

**The teaching of healing and the healing of teaching:  
Transformation, wholeness and integrality in the  
classroom and counselling room**

**Submitted by**

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## Summary

This study investigates experiences of transformation that lead to an ever deepening sense of wholeness. It does so chiefly in relation to the tertiary education of counsellors and is thus concerned with both educational and therapeutic processes. Jean Gebser's cultural theory of consciousness evolution, and particularly his concept of integrality, an emerging structure of consciousness that is time-, space- and ego- free, is used as a primary framework.

A predominantly organic methodology is employed in developing both a conceptual and personal understanding of integrality. The six elements of empathy, love, desire, time, space and participation are considered as both gateways to and ways of facilitating the kinds of experiences and insights that might be considered integral. The nature of deep knowing through being is investigated as that most suited to an integral form of consciousness. Likewise the nature of deep change is also examined and found to involve the complementary movements of transcendence and immanence, movements inclusive of both the earth and the cosmos.

Both anthropocentrism and cognicentrism are challenged as is the colonialism that emerges from the two. An integral methodology of direct knowing and undivided knowledge brings about the kind of self that may encounter experiences of transformation and wholeness that include more than just itself or its own species. Gebser viewed such transpersonal occasions as pertaining to an intensified mode of consciousness that is more holistic, multi-perspectival and integrative than that of the modern, dualistic, rational way of being.

This study suggests that through integrating the many and varied aspects of self and world, that integral consciousness is not only time-, space- and ego-free but also intrinsically pan-experiential, non-dual, relational and processual. As such, its dawning demands nothing less than the deconstruction and reconstruction of identity and it is this process that is considered in the light of the fields of teaching and healing.

## **Statement of Authorship**

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

Signed:

Viviane Golan

Dated: 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2013

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This land which holds me in loving embrace all the time and asks for nothing in return.

## Preface

This study emerges from a worldview that allows for and is receptive to transrational and transpersonal offerings and a perspective that conveys to me a non-dualistic and panexperiential cosmos. It was not intended to be a conventionally academic investigation. My work in the fields of counselling and teaching inform me that often the most significant moments occur in ways that cannot be intellectually formulated but that arise organically through the employment of a more holistic version of self, a self that might include many and varied ways of seeing, hearing and knowing. Gebser's model (1985) distinguishes five forms of consciousness, each with its own way of experiencing and orienting to the world, which is why it was chosen as the primary theoretical framework to guide this inquiry.

This thesis is the product of a phenomenological and autoethnographic process that had been gestating for a very long time but was born in the months after experiencing an extreme natural disaster which came to be known as Black Saturday, a firestorm that spread across 450 000 hectares of the state of Victoria, killing 173 people and countless flora, fauna and farm animals. My experiences at that time rendered an exclusively rational approach useless in the face of attempting integration and recovery. What emerged were processes from deeply subjective terrain that required a different kind of research and writing than I had previously been employing. This thesis attempts to stay true to that terrain which for me holds greater value, both personally and professionally, than more solely mainstream alternatives. In doing so, it has broken with some academic traditions.

The literature review is threaded throughout the work as seemed most relevant to what was being explored, rather than being contained within a specific chapter. Various texts have been employed to highlight rather than explain events. Theories have been considered in relation to their use in supporting alternative forms of understanding. My concern is not with the analysis, proving or refuting of various theoretical models, but with the deepening of knowing, which is often more effectively fertilised by validation in many forms than by cognitivism alone.

The data, in the form of my experiences, and their investigation, occur together. To separate phenomena and reflection into different chapters would have compromised the methodology through compartmentalising a process that, for me, is ongoing, cyclical and a significant part of my identity. These experiences are also spread throughout the thesis, namely as they arose and thus informed further research and writing.

I have let each chapter speak for itself, organically growing from the previous ones. I was usually not able to plan or predict where the next chapter would bud from or how it would fruit. If the route at times seems unpredictable for the reader, so it was for the writer and as it is for this teacher and counsellor. Of primary worth to me is to let the process voice itself and run its own course.

I have wanted this work to somehow mirror my work with students and clients. I find that after an initial phase where client and counsellor or teacher and students settle into the environment, assisted by the necessary conversation and stillness that eases all participants into relationship with each other, either for the first time or once again, the event seems to change tack to a more intuitive and less personalised mode. I have found that if I expect or demand such a consciousness shift to happen or even if I attempt to prepare or introduce those that I work with to the process before it emerges of its own accord, it does not work as well. Whilst not in such terrain myself, I can only talk about it, not from it. Clients and students can also hear it only from a more cognitive place that does not adequately reflect it. Hence the introductory chapters are as thorough as possible while still being hesitant in how they rationally engage both writer and reader. Further conceptual frameworks are considered in the latter chapters in order to extend rather than precede some of the more experiential components of the thesis. As much as possible, the form this thesis has taken has attempted to parallel my experiences in the classroom and counselling room.

Phenomenology involves a rich exploration, depiction and understanding of the underlying essence of experience. Understanding, as this study attests to, arises in many forms.

Autoethnography reflects on one's own experiences and connects them to a wider cultural perspective. Gebser's approach too, reflected on individual events and artefacts throughout history, connecting them to a broader cultural movement of consciousness. He considered a multiplicity of approaches and fields to develop his understanding. This thesis also uses



varied approaches and forms of insight. It has done so to redress an imbalance long suffered in both the heart of this writer and our modern educational and therapeutic settings. Its hope is the healing of teaching and the teaching of healing in ways that respect and integrate a multiplicity of selves and ways of knowing.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

*No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge. (Gibran, 1994, p. 67)*

This research began as an exploration of some of the skills and practices that might support a more integral approach in both classrooms and counselling rooms but, as one would expect, has become an examination of my own process toward a more integral way of being, both in and out of these workplaces. I work, live and breathe, wholly impacted by that which I identify with in each moment. Identity, a fluid, multidimensional and invisible factor, paramount to every moment of my life and every experience of the world in which I limp, walk and dance, has become the focus of this research. The process of identity formation and transformation is endless and therefore my conclusion is anything but final. This study speaks to an integral way of being that begins in the learning and healing settings where I work and extends itself to a reflection of transpersonal and postmodern perspectives before considering the nature of knowing and of change most appropriate to a form of reality that demands a different kind of significance, and therefore the subsequent courage to transform both oneself and one's world view.

As the writer, it was my experience that each area of investigation emerged for me to follow and grapple with as best I could. It seemed that as each theme became sufficiently resonant within me that the next one was handed to me. I often did not know where I was being led. This is also my experience of integrality. Sometimes the teacher or counsellor may lead the way over the abyss. Sometimes it is the student or client. Over time it becomes easier to sense when such events of transformation and wholeness may arise but not always. This study has taken a parallel course and for that I am immensely grateful. I would not have ended up where I did, had I known where I was going. I would not have been transformed by the process, had I planned it. I would not have let it swallow me had I rationalised it. At times the reader may also feel that they do not know where their reading is taking them. I

ask for your tolerance in this regard. To make the process more coherent, I offer a brief outline as your road map and compass.

This chapter presents a general introduction to this lived inquiry, the Gebserian framework and view of integrality used throughout, a brief statement on the methodological perspective, the educative and therapeutic contexts from which this study emerges and the research question. Chapter two sets out a more thorough reflection on the process and essentially organic methodology employed. A study in integrality must employ both rational and transrational methods in its explorations for topic, research and researcher to congregate cohesively. Chapters three and four are an organic form of data, born of the experiences that arise in an integral classroom and counselling room. These experiences have shaped themselves into six significant elements: empathy, love, desire, time, space and participation, elements that seem to assist my own transformation to a more integral and holistic way of being. Chapter five considers integrality through the Gebserian framework before also looking through both transpersonal and postmodern lenses. The incorporation of the afore mentioned six elements is suggested as a way to both permit, and assist one to endure, its disorienting arising. Chapter six investigates the nature of knowing most suited to the emergence of an integral structure of consciousness. Having stressed the importance of process over content in previous chapters, this chapter takes a further step in considering the process of knowing itself and how it might lead to an integral awareness that is processual and panexperiential by nature. In the same vein, chapter seven reflects on the structure of change most fitting to the emergence of integrality through contemplation of the dual and complementary movements of immanence and transcendence and their part in the dissolution and reformation of identity. Chapter eight bears an inconclusion, as only it can be when exploring a structure of consciousness of which I am both student and vehicle, never master or keeper.

Latter chapters take a more conceptual approach and, in so doing, may not appear to deal directly with the processes of teaching and counselling. Yet just as what goes on in the classrooms and counselling rooms of the world affects not only the lives of those directly involved but also the lives of those around them and even the planet itself, I have given myself the liberty to venture beyond the walls of institutions and agencies to enquire into the characteristics of deep forms of learning and healing, irrespective of the structure of

their arising. While counselling and teaching do not always involve identical processes or purposes, it is the conditions that make an environment ripe for transformation and wholeness that are investigated. What, essentially, is being explored is how:

...the pursuit of power is replaced by the genuine capacity for love. (Gebser, 1974, cited in Feuerstein, 1987, p. 170)

Such a quest occurs through making the acquaintance of both conscious and unconscious processes at work, in a way that leads to insight and, more importantly, ethic and meaning; factors that cannot arise from a solely rational approach (Romanyshyn, 2007, 2010). Such a quest includes the person of the researcher, of the teacher and of the counsellor. We are what we practice and are not separate from those that we work with, our own selves or this earth and cosmos.

## Overview

*The importance of clarity does not arise until we have interpreted it in terms of the vast issues vaguely haunting the fullness of existence. (Whitehead, 1968, p. 108)*

It is difficult, and at times impossible, to talk or write about the extraordinary. By its very nature, it often defies words and particularly logic. When transformation and wholeness occurs in educational or therapeutic settings, it is extraordinary; a coming together of empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation in a synergistic way that is greater than all of these parts together and which impacts on a far greater expanse than the immediate vicinity and humans within it. These six elements emerged as guides and companions throughout this research, demanding attention and exploration. Together they form the foundation for making the acquaintance of integrality in a more conscious and active way. Empathy involves a knowing of the other far beyond what is conscious and articulated. One feels understood and more importantly validated and therefore valid, through the presence of an unconditional witness. Love allows for a sense of safety amidst the confronting experience of learning and change, making both earnest participation and the experience and voicing of more transrational moments possible. One can speak of its influence and

effects but not of it for it is both wordless and timeless, a bridge between the personal and transpersonal. Desire fuels the movements of our bodies and thoughts through time and space. It is ubiquitous, hence the need to continually explore, clarify and refine our states and objects of longing. In the space lies waiting the love and peace that is sought and both a respect and disregard for time is required for the space to be acutely inhabited.

Participation occurs with self, germinating internally and growing into an engagement and collaboration with all of what is, and therefore with the processes of transformation and wholeness, both personal and transpersonal.

Such processes exist as part of a constructive postmodern paradigm that heralds the re-enchantment of a living and cohesive universe and our participatory and creative role within it. Modernity, on the other hand, operates under the paradigms of Cartesian dualism and scientific materialism; the fundamental splitting of mind and matter, of spirit and earth, of love and sentience. It offers a mechanistic model of the universe and may now be a prison of rationality yet it was once a liberating premise. It achieved the separation of church and science at a time when religion dominated and controlled thinking in Europe. Its duration has been relatively short, a few hundred years, yet its suppositions are persistent (Ferrer, 2002; Romanyshyn, 1973; Tarnas, 1991). Modernity's models for understanding transpersonal growth are those derived from a rational, conquestual paradigm, where spirituality is yet another commodity to a primarily material and individualistic life, rather than the possibility of the ground itself, bearing an essential and informative value regarding the world in which we live and the part we may play in it. Even many models called postmodern still harbour the unquestioned premise of cognicentrism and thus a view of process as something that can be rationally managed and mastered. Indeed, the term 'trans' as in 'transcendent' or 'transpersonal' signifies the workings of modernity, where the arational, spiritual or collectively alive lies 'beyond' and therefore not only unintegrated but unintegratable (Ferrer, 2002; Ferrer, Romero & Albareda, 2005; Heron, 2003; Miller, 2001, 2006). For convenience and due to a lack of more appropriate terminology, these words are used at times throughout this study but their intention is to point to a once-there mental conceptualisation that may, with grace, be now-here arationally. Changes to educative and therapeutic understandings can only ever be piecemeal while modernity prevails.

An embodied spirituality, and living universe belong to a non-dual and co-creative life force that is realised as materialist and idealist frames of reference give way to an integral and intersubjective self where divinity is no longer 'beyond' but fundamental, where the sacred and profane are one and the same, and spirit is not other but one's very breath and motion (Ferrer, 2002; de Quincey, 2002; Liquorman, 2010; Mathews, 2003). This self is both a part of the one self-realising and therefore subjective system and also one of the many differentiated subjects that in its own process of self-realisation contributes to the self-realisation of the One. (Mathews, 2003)

This order of mutual desire is not merely one of material reciprocity, but of intersubjectivity... of eros. (p. 9)

A consciously intersubjective self experiences communion as fundamental to consciousness (de Quincey, 2005). Shared presence is seen as primary to personal subjectivity and being becomes the ground on which doing rests. Form and formlessness are co-active, making immanence and transcendence also intersubjective. From this perspective, one is not a disconnected mind in a dead universe but 'being-in-relationship' (p. 27) itself; non-local, processual and relational by nature. These notions also seem to underlie the integral structure of consciousness as will be further explicated in coming chapters. This view, of a participatory and intimate ontology as the basis of everything, informs this study and bears witness to a self that knows of its limits and limitlessness. It has transcended the narrow confines of self-interest yet is free to experience and express itself and its coherence and relationality with the world and cosmos in a countless number of personal, social, ecological and spiritual ways.

