uniqueness, transformation
IV. Organized Multilevel Disintegration	James' Twice-Born	What ought to be, self-actualized, mankind my kind
V. Secondary Integration	Past the Pairs of Opposites	What is, <i>is</i> what ought to be, authenticism, centeredness, nirvana, sainthood

Figure 13. Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration.

The psychological basis of Dabrowski's theory attracted me because of its link to my experience of depression. The TPD described my depression as a valid part of personal disintegration from which one can spiral towards transformative growth rather than illness. This reinforced what I already knew to be true, while society advertised a depression free—Prozac society. My intuitive idealistic tendencies towards the pursuit of love as life work blended with Dabrowski's "higher and better" levels. The theory continues to be of value to me as it introduces spirituality within its culminating level. Dabrowski's work allows me the potential to reach that highest level while accepting those around me who may exist at a lower level.

Stages of Faith Theory. In the late 1990s I became aware of another personal paradigm shift. My New Story with its Buddhist philosophies, accompanying beliefs, and resulting behaviours had found a home. Where once I felt outcast and misunderstood, I found literature that resonated with my *Self*. Where once I was an idealistic kid struggling to find his place and voice in society, I found comfort in the journey and theories of others. Where once my mind was devalued by society, I found solace and new comfort in the life of the mind.

In 1996 I was presented with and rejected Fowler's Stages of Faith because of the term *faith*, to which I attached a notion of a predestined hierarchy. As I began to voraciously read the writings of Ken Wilber, I was once again presented with Fowler's notions of stage development of faith or spirituality across one's lifespan. I revisited the readings from the *Evolving Spirituality* course and came to recognize close links to the works of Piaget and Kohlberg, the holistic orientation of the theory, and the concern that

Fowler had with the relationship between the individual and the universal. This relationship is summarized in *Figure 14* (Fowler, 1981, p.201).

“The mystics have told us that faith is not something to be had like a marble statue, but like a rose, to be allowed to unfold” (Hague, 1995, p. 117). Fowler (1984) compares the role of developmental psychology to that of the mystics.

Theorists of adult development have begun to play the role in our society that storytellers and mythmakers once played in primitive and classical cultures. They have taken on many of the functions that philosophers and theologians performed in the twelfth through the nineteenth centuries. In our time of fractured images of the human vocation and cultural symbols of wholeness, a group of philosophical psychologists are helping us to gain a holistic grasp on the course of human life.

Using the organic root metaphor of development in a variety of ways, their research and theories aim to provide empirically grounded chartings of predictable patterns and turnings in human life cycles. (p. 15)

These psychological and philosophical developmental stage theories can be viewed as paths or variations on the mythical inward journey of the hero, each culminating in a desire for a wholeness or integration. Wilber (1998) suggests that there are “four major stages of spiritual unfolding: belief, faith, direct experience, and permanent adaptation: you can believe in Spirit, you can have faith in Spirit, you can have direct experience with Spirit, you can become Spirit” (p. 177).

Fowler's Stages of Faith theory includes these levels of unfolding. Because of my keen interest in the holistic perspective and the higher levels of most of the developmental theories presented, I will conclude this section with a summary of

Stage	Key Phrase of Faith	Characteristics
ONE	Intuitive-Projective	Convergence of thought and language. Fantasy filled, imitative phase. Cognitive egocentrism, combining fragments of stories and images given by culture
TWO	Mythical-Literal	Delineates real from make-believe, the ability to narrate one's experience. Cultural stories, myths and symbols are taken literally, Piaget's concrete operational.
THREE	Synthetic-Conventional	Puberty transition, personal myth of the self. Piaget's formal operational level with the ability to reflect on one's thinking. Authority external to self, God as the Decisive Other.
FOUR	Individuative-Reflective	Between ages 17-30 yrs. Sense of alienation from others and desire to aspire to new ideologies and identity. Critical reflection on one's previous ideological assumptions. Emergence of an 'executive ego' with authority within one's self, self responsible
FIVE	Conjunctive	Dialectic knowing, I-Thou relationship, wisdom in as things are, the conscious ego is not master in its own house, integral.
SIX	Universal	Extremely rare, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Teresa, Dag Hamarskjord, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Abraham Heschel and Thomas Merton

Figure 14. Fowler's theory of stages of faith.

Fowler's final Stages of Faith *Stage IV*. Fowler's Stage IV works hard to get clear and clean in terms of boundaries and identity, while his Stage Five makes everything more permeable and porous. During this transformation one begins to recognize that the egoic self is not all there is and that unconscious dimensions of the self shape many of one's beliefs, behaviour, blind spots, and responses. "There must be an opening to the voices of one's 'deeper self'" (Fowler, 1981, p. 198). This period of opening, of searching for Keen's elusive self, prepares one with a deepened readiness for a relationship to God, the higher *Self*.

Stage V. Stage V is a time when a person begins to look deeply into the social unconscious—those imprisoning myths, ideal images, taboos, prejudices, and paradigms that we blindly accept and enact. This examination signals a readiness for intimacy with self, society, and soil, for allegiances beyond our tribal gods and our tribal taboos. This is a period when one is alive and open to paradox. One understands that truth has many dimensions, held together in paradoxical tension as one seeks the support of an inclusive community and an integral spirituality.

Stage VI. The final level of Fowler's stages is that of Universalizing Faith or Stage VI. As demonstrated in *Figure 14*, few people have a transformation into Fowler's Universalizing Faith Stage. This transformation provides a shift from the egoic self as the centre of experience in a reversal of figure and ground. One's centre becomes participation in *Self*, Godhead or ultimate being, at ease with what Fowler termed a "commonwealth of being." We often experience these people as being more lucid and simple than we, while being intensely liberating people, sometimes even subversively so.

They occupy

Maslow's highest level of “self-transcendence needs”, Tillich's, “Ground of Being”, Spinoza's “Eternal Substance”, Hegel's “Geist”, and beyond the seventh chakra of Vedanta Hinduism “anandamayakosha”, Mahayana Buddhism “alayavijnana”, and the “Keeter” of Jewish Kabbalah. (Wilber, 2001, p. 247)

Fowler himself describes the promise of souls who occupy Stage Six in the following passage.

I believe that these persons kindle our imaginations in these ways because, in their generosity and authority, in their freedom and their costly love, they embody the promise and lure of our shared futurity. These persons embody costly openness to the power of the future. They actualize its promise, creating zones of liberation and sending shock waves to rattle the gages that we allow to constrict human futurity. Their trust in the power of that future and their trans-narcissistic love of human futurity account for their readiness to spend and be spent in making the Kingdom actual. (1981, p. 211)

Now What?

