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As well as:
A Personal Perspective
Promising Practices
Multicultural Book and Film Reviews
and Announcements and News

Beyond Guilt: How To Deal with Societal Racism

by Lauren N. Nile & Jack C. Straton

Program Ownership and the "Transformative Agenda" in Colleges of Education

by Suzanne MacDonald, Susan Colville-Hall, & Lynn Smolen

Creating Artwork in Response to Issues of Social Justice

by Jana Noel

and Three Other Articles

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Cover Photograph — Photograph of artwork created by multicultural education students studying with Jana Noel at California State University, Sacramento (see article on pages 15-18)

Transcendent Education

A Spirit of Community

By Jeff Sapp

Introduction

The focus of the study described in this article is transcendent education. Transcendent education is defined as an educational experience that goes beyond traditional parameters of interaction and results in turning-point experiences for participants—"Having had this experience, the person is never again quite the same" (Denzin, 1989, p. 15).

Purpose of the Study

Research depicting the lived experiences of groups of people engaged in this phenomenon is limited. The purpose of this study is to attempt to illuminate the phenomenon of transcendent education, "to help the phenomenon to reveal itself more completely than it does in ordinary experiences" (Keene, 1975, p. 44), "to see something hidden that may not yet be accessible" (Polanyi, 1969, p. 40). The intent is to identify examples of such relationships, thereby demonstrating their existence and showing that they are positive

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encounters for those involved. It is the purpose of this research to familiarize the reader with the dynamics of transcendent education as it is lived by those who have experienced it. "It depicts, interprets, analyzes and reflects upon the meaning therein, meanings that may be felt and known but have not been heretofore revealed" (O'Hara, 1992, p. 4).

Research Question

The research question is designed to allow for the illumination of broad and diverse experiences of teachers and learners, and to provide a clearer vision for those who may wish to pursue those experiences. The research question is worded: What is the nature of transcendent education? Subquestions include:

1. What are qualities that lead people into transcendent education? How do risk and vulnerability precipitate transcendent education? What part does communication play in building transcendent education? Does the restriction or distortion of communication affect transcendent education?
2. What are the qualities that prohibit the building of transcendent education? Are power and control a part of transcendent

education? How does the need to fix or heal another block the emergence of transcendent education?

Methodology

Because of my personal experience with transcendent education, I have chosen the heuristic research paradigm. Moustakas (1990) states that in "heuristic research the investigator must have had a direct, personal encounter with the phenomenon being investigated" (p. 14). In a very real way, all research is autobiographical. The researcher must have experienced the phenomenon being studied in its entirety.

My primary task as the researcher is to recognize whatever exists in the consciousness of myself and the participants as a fundamental awareness, to receive and accept it, and then to dwell on its possible nature and possible meanings (p. 11). The intent is to extend the knowledge and understanding of a certain phenomenon. The search is for qualities, conditions, and relationships that underlie a fundamental question, issue, or concern (p. 11).

In heuristic research there is an unshakable connection between what is out there and what is within the investigator in reflective thought, feeling, and aware-

ness (Moustakas, 1990, p. 12). The truth is that what is "out there" and what is "within" the researcher cannot be separated. The heuristic process challenges the researcher to rely on their own resources, and to gather within themselves the full scope of their observations, thoughts, feelings, senses, and intuitions (p. 13). The initial "data" is within the researcher. The challenge is to discover it.

The method of data collection in heuristic investigations is through extended interviews that often take the form of dialogues with oneself and one's research participants (Moustakas, 1990, p. 46). The interview will rely on a spontaneous generation of questions and conversations in which the co-researcher participates in a natural, unfolding dialogue with the primary investigator (Patton, 1980, p. 197-198). This is most consistent with the rhythm and flow of heuristic exploration.

In this study, the data includes primarily interview transcripts, but also includes narrative descriptions, stories, metaphors, analogies, poetry, correspondence and personal documents. All interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed. Notes were taken by the primary-researcher immediately following the interview.