Self is a term used frequently throughout this text. In a lived inquiry; an act of self determination amidst a larger event of cosmic proportions (Heron, 2003), I cannot help but desire to know, and such eros, the quest of love, empties the self as it fills it. What are these selves that are simultaneously vacated and permeated and why do I dubiously use the same term for both? Because they are and are not the same. The self requiring some dissolution might be seen as the modern self, the conceptual self, seemingly primarily rational and egoic by nature. It requires enough emptying to render the intellect a tool rather than an identity. The self that fills through the process of lived inquiry may be a more integral self,

primarily non-conceptual yet able to use concepts when useful, arational rather than irrational, able to experience wholeness as well as perceive the parts, driven by love rather than the desire for mastery, knowing of both an internal infinitude and a time and space bound life where each makes the other sweeter. Both notions are the self; the primary instrument of lived inquiry, a cyclical and ever partial process. That self which I am currently identified with becomes the grist for the mill and where the inquiry stems from. To be where and what I am and explore from here, now, is both a connective and transformative process in itself. Therefore the self is not stable. Its characteristics are only temporarily definable or measurable. It is ever changing, porous, affected by and affecting of every thing around it. It is, as used throughout this study then, an inclusive and accepting term, encompassing and accommodating whoever the writer and reader are in this very moment.

Transformation is viewed as the natural condition, both developmentally in regard to individuals and structurally as in the case of evolution in general. It involves a movement from prepersonal to personal and through to transpersonal temporary states and eventually more permanent structures of consciousness (Washburn, 2003; Wilber, 2006).

Transformational growth appears to involve an increase in both lived complexity and the felt simplicity of a subtle wholeness, a symptom being the reduction of emotional, mental, bodily or cosmic separateness or fragmentation. It is an autopoietic and cyclical process involving a crisis of deconstruction followed by a reconstruction of heightened dynamism, contact and intricacy (Combs, 2002). While growth itself cannot be personally implemented, this study contends that the processes of learning and healing, essentially forms of knowing and changing, might be seen as the active components of growth and are therefore central aspects of its focus. Deep forms of healing and learning enable the reality of transformation which may lead to a deepening sense of wholeness, for both individuals and groups and which, to some degree, involves the dissolution and reformation of identity. The relatively rapid rate of structural transformation or evolution of the earth and its inhabitants is no longer adequately explained by the Darwinian notion of natural selection but seems to suggest 'the presence of a guiding non-material aspect in organic life' (p. 173) that may be facilitating our seemingly personal and anthropocentric healing and learning events.

## Jean Gebser and integrality

*Knowledge is a function of being. When there is a change in the being of the knower, there is a corresponding change in the nature and amount of knowing. (Huxley, 2009, p. vii)*

Jean Gebser (1905-73) was a cultural theorist and philosopher who believed that he saw evidence of a guiding, non-material, sentient force. He felt it to be an ever-present spiritual or divine Origin, both transcendent and immanently unfolding in physicality, permeating everything with life and subjectivity (Feuerstein, 1987). His research seemed to suggest the existence of an overarching evolutionary process that has thus far taken humanity through four specific structures of consciousness: the archaic, magical, mythical, and mental-rational modes, each being a way that Origin translates itself into form. These structures of consciousness are viewed as coming about through mutational surges occurring relatively suddenly and periodically rather than through gradual development caused by natural selection and each structure, through its own faculties and capacities, directs how humanity experiences self and world. He saw evidence over the last century of a currently emerging fifth and integral structure of consciousness that is inclusive of previous structures, as well as space-, time- and ego-free as distinct from the space-, time- and ego-lessness of early humanity. The ego is viewed as that which perceives itself as separate from Origin or spirit and thus the individual and independent author of its experiences and activities, a perspective most dominant in modernist, mental-rational cultures (Liquorman, 2000). Integrality, however, is a mode of being where such intellectualism, hubris and individualised identity seem to have been sufficiently incorporated that they do not necessitate dominion of the moment but may be transcended in a conscious, if not volitional, act of connectivity and transparency with the ever-present, spiritual Origin; where permanence and foundation solely reside (Feuerstein, 1987; Gebser, 1985).

It was Gebser's view that for any structure of consciousness to operate functionally and constructively necessitated the conscious integration of all other structures of consciousness, only seen as earlier or later by the linear time frame of the current Eurocentric mental-rational mode, but essentially all operating latently and concurrently. Without such integration, each prevailing structure and therefore way of being is limited to



being expressed in primarily deficient or destructive ways. Current widespread dysfunction is seen as being due to the repression and domination of other structures of consciousness by the mental-rational structure with its persistent and complementary paradigms of dualism, a mechanistic cosmos and the androcentrism and anthropocentrism that dominates much of the world.

References to an integral methodology throughout Gebser's works and those of Gebserian scholars are relatively brief. Such a multiperspectival, arational approach leaves words far behind. Gebser (1985), however, did formulate new terms to attempt to convey the simultaneous and complementary processes involved. Systasis refers to the process of knowing something through all structures of consciousness at once, a process that leads to the kind of knowing that is greater than the sum of its parts. Synairesis is a non-conceptual, non-referential form of knowledge that can appreciate the whole of something without the need to rationally grasp it. It occurs through the 'accomplished transparency of all modes of cognition.' (Feuerstein, 1987, p. 195). Both systasis and synairesis are experiential rather than intellectual and integrative rather than objectifying. Gebser suggests that, together, systasis and synairesis, bring about the ongoing and complementary events of transformation and wholeness. These characteristics make an integral methodology both a blessing and a challenge to the current form of consciousness that is primarily rational and externalising in its approach to both itself and the world. It is not yet familiar with, or volunteering for, a form of knowing that occurs through becoming or a form of change that involves a loss of identity as much as a restitution to a greater identitylessness.

Gebser attempted an integral methodology through a thorough and interdisciplinary consideration of forms of evidence throughout history that could offer a holistic view of and meaning to the evolution of consciousness. He wanted his work to:

...contribute to lifting the feeling of isolation that is prevalent today not only in individual scientific disciplines but in the general public. (1996a, p. 78)

He applied two guiding principles; those of latency and transparency, of uncovering what is concealed or not yet manifest and of concretising or making perceivable that which is; namely all five structures of consciousness and the spiritual origin at the base of everything. Gebser saw that 'the integral structure cannot be represented but only "awared-in-truth."'

(1985, p. 267). This 'awareness' might include an aperspectival approach that takes us beyond subject/object dualism, paradoxical thinking, a discounting of the ego, an intensified conscious participation in life and the acknowledgement of a non-anthropocentric, sentient foundation to life (1996a).

Gebser used the term 'eteology' to denote an integral form of philosophy that is not conceptual and logical but integrative and arational, an experiential 'being-in-truth' (p. 309) rather than an intellectual contemplation about truth. As one can imagine, writing from such a position, or lack thereof, is difficult. Gebser wrote: 'Although this new method is still in its infancy, we are nevertheless compelled to make use of it.' (p. 7). Even so, he often found himself writing from the mental mode through the use of dualistic comparisons and linear explanations; linguistic structures difficult to avoid.

My own humble attempts at an integral methodology and way of writing have involved reflecting on various significant personal and interpersonal experiences throughout my work and life as well as various disciplines and texts. Gebser was clear that integrality involved transparency. Such intention has demanded an honesty that brings me out of hiding and into the light, if only for myself. The springboard to this investigation has been the classrooms and counselling rooms where I work, yet this study has taken me further afield to a more holistic version of myself that must acknowledge the life, sentience, intentionality and creativity in everything, both formed and formless, essentially 'the whole of the world' (1996a, p. 81). In attempting to write in a more time- and space-free mode than the intellect alone will allow, I have leaned towards a poetic style. It has, at times, granted such freedoms and also allowed for the expression of arational knowings and events. The poetic form may be where one can integrally relay experience in that it is both an integrating act and an expression of integration itself. It gives voice to the various selves and the coherence of the world and in so doing, implies a degree of aperspectivity. Poetry uses:

'the word as an expressive power... it no longer describes, recounts, represents, discusses or is utilised perspectively; rather it raises origin into the present, rendering it transparent in its aperspectival and multivalent plenitude. (1985, p. 492)

Despite such intentions, I have not had the experience or language to have written predominantly from the integral mode. Gebser (1996a) outlined three approaches he utilised in his investigations into cultural philosophy: phenomenological, comparative and co-ordinating, practices resulting in a reduction to specific fundamental insights. I have correspondingly used such approaches throughout this study but, at times, within a dualistic framework that juxtaposes modern and postmodern myths. It is primarily in the more poetic moments and places that experience and expression are released from space, time and an egoic jurisdiction and so they become the lights along the way and the domains where I learn to indwell more often.

Like Gebser, I have not stuck to any rigid method but followed the clues as they were given (Mickunas 1994). To pursue a specific method would involve intellectual dominance over the topic and this I have actively avoided. Gebser's exploration in his magnum opus, *The Ever-Present Origin* (1985), became increasingly wider and far reaching before turning back on itself to arrive at its point of origin. His purpose was to render transparent self, world and divine origin. This study travels along a similar vein and with similar intent, widening its reach beyond the counselling and classroom, to a more philosophical inquiry in latter chapters, before returning to its original theme and inquiry to 'know the place for the first time.' (Eliot, 1974, p. 222). My rage and grief at modernity, however, are not always tempered enough. The strong feelings of the magical mode fuel the mythical belief in a better world by placing the mental-rational and integral modes in dualistic battle and thus have, at times, plummeted me into an adversarial frame of reference, far from a world without opposites (Feuerstein, 1996). In truth, all modes are necessary. Their efficiency, at this time in history, lies in their service to a more integral structure.

## **A methodological perspective**

*Truth allows itself to be reached only through a sort of distance. (Merleau-Ponty, 2004a, p. 246)*

From a rational perspective, which uses the investigative tools of sensory empiricism or logic to ascertain knowledge, there has not been an instrument both sensitive and

multidimensional enough to ascertain the existence of such a non-sensory, illuminating and acausal force as consciousness or subjectivity. Agency and intentionality alone are not measurable and it is the nature of empiricism to look solely outside itself where that which cannot be measured or clarified through sensory means is discarded as irrelevant. In the same vein, logic disregards what it cannot conceptualise or comprehend intellectually. Strong has been the need for a sense of expertise over encounter. Yet human consciousness is just such an instrument, and first and second person reporting of various states and experiences, although a clumsy reflection, can provide evidence (Combs, 2002; de Quincey, 2005; Rock & Klettke, 2009). Consciousness, the presence of sheer subjectivity (Balsekar, 1988; Combs, 2002) can be known only through direct participation and not indirectly, through conceptualisation or measurement. Direct participation, whether it is with self, other or something greater that incorporates both and more, seems to enable the possibility of radical transformation of the individual and also therefore of human consciousness in general (Aurobindo, 2006; Bohm, 2010; Laszlo, 2007; Sheldrake, 2009).

Wherever one of us goes, to some degree we all go. (Bache, 2000, p. 20)

This study is a mythopoetic project (Leonard & Willis, 2008), an approach fitting to a study of consciousness. Its tasks involve the transcribing of experiences and processes, the suggestion of possible story lines, the formation and poetics of meaning. As such, it is not concerned with the production of knowledge through systematic, standardised or replicable means but with the deepening of experience, the making of meaning, imaginal knowing and even the 'responsibility of imagination' (Lachman, 2003). We may come to be, and thus to live out, what we see with an inner eye and sing from a present heart. These intentions do not imply neglect or the discounting of more cognitive forms of exploration, simply a fair and valid balance of various modes of knowing pertinent to the topic at hand. Imaginal knowing (Corbin, 1977; Hillman, 1992) is that knowing which passes through the heart and winds its way around the universe, its source rationally unknown and yet ever-present from a felt sense. It is the knowing that pertains to the 'world of the Soul and of souls' (Corbin, 1977, p. ix) and which provides meaning to the more sensory and cognitive worlds that are sorely destitute without it. In truth, it may be that all one ever does is imagine oneself and one's cosmos based on the capacities of one's current or dominant structure of consciousness. Knowing is a relative thing, wedded to the natural experience of

wonderment and awe for all that is not known, unless usurped by the modernist hunger for mastery.

More traditional or positivist forms of research are expected to both refute alternative theories or views as well as justify their own. These activities require a primarily rational perspective embedded in a stance of objectivity, opposition and justification. Yet it seems that much of what is seen as rational objectivity is more of a myth than a truth (Feyerabend, 1993; Gleick, 1987; Kuhn, 1996; Thompson, 1996) and is bonded to the equivalent myth of the binary opposition of fact and fiction or expertise and ignorance when what lies between the two may hold more accuracy. Such a stance corrodes an organic, integral approach to discovery that dwells with what is and what may be, exploring and giving voice to one of many aspects of experience, and not tied to expectations of certainty or outcome. From an organic and transrational perspective, 'what is' is not reliant on 'what is not' for its existence or definition. It simply is, as are many other things, particularly when viewed from different states or structures of consciousness. Organic research primarily uses the experiential activities of resonance, connection and, if so graced, union, in its approach to discoveries that are likely to be of both a personal and transpersonal nature. Although also working with more cognitive skills, it is not predominantly concerned with the refuting of other aspects of life or excessively analysing its own explorations as thinking about something necessitates a degree of separation from it and such movement becomes an obstacle to more heuristic forms of exploration. Neither the transpersonal nor transrational modes are rejections of more personal or rational ways of being. To work effectively with them involves the inclusion of all aspects of self and modes of operating. In the same way that the transpersonal is both enhanced by and a progression from the personal state of distinct uniqueness and prepersonal state of oneness, the transrational incorporates both the tool of rationality and the innocence of prerationality, allowing for multidimensional experiences of pre-egoic unity, individual immanence, trans-egoic knowing through being, and beyond (Washburn, 2003; Wilber, 2006).