I had come to a point of integration between Eastern philosophies and Western psychologies. My initial thought for a Master's thesis was to do just that, translate my concepts of the philosophies of Buddhism in relation to the many theoretical psychologies I had been studying. Just as I was about to create a proposal, a friend of mine gave me a book, Ken Wilber's *No Boundary* (1985), and encouraged me to read it, since they felt that “it sounded like me.” The description of this book from its cover reads,

A simple yet comprehensive guide to the types of psychologies and therapies now available from both Western and Eastern sources—psychoanalysis to Zen, Gestalt to TM, existentialism to tantra. Ken Wilber (1985) presents a new, easy-to-gasp map of human consciousness against which the various therapies are introduced and explained. (Wilber, 1985, back cover)

After reading this work, I realized that I had to change my thesis proposal, studying something not yet done. As I pondered topic after topic, I would discover more of Wilber's writings that had covered these items in great depth. I had stumbled upon my next teacher, one who could lead me along this translational and transformational formulation with full acceptance and authorship of integral spirituality. Wilber has produced many variations on his own hierarchy over the past 30 years of his integral studies. His most recent version of this hierarchy, from *Kosmic Consciousness—The Ken Wilber Sessions* (2003), is my most recent reference point. A synopsis of it appears in *Figure 15*, with the level name appearing in bold in the first column and followed by other terms he has used for the same level. Parallel to Wilber's stage theory are those of Buddhism and Hinduism as my own attempt towards integral spirituality.

As I have iterated and tacitly come to know, this journey of translation and transformation is one of expanding care and compassion. We all begin with a *self*-identity that exists in contrast to the rest of the world. This is what we come to know as our ego. The Hero's journey that calls to all, in the form of either whispers or terrifying crises, is the innate movement from *self* to *Self*. As I came to understand, the egoic self expands until it runs into the *Self*. This *Self* is identified with everything in the manifest world; it is the One Self, one ultimate consciousness. It is the freeing of our *self* from our

Wilber's Integral Hierarchy	General Self-Sense	Treatmen t	Spirituality	Buddhist Vijnanas	Hinduism Chakra / Kosha
Archaic	Material self, begins Body ego, begins	Intense Regressive Therapies Pacification	Archaic	five vijnanas, realm of the senses	annamayakosha, physical body, <i>muladhara</i> <i>chakra</i> pranamayakosha, biological function swadhishtana chakra
Egocentric Magic	Axial body Pranic body Image body	Structure Building	Archaic- Magic Magical		manipura chakra solar plexis mental energy,
Conformist Mythic Traditional 25% pop	Persona, begins Name self Concept self Membership self Ego, begins	Uncovering Script Analysis	Magical- Mythic Mythical- Literal Mythical- Member ship	Manovijnana mind closed to 5 senses, intellect,	manomayakosha, anahata chakra, heart, trust, harmony
Rational Modern Scientific 40-50%	Mature ego Centaur, begins	Introspec- tion	Rational- Universal	Culmination of manovijnana	Culmination of manomayakosha, <i>vishuddha</i> <i>chakra</i> , throat,

pop	Existential,	Existential	Integral		communication, creativity
Pluralistic Post- modern Vision- logic 20-25 % pop	Integrated self Soul, begins Psychic self	Therapy Path of Yogis, Shamans	Holistic Global Nature Mysticism	manas, begins, the subtle realm	vijnanama- yakosha, begins, beyond ordinary ego, mind and body <i>ajna chakra</i> , third eye, sees overview
Integral Holistic 2 % pop.	Spirit, begins Subtle self	Path of Saints	Deity Mysticism Formless	culmination of manas	culmination of vijnanama- yakosha beginning of sahasrara chakra, at-oneness,
Trans- personal Enlighten- ment Satori	Pure self Causal self Witness Nondual	Path of Sages	Mysticism Nondual Mysticism	alayvijnana causal realm	anandamaya- kosha manifestation of the highest chakra and beyond

Figure 15. A theoretical integration of Wilber's concepts and 2 Eastern traditions.

paradigms and prisons, the movement from love to Love and to the Higher *Self*. My comprehension of *self/Self* came by way of personal experience coupled with theoretical research and is most articulately synthesized in *Figure 15* (Wilber, 2001, pp. 246-48) (Wilber, 2003, disc 3) (Whitelaw, 1996, p. 111).

Wilber (2003) suggests that integral cognition is possible at level four but that it is not until level six that one's centre of gravity is there. This centre of gravity refers to the level and value structure from which one's paradigms are formed. These paradigms, of course, create the mental bars that imprison. A person at level four, or rational, will act 50% of the time from those guiding principles, 25% of the time from the next lower level, mythic, and 25% of the time from the next higher level, pluralism. I am aware that I am guided by principles in level six but remain unaware as to whether I do so 25 or 50% of the time. I suspect that my center of gravity is around pluralism and would like that my next transformative path moves that centre to the integral level. Whereas the previous five levels feel their worldview is the only correct one, level six is the universal donor. People at this level are the first to allow others to live by their own value structures. This level has a thirst for big pictures; that which pluralism deconstructed into multiple realities, integral brings together into a holistic vision where each previous level is accepted and has a voice. To paraphrase Wilber (2003, disc 3), at present only 2% of the world's population is at the integral level. He also suspects that in the next decade that number will rise to 10%. Perhaps by then I will be counted in. In the Buddhist tradition there is a mythology that talks of the "*inexpressibles*." One of those describes the idea that those who know, don't say, while those who say, don't know. Cockburn (1994) had the same thinking in his song "Burden of the Angel/Beast."

From the lying mirror to the movement of stars
 Everybody's looking for who they are
 Those who know don't have the words to tell
 And the ones with the words don't know too well
 Could be the famine, Could be the feast
 Could be the pusher, Could be the priest
 Always ourselves we love the least
 That's the burden of the Angel/Beast
 (Bruce Cockburn, 1994, Burden Of The Angel/Beast)

There are specific inexpressibles known in Buddhist terms. There are others known and appreciated by all as they culminate in common experience. When we know love through experience, we truly understand and words pale to its meaning. We know what a mango tastes like but have great difficulty describing that taste. Such is the case with experiences that occur in the higher levels of many of these theories. One can only know by the experience. In part due to my limited experience within this level of development as well as avoiding possible egotistic elevation of my self, I close this chapter with the writings of Thomas Merton (1992), specifically the last three lines from "A Letter on the Contemplative Life."

O my brother, the contemplative is not the man who has fiery visions of the cherubim carrying God on their imagined chariot, but simply he who has risked his mind in the desert beyond language and beyond ideas where God is encountered in the nakedness of pure trust, that is to say in the surrender of our own poverty and incompleteness in order no longer to clench our minds in a

cramp upon themselves, as if thinking made us exist. The message of hope the contemplative offers you, then, brother, is not that you need to find your way through the jungle of language and problems that today surround God: but that whether you understand or not, God loves you, is present to you, lives in you, dwells in you, calls you, saves you, and offers you an understanding and light which are like nothing you ever found in books or heard in sermons. The contemplative has nothing to tell you except to assure you and say that if you dare to penetrate your own silence and dare to advance without fear into the solitude with the lonely other who seeks God through you and with you, then you will truly recover the light and the capacity to understand what is beyond words and beyond explanations because it is too close to be explained: it is the intimate union in the depths of your own heart, of God's spirit and your own secret inmost self, so that you and he are in all truth One Spirit. (p. 426)

CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Well here I am with open upward hands
Shoulders to my ears
Trying to figure out who it is, this me
While breaking shackles of life long fears
Oh and there are two questions that occur to me
Are we evolution or divinity?
And then there's love and what does it mean, yeah
Find one in faith and two in a better me, a better we
There are paradigms and prisons
With bars of iron and bars of gold
I want to search them out
Find what it is in me they hold
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)

Summary

My journey of research began with an attempt at creating a transformative model of paradigms, with four categories to explore: *self*, our society, the soil/ecology, and *Self*. By way of my research, I have come to recognize the certain interconnectedness and interdependency between each of these categories.