The primary researcher was further interested in using the aesthetic as part of data collection. The essence of the aesthetic is that it cannot be capsulized or captured (Harris, 1987, p. 121). Dewey (1934) believed that an aesthetic quality must be felt in all experience:

Not only is this quality a significant motive in undertaking intellectual inquiry and in keeping it honest, but...no intellectual activity is an integral event (is an experience) unless it is rounded out with this quality. Without it, thinking is inconclusive. In short, esthetic cannot be sharply marked off from intellectual experience, since the latter must bear an esthetic stamp itself to be complete. (p. 38)

As teachers we are all artists. We create forms that enable students to see and to live at deeper and more profound levels (Harris, 1987, p. 144). Advocating the inclusion of the aesthetic is advocating a special kind of healing needed in education, the healing of the split between the disciplines (Harris, 1987, p. 146-147). Dewey (1934) noted decades ago that separating art, science; and other ways of knowing was a great error. "Only the psychology that has separated things which in reality belong together holds that scientists and philoso-

phers think while poets and painters follow their feelings" (Dewey, 1934, p. 73).

Eliot Eisner (1979) identified four ways in which teaching is an art: (1) it can be performed with such grace and skill that it can be regarded as aesthetic; (2) it, like performance in music or painting, "involves the making of judgements based on the perception of qualities that unfold in the course of action"; (3) it is carried out best without rigid prescriptions because it must respond to what is unpredictable; and (4) it involves the creation of ends in the process rather than prior to it through minute prespecification (Eisner, 1979, pp. 153-155).

Qualitative research often uses literary sources (poetry, stories, novels, plays, etc.) as case material and as textual material for writing (Van Manen, 1990, p. 74). Non-discursive artistic material is also used for data. Each artistic medium has its own language of expression. Objects of art are visual, tactile, auditory, kinetic texts. "Because artists are involved in giving shape to their lived experience, the products of art are, in a sense, lived experiences transformed into transcended configurations" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 74).

Mollenhauer, (1983, 1986) used the portrayal of the interaction between children and adults in historical paintings and medieval woodcuts to yield insights into the emotional and pedagogic quality of the relation between parents and their children. Other examples of the use of fine arts in qualitative studies are found in Heidegger's use of Van Gogh's painting of *Shoes of the Peasant* in his reflections on truth (Heidegger, 1977, pp. 144-187) and in Merleau-Ponty's studies of language (Merleau-Ponty, 1964b, pp. 39-83). A component of data collection in this study will be to choose an artistic form and use it to describe aspects of transcendent education. The primary researcher and the co-researchers will produce aesthetic pieces as part of the data collection.

Participants

The participants in this study span three decades of experience with transcendent education. The study will bring together six focus groups. Focus groups "bring together several participants to discuss a topic of mutual interest to themselves and the researcher" (Morgan & Spanish, 1984, p. 253). Specifically, the focus groups here are phenomenological groups "because they give the researcher access to the participants' common sense conceptions and everyday explanations (Calder, 1977, p. 64). Phenomenological approaches emphasize the individual participants' voices because,

as Carter (1993) states, "these stories capture...the richness and the complexity of our understandings of what teaching is and how others can be prepared to engage in this profession" (p. 5).

There are six focus groups. The first four focus groups include those who have had personal experience with the primary researcher: (1) a non-formal and non-traditional educational group from a after-school community program, (2) junior high school students, (3) high school students and their parents, and (4) university student-teachers. To make the research more reliable, a teacher and his students were chosen who had no previous contact with the primary researcher and this became focus group five.

Participants were gathered and chosen on the basis of having experienced transcendent education as defined by this study. The sixth focus group was a mix of all the aforementioned focus groups. This will contribute to the revelation of transcendent education because participants will "be encouraged to continue reflecting on their learning experiences and...try discovering relationships that they might otherwise not see" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 73).

Research Findings

Let us look at the wisdoms in this study. In other terminology these could be called findings, results, learnings, conclusions, or meanings. I prefer the notion of *wisdoms* because of the richness of the word and its multilayered meanings. Harris (1987, pp. 152-153) explains:

To begin with, wisdom does mean learning, as well as the understanding of what is true, right, or lasting. But, playing with wisdom a bit, one discovers the Middle English "wisdom" and then the Old English root "weid." And "weid" is "to see"; as the Germanic "witan" is "to look after" and "guard" (cherish?), and the Old German "wissago" is "a seer" or "prophet"; as the Greek "weid-os" is a "form" or "shape," an "idyll"; as the Old Irish "white" is "clearly visible."

The question remains then, what is it that we see? What takes form, takes shape? What is seen, imagined? What becomes clearly visible?