The purpose of this study is not to argue each point as irrefutable or counter alternative views but to convey and share the emergence of integrality as it occurs in the heart of this writer and the classrooms and counselling rooms that I work in. It is also not intended as an exhaustive study of all literature in the fields explored but leans on the brave offerings of

many theorists in fields as diverse and similar as education, psychology, sociology, philosophy, mysticism and physics. These theorists have been the shoulders I have stood upon throughout my humble musings and their work is therefore spread throughout the text rather than being limited to a specific literature review. Integrality, the process of spirit at work, is indefinable by its very nature and so it is hoped that the reader will, at times, go with the felt meaning of a term rather than be hampered by its assigned explanation. The restructuring of identity, the fundamental theme of this work, is a nebulous and nascent journey, hence the experiential and emergent structure of this conceptual study in a field that is trans-conceptual by its very nature. For this writer, it is both a seventy thousand word love poem and an act of scholarship. I have learned that research can be both. In an integral era, poetic scholarship may be a necessity rather than an indulgence. Poetry allows for a gentle form of accuracy that more positivist methods miss (Neville, 2005). As Audre Lorde wrote: 'Poetry is not a luxury' but a 'revelatory distillation of experience... the way we help give name to the nameless... it forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change.' (2007, p. 37). A mythopoetic process is one which seems to compose itself, the servant-writer following with pen and paper in hand.

## **The learning context**

*There is no such thing as a neutral education process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (Shaul in Freire, 2006, p. 34)*

To teach in an environment of transformation and wholeness requires one to simultaneously participate, facilitate and witness. Transformation is the process by which one is irrevocably altered from the inside out. It is an internal revolution and not just a modification of the exterior. Wholeness may involve two seemingly paradoxical felt

meanings that come together to form far more than the sum of their parts. One is a sense of coherence and belonging to self, the earth, cosmos and spirit, in short, to life itself; and the other simultaneously, a sense of sincere and unique differentiation, of being a very individual and precious expression of such life (Hart, 2001, Miller, 2006). Many of the students drawn to learn the counselling or psychology professions appear to come for their own healing whether they articulate it or not. Many drawn to the teaching professions seem to come for their own learning whether it is acknowledged or not. One could think of healing and learning as involving similar processes. Both involve a transmutation of the interior of the person, an alchemical journey inward toward greater wholeness that involves a parallel process between student and teacher or client and counsellor if the experience is to be authentic and true. I am, of course, not writing of superficial forms of learning or healing that are more about the addition of further material to the psyche while leaving what is already there intact and unquestioned. Transformation is about the deeper forms of these processes where the interior is, at the very least, questioned and at the most, profoundly challenged and changed; 'the very point of personhood: the process of constant renewal.' (Moore, 2004, p. 47). Thus real learning can be painful, confronting, delicate, joyful, intricate and humbling.

Transformative learning has a sense of irreversibility about it. It accesses one's interiority, a domain too infrequently stirred. Many things in this world, of dubious value, tempt, challenge or instruct us to change our exterior in the misguided belief that changing the outside will sort out the inside. When inner transformation occurs, it may not show on the outside. The transformed one, however, feels it and for them it has a higher value than words can express and often a more profound resonance than they knew was possible. Transformations, although appearing to be diverse in theme or issue, essentially bring more focus and value to one's interiority which, as it grows in its capacity for awareness, stillness and wholeness, comes to include everything, a much larger Self. As a consequence or byproduct, the focus on the outer self and a separate external world diminishes. In a world obsessed with externalisation at any cost to the individual, community and environment, the very personal process of transformation becomes highly and quietly political in the most powerful of ways.

Transformation is a movement toward increasing wholeness that simultaneously pushes toward diversity or uniqueness, becoming more uniquely who we are and toward unity and communion, recognizing how much we have in common with the universe, and even recognition that we are the universe. (Hart, 2001, p. 150)

One could view all true learning as transformative and therefore spiritual by nature, in that it concerns itself with the spirit of a thing. Learning that does not transform one's being, even slightly, might better come under the labels of adaptation, conditioning or compliance (Krishnamurti, 1998). At their best, these modes can be very useful. At their worst, they are disempowering, violating and annihilating of one's spirit. True learning invigorates, embraces and fuels the desire for more knowledge and peace. One comes to claim the process as one's own, all the while knowing it as a gift. True learning involves a metamorphosis of the whole of one's being and, in so doing, impacts the universe in modest and precious ways.

As I learn about my spirit and, more importantly, make no distinction between this and other facets of my being, I start to embrace and encompass all of myself in a way that is holistic, spontaneously transformative and truly spiritual. Too often, 'spiritual development' denies the needs or wants of other aspects of experience and, in so doing, plays out the same paradigm as traditional academia or religion where one aspect is seen as being of a higher order. This philosophy too often leads to an emptiness parading as false fullness, requiring self righteousness as a gap filler. When I resist the tyrannical paradigm of making one part more important than other parts, I have the chance to stumble upon an integral way of being where all selves, from the personal to the cosmological, are addressed and loved in the moment and that moment becomes one of healing. Integral education incorporates the seemingly paradoxical dynamics of transformation and wholeness, of self and cosmos, within it. It cannot be otherwise.

Both Eastern and Western cultures have sustained traditions in mysticism and lifelong spiritual learning (Balsekar, 2000; Capra, 1991; Corbin, 1977; McGinn, 2006; Welwood, 2002) yet little of it filters down or is made accessible to the general public. Such practices have, at their core, the goal of transformation involving the direct awareness of or



unification with self, other and the ever-present divine Origin (Gebser, 1985) from which life stems. As such, they defy the power preserving structures and regulatory, conformist and oppressive nature of many religious institutions and belief systems that act as gatekeepers and withholders of such knowledge and love. Postmodern individuals are thus often forced to look to the education sector, with a thirst of being that cannot be quenched with the worship of the intellect alone.

In recent years the term 'lifelong learning' has been used as a way to promote the ever increasing need for degrees and diplomas required by individuals as their work and career choices require ever changing skills and knowledge in a rapidly shifting world of technological frenzy and material 'advancement'. This concept, however, is a far cry from a holistic, transformative approach, focused on the continual discovery of selfhood. It is far more inclined towards supporting the economic needs of an ever-expanding marketplace, hell bent on the destruction of the planet that cradles it. Most religious institutions offer no more than additional dogma, enforcing belief systems and ways of living that further repress and control. Consequently, knowingly or unknowingly, individuals often turn to academic institutions for some guidance or possible leads in how to live more fully; with more heart, soul and participation with that which surrounds them.

My experience of teaching adult students across various courses and institutions is that many arrive at their first class in various states and degrees of fear, powerlessness and anticipatory boredom, closely aligned with feelings of resentment and a quieter despair that the experience of learning which promised to be so much has turned out to be so little or worse. They are not expecting to be affirmed for all of themselves, even in some small way and they definitely do not anticipate the class to be enriching to their emotional and spiritual lives. They are not expecting to be validated and acknowledged for what they know and bring to the room, or that what they do not know will be cause for celebration and discovery rather than the humiliation that brings about further shame and masquerading. This is as true of those students who have known academic success as those who have not. Those who have been more successful at school tend to come in less defensive yet just as hidden from themselves, each other and especially the teacher as the success or affirmation they have known has usually been predicated on only their mental selves, leaving the rest of them denied, thirsty and eventually resignedly silent and withered. Those who have found

school a trial may set out to hide from the start, thus remaining unnoticed and obsolete, or ready for a fight, a power play that will determine a winner and loser. These ways of being and relationships to learning are the legacy of traditional schooling.

## **The counselling context**

*True healing means drawing the circle of our being larger and becoming more inclusive, more capable of loving. In this sense, healing is not for the sick alone but for all of mankind. (Moss, 1989, in Carlson & Shield, Eds. 1989, p. 36)*

We live in a global era of growing economic rationalism, consumerism and the objectification and quantification of so many aspects of ourselves and our lives. One of the many professions suffering from these world scale developments is the counselling field in which I do the bulk of my teaching. It is my observation that one can enter into a course, coming out the other end with a qualification, having passed a series of subjects and gained a collection of learned theories and skills but with little acknowledgement, guidance or support for the internal conditions required for counselling to be sustainable, enriching and transformative to both the client and counsellor.

As a consequence of such little focus placed on internal process, both novice and experienced counsellors secretly, yet frequently, express concerns of incompetence, feelings of fraudulence, pretending to be experts on other's lives when their own are a shambles, struggling with integrating head and heart in their relationships with clients, adrift with the intellectual knowledge of numerous theories and skills and yet no understanding of when or how to use them in a relevant or supportive manner. They often discover large gaps between what they have studied at university and what they find themselves dealing with in the field, both internally and externally, resulting in contradictory professional and private faces leading to no end of anxiety, inadequacy and eventual burnout, not to mention grave disservice to and dissatisfaction for clients. Additionally, most counsellors change jobs a number of times over the course of a lifetime. Each position brings new clientele, new issues and therefore new challenges, lending weight to the need to develop an internally embracing, trusting and integrative self as the main tool of trade

rather than a series of skills, tactics or theories that may not be so transferable across various sectors.

For counsellors to be truly effective, which involves being able to facilitate healing or transformative experiences in their work with clients, it seems important that transformative experiences, or at least their possibility be seamlessly integrated into one's training. This requires a view of education that is both transformative and integral by nature, the ramification being that the training experience itself becomes one of healing and transformation. Although it is tacitly acknowledged that personal growth does occur for many students, it is usually viewed as secondary, a byproduct of more theoretical and practical learnings. It is deemed preferable to send students off to private counsellors as issues arise. This is often beneficial and at times crucial. However, it also further widens the rift between the professional and the personal, the theory and skill mode and the being. The immediacy of relationship is highly challenging. What one finds when one is in the presence of a client is that all of oneself is in the room, whether one likes it or not. What one then does is where the problems of relating and the obstacles to healing and learning arise. Becoming more whole is difficult, if not impossible, for the client, when the counsellor sitting opposite you is busily attempting to disidentify from significant parts of themselves. Not only is it impossible to truly disconnect such intrinsic parts of ourselves at will (Gadamer, 1989). If we could, we would then be eclipsing the opportunity for our own transformation through denying a rich mutuality of meeting. Such meetings Gadamer called a fusion of horizons, alchemical events that happen through relational self disclosure, the very thing wanted and even expected of our clients. Some would consider these suggestions hazardous and I appreciate many of the concerns. Yet just as the personal is political, it is also professional. I work with the premise that all acts, both internal and external, stem from the personal and experiential, thus implying that an education in the healing arts, at its best, involves the personal experience of those conditions that facilitate healing and, therefore also, personal experiences of healing.

A constructive postmodern stance allows for the questioning of those structures and assumptions that seem solid and unquestionable (Griffin, 1993). This study questions the compartmentalisation and oversimplification of the study of theory, skills, practice and 'personal awareness' and begs for more fullness and focus on the immediacy of process in

the education of counsellors and education in general. Fritz Perls, the founder or, as he preferred to be called, the finder of Gestalt theory wrote of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts (Perls, 1969). When we break something down into a series of fragments, we risk losing the essence of it and developing a more mechanistic version that appears as the original but is somehow sadly lacking in ways that are hard to articulate. It may be hard to support the growing wholeness of our clients if we as counsellors are trained in compartmentalisation and therefore disconnection in so many ways.

References to love and integrality are mournfully scarce in the literature on counselling and education (Miller, 2008). In the professional pursuit of academic kudos, much of it is filled with positivist, reductionist notions on the matter of being human. Complex, interconnected facets of experience, not only of ourselves and each other but of the whole of non-human existence are offensively reduced to tick boxes alongside cognitive statements. It may be that nothing that can be spoken or written about can be the truth. However it may, at the very least, be a pointer towards it rather than away from it, regulating and dehumanising our very existence (Liquorman, 2000). The social sciences, in their desire to be just that, have sacrificed much of their heart.

A useful training in the healing arts may require a different stance—one of being with the whole of something as best one can. Most ‘dis-ease’ could be seen as partly or even wholly caused by perceiving only a part of a person or situation.

How then, finally, can those of us who are counsellors, hope to become more tender, more capable of being with our clients in such a way that we and they are transformed, however fleetingly, into what we are capable of becoming? The short answer must be that we take our bodies and our souls seriously, and not only our minds and feelings, and do not forget for a moment that we are all four. (Thorne, 1991, p. 81)

Much modernist counselling and teaching is little more than a process of domestication and conformity to an isolationist self that continues to distinguish and prioritise individual goals over collective ones. It does not come close to true healing or learning that includes our bodies, souls and the deeper thoughts and feelings that belong to far more than each of us alone (Balsekar, 2000; Neville, 2012; Rogers, 1980). Studied and practiced in a brave and

encompassing way gives these fields a chance to witness, touch and transform our aches, joys and knowings. An integral practice allows for the recognition and development of a collective and relational self, that does not detract from the uniqueness of the individual self and, for whom personal and universal goals become one and the same (Choi et al., 1995).