The two concepts of self that I have used in this research are *self* and *Self*. Our socially conditioned ego, our *self*, is created from everything we identify with from within the bars of our self-centered prisons. It is a construct that we have come to know and associate with our own self-image. The second, the *Self*, we don't know as well and seek to find through contemplative practices and philosophies. The *Self* is a universal being, in atonement or at-one-ment with all. S. Covey (1998) illuminates the role that knowledge of the *Self* plays within our personal and professional interactions with others.

“It's because the most important ingredient in any relationship is what you are. As the essayist and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson put it, 'Who you are speaks so loudly I can't hear what you're saying'" (p.132).

Knowing this dichotomy as a paradoxical paradigm, how do we move from *self* to *Self*, further along on a journey of understanding and being? The answer to this has been clarified for me along my own path. It occurs only when I am able to immerse myself in Buscaglia's sense of *love*, that of universal love.

There's a self we know and one we don't
One a construct over all time
The other based on illusions perceived
Dividing everything into yours and mine
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)

The category of soil refers to the interrelated ecological systems of our natural world. My introduction to the delights of this world came through environmental and outdoor experiential education during my undergraduate studies. I was later introduced to the realm of Ecopsychology, in which the ails of the *self/Self* are linked directly to the ails of all life forms on planet Earth and that any inward healing must address and honour our connectedness to these life forms. I remained ego centered throughout this time of my life, even while I came to the conclusion that mankind does not dominate the natural world. The soil category now seems more complete to me, as my new story tells me that as long as mankind considers himself apart from the natural world, he'll continue to devastate it as a beneficial resource at irreparable rates.

Society was the final category that I came to articulate and develop. Upon reflection, I feel that the idea of society has been such an integral part of my world that I

was actually blind to it. My entire life has been about reaching out to others in an attempt to form community. The paradox in this act lay in the fact that membership within any community almost requires one to stay within the belief and behavioural norms of that group. The community will certainly assist one to rise to its collective developmental level but offers little or no assistance to those wishing to move beyond. My path has been all about this developmental movement beyond.

Narrative, Story and the Hero's Journey

We each have stories existing within us in varied forms, those of a personal nature, those of a societal nature, those of an environmental nature and those of universal nature. Historically, the traditional form of learning was through oral story, and countless lessons were shared in this way. The printing press altered this oral tradition, as more and more value was placed on the written word. The art of storytelling was then often viewed as a primitive way of communicating in academic terms. Dewey (1938) discussed the importance of *re-creating* experiences, that is, telling stories that move one towards knowledge gained from that experience, and building the foundation for narrative inquiry in my own work. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) updated and reinforced Dewey's findings, further bringing academic validity to the relationship between narrative inquiry and educational experience.

The research of Dewey and Clandinin and Connelly lays the foundation and provides the justification for the use of narrative in my academic research. I've employed Van Manen's (1992) "Four Existentials" towards the integration of seminal theoretical works into an intellectual framework aligned with my research. Drake et al. (1992)

“Story Model” provides a straightforward tool for personal narrative inquiry. Along with narrative, the use of hermeneutic foil is essential in my perspective. Within this thesis I have used many such foils. These foils are maps, pathways for the potential of all journeys from “Old Story” to “New Story.”

Story has secured a supportive place in the restorative human journey. Glendining (1994) states that the use of story is effective to "heal us because we become whole through them.... We restore those parts of ourselves that have been scattered, hidden, suppressed, denied, distorted, forbidden" (p. 146). The psyche heals through story, making a shift from repression to full consciousness and building one's strength through acceptance. The lyrics sung by David Wilcox (1991) in "Last Chance Waltz" describe this restoration through the paradigms and prisons of the past into wholeness. "To heal the old pain we must face it again. Held by those rusty old remnants of fear, after all these years, I'm melting the shackles with tears." This inner witness of consciousness, of facing the old pain again, creates a protection of sorts, leaving us with the ability to deal with emotions even when they are bombshells.

Stories link us to each other while affecting the understanding that we each have of our lives. The use of story in this way involves the transmission of social values by passing stories through the generations. The most prevalent of these stories are called explanation stories. We look to the past at these cleverly disguised myths to gain valuable social understanding and the foundations of religion. These mythology tales are often told in the form of the Hero's journey, through which we gain insight into a path from the *self* to the higher *Self*.

**Looking forward and back at the future and past
Inward and outward my biography**

**While moving toward a
Future that only I can create and conceive
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)**

Within each of us is a whisper calling us to the Hero's journey. Joseph Campbell (1988) describes this journey as an integral part of a "life lived in self-discovery" (p. xiv) for the good of all. Campbell also splits the journey itself into three parts: the call, the initiation, and the return. We are infinitely presented with learning situations urging us to move into this journey. This narrative research has traced my own calling, with my willingness and resistance along the path, to this adventurous path of self-discovery.

Throughout this research, I have related my awareness to situations of this call, descriptions of the whispers that I have responded to, as *What?* If we find meaning in this call, we accept the tests and trials that accompany it. This portion of my narrative, the initiation of the Hero's journey, I have related to the phrase, *So What?* Anecdotally, I have heard experiential education described as "anything worth doing is worth doing badly." This phrase describes my learning as I stumbled, tumbled, and fumbled through new situations, often painful experiences, translating and transforming to a new story or new way of being. The final phase, my return, I have depicted with the phrase, *Now What*, describing what I have done with my new story in my resumption of daily life, and ideally, sharing the gifts of my journey of transformation.

Many of us are traveling along the self-discovery path of the Hero and unaware of it. The examination of our own personal narrative is a way to gain insight into this path, a powerful tool to move our lives into translation and transformation. Translation refers to horizontal health, the personal development within one's existing paradigm. This is typically the work that we make an effort to do, changing our beliefs, behaviours, and

blind spots. Transformation is equivalent to Kuhn's (1970) idea of Paradigm Shift. We stay within a paradigm until it no longer satisfies our worldview. This is a vertical, inward movement that encompasses all that we move out of as we move into something else higher up a hierarchical scale. The groundwork of translation helps in this upward movement. What an examination of one's path reveals is a series of maps, maps that guide us inward from the egocentric *self* to the ever-expanding *Self*. Our journey begins with ideas such as heaven as a place outside of us. As we move along the journey, guided by our Heroic maps, we begin to sense and understand that, as all of the religious traditions deeply indicate, heaven truly is found within, in the realization of the *Self*.