One thing is obvious to me, that an educational system based on a "banking" model is set up for failure because it excludes the most important component of a classroom: relationship. Freire (1990) introduced the highly influential notion of banking education that highlighted the contrast between education forms that

treat people as objects rather than subjects. In an education system based on relationships, those whom "banking" education would now label and treat would instead be incorporated into the learning community where their contributions would be part of a network of relationships (McKnight, 1987, p. 89).

It is through and by means of education that individuals can be provoked to reach beyond themselves. "It is through and by means of education that people may become empowered to think about what they are doing to become mindful, to share meanings, to conceptualize, to make varied sense of their lived worlds" (Greene, 1988, p. 12). Sadly though, "banking" education dominates our society today with watchwords like "effectiveness," "proficiency," "efficiency," and an ill-defined, one dimensional "excellence."

In a recent article in *The Nation* (January 29, 2001, p. 16) Stephen Metcalf wrote about this "banking" education in regards to President Bush's choice of Rod Paige to head his Education Department. Paige was Houston's School Superintendent. His emphasis on TAAS (the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills—the state-designed standardized test administered annually to public school children in third through eighth grades) led to forcing "teachers to teach test-preparation materials in lieu of a full subject curriculum. In other words, instead of receiving an education, students are drilled on how to pass a single multiple-choice exam" (p. 16). Sadly, this has become the norm in our standardized, test-crazed nation.

The wisdoms of this study are offered as a paradigm. Following an aesthetic flow, I would like to use the metaphor of dance to allow these wisdoms to reveal themselves. I am not a dancer—except in the sense that I am a dancer of life, as are we all. Years ago I heard a striking metaphor for teaching that was based on choreography. I do not know where or when I heard it, but it has been the dominant metaphor that I have used in my own teaching. Simply stated it goes something like this: As teachers we are choreographers in the classroom, choreographing the flow of learning that occurs.

I'm not the first to experience the power of a teaching metaphor. Barnes and Goodhue-McWilliams (1992) write that metaphors carry three fundamental impacts. "First, metaphors have a compactness about them; they pack lots of information and meaning into a small space or package. Second, metaphors exhibit an inexpressability, the ability to communicate those things which are usually not transmitted orally or written, getting be-

low the surface, hitting at a different level of language. Last, metaphors are particularly vivid and powerful, arousing emotions and things in us which are not often experienced" (pp. 3-4).

Our Dance has five movements, or steps: (1) Embracing, (2) Awakening, (3) Focusing, (4) Releasing, and (5) Yielding. Dancing is a means of communicating, of reaching people, of sharing with them all that is valuable in your life, of speaking of things you would not otherwise have an opportunity to say (de Mille, 1960, p. 41). How like teaching that dancing sounds! A means of communicating, of sharing. Agnes de Mille (1960) states:

Real talent manifests itself in a lovely response to music, in the coordination of head, arms, and body, in invention, in a hell-bent, frenetic, single-tracked, enduring determination to dance, not in order to show off before Mother's friends, but to find complete release and happiness." (de Mille, 1960, p. 11)

With few changes this could be brought to teaching: Real talent manifests itself in a lovely response to people, in the coordination of relationship, environment, content, in invention, in a hell-bent, frenetic, single-tracked, enduring determination to teach, not in order to show off, but to find complete release and happiness.

The choreography of dance applies to teaching also. "Most choreographers have learned their craft by working and watching in the ranks or by experimenting alone without help or supervision" (de Mille, 1960, p. 117). Teaching, like choreography, is best learned through experience. Read Blom's definition of "the impromptu choreographer" and look for parallels to teaching:

When you find yourself choreographing as you drive on a freeway, walk down a crowded city street, ride in a bus—know you are not alone. At any unpredictable moment, a choreographic idea strikes; you find yourself marking it with your arm, stepping the pattern with your feet, drawing the design in the air. This moving-to-one-self is one of the earmarks of a choreographer, a side effect of the trade, an occupational hazard." (Blom, 1982, p. 203)

Do you not think that Blom's "tao of the choreographic process" (Blom, 1982, p. 204) could also be the "tao of teaching"?

pare down	build up
eliminate	add pertinencies
irrelevancies	
simplify	elaborate

focus in	expand out
with an eye	with an eye
to detail	to the whole

Dancing is a way of discovering how to use our bodies to express our feelings by creating patterns of movements (Lidell, 1987, p. 86). Teaching is a way of discovering how to use our gifts to express relationships by creating patterns of connectedness. Dancers should follow the dictates of their musical rhythms and allow the music to flow through them with ease (Lidell, 1987, p. 86). Teachers should follow the dictates of their own personal ways of knowing and allow their teaching to flow through them with ease.