It seems to me that it is the essential work of therapy to challenge the lies we tell ourselves, not just the personal ones but the shared ones. The counsellor who attends fully to the client-as-holon will be listening not only to the private pain but also to the pain of the species and the plight of the world. The unconditional caring which comes with this attention will go 'all the way down' the holarchy (and all the way up). (Neville, 2012, p. 46)

Indeed there seems to be a growing recognition of the importance of both ecological and spiritual aspects of identity in therapeutic and educational environments (Blackstone, 2006; Fisher, 2002; Miller, Karsten, Denton, Orr & Kates, 2005; Neville, 2012; Palmer, 1998, 2004; Prendergast, 2003; Thorne, 1991). From a constructivist, postmodern and relativist approach these aspects are part of the politics of personal experience and trust in self, versus input from others and trust in external authorities, and can be applied to education in general, not just that of counsellors.

'Trying to solve problems of inner emptiness and doubt with external fullness or internal rigidity is a materialist, classical approach' (Goswami, 1993, p. 231) and that of traditional education. It may have succeeded in maintaining and even enhancing unsustainable and soul destroying systems of culture and economy. It has failed dismally in caring for and nurturing the whole of our being and our universe. A system so dysfunctional requires more than a piecemeal change approach. Bringing integrality into the classroom is a leap, the kind of quantum jump that particles take, without any trajectory or predefined outcome. Bringing integrality into the heart involves bearing the anxiety of never knowing or, alternatively, abiding in the peace and comfort of the eternal mystery.

## **The research question**

*What elements might support the emergence and facilitation of those integral experiences of learning and healing that seem to transcend space, time and individualised identity?*

My own teaching has undergone, and continues to undergo, shifts of seismic proportions, shifts that shake me to the core even as they occur. Whereas I would initially use experiential exercises amidst periods of theory teaching or skill training, I have gradually found myself using more and more of the direct personal experiences and needs of the students as the bedrock that the curriculum, and the form it takes, emerges from. Such learnings bring about much immediacy, care and attentiveness for everyone involved yet I have known there is more to the picture. At times, my very existence seems to move in mysterious and life altering ways. When these powerful transformative processes began occurring in the classroom, I would find that I had stumbled into them accidentally. I would flounder, swept off my feet by potent waves I knew not what to do with, making it difficult to guide or support others, let alone make the most of the moment. This study is an exploration of ways that seem to ease both myself and the group into such waters and use our time there well.

This research strives to resonate with the six elements of empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation and their possible alchemy into a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts; a more integral way of learning and being that seems to encapsulate the whole of a person or group in a way that transcends many of the more personalised or individualised forms of identity. It was Gebser's suggestion that an integral form of consciousness was emerging throughout humanity and that its primary characteristics involved time-, space- and ego-freedom, characteristics I have thus included in my research question. Such features seem to allow for the kinds of encounters that become transformative to those both directly involved and further afar. Within a non-dualistic and process view of reality (Balsekar, 1992; Liquorman, 2009; Whitehead, 1978), living, learning and being become one in a resonant, dynamic movement of life itself rather than authored by separate, individual identities. This study explores the direct experience of such integral transformations and the conditions that may facilitate them.

An organic inquiry concerns approaches to learning where the artificial but seemingly unquestionable lines in the sand between the educative, therapeutic and spiritual are washed away by the tides of love and desire. I write, not of personal facets of these tides but, of engaged pedagogy (hooks, 1994), of embodied practice (Davis, 1997), of teaching with all one's body and soul as well as one's head, where the yearning for my own wholeness becomes one and the same as my yearning for another's and we meet in a moment of compassion and understanding that defies and transcends the emotional scars and mental alienations that we all, so dutifully, carry.

I am certain that whatever I come to perceive is an infinitesimally small vista of a much larger picture, not to mention a vista that changes and unfolds day by day. Hence this is an entirely inconclusive and personal work. It is also likely that many of my understandings and interpretations of events will be viewed quite differently in the days and years to come. Given that, this study investigates what I momentarily understand as some of the primary elements that facilitate the practice of integrality as I experience and know it, in the classroom as in life.

## Chapter Two

### Reflections on Process

*In giving words to what was formerly mysterious, a certain innocence or grace is lost. No sooner is it grasped than it dissolves. In the end, healing must be a ceaseless process of relationship and rediscovery, moment by moment. The more we 'know' about healing, the more we are simultaneously carried toward something unknowable. (Moss, 1989, in Carlson & Shield, Eds. 1989, p. 36)*

*You think the only people who are people  
are the people that look and think like you  
but if you walk the footsteps of a stranger,  
you'll learn things you never knew you never knew.*

*(Pocahontas' song in Gabriel & Goldberg, 1995)*

To put words to the wordless, examine the unexaminable, arrive back from despairing disconnection, find grace in life again and for the first time, hold to my own personal authority and self care... these are tasks this investigation asks of me and I respond one sentence and one step at a time. To be two sentences ahead of myself corrupts the connection to myself, to the subject matter and to spirit. Stillness, listening, guidance and self respect are what this thesis teaches me. It is my meditation.

When the deadliest bushfires in recorded Australian history swept through our valley in 2009 and my two year old son and I sheltered in our neighbour's laundry, the life of my partner, who was outside fighting the fire, lost all significance except as a means to save our son. When the sun came up and as far as the eye could see was ashen ground, blackened silhouettes of trees and not a bird or insect in sight or sound, the desolation was immediate and penetrated to my core. When the blackened tree ferns, feared dead, birth their new luminous green baby fronds many long weeks later, when the first frog is heard again months later in a dam still filled with ash and sludge, when the classroom and its myriad of



individuals turn into one alchemical organism, the silence and presence are palpable. When I share my life with the life of my partner and children, the world and myself are born again with renewed love and passion. All of these miracles happen in a wordless state and no matter how profound my experience, are no more than a glimmer of a whole.

I am always in way too deep to grasp more than a fragment of the entirety of an event or depict any greater truth than that of my own ever changing experience. Hermeneutics is thus a suitable approach. It is about:

...the essential generativity of human life, a sense of life in which there is always something left to say, with all the difficulty, risk and ambiguity that such generativity entails. Hermeneutic inquiry is thus concerned with the ambiguous nature of life itself. It does not desire to render such ambiguity objectively presentable but rather to attend to it, to give it a voice. And it does this while recognising its own embeddedness in the very life of which it is the expression. (Jardine, 2000, p. 120)

This study explores ambiguous glimmers of what integral education might be: learning that ripples through time and space and perhaps beyond it. Its methodology involves my own immersion in the elements explored: empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation, as the conduits of this information. Most of the time it feels like I am in my own spiritual retreat, even as I partner, parent, counsel, teach, do the gardening, walk the dogs and clean the house. There is little energy or focus left for anything else and I have to say that this is how I like it. When I keep life simple, it is easier to both get out of the way and stay fully engaged.

This is not to say that my life has always been simple. In fact most of it has been far from that, with spiritual seeking as my constant companion as I have explored a multitude of ways to ease the suffering and fragmentation of a soul looking for solace with various degrees of success. One of many watershed periods in this journey occurred in 2009, in my experience of the firestorm known as Black Saturday and the year that ensued. What was triggered after a period of shock and then euphoria were layers of helplessness, desolation, lack of will to live, fear, resentment and grief. All of these feelings were already within me in rather large amounts and despite many years of personal and spiritual growth had lain

dormant, unnoticed, except for temporary periods of despair that arose as frequently as they were repressed. It took being within a firestorm and a number of other traumas that occurred last year to awaken this pain fully enough to finally engage another way.

I find that empathy for myself involves, above all else, accepting myself as I am and not trying to be someone I am not, for myself or for others. Along with this comes honouring my needs to a degree that I never imagined possible. Having a partner in my life who honours my needs has also been, and sometimes still is, unimaginable and I am utterly grateful. The love and desire I have towards this piece of work bring me back to it each day and involves much courage as I come out of hiding in writing about my experience of teaching and life, through creating something that others will eventually read. Immersing myself in the moment leads to the timelessness that my own spiritual learnings stem from and soaking in the space allows me the room to find a more authentic voice than the one I usually use in daily life. This thesis is my teacher at this time. Writing it is changing me, for the better, for the deeper.

An integral study is an ongoing direct experience of working with myself: stilling and listening, getting out of the way and connecting all at once, nothing coming through until and as I experience it. I have a voice here and yet must be quiet to hear the words. I must heed the messages yet experience enormous personal creativity and freedom in the process. The experience is intangible and non-verbal yet produces a tangible and articulated product. This thesis bears my name as its author yet more honestly would be authored: 'shared mind decoded through grateful individual'.

Hermeneutic inquiry involves appreciation for what is being examined and is thus an act of gratitude for the richness of experience that life provides. Explorations of this nature require intimacy and transparency, a desire to sink into what is felt and known. In this way, what is born out of the exploration is born out of love. A work derived from love necessitates its ambiguity, fluidity and mystery, for love does not define or pin down for the sake of security, dominance or expertise. Love also requires congruence, that the exploration match the topic, and an organic, hermeneutic inquiry, like integral education, considers the overcoming of alienation, the risking of identity and the transformation of self understanding (Fisher, 2002; Hart et. al., 2000; Jardine, 1998; Neville, 1999, 2000).

This study is an inquiry into what goes on in the classrooms, counselling rooms and groups that I facilitate through the exploration of six interrelated elements that seem to hold some sway in the emergence of integrality. I have no interest in writing, teaching, reading, counselling nor, for that matter, living from a distance. Even though many a time I find myself doing just that, it is never my intention and usually occurs through fear. Models are mostly 'thin approximations of the seething real world... caricatures of reality.' (Gleick, 1987, pp. 59-60), and this study attempts to explore something that is only in the moment, is far richer than can ever be articulated and does not translate well to retrospective written reflection. The classroom is a complex system, a mystical ordinariness veiled behind educational structures and frameworks so common, we are blasé to its beauty. The elements considered appear simple as their commonly understood definitions, yet hide a vast complexity of luminal depth and meaning. There is always the danger that a little understanding hinders more than it helps yet there is also the possibility that outlining these elements in this way may assist me to surrender to the process more consciously and intelligently, as well as allowing the space for further clarity and awareness to develop. Given that I am likely to only ever understand a little of this sacred and multidimensional system, my explorations proceed with respect and caution.

## **An integral approach**

*However we may wish to define it, arationality is never identifiable with irrationality or prerationality. There is a fundamental distinction between the attempt to go beyond the merely measurable, knowing and respecting it while striving to be free from it, and rejecting and disregarding the measurable by regressing to the immoderate and unfathomable chaos of the ambivalent and even fragmented polyvalence of psychic and natural interrelations. (Gebser, 1985, p. 147)*

What is this love that moves through me yet is not mine?

What is the meaning of this universe and what part do I play?

What elements might support the emergence and facilitation of those integral experiences of learning and healing that seem to transcend space, time and individualised identity, in the classroom? (or counselling room or living room?)

The bigger questions are the subtext to this study and, in some small way, are explored through every sentence. They point to an ontological and epistemological position that makes room for, and in fact loves and learns from, the sentient and volitional more-than-human world and cosmos where every thing is part of Everything and from where all knowledge arises. The more specific question regarding the elements that might facilitate integrality in the classroom was responded to, with little adherence to the spatial and temporal expectations and requirements of traditional academic research, in the first few days of writing. The answer, in the form of the six elements of empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation explored in this study, came integrally, arationally, distinctly and with no initial elaboration. I was not the author or instigator yet was claimed as their explorer, their researcher, one among many.

To become a more integral, embracing and sustainable human community requires, not just individual, but also institutional transformation that allows for more diverse, multidimensional and immediate forms of being and expression. Academia, 'a culture of fear' (Palmer, 1999, p. 21) is one such institution where, up till now, one voice has been given precedence to the exclusion of all others yet 'the process of formalising all knowledge to the exclusion of any tacit knowledge is self defeating.' (Polanyi, 2009, p. 20).

Integrality heralds the silence of communion as much as the voice of communication, and involves ways of relating that, directly at least, do not necessarily use the frameworks of space and time. There may have been decades of internal reflection, personal healing, meditation and spiritual seeking that may or may not have tilled the soil but these facets of life are hard to document and impossible to provide as any causal link in an integral chain of events. Integrality emerges of itself. Each experience seems to stand alone yet is also connected to other such experiences, through a rumbling, subterranean force that arises of its own volition and in its own time.

A thesis on integrality, on a restless force on the move, cannot just accept but must use integral ways of knowing: methods of research that are space- and time-free, for there to be

congruence. If we are to become a human community that can hear and respond to integral information, then we need to consider data that may emerge for the one as much as data that can be validated by the many. De Quincey (2005) makes the distinction between rational scientific data that are public, sensory and therefore measurable, and extra-rational and spiritual data that are intimate and non-sensory. The notion that respectable data must be able to be replicated has banished those intimate and integral forms of discovery from the mental-rational, patriarchal, body-denying bastions of research and knowledge.

## **Non-duality**

*...like a fish in the sea, looking for water. (Liquorman, 2010)*

My beloved spiritual teacher Ramesh Balsekar (1917-2009) taught Advaita Vedanta, the mystical branch of Hinduism. Advaita has a profound influence on my way of thinking and being in the world because I have found it so validating and articulating of my deepest feelings and inarticulatable experiences. Its non-dualistic premise echoes through my heart and also therefore throughout the heart of this study. A non-dual understanding or appreciation and subsequent stance of acceptance are the two primary principles of Advaita, as I experience and understand its teachings. Each individual self is a unique and discrete expression of a grand, unified consciousness or subjectivity, which is uncaused, eternal and all there is (Balsekar, 1992; Liquorman, 2000; Maharshi, 1985).