It is exciting that narrative has found a valued place in academia. Western society has sent astronauts to the moon and probes to the far reaches of our galaxy. We have excelled at this outward expansion of knowledge. However, it seems that with this development we have allowed the inward expansion of self-knowledge to wither. Narrative inquiry has the potential to take each of us on our own Hero's journey inward, the value of the narrative reciprocating the value of personal awareness. Drake and Miller's (1991) notion of being a "reflective and contemplative practitioner" can be related to this inward journey, as a reflective practitioner "weaves together practice and theory at an intuitive level" (p. 321). This weaving of experience and knowledge creates a personal awareness that allows us to identify the limits of the past, the paradigms and prisons we live in, to our growth. It also allows the thoughtful experience of transformation a new story, one of universal care, compassion, and love. Our new story, then, is an evolving, living story. It is one that charges us with kindness for everyday

situations, blessing us through the difference we make in our world as that kindness ripples out to those around us in both personal and professional settings.

Conclusion

This thesis research has been focused on my quest, my own Hero's Journey. This journey has taken me far from my home in search of a sense of *self*, only to return in an effort to serve others. It expresses my way of being and some of the transformations that I am fortunate to have made along my path. My narrative may illuminate the sense of confusion, meaning, and suffering for others as they travel along their own transformative quest. My own gleanings are intended for the students that I teach, friends and family members that I touch, and the professional that reads this.

Similar to the teacher featured in the television sitcom from my youth, *Welcome Back Kotter*, I have returned to work in the same city and class of “at-risk” students that I grew up in. My own way out of similar situations as these youth find themselves in has been a process of translation and transformation through personal choices. I see myself reflected in the youth that I work with, many of the beliefs and behaviors I also held resulting from being scared, lonely, and confused while longing just to belong. The universal mythic hero's journey I have been on has blessed me with compassion, love, and a desire for openness and inclusivity. That is what I attempt to share with these youth in the classroom.

My journey through narrative has revealed to me misunderstandings that I have had regarding very fundamental ideas. The Buddhist “All life is suffering” has moved from intentionally living a poor, tormented, and starving life of an artist to embracing my *Self* and “breaking shackles of lifelong fears.” Another Buddhist dictum, “Life is the

pursuit of happiness,” I understood as trivial, self-indulgent, and self-serving through the lens of a consumer society. I now understand a process actually moving one to a higher place and eradicating suffering by increasing the awareness of a mind-body connection. Leo Buscaglia once introduced me to the notion that love provides a purpose for life. I sought the superficial comfort of affectionate love, which typically led me along a complicated path of physical attraction and sex. Buscaglia's message to me now is of a higher love, that which is given away freely without any expectation of reciprocity. It was my ability to examine and dissolve my past impressions, my paradigms, which led me to a new appreciation of the depth of these guiding concepts.

One's temperament typically helps to determine one's paradigms and paths in life. I have been exposed to several tools that sort personality types, although I became interested specifically in Keirsey and Bates (1978) Temperament Sorter with its base in Jungian archetypes. Keirsey created this model with a depth of research into Jung, and the model has been further applied, supported, and made useful for educators by other researchers. Using Keirsey's (1998) Temperament Sorter, I tend to fall into a category of intuitive-feelers (also known as NF), described as the intuitive dreamers. The life purpose of the NF is to heed the call of the Hero's journey, making that a natural path for me to take. This exploration of *self* and *Self* is what fuels my life more than anything else. The narrative inquiry process further enhances that journey, allowing me to deepen my own understanding while communicating that to others.

Keirsey and Bates (1978) suggest that about 75% of teachers fall into the sensory-judging (SJ) temperament. My choice to become a classroom teacher poses a dilemma simply in terms of personality. While the SJ is considered the guardian of the

status quo, the NF is interested in the notion of possibility and change in the metaprocesses of life. They are often considered by others to “have his/her head in the clouds.” The alternative setting of a custody facility identifies what seems to be the best fit for me within a conventional educational system. I also informally use the teachings of this temperament sorter as further access to the youth and staff with whom I work.

At one time in my academic life, psychological theories and hierarchies provided me fuel towards rebellion. I understood them to lead to a pathway of blame rather than a higher level of care and compassion. I could not accept that hierarchies could create an egalitarian approach to human growth and development. Discoveries that I made along the road of this thesis research opened my eyes to theories that existed beyond the notion of blame. From that position, I was able to revisit the earlier developmental psychologies with an openness that allowed me to appreciate the undeniable sequencing of hierarchies.

Things I Have Come To Know/Lessons Learned

Wherever you go, there you are. This is a Buddhist dictum and the title of a book, *Wherever You Go There You Are, Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life*, by Jon Kabat-Zinn (1994). It describes the sensations that regardless of where you go, how far you run to get away from yourself, one always ends up with one's self. We are presently at where we are at. Each of us, from the “at-risk” youth I work with, to the professionals who serve them as teachers, lawyers, doctors, and judges, is at whatever developmental level we are at. This is regardless of their age, position, education, or status.

The task or purpose of the journey is towards the *Self*. We acquire various tools that enable us to gain insight into our paradigms—beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots. The developmental scales and lines of development briefly outlined can also be used to

advance one's journey. I now believe that the higher levels of any of these developmental lines, be they Gardner's (1993) Multiple Intelligences, Maslow's Needs Hierarchy (1970), or Fowler's (1981) Stages of Faith, have a spiritual quality to them. I have outlined and storied tools that I have found useful along my path. However, I would like to caution the reader with the words of Basho, as cited in Schiller (1994): "Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the men [and women] of old; seek what they sought" (p. 107). One would do well to let another's experience illuminate the possibility of potential rather than attempt to copy their path. My present understanding of temperament leads me to believe that the tools of *self*-inquiry vary for each person's journey based on their temperament.

We move from paradigms based on love or fear. Love Is Letting Go of Fear is the title of a wonderful book by Jampolsky (2004) and based on the text of Schucman and Thetford *A Course in Miracles* (1992).

The *Course* states there are only two emotions, love and fear. The first is our natural inheritance, and the other our mind manufactures. The *Course* suggests that we can learn to let go of fear by practicing forgiveness and seeing everyone, including ourselves, as blameless and guiltless. (Jampolsky, 2004, p. 2)

I find this paradigm most useful in maintaining my awareness on the behaviours of others with the intention of gaining insight into their beliefs and blind spots. Many of the youth I have worked with have committed atrocious acts, such as the murder and/or rape of infants. I have had students pull knives on me in class. Once a student pulled and pointed a gun at me. On several occasions I have been physically attacked.