When I think of a choreographer, I think of a person who plans each minute movement with precision, care, and flow. The best dancers are those that use their gifts of intellect and experience, passion and emotion to breath life into the dance. This is the way that teaching can occur also. Thus, the wisdoms presented here are simply The Dance Steps. They are not to be used like the steps of a staircase, progressing upwards. "Rather, they are like steps...where movement is both backward and forward, around and through, and where turns, returns, rhythm, and movement are essential" (Harris, 1987, p. 25). This is not the way to dance (teach), but a way to dance (teach). This is not a prescription. These are only steps. "All generalizations are, of course, broad and can with the growth of technique be varied. As an artist, you will find an endless variety of combinations" (de Mille, 1960, p. 30). The same Dance can be different for different people. Each teacher's interpretation of these steps will necessarily be idiosyncratic. Nevertheless, these general steps may help guide us in The Dance.

Educational Postures and Movements

In this article I want to present some educational postures and movements for you to consider, so that your teaching might begin to experience a new freedom of expression. The construction of theme portraits was a phase of the analysis of the data in this research study. The theme portraits include verbatim material taken from focus group interviews, aesthetic data collection, written communication, and historical documents. These are the themes as described by the participants of this study. The theme portraits provide an overview of the qualities that seem to be most pregnant with the possibility of birthing transcendent education. It is a description, in the language of the participants, of

how they experienced the phenomena. The theme portraits seek to answer the overarching question of "What is the nature of transcendent education?" The themes become the steps of The Dance.

The steps of The Dance, or wisdoms, look like this:

	YIELDING Transcendence	
		EMBRACING Acceptance Connection Comfort
RELEASING Courage Strength Perseverance		AWAKENING Responsibility Loving Sacrifice Hope
	FORMING Growth & Learning Self-Esteem	

Embracing

We begin with the step of Embracing. Embracing means to "cherish" and "love." Embracing means "the opportunity to study further" and "to take in or include as a part, item, or element of a more inclusive whole." The initial criterion for any teacher is the criterion of Embracing. Embracing is an attitude, a way of being toward the Other. Embracing means to be still, to be silent, to be quiet and give ourselves room to see what lies before us in the teaching activity, what and whom will become our Dance partners. As teachers, we are to be mindful.

Get to the rehearsal hall at least an hour before your group. Make yourself at home in the room, at home in your thoughts." (de Mille, 1960, p. 133)

Embracing begins before we arrive in the classroom. Mary Tully, (Harris, 1987, pp. 159-160) speaks of the moments of previsualization of the teaching situation. It is an act of readiness. If the teacher believes that teaching is merely the handing over of facts, ideas, and concepts to be memorized, then teaching is certain to fail (Harris, 1987, pp. 35-36). We are to embrace ourselves, our students, our environment, and our subject matter. These Embracings encompass themes of acceptance, connection, and comfort.

We must Embrace ourselves. We must trust and love ourselves. Trust our gifts, abilities, ways of knowing, and talents. It is an old adage that holds true: before we

can love others, we must love ourselves. hooks (1994) speaks of how Thich Nhat Hanh, the Buddhist monk, informed her pedagogy. He called for healers, teachers, therapists, and those in the helping professions to first heal themselves. He said, "if the helper is unhappy, he or she cannot help many people" (hooks, 1994, p. 15). We can practice the step of Embracing ourselves through reflection. Possible questions we might ask ourselves are: Where am I, as a teacher, called to Embrace in the class I am teaching today? Where does what I am planning to teach today allow co-learners to be more human? In what ways does my Embracing help them Embrace? Then, after reflecting briefly on each co-learner, ask: To what in them might I Embrace specifically (Harris, 1987, pp. 160-161)?