Within a non-dualistic universe, integral or transrational data may arise through communion which is instant and authorless, rather than through communication which requires space, time and personal authorship, and is therefore difficult, if not impossible to replicate. Such communion is both a transcendent and embodied experience, occurring everywhere at once. When we deny the body of the self, we make it difficult for such acts of resonance and knowledge and also deny the body of the earth and the sentience of both and of the greater cosmos and consequently the capacity for communion and care.

We live in an in-formed universe of:

...mind boggling coherence. All that happens in one place happens also in other places; all that happened at one time happens also at all times after that. Nothing is 'local', limited to where and when it is happening. All things are global, indeed cosmic, for all things are connected, and the memory of all things extends to all places and to all times. (Laszlo, 2007, p. 80)

A study of integrality relies, then, to a large extent, on non-sensory perception and first and second person investigation. The modernist view assumes a perception, solely of the senses (Griffin et al., 1993; Whitehead, 1967a) but such information is indirect and retrospective to the immediate experience of a non-dualistic, space, time and ego-free reality.

...the most significant characteristic of consciousness is its subjectivity... Subjects, unlike objects, come to the world with interiority, with a point of view. Investigators taking the first person perspective recognise that any comprehensive exploration of consciousness must include the investigator examining his or her own experience. The beam of inquiry is turned back on itself, and the study of consciousness becomes a matter of self-exploration. (de Quincey, 2005, pp. 175-6)

When we are released from exclusively rational and sensory ways of communicating, we cease to exclude self or other from the processes of healing, learning and relating, and can exist in a 'continuum ontology' that honours and hears all forms of intelligence. All matter-energy is 'sentient, intentional and creative.' (p. 118).

## **Phenomenology and other contributing approaches**

*The act of writing is not a shift into abstraction but an archaeological excavation of consciousness... (Thompson, 1996, p. 42)*

With the subject/object dichotomy firmly blurred by quantum science, phenomenology, as the study of lived and fluid experience, both subjective and intersubjective, comes into its own. Husserl's focus on the role of the body of the earth as intrinsic to the 'life-world', the pulsing, sensory world that we experience, so intrinsic in fact that we dismiss it, also anchors

our more human body as intrinsic to experience. Embodiment is unavoidable. It is also primal, immediate and open-ended, flavours distasteful to a rational palate. While Husserl however, views consciousness as transcendent, Merleau-Ponty unites consciousness and body into a non-dualistic 'body-mind organism' (Balsekar, 1999) in much the same way as integrality does (Abram, 1996; Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Husserl, 1999). Everything is both ensouled matter and embodied soul, both sensuous and sentient (Abram, 1996; de Quincey, 2005). Such is 'the reciprocal nature of direct perception – the fact that to touch is also to feel oneself being touched, that to see is also to feel oneself seen.' (Abram, 1996, p. 69).

Van Manen (1990) describes hermeneutic phenomenology as '...the study of lived experience, ...of essences, ...of experiential meanings as we live them, ...as a search for what it means to be human and a poetizing activity.' (pp. 9-13). It is a process of giving voice to that which is often hidden or at least invisible to the naked eye; our intimate experiences and reflections, in a way that validates and substantiates that which would often remain silent and private. An aim of this work is to bring what is often silent and private into the heard and public realms, that the loud voices of rationalism and positivism be challenged by those more subtle songs of innocence and reflection, that a way be found to bring intimate and sacred experience into the more civic realms of education.

The postmodern view, entailing a radical reconstructivism through a radical deconstructivism (Nakagawa, 2000, p. 5) and further reiterated by the findings of quantum physics, asserts that there can be little separation between the researcher and the researched or for that matter the knower and the known. The dualistic notion that there are objective facts distinct from subjective perceptions is now challenged, as is the notion that order, reason and predictability prevail. Quantum physics contends, amongst other more complex notions, that everything, including human consciousness is interconnected and part of a unified whole, that matter is purely process rather than substance, and that there are no fundamental laws of knowledge but fields of information (Capra, 1991; Laszlo, 2007; Sheldrake, 2009). Hence, this study holds a relativist perspective, knowing that any attempt to either understand or represent experience is at best semi-true.

Causal and linear thinking, along with the insistence on understanding, are what block the Spirit at every turn. All understanding is partial and therefore a distortion. (Grant, 1996, p. 211)

This inquiry is also inspired by the integral, heuristic, critical and feminist approaches to research (Braud & Anderson, 1998). These approaches are, of themselves, apt descriptions of facets of the learning and healing process. Integral inquiry, in taking a holistic approach incorporates varied ways of knowing and depicting findings. It:

...recognises and honours alternative forms of knowing, doing and being, promotes change and transformation in all persons involved in or touched by the research project and... there is a strong emphasis on... transcending apparent dichotomies and contradictions, tolerance for ambiguity and ability to live with and comfortably hold paradoxes. (p. 258)

Braud (1998) challenges a solely rational perspective on validity, particularly in regard to the human sciences and suggests the consideration of other clues to validity such as tacit or bodily knowings, somatic or feeling states and mystical, aesthetic or intuitive insights, particularly when they work together to form a consistent impression. It is a knowing through becoming, a required methodology when the research topic is not empirically observable or rationally understandable.

The heuristic approach demands empathic immersion in and personal experience of the subject matter by the researcher. Many forms of knowing are harvested for the inquiry; however emphasis lies with 'the investigator's internal frame of reference, self searching, intuition and indwelling.' (Moustakas, 1990, p. 12). It is an intimate, passionate, open-ended and relentless self investigation where one comes to 'follow the subjective past ordinary levels of awareness, living the question internally in sources of being and non-being' (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 40).

A critical approach is emancipatory in that it is 'oriented to the unmasking of ideologies that serve to maintain the status quo by restricting the access of groups to the means of gaining knowledge, and through this to raising of consciousness or awareness about the material and structural conditions that oppress them.' (Bryant, Johnstone & Usher, 1997, p. 187).



This study explicitly challenges dualistic and inequitable relationship under five broad themes: teacher/student, counsellor/client, male/female, human/environment and sacred/profane, while still acknowledging intrinsic diversities of role, experience and meaning.

Traditionally, many of the ways of knowing and kinds of knowledge explored through this study have been considered more feminine and less legitimate. Until very recently, more receptive, intuitive or organic methodologies have been mostly, if not entirely, excluded from academia (Braud & Anderson, 1998; Neville, 2005). A feminist approach to research is concerned with embodiment, connectivity, relativism and the empowerment that comes about through the expression and validation of one's reality. Finding voice counteracts a culture of silence. Becoming public thwarts a norm of invisibility (Creswell, 1998; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Bryant et al., 1997). Research is as much a political and personal stance as an epistemological one.

### **An organic methodology**

*At our best moments we are always surprised... fundamentally we are never the authors of meaning but its agents—agents of, or witnesses for, soul in its desires for revelation. (Romanyshyn, 2007, p. 40)*

Phenomenological, integral, heuristic, critical and feminist approaches converge in the creation and development of a relatively new methodology that also contributes a number of distinct and unique aspects to bring research into a transrational, transpersonal, transpatriarchal era of sacred possibilities. Organic inquiry derives from a non-dualistic, participatory ontology and epistemology where everything is interconnected and interdependent, and learning arises through the empathy and resonance involved in becoming what one knows and knowing what one becomes. Spirit is primary and intention underlies everything. Exploration occurs through lending oneself to the research topic to do, with one, as it will. It is a volitional and yearned surrender to that which involves more than the small sight of the little self. Its purpose and prayer is the transformation of both researcher and reader into a more whole and loving version of self and perception of reality.

Hence organic inquiry is as much an act of service and liberation as investigation (Braud, 2004; Clements, 2004). As with deeper experiences of education or counselling, organic inquiry is a synthesis of healing, learning and spirituality and is therefore an appropriate methodology for an integral study of the teaching of healing and the healing of teaching.

Organic inquiry, as outlined by Clements (2004) involves a cyclical, three step process of preparation, inspiration and integration. Preparation may be intentional or spontaneous and is often likely both. It requires a simultaneous disbanding from that which is familiar and close while invoking the unknown and unrestrained. Inspiration occurs in the liminal space, in transition from one world to another and may have an initiatory quality to it. Insights and understandings are gleaned in non-rational and often non-sensory ways. The integration phase uses cognitive, intuitive, sensory and bodily aspects of self to incorporate and articulate such gleanings. Sometimes this occurs through being led to arise from slumber and write at, what is for me, an early hour. What would rationally seem a preposterous time to study becomes highly productive as the information flows freely, my mental faculties not yet excessively engaged. Memories of dreams and experiences not available to the recollections of a linear thought process become not only accessible but magnanimous in their validity. In trans-egoic ways of working where data are both real and imagined, understandings arise from the unfamiliar terrain of organic liminality rather than from under the decisive influence of personal will. Once back in rationality, transrational states are difficult to recall in accuracy or depth of meaning yet are no less valid or real than more measurable data (Braud, 2004; Clements, 2004, Hart, 2000a). Part of the discipline required of organic inquiry regards engaging the cognitive and personal will, only subsequent to those liminal and spiritual experiences, for the purposes of integration and articulation rather than manipulation. This results in a transformation of the psyche to more inclusive and expansive states of consciousness rather than the diminishment of a participatory cosmos to the reductionist capabilities of a linear rationality and an egoic control. Each cycle, in bringing about a deepening connection to self and cosmos, triggers further personal work in unresolved or incomplete areas of the psyche, lest the whole process come to a standstill in a fog of individual anxieties and grudges.

I find that part of the process of being available to more liminal states of consciousness involves the sense of 'bridge work'. Throughout the day, and often at night, I hover by a

bridge, a gateway to other realms and ways of perceiving. Most of the time I hover near the entrance to the bridge, on the rational side of the river in a preparatory process involving releasing the extraneous thoughts and feelings from my being to allow room for a richer diversity of experience and insight. At times I am drawn away from the water's edge as the dramas of life engulf me in their complexities and I feel myself far from this study and from myself. At other times I stand on the bridge at various depths of transition and awareness, an apprentice and conduit of possibilities and promise. Then there are the rare times I find myself over on the other bank. The bridge evaporates, in fact was never there. There is no possible translation and direct experience entirely dissolves any experiencer. Contrary to what might be assumed, there is, at times, not peace or bliss retrospective to such experience but a sense of horror at the recollection of total and complete extinguishment of any identity I can call my own. In truth, I do not even exist and as terrifying as that is, I am like a moth to the flame. My desire seeks dissolution even as my identity seeks affirmation. This study is ontologically anchored on that other nameless river bank yet gleans the vast majority of its data from time spent on the bridge itself, harvesting such information for the cognition and intuition required of integration, expression and embodied transformation. Simultaneously and conversely, it seems that one's cognitive and intuitive aspects become gradually integrated into the service of a greater self along with one's body and soul. The times spent on the bridge seem to increase in frequency and length.

Although I think that I know better, in truth, I still keep expecting transformation to happen from a zone of relative comfort and satisfaction, with a sense of accomplishment; an exercise in self-willed improvement. I am wrong. Time and again the process comes at me from left field and takes over before I know what is happening. There is nothing comforting about the dissolution that this research has tricked me into and yet there is no desire to turn back either. The profound and unreasoned love and peace I feel at times is also unparalleled in my life. This study has become, as my breath, ever-present. Whereas I initially thought I would write this thesis, I find that it is writing me, rewriting me, for the stronger, for the stiller, for the more overcome, joyful and sorrowful. Everything feeds into it like the sand pouring through an hour glass. Then there are short moments of reprieve before the whole thing is turned over and starts again.

The validity of such an immersing and altering inquiry lies in the consideration of its coherent, authentic and transformative qualities. Such legitimacy and soundness is 'personal and not necessarily generalisable or replicable' (Clements, 2004, p. 43). Its use to 'self, Spirit and service' (p. 43) for both researcher and reader is its primary worthiness as it is 'an approach that blends knowledge acquisition with the psycho-spiritual development' of those involved (Braud, 2004, p. 2). There is a sense of great congruence between this methodology and this researcher that has brought continual tears to my eyes since finding it on the blessed world wide web of interconnections and synchronicities. As I come to trust and ratify my own emerging ways of inquiring, so is it reflected back to me through the universal field of information (Laszlo, 2007), expressed in endless form. Transformation is what I am here for, my own and that of other. Sometimes there is an urgency that threatens to send me mad. Then there is the patience born of trust in the process that brings me back to a more steadied and centred state. Always now there is the passion for the healing, educating and loving of ourselves, our communities and our planetary home and cosmos.

## **Participatory knowing**

*The relation of psyche and cosmos is a mysterious marriage... (Tarnas, 2006, p. 491)*

Intrinsic and integral learning and research are not separate processes but exist within a universe of implicate order that is 'indivisible and unanalysable' (Bohm, 1980, p. 12). Genuine integrality in education means therefore not just the addition of various content to create a more 'holistic' curriculum, while still compartmentalised in process. It is the very process under question and its very unity with content and that very unity with the participants; students and teachers alike and the broader community and cosmos. It is learning through life where everything occurs at once: relationships, knowledge, skills, practice, movement, creativity, body, mind and soul; integrated and indivisible—in the classroom as in life. Bohm challenges our divisions between content and process:

Thus fragmentary content and fragmentary process have to come to an end together. What we have to deal with here is a one-ness of the thinking

process and its content, similar in key ways to the one-ness of observer and observed; that has been discussed in connection with relativity theory and quantum theory. Questions of this nature cannot be met properly while we are caught up, consciously or unconsciously, in a mode of thought which attempts to analyse itself in terms of a presumed separation between the process of thinking and the content of thought which is its product. (p. 18)

A methodology, let alone method, decided in advance and imposed onto the subject matter is anathema to a study of integrality. If research is the exploration and investigation of a knowledge area in the hope of fruitful discovery, then it is useful for the research process to occur in the way of the research content, leaning into it, listening for it, loving it and essentially being taught by it. The development of congruence is called for, which takes time, and involves an ever increasing resonance between process and content, subject and object, for they are truly inseparable. Such unfolding knowledge is personal, experiential and originates in the body, tacitly (Fisher, 2002; Gendlin, 2004; Hanrahan, 2003; Polanyi, 2009). Much of this research process involves the explicating of such knowledge through the immediacy of contemplation, of teaching and of writing. Research findings may be those implicitities, come into the light of conscious knowing.