Embracing this paradigm has allowed me to view actions and behaviours along a continuum, with *fear* at one end and *love* at the other. From this perspective I am better

able to maintain a position of care, compassion, and love. If someone treats me in a way that I perceive as unkind, I attribute it to the notion that their fears are running them. I now recognize that any time I have judgmental thoughts, use unkind words, or act in ways that are less than caring, I am better off in the long run to let go of those thoughts, stop speaking negatively, and apologize for my actions. This attentiveness has moved my beliefs, subsequent behaviours, and me from a place of fear to a place of love. The intention that I have as I detach these crimes from the youth who committed them is to gain present–moment awareness.

Intention combined with detachment leads to life–centered, present–moment awareness. And when action is performed in present–moment awareness, it is most effective. Your intent is for the future, but your attention is in the present. As long as your attention is in the present, then your intent for the future will manifest, because the future is created in the present. (Chopra, 1994, p. 73)

This process of calm attentiveness and respectful discourse has proven useful for me in the custody setting, as students learn that they are seen, heard, and loved.

We're all doing the best we can within any situation at any given time. Any shift to occur in beliefs, behaviours, and blind spots will occur only when we become aware that the paradigm we are operating from does not meet our needs or nurture the journey of the *self/Self*. Once we begin to learn the paradigms that imprison us, we can choose to act on them. We can use the tools I have outlined or work with a therapist or psychologist to help illuminate our paradigms.

I have used the described *love–fear* continuum to interpret where we are at developmentally. I listen to the stories of the “at–risk” youth, meet their parents,

guardians, or lack of either, and am reminded of the different operating paradigm that they live in. When I hear that a father and uncle are in Kingston Penitentiary, a mother is a crack cocaine addict and prostitute, I gain deeper insight into their lives, worldview, and paradigm.

Regardless of the paradigm and situation we have settled into, we are presently doing the best we can within our abilities. Often we say one thing but our contradictory beliefs influence our behaviour patterns to create blind spots, which we are unaware of. If getting into top physical shape, then one will give up what is necessary in order to reach that place. Getting to a workout becomes more important than eating the junk food or missing that workout. Our *present story* (Drake et al., 1992) is based on our *past story*. One aspect of translation and transformation is the deep and critical reflection on our *past story* towards a *new story*. Present situations and our experience of them is a result of the choices we've made in the past. Many of us make choices unconsciously, leading us to believe that we haven't made a choice. Yet those choices are made.

Countless are the times that I have heard the youth I work with say something like, "I need to get an education to get a good job," or "When I leave I am never coming back to this jail." Somehow, somewhere in their lives, they have learned that this is the standard and acceptable thing to say. Typically, however, the outcome spoke, of is not achieved, as recidivism remains high. There is a certain disconnect between what they say and what they do. Essentially, they are unaware of being infinite choice-makers.

Most of us, as a result of conditioning, have repetitious and predictable responses to the stimuli in our environment. Our reactions seem to be automatically triggered by people and circumstances, and we forget that these are still choices

that we are making in every moment of our existence. We are simply making these choices unconsciously. (Chopra, 1994, p. 41)

They are doing the best they can in the situation with the paradigm they occupy, just as we all are. Otherwise we would all be doing better. To do better we need the tools and language to become aware of the paradigms that imprison us. It is useful to recognize where we are, and accept without judgment what *is*, to better articulate and build a plan for a new way of being, a new story, or a new paradigm.

This research has confirmed to me that, as an educator, my main focus is not on the common curriculum, that information that teachers both give and get to maintain the status quo. As Russell (1997) states, “curriculum is designed to develop an individual's ability to fit into the society as it is” (p. 36). My focus is on the larger questions that lead to transformational learning. I tend to look at the implications of individual choices on all beings, the Earth, and the universe. This “transformational position has as its primary goal, personal and social change. It is not only the learner's cognitive abilities that are important, but also aesthetic, moral, physical, and spiritual needs” (Russell, p. 36). Awareness of the *Self* can be explored only by choice and perseverance related to those larger needs. I consider the role of curriculum to be a transformative vehicle that brings to the egoic *self* an understanding of the universal *Self*. It becomes an instrument used in the awareness of potential and meaning with these “at-risk” youth.

Roszak (1979) describes the educational role that I aspire to. “To educate is to unfold (a wholly unexplored, radically unexpected) identity – to unfold it with utmost delicacy, recognizing it is the most precious resource of our species, the true wealth of the human nature” (p. 182). Within each of us is this precious identity, the joyful

consciousness that surrounds us all, that is able to remain separate from any human contact and is not affected by ridicule or acts of violence. My educational focus has become the creation of an environment that encourages the youth towards a journey from ridicule and violence to a sense of wholeness and integration.

I have come to an understanding of *love* with the truest awareness that the only real value gained in any aspect of *self* is the ability and amount one gives that *self* away. This giving is not based on pride. As quoted by S. Covey (1998), C. S. Lewis wrote, “pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man” (p. 148). The pleasure of giving without any desire or expectation of receiving is the true value of love in the absence of the egoic *self*.

In my journey, I left my egoic *self* to be born anew and live a more holistic life of the *Self*. I have found meaning in selfless service. The Hero does not gain the elixir of life to run off and hoard it, but returns home with it so that others may share in its bounty. My own journey translates into my professional life as a *Teacher* as I work to give from a place of love and universal compassion. In *The Courage to Teach* (1998), Parker Palmer describes the deep inquiry that “honors and challenges the teacher's heart,” moving from the superficial to the “inner landscape of the teaching self” (p. 4). I am not alone on this journey of deep inquiry of the inner landscape. Whether they are aware of it or not, every teacher, every at-risk youth, every person takes part in the Hero's journey as a way out of the prisons of human suffering.

Implications

Once in awhile I'll see somebody about to make the same mistake as me

So I try to do something good and save them a little grief

I'll say, "Hey you, get away from that thing it's about as hot as hell"

They'll smile and thank me very much and then go and touch it for themselves

(Thomas, 1993, *Art Of Living*)

I have always been reluctant to give advice or tell others how to do something. This personal trait creates a tricky situation for me in my role as a teacher/learner, a disseminator of information. The educational system tells me what I am supposed to teach and I make great efforts to do so. The educational system does not tell me how to teach who I am. I remain reluctant to offer advice as either a teacher or as a friend and only ever do so after being asked to specifically. It then usually takes the form of a circle of philosophical ideas and questions posed back to the one asking. "The Socratic form of inquiry, using a system of questions, enables me to drop the burden of self-incrimination and self-defeating behaviors and to dance in the sunlight" (Kaufman, 2000, p. v). I am more comfortable discussing paradigms that imprison us while never excluding myself from the topic at hand. I try to back up my beliefs and personal philosophies with theoretical literature, fully aware that it all may be incorrect. I have come to an understanding that "ideas" do not belong to anyone; rather they simply live in this world as we do. We discover certain ideas at certain times, and sharing them is part of the journey to a fuller awareness and understanding.

I accept that this dissemination of practical advice, of my own "best practices", would be an aspect of this research thesis that some might find useful. While this task is certainly elusive for me, nodal implications from this research thesis will be organized into the areas of practical implications, theoretical implications and implications for further research.