I am always struck by students' disgust in their teachers not knowing their names. Embracing our students is demonstrated in our naming them. A teacher is responsible for knowing the names of every student they work with. This Embracing allows the class members to be addressed as the persons they are, specifically, and not as generic or interchangeable "students" (Harris, 1987, pp. 162-163). Relationships can be infused into a classroom by recognizing the whole depth of each member. This first step towards transcendent education lies in the acceptance of the fact that we are not, nor can we ever be, all the same (Peck, 1987, p. 170). The naming of students creates the possibility of the student's willingness to enter into The Dance with the teacher.

Where The Dance happens is obviously important. We need to embrace the environment in which we teach. Embracing seems more a part of dancing than teaching allows it to be. Jean Erdman (1960), in an article in *Dance Magazine*, describes Mary Wigman's contribution of "space" to the field of dancing:

With Wigman space achieved a personal or emotional character. It was no longer the emptiness separating one dancer from another. It took on a positive quality and became an invisible counter-player against which the dancer was to control.

Learning to choreograph—or teach—necessitates becoming involved with the Other. This calls for a heightened sensitivity of yourself, your partner, your environment, and your relationship as you co-create. The learning environment can be considered an active participant. I often teach with all of us in a sacred circle. I feel dissonance when one of my students won't

physically enter our circle but remain a row back and, thus, apart from us. They are making a statement to me that they do not feel apart of the group. Drawing from Buber's *I-Thou*, I believe that the physical environment is not the I-It that we believe it to be; the environment is an I-Thou. In her book, *Calling the Circle*, Christina Baldwin (1994) speaks to the importance of gathering in a circle. She states that "Among indigenous peoples—from the Arctic circle to the Australian outback—the common element of life is a daily relationship to sacred center. What is missing for most of us in the modern world is an understanding of how to live as an act of worship" (p. 12). Thus, where and how people sit in a classroom is important.

Last of all in this step of Embracing, we must Embrace the subject matter. Robert Samples (1976) tells us how:

During and after World War II, U.S. air force officials were astounded at the incredible ease with which Eskimos became skilled maintenance workers of sophisticated aircraft. As their acuity was examined, it became obvious that the Eskimos thought of the aircraft as being alive. They acknowledged circulatory systems, nervous systems, and all the rest. They approached their work in a mystical reverie about the object to which they ministered their "healing." (Samples, 1976, p. 91)

The greatest way we can Embrace our subject matter is to find out all we can about it. I am always shocked to hear a teacher claim that they hate to read and write. They are telling me they hate to learn. How can such a person inspire a love of learning in someone else? It is our responsibility to study, to research, to converse with the material. I had a student this past semester (Liberal Studies 301, Fall 2001 semester) that used what, at first, I thought an inappropriate word as we were discussing language. She stated that we needed to "fondle words." The more I thought about it, the more powerful it became. Had I ever "fondled words" in as intimate a way as two lovers might caress each other? It is only after we know our subject matter intimately that we are ready to bring the material to co-learners and ask them to embrace it also. Buber (1947) states that the one who selects, prepares, and presents the material must do it "from the other side, from over there, from the surface of that other spirit which is being acted upon—not of some conceptual, contrived spirit, but all the time wholly concrete spirit of this individual and unique being who is living and confronting the

educator, and who stands together with the [teacher] in the common situation of educating and being educated" (Buber, 1947, p. 100).

The personal truths we Embrace should not lead us toward individualism but toward a community of relationship, dialogue, and mutual transformation (Palmer, 1983, p. 57). In his more recent work, Palmer (1998) simply states that "we teach who we are" (p. 2). He further states that "To educate is to guide students on an inner journey toward more truthful ways of seeing and being in the world. How can schools perform their mission without encouraging the guides to scout out that inner terrain?" Another reason for these steps of The Dance to be called "Wisdoms" is evidenced in the fact that the learners I spoke with were so "wise" in their seeing the importance of the themes of comfort, acceptance, and connection—of Embracing. They are all important steps in The Dance. It is not always possible to explain this, but perhaps this poem by James Worley (1979, p. 33) describes it better than I can.

Mark Van Doren (1946)

You know, he didn't teach me any thing;
The Chaucer, Edmund Spencer, Dante—wait!
I'm often etched by what he said of trimmers
(or by what he said that Dante said of them)
that they weren't wanted, even down in hell -
but otherwise (and that's the wise he was)
he taught me not a thing that I've remembered.