The notion of tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 2009) brings content and process together through the process of embodiment. Tacit knowledge lies in the body; 'the ultimate instrument of all our external knowledge, whether intellectual or practical.' (p. 15). In coming to know something; 'we incorporate it in our body—or extend our body to include it—so that we come to dwell in it.' (p. 16). Such knowing incorporates a self connected to the Earth and cosmos. Such a self, while appreciating the intellectual and structural advancements of the modern era, is not fooled by the modernist concepts of advancement and progress that long ago left meaning behind, but carries a sense of the stillness that incorporates the rhythms, movements and significance of the unfoldment of life. Such a self allows for and honours those tacit forms of knowing in which 'we can know more than we can tell.' (p. 4).

Godel's theorem suggests that there will always be some questions produced from within a system that will not be able to be answered from within that system (Braud & Anderson, 1998; Gill, 2000; Hofstadter, 1999). Some questions that rationality and empiricism lead us

to may not be able to be responded to rationally and sensorily. De Quincey (2005) describes four kinds of knowing: philosophical knowing found through reasoning, scientific knowing found through sensory empiricism, shamanic through participatory feeling and mystical through transcendental direct experience. An excess of rationality has brought us to a glass ceiling where rationality alone shall not pass. Participatory feeling and transcendent direct experience along with a suitable balance of rationality are needed in a study of integrality. It involves the cognitive process of bringing tacit awareness into explicit articulation (Gill, 2000).

Tacit and explicit knowings interact in ways that deepen both. While the process of inference, needed for explicit conceptual knowledge is both reversible and repeatable, the process of integration, required for tacit knowing, is not (Polanyi, 2009). The transformative process; embodied and integrative by nature, is neither reversible nor specifically repeatable, hence its intimacy, power and uniqueness. Tacit, bodily and non-sensory knowing anchors more explicit forms and disrupts the modernist belief in an objective and cognitive disparity between knower and known. The nature of connection, indwelling and embodiment is that of transrational and personal knowing, evidenced through the eventual development of embodied skill; integrated knowing that emerges through our expressions and activities, changes gestated in our interiority and born through our behaviours (Gill, 2000).

Such a cyclical and organic sequence of events lends itself to a process philosophy, one that regards an appreciation for and perspective of process not only as the most relevant way to view and understand the world we live in but also as the most 'pervasive, characteristic and crucial feature of reality.' (Rescher, 1996, p. 28). The cosmic interrelation of all things renders the concepts of panexperientialism, non-locality or 'action at a distance' and also, therefore, non-sensory perception as both relevant and plausible (Griffin et al., 1993; Whitehead, 1967a). Being both an epistemological and ontological approach, it also brings about the alignment and integration between content and process which Bohm writes of. The 'self' which has always proved a difficult 'substance' to pin down or define, flows more easily, if not necessarily more understandably, within a process view of reality where events occur relationally, everything is interconnected and each of us are 'drops of experience,

complex and interdependent' (Whitehead, 1978, p. 18) in an ontology of change, creativity and becoming.

Erich Fromm (1978) writes along similar lines as he distinguishes between the modes of having and being or substance and process. In reference to learning, he writes that in 'having' mode, one attempts to 'hold on' to what one has learnt, the consequence being that 'the content does not become part of one's own individual system of thought, enriching and widening it.' (p. 37). Holding onto something condemns both the holder and the beheld to remain separate from each other as one cannot hold onto what one has become. The 'being' mode, involves one in a 'relatedness to the world... occupied with the topic... receiv(ing) and respond(ing) in an active, productive way... affected and changed' by their learning (p. 38). Learning in the being mode occurs when process and content come together and results in one finding oneself experiencing life differently.

As the oral and participatory traditions of indigenous peoples around the globe diminish and the phonetic or abstract literacy of the modern world becomes more widespread, the being mode of reciprocity and relationship is 'transferred from the depths of the surrounding life-world to the visible letters of the alphabet.' (Abram, 1996, p. 138). Integrality would have us come alive with nature and the word, dialoguing and participating with both. This study is just such a discourse, weaving together the learnings of earth, spirit, the classroom, counselling and living rooms. Such an autopoietic and indivisible process of integrating and embracing wholeness requires whole data. I am that data and its interpreter, not that which I think, feel or record but the whole of me woven into every page. I am on offer here and the authenticity and trustworthiness expected of this kind of research is to be found in my voice and presence. I am whole amidst my brokenness, constant within my process, real unto myself and flawed even as I try not to be. This is an organic and local study in integral practice. A focus on such traditionally understood terms as validity, reliability or generalisability displays a bias toward more scientific methods that consequently denies the legitimacy of more overtly subjective and non-measurable approaches (Denzin, 2001).

'Writing down oral (or felt) stories renders them separable' (Abram, 1996, p. 183). The experience once held personally and in my body, is transferred to paper and public scrutiny. For the sacredness to remain, I must continue my connection with the material, that fear

not disband my truth from my words. Yet in so doing I become visible, vulnerable. To stay connected is to feel the ceaseless pangs of separation and the risk of loss. Yet an ontological position of participatory, integral reality renders space and time as one and transcendable. The traditional time lag between collection of data and their interpretation closes to a relative immediacy of experience, knowing and embodied expression. That there is a crisis of representation in which the lived experience cannot be directly depicted is assumed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). 'Research that keeps soul in mind must attend to the feeling of mourning for what is left behind in our saying and knowing.' (Romanyshyn, 2007, p. 11). Integrality is mostly a wordless, let alone textless state. It is only in moments of its arising that such a phenomenon is accessible for exploration. The act of writing usually entails a linearity that seems to separate space and time and in so doing obscures a sensual, aware Earth from human insight. In an immediate, participatory relationship with self and other, 'the present itself expands to become an enveloping field of presence' (Abram, 1996, p. 203) of both cosmic and earthly proportions. Integrality would have me simultaneously write and remain consciously bonded to an intelligent and enfolding field of presence, never straying too far from my immediate sensory and non-sensory experience.

At these times, the intentional sentience and sheer power of life surrounds a 'me' that feels itself to be a clumsy limb of such a force. That we have come to see ourselves as:

...an isolated intelligence located inside the material body can only be understood in relation to the forgetting of the air, to the forgetting of this sensuous but unseen medium that continually flows in and out of the breathing body, binding the subtle depths within us to the fathomless depths that surround us. (p. 255)

And so the words must come through me as does the breath, connecting me to that which is beyond and yet me, that the crisis of representation be as minor as possible, that this study 'say what it says only as what it talks about also functions in the very saying' (Gendlin, 1997, p.xi). Viewed from this epistemological position, rigour might come to be viewed as the attempt to contemplate whilst in communion through keeping soul in mind, and truth might come to be seen, not as abstract fact or final conclusion but as a fluid and reciprocal quality of relationship with self and other (Abram, 1996; Romanyshyn, 2007). When there is



mutuality between topic and method of inquiry, the 'congruence runs so deep that the topic becomes the method through which the topic is pursued.' (Oberg, 2003, p. 126).

## Method

*You may not divide the seamless coat of learning. (Whitehead, 1967b, p. 11)*

When method is prioritised over subject matter, both are diminished. Topics become more simplistic and linear in order to fit into acceptable practices of investigation, held ransom to academia's loyalty to known and comfortable procedures. Method comes to be a way to regulate and control the impact a subject area might have on the researcher and academy, therefore diffusing the uncertainty and anxiety that comes with the process of personal or institutional transformation (Romanyshyn, 2007). When method is primary, it mutes the intimate dialogue between topic and researcher and thus deadens the investigation. Just as modernity has silenced and inverted the cosmos-human relationship, a principle focus on method over subject alters the direction of guidance and leadership from topic-researcher to researcher-topic. Worse still, 'method as technique, then, is designed to replace the presence of the researcher as subject.' (p. 209). My role is not to diminish the topic into an anthropocentric and rationally palatable form, but to open myself to its learnings as best I can, be changed by it, and in the process, conduit a little of its complexity and wisdom onto paper for further human inclusion and integration. My presence is my truest tool and, at its most vivid, my most accurate way of encountering the topic.

In the case of integrality, such presence brings about a flow of information or a 'poetics of the research process' through 'attending to the images in the ideas... the dreams in the reasons... the myths in the meanings... the work of knowing as a journey of return... (as) one comes to know what one has already known without knowing it.' (pp. 12-13). It is a reclaiming and like all reclaiming, must include grief for the time spent in the land of amnesia and for what was once had and lost, known and neglected, forgotten and now redemptively remembered (Romanyshyn, 2007).

A poetics of the research process involves metaphor and rhythm, both of which attempt to leave what is unsaid as palpable as what is said. A study of integrality is as much about non-expression as expression, as much about non-doing as doing and as much about what is known as what can never be known. Metaphor brings process into the light through making the invisible visible through the use of image, while allowing the arising information to remain free of the certainty and linearity that would nullify its extension into the imagination of possibilities. Rhythm leaves pause for feeling to arise, contributes silence for the content to have impact and generates a melody that allows the topic to hold some sway, that writer and reader may sway along with it (Romanyshyn, 2007). Method that does not organically bloom forth from the direct experience of the topic is difficult when the topic is one of direct experience and convergence. Thus the methods integrality would have me practice are those that keep soul in mind through attending to my bodily felt sense, those non-sensory encounters, my sadness and my peace, what drives me and what holds me to itself. Synchronicities, intuition and guidance play a large part as do periods of active thinking and writing, interspersed with periods of non-directed thinking and writing, where the thoughts and sentences emerge of their own accord, leading me along their paths of knowledge and mayhem. Much time is spent waiting in contemplative stance, with welcoming heart and quiet mind for learnings to arise.

Intuitive and embodied writing, epistemologies of the heart and body respectively (Anderson, 2001, 2004), conspire to cultivate an ethical and congruent stance.

Misrepresentation in research mostly involves an abstraction from self where expectations, demands and earlier unmet needs are projected and obligated onto other, be they human, animal or text. Intuitive inquiry seeks a healing of self and the world through a topic that has claimed the researcher through her wounds and passion. It is a slow and processual approach, where one cannot get ahead of oneself for the sake of outcomes but must continually replace their trust into the hands of the topic to illuminate the path, one resonant and transformative step at a time (Anderson, 2004; Romanyshyn, 2007).

Embodied writing occurs from within an experience, writing to a topic rather than about it (Anderson, 2001). The subject becomes my primary reader and that to which I am accountable. As I stay anchored to the internal ocean of my bodily realm, dismembered parts are remembered, hence the discomfort; and re-absorbed, hence the coming together

of oneself that this work necessitates. Reincorporating lost, pained or wise parts of self requires help, particularly when courage, connection or insight are lacking. I make use of first rate mentors, teachers and healers on a regular basis for supervision and feedback. I participate daily in meditative and contemplative practices for balance, clarity and a quietness of mind that might allow for more conscious listening. I ask for help and guidance from those and that which is around me; non-human, visible and invisible, sometimes many times a day. I give thanks for the multitude of blessings I continue to receive on a daily basis. These are the ways I attempt ethical research and practice: by never losing sight of the nebulous, mysterious and wondrous unfoldment of who I am, what I do and that which I arise from.

As I reclaim and dwell in the wisdom and truth of my very own body, I learn to honour an inner and existential reality, that has, for so long, seemed the contracted property of others, but now expands to include the body of the Earth and beyond, in a 'field of resonance' that has no bounds (Anderson, 2001). As that occurs, my urge to project, impose, deny, hide or embellish my own experience and reality seems to dissipate and I have the chance to present a valid organic study in integral practice simply because it is a worthy expression of a self's participation in a process of transformation toward wholeness. Method becomes, not what I do but how I do it and therefore also who I am. For research to be ethical, it is becoming clearer that I must not only become one with topic but with method, that the resistance that hides repressed stories and concealed agendas, from myself, let alone another, evaporates in the embodied transformation of the researcher and the transparency of integrality itself (Braud & Anderson, 1998; Romanynshyn, 2007). This is my quest.

Which animal-made trail signals my direction into the bush today? What tree greets me and whispers its wisdoms? From where on the bookshelf does the next call come? Which next groupwork experience winds its way into my life and thesis? What is it that wants to be written in this moment? When is it time to stop because the words have lost their meaning and the heart its purpose? When does alertness and desire arise again, returning pen and paper to hand and lap? When does another log go on the fire to warm the room to a contemplative temperature? The smell of chicken manure emanating from my shirt... the

thump of kangaroo feet on the ground ahead of me... to be loved by the land that I love and that apprentices me into the ways of integrality day by day....