Practical Implications

S. Covey's (1998) *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* describes an integral approach to change and opportunity in one's life and is directly applicable to my findings. Covey's first habit is "Be proactive" (p. 65). Based on self-awareness, this habit encourages us to realize that if "I don't like that ineffective script [paradigm], I can change it" (p. 146). This is my *What?* throughout this narrative research. "Begin with the end in mind" (p. 95) is Covey's second habit, which he describes as "the deep contact with our basic paradigms and values and the vision of what we can become" (p. 147). This second habit is very similar to my *So What*. His third habit is to "put first things first" (p. 145). Covey cites Goethe towards a deeper understanding of this notion in the following: "Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least" (p. 146). This third habit is related to *Now What?* The main premise of my narrative research thesis is that love is my life's purpose.

In the real of love, a paradox exists; you can effectively love others only when you can love yourself. If you cannot love yourself, you will try to fill the void of your own lack of self-love with the love of others. (Hendricks, 1992, p. 91)

Covey's first two habits are concerned with philosophies and answering "the ultimate questions of life" (p. 147), while the third leads us to "create a life congruent with those answers" (p. 147).

Because you cannot make me happy
Not when I am empty inside of me
But you can pull yourself right in here with me
My misery would love to have your company

We cannot trade empty for empty

We must go to the waterfall

For there's a break in the cup that holds love inside us all (Wilcox, 1994, Break In The Cup)

The efforts that one makes in order to bring new philosophies, story, or paradigm into life actions allows one to *walk the talk*. Parker Palmer (1998) makes this point eloquently in his writing; “The connections made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts—meaning *heart* in its ancient sense, as the place where intellect and emotion and spirit and will converge in the human self” (p. 11). This very quote revisits my *Nature–Nurture–Namaste* discussion, where *nature* refers to the scientific make-up of our being; *nurture* is related to our social relations and impact of family systems on our paradigms; *namaste* refers to the divine that resides in each of us while simultaneously residing in another. “When your internal reference point is your spirit, when you are immune to criticism and unfearful of any challenge, you can harness the power of love, and use energy creatively for the experience of affluence and evolution” (Chopra, 1994, p. 56).

In my own efforts to put first things first and walk my talk, I employ four categories in daily living to help maintain my own awareness to the sometimes obscure values and paradigms I hold. They are, the Head (the cognitive domain), the Heart (the affective domain), the Hands (the physical domain), and the Holy (the spiritual domain). What follows is a description of my attempts to personally attend to these four domains daily, while recognizing that they converge in my very essence.

The head: cognitive domain. Most of my learning comes through daily reflective reading, typically in the realm of the *self/Self*. Another area of great learning for me comes when students ask questions that I don't know the answer to. I tell them that "I don't know, but we can learn it together." And so we do.

I use daily affirmations in an effort to train my cognitive mind to alter old paradigms. I have used several sources to make what I feel is an integrated set of affirmations. The first two lines each day are taken from the Prayer for Peace of Saint Francis of Assisi (cited in Dyer, 2003). For the next few lines I paraphrase Jampolsky's (2004) 12 affirmations from *Love is Letting Go of Fear* in combination with Chopra's (1994) *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*. The last lines are taken from Phillips's (1999) *Body for Life: Twelve Weeks to Mental and Physical Strength*.

The heart: affective domain. I have written about life as a process of "becoming" and the value in translating and transforming into the most wondrous, caring, and talented being. The *heart* is active participant in the giving away of all that! From my poem *Learning to Let Go*, I feel that as we let go of the scarcity mentality, we open our hearts up to the needs of others, the giving of care, compassion, and love, and receive the same in return. Joy for me is to truly fill this sense of *self/Self* and then give as much as I can to others.

With each person I meet I give them a prayer. For some the prayer is silent for others, it is physical and verbal. With my hands held in the prayer position, I bow my head and say Namaste. "It is the intention behind the giving and receiving that is the most important thing. The intention should always be to create happiness for the giver and

receiver, because happiness is life-supporting and life-sustaining and therefore generates increase” (Chopra, 1994, p. 30).

I make an effort to hug any and all adults, male or female, that feel comfortable with such a gesture. With students I make contact as much as possible in what I feel are appropriate ways. I make an effort to compliment, not in a patronizing way, but honestly.

I am continually writing poetry, which is one way I interpret my experience and the emotions related to it. Some of my poetry I have been able to put to music, adding an entirely different dimension to the affective impact they hold for me and for others. I also use the music of others to move my heart and emotions.

I encourage students to write poetry and journals. I also use popular music as a pedagogical tool. I have also tried to put student poetry to music. My intention is to bring to each person's awareness a connection between feelings, thoughts, and experiences. The learning in the affective domain can shatter old prisons we hold.

Whether we adopted beliefs (like, “Something is wrong with me” or “I’m not good enough or smart enough” or “I never can really get what I want”) decades ago or even just yesterday, we can, nevertheless, change them easily, rapidly and without pain. And the discarding and or replacing of such beliefs will alter our perception and, indeed, our experience of reality. (Kaufman, 2000, p. iv)

Each morning I arrive at the facility about an hour before class begins. My school preparation goes beyond organizing students into classes and photocopying, as I go to each unit and the cafeteria to visit with the youth as their day begins. I learn of personal intricacies that certainly affect behaviours.

As the youth live at the facility, regular social gatherings are planned for holidays, such as a Thanksgiving brunch or Christmas dinner. I attend these events, making a special effort to both serve the youth their meal and join those who have no family visiting. In my experience at the facility, I am the only teaching staff to attend these functions, as they occur on holidays and outside of regular teaching time. The same holds true for floor staff, guards, and typically administrative staff, as the only ones at the events are on shift, those paid to be there. I have gone into the facility to spend a few hours with the youth on past Christmas days. These are heart connections that I make.

The Hands: Physical Domain. I know from both my kinesiology education and experience that a balance of progressive weight training, aerobics, and flexibility routines increases muscle mass, metabolism, bone density, cardiovascular health, and quality of life, while it decreases excess adipose tissue. Hendricks (1992) describes the integral nature of physical awareness and acceptance in the following.

It is vitally important for mental and physical health that we learn to feel and to love our feelings, including those about our bodies. If we simply cover up our self-hatred with more cosmetics we are wasting money and digging ourselves a deeper hole from which to climb. (p. 94)

I make an effort to rise at 5 a.m. in order to do a Yoga routine and meditate. I then get on my bicycle for the 10-minute ride to the fitness club where I lift weights for 45–60 minutes. After weight training I ride my bicycle 15 kilometers to work. After teaching Healthy Active Living and participating in the activities in class, I ride my bike home. The cycle to and from work is particularly enjoyable as it is along a converted rail trail up

the Niagara escarpment. For the 30 minutes that I am on the trail, riding in silence, it is as if I were in the wilderness.

One way to access the field of pure potentiality is through the daily practice of silence, meditation, and non-judgment. Spending time in nature will also give you access to the qualities inherent in the field: infinite creativity, freedom, and bliss. (Chopra, 1994, p. 13)

Each day I share the trail with a variety of birds, raccoons, squirrels, possum, a red fox, snakes, and a few fellow human travelers; it is truly a lovely ride to commune with nature.