Why, then, is he the uppermost in mind
when I am asked—most often by myself -
"Who was the finest teacher you have known?"

The style, the style's the trick that keeps him kept—
no, not a trick: it must unfold as grace,
inevitably, necessarily,
as tomcats stretch, as sparrows scrounge for lice,
in such a way he lolled upon his desk
and fell in love before our very eyes
again, again—how many time again! -
with Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton's Satan,
as if his shameless, glad, compelling love
were all he really wanted us to learn;
no, that's not right; we were occasionals
who lucked or stumbled or were pushed on him—
he fell in love because he fell in love;
we were but windfall parties to those falls.

Awakening

Another step in The Dance is Awakening. Awakening means "to cease sleeping," "to become active again," and "to become conscious or aware of something." Helen Keller describes the moment of Awakening, that point in the process of teaching where something is born or re-born.

She brought me my hat and I knew
I was going out into the warm sun-
shine. This thought, if a wordless
sensation can be called a thought,

made me hop and skip with pleasure. We walked down the path to the well house, attracted by the fragrance of the honey-suckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word "water," first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly, I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten—a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that w-a-t-e-r meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away. (Keller, 1936, pp.23-24)

In this step the learners I spoke with believed themes of responsibility, loving sacrifice, and hope could be Awakened anew. For the teacher, Awakening must begin through involvement with relationships—whether they be people, subject, or environment—at their deepest and most profound levels: we must love responsibly and passionately all that encompasses the learning process.

What happens in the step of Awakening may be entirely different than what was expected. John Dewey stated that "perhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies is that people learn the thing they are studying at the time they are studying it." You can go through all of the steps time and time again, but, finally, there will come a time away from the dance-lessons that the steps will Awaken in you. And you will dance. The moment of Awakening needs to occur in its own time. It will not occur on a schedule constricted by semester or term, by examination or a pressure (Harris, 1987, pp. 37-38). The following excerpt from *Zorba the Greek* illustrates this:

I remember one morning when I discovered a cocoon in the bark of a tree, just as the butterfly was making a hole in its case and preparing to come out. I waited a while, but it was too long appearing and I was impatient. I bent over it and breathed on it to warm it. I warmed it as quickly as I could and the miracle began to happen before my eyes, faster than life. The case opened, the butterfly started slowly crawling out and I shall never forget my horror when I

saw how its wings were folded back and crumpled; the wretched butterfly tried with its whole trembling body to unfold them. Bending over it, I tried to help it with my breath. In vain. It needed to be hatched out patiently and the unfolding of the wings should be a gradual process in the sun. Now it was too late. My breath had forced the butterfly to appear, all crumpled, before its time. It struggled desperately and a few seconds later, died in the palm of my hand. That little body is, I do believe, the greatest weight I have on my conscience. For I realize today that it is a mortal sin to violate the great laws of nature. We should not hurry, we should not be impatient, but we should confidently obey the eternal rhythm. (Kazantzakis, 1952, pp. 120-121)

It is evident from this passage that to hurry is to violate the laws of nature and the laws of teaching.

We have many rhythmic patterns. Although all of them are rooted in the body, some are carried out by the automatic nervous system (such as breathing and heartbeat) while others are learned by repetition (rowing a boat or jogging). Natural rhythms are an integral part of art. They affect the Dancer and the audience in many obvious and subtle ways (Blom, 1982, pp. 67-68).

Physics has helped teachers understand some of the phenomena of rhythm. We know that all matter is constantly moving. The universe itself has a rhythm—the planet has a daily rhythmic rotation, a yearly rhythmic revolution around the sun. The tides are rhythmic, the seasons are rhythmic. "We are surrounded and held and nurtured by rhythm" (Harris, 1987, pp. 163-164). Rhythm is rich in the field of education. In 1929 Alfred North Whitehead wrote *The Aims of Education* and described the rhythm of education as having three steps: romance, precision, and generalization. Again, consider your "romance" with education and your desire to "fondle" ideas. The rhythms of education must be respected or the process will be a wretched butterfly with crumpled wings. You do not have to cover the whole book. You do not have to do it all in the sixth-grade. You do not have to have the final word as the all-wise, all-knowing giver of truth and wisdom. Awakening "happens silently, and one does violence to keep pulling up the plant to see if the roots are growing" (Harris, 1987, p. 38).