## Chapter Three

### Empathy, Love, Desire

The following two chapters explore the six interrelated elements that have arisen as personal guides into those encounters with a more integral experience of life, learning and healing. In truth, the immersion into any one of these elements seems to bring the others into reach. Like facets of the one diamond, any singular reflection allows much of the other aspects to transparently shine through. Sometimes immersion is difficult, with much resistance and fear arising, and involves unwavering intention and focus. At other times, it is as simple as standing on the shore and waiting for the white wash to greet me. Either way, it makes for an ocean of complexity even as it is so very simple. Empathy, love and desire combine to produce an eros of the ordinary that willingly makes for the adoption of space, time and participation. Conversely, space, time and participation with both, connects one with the cosmos in ways that allow empathy, love and desire to arise naturally and obviously. No other responses resonate quite as well. Integrality itself cannot be willed. It may strike me at times like a thunderbolt, unannounced and unrelenting but it is also as timid and overlooked as a feral deer. These elements are both my research data and benchmarks. They are the foundational experiences and information that sustain the ongoing exploration of integrality and are also my way of keeping the door ajar to greet this form of consciousness arising within me, with its deeper ways of knowing and wiser ways of seeing.

#### Empathy

*The potential for connecting is rooted in a wholeness that already exists.*

*(Bache, 2008, p. 150)*

*We are human only in contact, and conviviality, with what is not human.*

*(Abram, 1996, p. 22)*

Empathy asks for an expanded vision and compassion for it is a multi-faceted task. The student, in their anxiety and desire for the familiar, cries out for validation of their confusion and a fixing of their woes. The deeper psyche of that same student, which is pushing for this learning crisis and subsequent resolution, requires unconditional backing and support. And the facilitator requires empathy for themselves as it is impossible to witness the struggle of another and not feel both their angst and one's own parallel existential struggle between the comfort of the known and the hunger for the unknown or long forgotten.

Empathy asks that I thus be as a midwife, leading the group into intensified learning pains and the disorientation that comes with unfamiliar territory for the sake of new life, a greater perspective and more thorough understanding of the complexities involved. And just as a baby requires ongoing care, so must the empathy be continual because even at the point of learning, whether gradual or instant, the rigid personality of the student will feel that it has been defeated and will require validation of its grief and loss. The healed and more peaceful and accepting self that emerges through a genuine learning crisis will need encouragement and support in a human society that, for the most part, denies its very existence and invalidates its wisdom. And as facilitator, the part that wants to flop down in exhaustion after the birth must stay awake to its own interior struggles and the response and ongoing learning of the larger group.

As facilitator, I am on the line. Empathy requires the acceptance of all that is occurring in the classroom. It is inclusive and immediate, denying nothing of itself or another. It is a terribly vulnerable experience walking into a new room of students or group participants with an empty head, reliant on making contact with the field of energy in the room to know how to start. I find that having empathy for myself and my fear seems to be the only way to render this process bearable, as I am naturally introverted and not particularly comfortable with large groups of people. Students often seem to assume that, as the teacher, my head is full of information to pass on to them. That could not be further from the truth. While there are certain topics and themes that I certainly assume responsibility for covering at some stage, this seems a distant and irrelevant point as the first class begins. What is more true and has been for some time is that I find my head becoming quite empty at the start of a new course, so much so that I feel little or no connection with or even understanding of the subject matter until the morphic field of the group (Sheldrake, 2009); that energetic form

that holds the hopes, fears, wisdom and potentiality of the group, begins to slowly convey what is needed, how to present it and in what order. Then I find myself reconnecting with the material as it comes through, excited and passionate as if it was the first time I am hearing it and often it is. Such a field shows me what the students already know but also where the learning edge is and how to best greet it, that more useful and integral 'patterns of organisation' or ways of being may be explored and thus implemented. If much of what is thought, felt and acted upon is held in the energy field around and within a person or group and thus operates habitually, then through experimentation, connection and repetition, more constructive characteristics or responses may become part of such a field, thus becoming more probable and prevalent (Bache, 2008; Sheldrake, 1995).

Each time I teach a class, I learn to trust this process more. When I find myself thinking that this time I really trusted, I find that I trust more the next time. When I look back at where I hovered in the previous class, it becomes clear that I was still treading water and that it was fear that stopped me surrendering further. The fears of my dissolution and of my authority go hand in hand. Both occur as I yield to spirit. Then there are the added fears of doing so in front of a group of students as well as the impact of such a process. At times it is very powerful and, in an instant, can propel the group to dimensions unknown and unplanned for, even if they may be hungered for at another level.

Classes like this can be profoundly invigorating, terrifying and transformative, creating ripples of change throughout a student's life. Not everyone in the room will be at the right time and place in their being to catch the wave. Therefore it is vitally important to normalise and validate everyone, whether their experience is one of fear, stuckness, pain, resentment, day dreaming, peace, inspiration, healing, profound awakening or anything else. All are valid human responses to powerful and confronting energies and next class it may be quite different individuals catching the wave. For a student who is struggling, self judgement regarding their capacity to incorporate today's events will only undermine their learning journey tomorrow. Fear, resistance and the multitude of ways they are expressed must be attended to and engaged as relevant responses, often evidence of the sensitivity towards what is going on in the room and the risks involved. Mearns and Cooper (2005) call this 'multidirectional partiality', the capacity to listen, acknowledge and connect with the many

different aspects of the student including the more inflexible or harsh parts, a necessary factor when working at relational depth.

Empathy might be thought of as a form of resonance, reverberations occurring between individuals or within a group, in a way that produces a connection that may aid learning at many levels, both conscious and unconscious. When the depth in me resonates with the depth in another, a nakedness occurs that far exceeds any physical nakedness in terms of vulnerability and intimacy. In such moments of transparency, my own doubts and self hatred can emerge with startling speed, catching me off guard and propelling me back into separation and hiding before I have even made a conscious choice one way or the other. At other times I have the presence and awareness to deliberately and silently calm myself in order not to internally flee the intimacy and beauty of the moment. Many times I find myself propelled into a depth of communion and breadth of insight that is initiated by the learning needs of a student or group. These experiences show me a more integral and courageous way of being and living. I need my students as much as they need me. More truly and more potently, it may be that the living universe desires all of us in its journey as a spontaneously evolving, self-organising system (Bache, 2008; Mathews, 2003).

Realising the universe as a self-referent being brings forth change in the human psyche (Berry, 1999; Mathews, 2003). To be lovingly referent to another requires tenderness and intimacy. To be lovingly referent to a non-human other also requires humility and care. This entails a 'willingness to transcend self interest' (Pittman, 1993 p. 209) in order to come unstuck from the colonising, patriarchal attitudes which we have all, both men and women, benefited from with our unsustainable and lavish, first world lifestyles. When our anthropocentric and ego-centred education systems are geared to maintaining current modernist and economic structures through training students in a dismantling and hierarchical attitude to each other, the Earth and even outer space, the first and ongoing step must always be the development of desensitisation; to self and other, to suffering and love (Berry, 1999).

Turning this around then, may be as simple as providing truly sensitive and intimate arenas for learning about self and other, arenas where the slightest nuance of discomfort or concern is picked up and considered with respect and validation. This is not done with a



view to pandering to distracting quirks and demanding quarrels but to offer a quality of tenderness, esteem and care that may be internalised and then explicated by students as a way for them to attend to themselves, each other, the Earth and beyond (Hart, 2000b; Noddings, 2003; Thorne, 1991). Being universe-referent is paradoxically equivalent to being self-referent in the most intrinsic of ways. We are conjoined and on a more conscious level, we become part of what we love and what we love becomes part of us in ways that cannot be denied or extinguished and so we begin to live as 'an intimate presence within a meaningful universe.' (Berry, 1999, p. 15).

Nothing escapes the role of intimacy. There is such a thing as considering the curvature of space as an intimacy of the universe with every being in the universe. (p. 98)

To cope, let alone thrive, with intimacy requires as much self acceptance as I can muster on any given day. Acceptance asks of me to deny no part of myself, neither the ugly parts I would hide in shame nor the beautiful parts I would hide in fear. I must move intently, transparently and unrushed in my internal processes and therefore outward expression, in order to not deny any part of who I am and subsequently any part of that which is outside of me and consequently all of everything. Strong are the habits of disconnection. Self-acceptance, a remedy for disconnection, seems to require relationship, relationship with myself primarily but also relationship with other. My own journey has often been witnessed by the compassionate presence of another and, particularly when I have had little compassion for myself, it has seemed that the other has been needed for movement to occur. Additionally, the apparent separateness and solidity of the other can be like a gravitational centre for the one who flounders in either new or old material. An anchored boat is safe to fully experience the motion, sounds and sights of the sea and weather, knowing it is held within a certain radius.

There are also times when the entrenchment of an individual or group is grave in its intensity. Then I am called upon to unite with the states of compassion, gratitude and tenderness even more intently lest my own ingrained, adversarial tendencies collide with another's and a battle be upon us. Warfare is cruel and hurtful, screaming of the agony of displacement and disorientation and often masked by a false confidence and assertive

words flimsily hiding aggressive intentions. Entrenched fear and rage are powerful forces. They are, at times, willing to fight to the death, taking their host down with them. Compassion, gratitude and tenderness come easy when all is well. I can be hard pressed to find such qualities when the turbulence attempts to block any movement in the room. At times such as these, I must find them for myself; compassion for my own dread of conflict and hostility, gratitude for yet another opportunity to feel the yearning behind the rage, tenderness as if I were my own sweet and calming lover. It is only these feeling states that seem to grant me the strength to speak up when my own entrenchments would have me shut down in numb silence and vacant repression. It is the time to transparently share what I feel going on in the room, allowing each individual to take meaning from it or not. The silence of denial is not a comforting one. It can be excruciating but I do my best to not do battle and sometimes must retreat, not in presence but in action, not in thought but in words, not in companionship but in point proving. Sometimes another student will step in where I am unable. Sometimes the conflicted one will become more generous with their struggle. Sometimes a tea and toilet break is apt but works better when it arises from loving truce rather than panic, resignation or bitterness.

## Love

*...we are bereft in our culture of an adequate psychology and philosophy of the heart, and therefore also of the imagination. Our hearts cannot apprehend that they are imaginatively thinking hearts, because we have so long been told that the mind thinks and the heart feels and that imagination leads us astray from both. (Hillman, 1992, p. 6)*

*Autopoietic structures have definite boundaries, such as semipermeable membranes, but the boundaries are open and connect the system with almost unimaginable complexity to the world around it... It appears that the greater an organism's autonomy, the more feedback loops required both within the system and in its relationship to the environment. This is the autopoietic paradox. The paradox implies that, in a sense, the individual is an illusion. (Briggs & Peat, 1990, pp. 154-5)*

*No better love than love with no object, no more satisfying work than work with no purpose. (Rumi, 1995, p. 279)*

Love requires no overt action in the classroom. Love is a state of being rather than doing and will often be evidenced by what is not occurring rather than what is. Love leaves plenty of space; space between thoughts, between comments, between activities. Love is never in a rush and knows that the quality of the interactions far exceeds the quantity of the content in importance. Simultaneously, love knows that the relevant content will be covered, all in good time. Love has faith that learning will happen and trust that what needs to be covered will be. Love is centred enough to be able to cover all the institutional obligations and curriculum requirements without becoming slave to any of it.

Fear is the profoundest of paralyzers and love its only true dissolver. For love not only heals what is in its path but transcends paths altogether. The love of any thing may transport one to a Love beyond every thing. Such may be the definition of true love. At times it is only the promise or faint hope of love that keeps one on any kind of sound path at all. Sometimes clinging with one's fingernails is the best one can do, trust too strong a word for the faint glimmer of distant anticipation of better sojourns. At times like these the teacher in me must hold the light of hope for the student in me or another or both. There are many parallel processes occurring in the seemingly mundane classroom with its cream walls, scratched desks and assortment of odd chairs.

For me to love another: the student, requires love of myself. With that comes my authority, an unapologetic stance in personal leadership, my relentless focus on the possibility of growth and learning, an ongoing pursuit of the truth, my frequent tentativeness because I know so little of what I speak. The results of love in the classroom are 'often intrinsic... a challenge in an insecure and immature society that seems addicted to seeking external affirmations of worth.' (Dobson, 2008, p. 77). Hence the love must be tangible enough to counter the need for more overt confirmations of value, and affirming enough to attend to the criticisms students often experience from those around them who would choose for them to stay as they are. Love rocks the boat.

An important aspect of my participation, as teacher, is with the field of energy and it begins long before the first class. The unified or morphic field responds to both intention and

repetition (Bache, 2008; Sheldrake, 2009) more than anything else and my focus, purpose and love begin as soon as I am hired by an institution and given the name of the subject I will teach that semester. I believe that my intention for the learning space to be a positive and transformative one allows for just that. The love and service that I hold and offer allow, to some degree, for the space to be experienced as safe and fertile by the students, and perhaps for our work together to begin before we physically meet. It is extremely useful, if not necessary, for love and transformation to go hand in hand as real learning can be a frightening and risk-taking venture on foreign ground. Empathy can carry one some of the way when one's will alone would not choose it. Love can grease the way until one's own love of learning and quest for truth become stronger than one's resistance to change and attachment to the known. Believing that I can influence the field of consciousness around a given class or learning space may sound like a highly arrogant notion yet it is just the opposite. Arrogance begets separation and it requires respect and love for connection with the field to occur. And occur it does, as my constant companion over the weeks and months that follow, as it changes me as well as my students. When a class finishes, there is a letting go and I find myself experiencing a lightening or release as if a presence has moved on or a connection disconnected. Sometimes there is a sense of relief with the disconnection if the group field has been a particularly heavy or challenging one. Other times there can be grief as what we created together lifted all our consciousnesses to a more expansive place and I feel my own level of awareness and communion shrink back to their baseline state as the group field falls away.