While at work, during my lunch break, I have set up a fitness class for various staff at the facility. In effect they receive the knowledge and skill of my personal training and nutritional training for the time they participate.

In Healthy Active Living class, students learn the conceptual as well as practical knowledge to build their own training programs. Spotting one another during weight training is an excellent opportunity for even the toughest of guys to accept physical support. The fitness program is the most popular aspect of all the course work presented for 90% of the students.

The Holy: Spiritual Domain. I have learned to use the Buddhist practice of Vipassana meditation as a method of objectifying the *self*. This is simply one form of contemplative practice that lessens the power of the ego; any of this type of practice is useful. With practice I experience more and more at a deeper point of inner stillness the ultimate ground of creation/Self, where everything is inseparable. Increasingly, I have seen both academic literature and mainstream culture attempting to articulate the benefits

of meditation. My own practice and experience have led me to understand the “happiness” that the Dalai Lama expresses.

In the morning, my intention is to meditate for about 30–45 minutes before leaving home. The Vipassana tradition also encourages another 30–45 minutes in the evening. The benefits, side effects, and experiences I have had with meditation are well documented, as they are universal. During an audio compact disc session titled *Kosmic Consciousness*, Wilber (2003) suggested that if someone follows a meditative practice for about 4 years, on average they move up two levels along various developmental lines.

For ease of understanding I have separated the domains of the Head–Heart–Hands–Holy from within the make-up of the individual as Nature–Nurture–Namaste. Of course there is no actual separation or division of the individual into these terms or any others that our minds fabricate. Each set of systems or paradigms that we elaborately create is simply a mental map that serves to answer the questions and confusions we have at the developmental level we occupy at that time. As the Buddhist dictum goes, “To change the world, we need only change our minds.” Chopra (1994) also wisely articulates, “While meditation is the most useful way of entering the domain of the spirit, simply shifting your internal dialogue will also access the spirit, the domain of your awareness where you experience your universality” (p. 100). This universality is the level of *love* that I have attempted to define through light and awareness. It is found in the highest level of *self*–development and through this development, we translate, transform and transcend closer to the *Self*.

I have made an effort to bring my natural tendencies of metathought to a practical level, in the hopes that students, staff, and educators can take from it what is most useful

without the weight of “ought” and “should” imposed onto them. I struggle daily to walk my own talk and honestly have no “right” answer for another. I will close this section with another’s words, a work of powerful writing that I use as a guide on how to be love.

Desiderata 1927

Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence.

As far as possible, without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons they are vexations to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with others you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interest in your own career, however humble: it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery.

But, let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals and everywhere there is heroism.

Be yourself.

Especially do not feign affection.

Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years; gracefully surrender the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.

But do not distress yourself with imaginings.

Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the Universe, no less than the trees and the stars you have a right to be here.

Whether or not it is clear to you the universe is unfolding as it should.

Be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be and whatever your labors and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul.

With all its drudgery and broken dreams it is still a beautiful world.

Be careful.

Strive to be happy. (Max Ehrmann, 1976)

Theoretical Implications

Many of the world's spiritual traditions agree that the Hero's Journey, a path of realization and transformation towards enlightenment, is what brings greatest meaning to one's life. I believe the quest to be a valuable purpose. The gift of this journey is that as we move through the awareness of the *self*, the dualistic, egocentric one, we prepare the fertile soil of awareness, understanding, and being of the timeless and universal One, the *Self*. So any movement along the path prepares us for what is to come.

There is a Buddhist saying: "A stick is a stick, then it is not a stick, and then it is a stick again." Before our journey begins, our paradigms grant us an awareness of what a stick is. However, during the trials of the call and initiation of our journey, the stick is no longer separate, as it becomes one with us. When we return in our new, enlightened state

with our bounty, we are transformed. We are aware of the illusions, of the duality of our world, but we are no longer entangled in them and freed from the sufferings of our old story. The stick is once again a stick, though we know from experience that it is not separate from our own being.

Any theory that I have encountered finds its greatest value when I can realize personal meaning in it and an ability to enact it. Narrative inquiry, as a tool for self-understanding and personal growth, provides an appropriate approach for educational practitioners as well as students themselves. It provides an open-ended methodology for those who seek the path of inner inquiry, bringing one to places unimagined. Richardson (1998) describes the writing process as a “way of knowing—a method of discovery and analysis” rather than “a mopping-up activity at the end of a research project” (p. 516). Narrative inquiry through journal and notebook writing became the way in which I was able to first to uncover and express certain thoughts or feelings that I may have had but up until the point of writing was unaware of. The act of writing was an act of discovery, of self-discovery. Upon the initial articulation of the thought or feeling, I then had something concrete upon which to attend. Often, the discovery of the thought or feeling came as an utter surprise to me. The process of narrative inquiry has allowed me the deeper exploration of both theoretical research and myself.

The intellectual endeavours of university and this thesis continually bring to my awareness the paradox of knowing in theory and not knowing in action. The Buddha once said something like, “to know and not to do is not to know.” The difficulty for me has been to put into practice the theory that I know. Narrative inquiry has provided an opportunity to intentionally and comprehensively consider ways in which to enact that

theoretical knowledge and a practice that resonates with me. This contemplative practice leaves me with more compassion and patience for the eccentricities of everyday life and brings meaning to my life through service to others. This probably makes me a more effective educator and allows me to share the passion of the new paradigm I am enacting with those around me.

What began as a straightforward narrative inquiry has developed into something greater for me, specifically the discovery of various developmental hermeneutic foils. They have created a map that has allowed me to integrate *self*, soil, and society towards a new paradigm, a new story, of *Self*. *Figure 16 a*, *Figure 16 b*, and *Figure 16 c* is my attempt to correlate the varying levels of development with those hermeneutic hierarchies that I've found useful through my ability to apply them.

Implications for Further Research

The Source

I can talk philosophy

But without action what does that mean

The headlines do read

In black 'n white but what's in between

Introspective rhetoric

Trying to find the source

Every issue thought of

Raises a hundred questions more

(Warren Albert Trimble, 1999)

Be Here, Now (1979), the title of a book written by Baba Ram Dass, is also a common saying in eastern philosophy. This saying refers to the paralysis in one's life linked to our fear of the past (old story) and of the future (new story). It also speaks to the

Wilber's Integral	Average Age of Emergence	Piaget Cognitive	Kohlberg's Moral	Loevinger's Self
Archaic	0-18 Months	Sensorimotor Intelligence		Autistic Symbiotic
Egocentric	1-3 Years	Preoperational Thinking	Preconventional Morality	Impulse Self-Protective
Conformist	7-10 Years	Concrete Operational	Conventional Morality	Conformist Conscientious- Conformist
Rational	10-20 Years	Formal Operational	Postconventional Morality	Conscientious Individualistic Autonomous
Pluralistic	21-35 Years		Post-Post- Conventional	Integrated
Integral	35-42 Years			
Trans- personal	42+ Years			

Figure 16a. A hierarchical integration of developmental levels.