If there is an ideal image for me of responsibility, loving sacrifice, and hope, it is in John Steinbeck's (1939) *The Grapes*

of *Wrath*, when Tom Joad, fugitive and "outlaw," decides to enter into a larger community to escape being driven by those who are "drivin' all our people."

Wherever they's a fight so hungry people can eat, I'll be there. Wherever there's a cop beatin' up a guy, I'll be there...I'll be there in the way guys yell when they're mad an'—I'll be in the way kids laugh when they're hungry an' they know supper's ready. An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build—why, I'll be there. (Steinbeck, 1939, p. 573)

Social Justice

Teaching for Social Justice is at the core of democratic education. In March of 2001 the news was filled with the stories surrounding Charles "Andy" Williams and his shooting that rocked Santana High School in San Diego, California. Andy was bullied relentlessly. Where were the teachers during this bullying? In their book, *Teaching for Social Justice*, Ayers, Hunt, and Quinn (1998) state that teaching for Social Justice "serves as a reminder not only of the inequities and biases that continue to wear away at the foundation of democratic values, but of the powerful stories which inspire us to work toward change, to make the world a better place" (p. xiii).

In this Dance of transcendent education, responsibility requires many talents. Our Dance is a call to action. We cannot change the old rules by maintaining the status-quo (Peck, 1987, p. 330). I speak here of revolutionary tactics

Forming

Forming is yet another step in our Dance. All things come about via one of a series of forms or forming devices; cycles, progressions, stages of development (Blom, 1982, pp. 83-86). Steps of self-esteem, growth and learning may form within a relational classroom. The beauty of the Forming, as any good choreographer knows, is that there are an infinite number of possible realizations. What Formed growth in one co-learner may not in another. Robert Graves (1975, p. 80) writes:

He is quick, thinking in clear images;
I am slow, thinking in broken images.

He becomes dull, trusting to his clear images;
I become sharp, mistrusting my broken images.

Trusting his images, he assumes their relevance;
Mistrusting my images, I question their relevance.

Assuming their relevance, he assumes the fact;
Questioning their relevance, I question the fact.

When the fact fails him, he questions his senses;
When the fact fails me, I approve my senses.

He continues quick and dull in his clear images;
I continue slow and sharp in my broken images.

He in a new confusion of his understanding;
I in a new understanding of my confusion.

The Dance is beautiful, intricate. Each Dance is individualized. Every Dance must have form—it can be abstract or formal, dramatic or storytelling (de Mille, 1960, p. 127). It can often be all of these at once.

We should be forever Forming, forever growing and learning. This forming, though, can follow the organic and natural rhythm within a community of relationship. A setting—education—that wishes to help others learn and grow has to learn and grow itself (Sarason, 1972, p. 138). I see this as a major concern of education...we "eat our own." In his article, *Education for Sustainability: The University as a Model of Sustainability*, Cortese (2001) states that it "is difficult to imagine the individual and social changes needed for creating a sustainable future occurring without the higher education community committing to modeling sustainability" (p. 5). We must remember that being takes precedence over seeming (Dewey).

Releasing

Another Dance step is Releasing. Releasing means "to set free from restraint, confinement, or servitude." The choreographers of this Dance believe that transcendent education releases themes of courage, strength, and perseverance. This freeing and healing step of Releasing requires that we stay with things, confront ourselves with patience, and bear the pain that comes from the world (Parker, 1983, p. 124).

When we Release, we find that we have the gift of grace, a gift that comes whenever we are able to face ourselves honestly; the gift of acceptance, of compassion, for who we are, as we are (Palmer, 1983, p. 124). When we Release our self-delusions and allow ourselves to be transformed by courage and strength, we create a space for others to be strong and courageous. The important thing is not finding the answers as much as it is continuing to ask the questions, and then having enough perseverance and strength to change direction and continue when a need for change is warranted (Wigginton, 1986, p. 307). Rainer said it best when he said, "Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves" (Rilke, 1934).

There is a second type of Releasing. We have a saying in my spiritual life that

exemplifies the step of releasing. Simply stated it says, "We are all One." It is close to the Zen art of archery: In Zen the archer and the arrow are one. Here the dancer and The Dance are one. There is a point in the activity of teaching where we must say, "I can do no more," and where the only right thing to do is to let go (Harris, 1987, pp. 38-39). This is also a moment of Releasing. It is in this moment of release that courage and strength are born. We have the power within us to continue and persevere.