Wilber's Integral	Average Age of Emergence	Maslow Needs	Dabrowski's Disintegration	Gebser Cultural Structures
Archaic	0-18 Months	Physiological Needs		Archaic
Egocentric	1-3 Years	Safety Needs	Primary- Integration	Magic
Conformist	7-10 Years	Belonging Needs	Unilevel- Disintegration	Mythic
Rational	10-20 Years	Self-Esteem Needs	Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration	Rational-Mental
Pluralistic	21-35 Years	Self- Actualization Needs	Organized Multilevel	Integral
Integral	35-42 Years	Self- Transcendence Needs	Secondary Integration	
Trans- personal	42+ Years			

Figure 16b. A hierarchical integration of developmental levels

Wilber's Integral	Average Age of Emergence	Fowler's Stages of Faith	Erikson's Self Related Stages	Chakras Body-Mind Connections
Archaic	0-18 Months	Preverbal Undifferentiated	Trust vs. Mistrust	Material
Egocentric	1-3 Years	Magical- Projective	Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt	Emotional Sexual
Conformist	7-10 Years	Mythic-Literal	Initiative vs. Guilt & Anxiety Industry vs.	Intentional-Mind, Power
Rational	10-20 Years	Synthetic- Conventional Individual- Reflective Conjunctive- Faith	Inferiority Identity vs. Role Confusion Intimacy vs. Isolation	Community-Mind, Love
Pluralistic	21-35 Years	Universalizing	Generativity vs. Stagnation Integrity vs. Despair	Verbal- Rational mind
Integral	35-42 Years			Psychic- Mind, vision
Trans- personal	42+ Years			Transcendental

Figure 16c. A hierarchical integration of developmental levels

avoidance of dramatic fantasies with their consequent outcomes and the strength of living in the moment. It is the basis of eastern spirituality. Preparation provided in the moment nurtures the fertile ground for the ideals of the future. The same holds true in research. We create a hypothesis while looking at some form of the old story as we move towards a more inclusive new story. The creation of this new story beckons the research towards even greater understanding and clarity. This thesis is no exception. I began in an effort to express my narrative of translation and transformation. Along the path of this study and research of contemplative reflection I came to a much richer understanding of the potentials that lay within the theories and hierarchies I explored. What began as a study of the *self*/*Self*-narrative through the windows of *self*, society, soil, and *Self* has now opened to a new perspective.

Initially I began with an outline that included the categories of *self*, society, soil, and *Self*. These proved to be useful parameters in order to view different aspects of my Old Story. My further studies have led me to a new model that provides more clarity to me. My New Story includes a four-quadrant model to explain the reality we perceive. The four quadrants are now labeled *self*, society, systems, and science. The premises behind the categories of self and society remain unchanged. The soil category has become a “systems” quadrant, which includes the ecosystem and many other systems that function as a unit. The fourth quadrant returns me to the area of science, the foundation of my thinking and understanding. My passions in undergraduate study were in the human sciences: biology, chemistry, biochemistry, physiology, anatomy, and so on.

My proposed model as a start point for further research looks like a box with four quadrants and vertical parallels of *self* with society and science with systems. The *self*-

society parallel is exemplified by the differences that people display in their behaviours as individuals as opposed to within a larger group. The science–systems parallel is exemplified by the way in which a cell acts alone as opposed to as a part of an organ, as when two pieces of cardiac muscle beating at different rates are placed in contact, side by side, they will synchronize their beating rhythm. *Self* has been removed completely from this four–quadrant model.

My studies of Loevinger's Hierarchy of Ego Development (1976) have led me to an understanding of the transformation of *self* to *Self* as a developmental area on its own. I also believe now that as each developmental area reaches into the higher levels of the hierarchy it assumes a spiritual nature, as does *self* as it moves to *Self*. These concepts, the four–quadrant model, as well as the development of *Self*, require far greater research, possibly an opening into doctoral work. This work also leads me further into the effective education of “at-risk” youth. Many of the students remain in lower levels of the developmental hierarchies, existing at a survival level attempting to meet their physiological and safety needs, while getting older. How does an educational system, how do I, meet the needs of these youth? How does an educational system, how do I, “teach” and “learn” awareness and development along these hermeneutic foils?

Only interests are in me, promises made we never keep

What I knew now I don't see, I don't mean to preach

In the darkness, in the distance, in that instance find the reach

Please help me find the reach

(Warren Albert Trimble, 1989)

Paradigms and Prisons has become a gateway to my path of self–awareness and understanding as well as a bridge to universal awareness and understanding, the Hero's

Journey. This journey is towards an ever-expanding, universal being, enacting care, compassion, and love. It is the possibility of potential which draws me along this journey, pulling me to new realizations. The value in one's understanding of the *self* is seen in the universality of how one affects others, the higher *Self*. It has allowed me to release the control of my ego over my operational paradigm, moving me into a New Story.

There's only now
The present is my gift
I open up and find I want to give out
All of this is ours if we wish
Reflecting with open heart and open eyes
This love search can help
With a more meaningful and richer life
(Warren Albert Trimble, 2003)

There is an intuitive, innate drive for this quest, yet we do not have a language to give real voice to silence, mediation, and spirituality. I have come to realize the powerful role that narrative could play in this form of education and search. Bosacki (2005) states,

Regarding practical tools for educators; further exploration of various experiences of silence, and their socioemotional and spiritual consequences suggests the need for useful assessment tools and interventions. Given past research, which suggests that psychological understanding is related to school experiences (Astington, 1993; Bruner, 1996; Bosacki, 2003), we could teach “psychological language” to adolescents, focusing on self-reflection and self-acceptance (Rhedding-Jones, 2000; Tannen, 1994). As educators, we can encourage adolescents to develop “mental state vocabulary of the self and others.” Such initiatives support

educators who advocate the importance of narrative and metacognition in education. (p. 133)

As children, adolescents, or adults we teach who we are. As we develop the mental language to understand life's mysteries, so those around us have the opportunity to learn as they are ready to. It is the whispers of the soul's calling moving us from *self* to *Self* that will overcome our deep sense of meaninglessness. In order to develop a different vocabulary and awareness we need to let go of "what I want," "what I need," "what I consider to be right," and so on. This awareness is one that recognizes that we are not isolated and individual *selves*. This sense of being moves beyond a sense of belonging through the Head–Heart–Hands–Holy divisions into a vast expanse of interconnections making up my *self* and the universe. More research is required into the realms of narrative and metacognition, particularly in the field of education, as we learn the value of such tools in increasing one's sense of self–awareness and understanding along the path of ever–expanding care, compassion, and love. As the academic re–search leads the way in articulating language and giving voice to what has been silenced, we will find ourselves "in the final analysis, that the sense of *self*, my–*self*, and the universe become one" (Craig, 1994, p. 54).

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