Yielding

Another step in our Dance is Yielding. Yielding means "to give or render as fitting, rightfully owed, or required," "to give up (as one's breath) and so die," or "to bear or bring forth as a natural product." The imagery is of a plant having to die to produce seeds for further growth. On the level of Yielding we have yet to take seriously what Dewey knew so well: it is nonsense to think and act as if helper and helped, teacher and pupil, are different kinds of people and that the one can change or help the other in desired ways without experiencing change in themselves. The participant-choreographers believe that the moment of transcendence comes in our Yielding.

There is a second qualifier of Yielding I would like to draw on in this study. It is contained in the word "numinous." The numinous refers to the experience we know when we find ourselves in the presence of "divinity." What we may call the divinity differs throughout the world and within particular communions; but the awareness is universal and often characterized as being in the presence of holiness, awe, and wonder (Harris, 1987, pp. 14-15). We find ourselves, often without warning, in the presence of a "Thou" (Robinson, 1983). Something or someone cloaks us in its presence, and no amount of reasoning can dissuade us that it has occurred. This numinous is the "going beyond" of transcendent education, the "more than." We can experience it during a jog in the park, at dinner with friends, while at a movie, gazing at a child, or typing a letter. For most of us, it is fleeting:

...only the unattended
Moment, the moment in and out of time,
The distraction fit, lost in a flash of sunlight
The wild thyme unseen, or the winter lightning
Or the waterfall, or music heard so deeply
That it is not heard at all, but you are the music
While the music lasts

—T. S. Eliot, *The Dry Salvages*

Nevertheless, the numinous has the quality of permanence; once it is known it

cannot be unknown. This is the essence of Yielding and transcending. In *The Courage to Teach*, Palmer (1998) defines "spiritual" as "the diverse ways we answer the heart's longing to be connected with the largeness of life—a longing that animates love and work, especially the work called teaching" (p. 5).

Five Steps

These five steps to The Dance—Embracing, Awakening, Forming, Releasing, and Yielding—are among steps that teachers might look to as they respond to the invitation to co-create the relationships of community. The themes of this study are the practical disciplines that can open us as teachers to receive these steps and dance The Dance.

These aesthetic virtues explored here are virtues of knowing and teaching. Indeed, they are spiritual virtues. Spiritual virtues may seem alien to professors today, but the original and authentic meaning of the word "professor" is "one who professes a faith" (Palmer, 1983, p. 113). The true professor isn't one that controls facts and ideas, but is one who affirms transcendent centers of truths, centers that lie beyond our contriving and bring us into community with each other and the world.

Human beings have long been referred to as social animals, but we are not yet community creatures. We are impelled to relate with each other for our survival. We do not relate yet with the acceptance, connection, comfort, courage, growth, learning, hope, loving sacrifice, perseverance, responsibility, and strength of genuine community. It should be our central task to transform ourselves from social animals to community creatures (Peck, 1987, p. 165). Spaces will have to be opened in schools and around schools so that the windows can let in fresh air.

It seems evident that all of this holds relevance for a paradigm, a conception of education—if education is conceived as a process of Embracing, of Forming, of Releasing, of Yielding, of Awakening people to take action to create themselves (Greene, 1988, p. 22). In this Dance we can be made whole; self and world can be permeated with transcendent possibility, the possibility of love (Palmer, 1983, pp. 14-15). We come to know the world not simply as an object, but as an organic body of personal relationships and responses, a living and awakening community of compassion. It is an education that, in the words of Martin Buber, is no longer only "It" but thoroughly and profoundly "Thou." We are to live in the bonds of Thouness.

"I can't believe that," said Alice. "Can't you?" the Queen said in a pitying tone.

"Try again: draw a long breath, and shut your eyes."

Alice laughed. "There's no use trying," she said. "One can't believe impossible things."

"I daresay you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

—Lewis Carroll,

Through the Looking Glass

I believe that transcendent education is waiting to be summoned up by teachers who will Embrace, Awaken, Form, Release, and Yield. I do not know what The Dance will look like, but the power of imagination in me thrills to visualize it.

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