Reclaiming seems to be a major part of learning and healing (Cornfield, 1993). One reclaims the knowings of the soul that were denied for so many reasons, the wounds that felt too hard to inhabit at the time of their searing, the rage that one judges oneself for, the strengths that one has grown into along the way and then rejected for their promise, the sensitivities that bring about the sense of vulnerability and humanness amidst the truth of oneself. Reclaiming asks of me to stop running, chasing, striving, achieving, overcoming. These activities so often take me further away from myself, all the while appearing so productive and diligent. Reclaiming requires me to stand still, sooth the busyness and make the space and time for the hidden to emerge, for the unfelt to be felt, for the denied to be given voice. At times there is enormous resistance to stillness because so often what arises

first is the pain, denied and deflected for so many years, lying just below the surface. It may only be the whitewash ahead of a much larger wave of purpose and peace but like whitewash, it is cold, chaotic and destabilising, making it far more tempting to run back to shore than dive into the ocean within. The ocean within is in constant movement, disclosing endless treasures and mysteries. It satisfies boundless curiosity and exploration yet is still and quiet, providing peace and solace. It lies beyond space and time even as the body functions in a world completely bound by the cyclic dimensions of nature. It may be at the crossroads between these two realities that the sweetness of existence lies, in the referencing of one to the other, the joy of oneness and agony of separation. It seems that the human psyche may need to know what something is not, to know what it is.

Much of my own learning involves loving the hidden, dulled, disembodied female into vibrant life and expression. She has lain dormant within me and so many others for so very long and I must love her in myself and in other to bring balance to this plane. Having a female body does not, of its own accord, entail loving the feminine. Often it results in the opposite. Many aspects of our cultural and personal selves are not only enforced by other. They are also sustained through our own implicit endorsement (Gramsci, 1971). Bringing balance by loving the feminine requires giving time, space, voice and respect to her. Intelligence and adulthood have come to be so identified with reductionism and the distancing of self from cosmos that is the malady of these times. It can be difficult to utter other forms of insight that might entail wisdom that does not require logic, knowing that does not utilise thought or care that does not entail pity. The masculine, without the feminine, is a half-crazed, riotous tyranny that hurts itself as much as it hurts the other, all the while claiming victory. Masculine culture, like most feminist theory '(does) not tell us about the deep inner misery of men. It (does) not tell us the terrible terror that gnaws at the soul when one cannot love.' (hooks, 2004, p. 4) and other reclaiming that men must also do.

It is little wonder, then, that love is avoided to various degrees, for it is an ache as much as a gift. It leaves one open to loss, exposed and vulnerable to the pain of severance like nothing else can. The more love, the more intensified are both contentment and yearning, two experiences actively operating in the integral classroom. A degree of contentment allows for a further sinking into life's quest and 'those vast issues ...haunting the fullness of existence' (Whitehead, 1968, p. 108) as desire no longer signifies inadequacy or inferiority. Hence the

notions of self love, yearning, exploration and discovery work together and cyclically. The act of accepting oneself is intrinsically woven into the search for more of oneself. Teresa de Avila, a sixteenth century mystic and nun, called it the 'wound of love' (Lanzetta, 2008). The wound of love is not 'self-activated' (p. 237) and therefore cannot be self-relieved. It both heals and transforms pain as well as fuelling the inner voyage to an embodied relationship of 'mutuality and intimacy... a deconstructive process simultaneously contain(ing) within it a creative co-emergence' (p. 227) with the divine. It brings pain and gratitude together, in much the same way as childbirth and other creative expressions. The learning process too is a creative expression through a process of deconstruction and reconstitution. In the case of Teresa de Avila:

The relationship between an intimate, participatory relationship with the divine and the contemplative process that reverses her gendered oppression are intrinsically tied together. (p. 228)

My own process feels to me a cyclical one of becoming more of myself, a self that seems to develop 'answerable to an innate image.' (Hillman, 1996, p. 4), a self I have been waiting for and innately recognise as she emerges more fully and yet that I consciously do not know until she arrives. Correspondingly, I feel that I become less myself through becoming more of everything, not so much a part of everything but actually everything. Boundaries lessen and a sense of unity seems to emerge that complements the mounting recognition of a unique and precious human life. This process always seems to me to be fuelled by love, that of a loving universe and a respondently loving soul, by a sense of meaning and relationship far greater than the mind can grasp but that the sentient heart and body intrinsically and intensely know. It may be relationship that is ontologically primary (de Quincey, 2005).

Theories of attachment (Bowlby, 1990; James, 1994) would agree with the notion of relationship as both epistemologically and ontologically primary. When an infant is conceived and born there is a relationship between it and the primary caregiver(s) that is innate and crucial to not only its physical survival but to the formation of its very sense of self. The bond may be loving, secure, negligent, ambivalent, destructive or all or some of the above but there is always relationship, one that we take cue from in learning how to feel

towards both ourselves and each other. Love will rub against such formations of the individual human self, offering alternatives to an inherent egoic loneliness.

Love is the possibility, and indeed maybe the principal fabric, in a cosmos that seems to be intersubjective and interconnected at every level (de Quincey, 2005; Laszlo, 2007), a cosmos that does away with the modernist myth that we are all alone on a dead planet in an even deader universe. This is the myth of the abandoned child come survivor, or of Adam and Eve flung out of their garden home, destitute and vulnerable. Myths of survivalism justify the ravages of an exploitative society and mask a loneliness and bewilderment too great to mention. Yet recent explorations in science, culture, philosophy and psychology (Bohm, 1980; de Quincey, 2005; Fisher, 2002; Gebser, 1985; Laszlo, 2007) show the modern mind another way to know itself and the cosmos, bringing it back into the folds of what many indigenous traditions have never lost, back into the warm embrace of Life, the loving bond with all that is. To perceive such a co-creative and intimate sense of reality requires other forms of knowing than those of rationality, those which the bulk of the education system focuses on and in so doing misses out on most of everything. Other forms of knowing might come under the umbrella term of love. Many of these alternative forms of knowing are aided by silence. In the classroom, silence allows for the eventual expression to arise from the wordlessness of communion with self or other, rather than from distance distracted by verbosity.

There are days that grief and anxiety writhe below the surface of my daily existence with relentless monotony. Calamity feels terribly close and sorrow is ever-present. Then I bring that into the classroom, my own and the planet's desperation. It may or may not colour what happens in the room but denying my experience has little place in an integral classroom. Transparency is required. Everything is on offer, not indulged in but made silently present for possible use. Offering everything is the only stance I find that alleviates some of the anxiety and pain, a non-religious version of 'not my will but Thine'. Control is an impossibility and the best I can do is offer myself for dissolution and procurement.

Love is the great dissolutioner, hence the terror that arises in the face of it. The process of transformation may trigger the same feelings as the trauma of persecution. The fear of disintegration (Kohut, 2009), 'an unnameable dread associated with the threatened

dissolution of a coherent self.’ (Kalsched, 1996, p. 1) lies shallowly below the surface of everyday life. Often when I think I want love, I know not of what I speak. I want comfort, security, familiarity. These things are not love but blind attempts at false replications. Love is a form of resonance, a steadily flowing stream or torrential downpour that carries one, outwards and inwards, along a river that eventually claims everything on its journey to the ocean, all the while already the ocean. There is no distinction between a tributary and its sea.

Just as the sense of separateness from all that is, is not what the personal egoic self does but what it is (Wilber, 1981), love might be seen as the brave act in remedy of such a cause for it is the reaching out beyond one’s personal separate self, for the good of another and therefore of the whole (Peck, 1978). It is the bridge between the personal and transpersonal, hence its status as a spiritual practice. According to Indian yogic traditions there are four main methods of self inquiry and spiritual development: bakti (devotion), karma (work), raja (meditation) and jnana (knowledge) (Maharshi, 1985). Bakti, the love of the spiritual teacher or guru is the one that I find myself most resonant with. There are times in the day that I live for my guru, when the words that come through me as I teach or counsel are his and when I cannot distinguish between my love for him, his love for me or the Love that is Every Thing and No Thing. Grace.

## Desire

*This person is yearning. It’s not obvious.*

*Yearning is an exquisitely private or secret condition.*

*What is yearned is true. To yearn is to see.*

*Yearning is the natural remedy for discontent, agitation, non-specific grievance, prickly sensibility and similar modern ailments.*

*Yearning is a well tended hope which has ripened slowly into a sweet sensuous prayer.*

*Yearning brings poise to the imagination, a pleasant momentum to consciousness and an angel who plays a lute which drowns out the noise of the traffic.*

*(Leunig, 2002)*



*I have begun to have a relationship with the universe more profound than anything I've ever experienced before. (student comment in Bache, 2008, p. 209)*

Part of my developing friendship with desire has involved a moving away from externally oriented directives to that which emerges interiorly and may surprise me. Once the self is included and therefore inclusive, my quest for knowledge becomes passionate. Passionate knowing is what Belenky et al. (1986) view as knowing born of connection, with self as the 'instrument of understanding' (p. 141). When self is engaged and in use, ordinary life becomes the source of learning and therefore the teacher, which is why it becomes so important to use the students' lives as the bedrock that the curriculum springs from. Passionate, connected knowing, born of joining and therefore eros, knowing that is intrinsically embodied, is then birthed rather than separate knowing, where the information is mental, the education is disembodied and the whole process is externalised and fragmented, bringing about regulation, numbness and the silencing of the self. (Belenky et al., 1986; hooks, 2010; Miller et. al., 2005; Palmer, 1998, 2004; Pryer, 2001).

For true learning and healing, it seems that desire is necessary. Hence much of the process of teaching and counselling might be taken up with the gestation and birthing of desire, something not to be feared or denied because it is arational, bodily or because so many times before it has been disappointed or betrayed.

We have been raised to fear the yes within ourselves, our deepest cravings.  
(Lorde, 2007, p. 57)

Hence it calls for much empathy and love to coax desire out of hiding. Desire is fuelled by eros, the life force, the liberating force. Deep forms of learning and healing 'involve the ecstatic abandonment of self to the Other, the continual losing and finding of self in the Other, the intimate, sensual engagement of self with the world.' (Pryer, 2001, p. 86). Eros, as a timeless force, presents us with our mortality each time we surrender to it or are overcome by it. Little wonder it is denied or pornographied. And yet an awareness of my temporality also engenders a connection to that which is timeless. Eros persists and when it arrives or is permitted entry, the ruptures between the revered and mundane, the transcendent and immanent, between earth and sky, mind and matter, female and male,

are diminished. I can see that 'the tree exists for the sake of its own being' (p. 151) and I love and desire it all the more.

Desire is a double-edged sword. Longing mostly carries the seeds of its antithesis, the terror of attainment. Hence the quest for knowledge, understanding, peace or any other such matter must be gently encouraged and reassured along the way. The fear of fulfilment as well as the seeking must be validated and comforted with understanding and acceptance. Fear is seen as weak, as a sign that one doesn't really want what one says one wants or that one is not up to the task at hand. Fear may actually be a sign of wisdom, an intrinsic knowing that as one becomes receptive to what it is that is sought rather than using one's seekingness to push it away, that it will transform one's very being, and life and the world will never look the same again. Desire also triggers unworthiness and past humiliations. Being a learner is fraught with minefields. Modern culture shames desire and even more so, shames an incapacity to satisfy it. Shame can get in the way of peace. It may take a sense of one's innocence to facilitate levels of reunification with desire. Persuading students' desires to surface from the trenches of fear and shame into the public arena of the classroom requires the teacher in me to accept my own fear and shame, coaxing myself out into the open simultaneously, to stand in my authority and timidity as I would have another do.

A yearning or hunger that is at times bodily in its intensity, desire is often nebulous in its goal because it does not always arise from the mind which can focus so well on specific targets. The heart's yearning is broader, less driven towards a conclusion. The most relevant way forward may involve yielding, surrendering or resting in a trusting stance, positions so often interpreted as stepping backwards by the adamantly seeking personality. Often there is a desire for healing or change. For decades, my aim has been personal healing, a more honourable way of describing a desperate chase for a better and improved version of myself, fuelled by the sense of being not okay as I am and designed to satiate a hungry ego, never content with what is. Recently, I have seen that I have often and still now miss the point. The fictional, better and improved version of myself eludes me as quickly as I make gains on it. It is ultimately unachievable. Life takes as much as it gives and self-improvement is a thankless task. I get older and the sense of my mortality is gaining momentum. The ever-unreachable, superior version of myself assumes youthfulness and immortality, somehow sidestepping time's passing. Moore (2004) questions our notions of healing or growth:

The language of popular psychology tends to be both heroic and sentimental. You conquer your problems and aim at personal growth and wholeness. An alternative is to have a deeper imagination of who you are and what you are going through. That insight may not heal you or give you the sense of being whole, but it may give you some intelligence about life. (p. 10)

And so it may be possible to hold a different relationship with desire, a more enduring, accepting stance that actually brings one quietly closer to the beloved without creating more roadblocks in the process.

Integrity calls on me to see the classroom as myself. As I do that, my habitual stance of fear and reluctance changes to one of desire and care. My trepidation of standing in front of yet another group of supposed strangers eases. I am reminded that I am in the classroom for my own learning and that I have much to learn. I feel the commonality of humanity's quest. I can trust that whatever will occur, no matter how confronting or difficult, will be relevant and that there will be a way through it that will emerge as part of the tapestry of learning. I can look at this, as yet unknown, group of students sitting in front of me displaying varied levels of interest, anticipation and defiance and know that they will show me different parts of myself that require more compassion and care. In short, it slowly becomes easier to feel safe, present and loving. Macy (2007) calls this seeing the world as lover and as self. She writes that it is impossible to live on Earth without being in some sort of relationship to it and suggests that there are four primary ways humans seem to view the world: as battlefield, trap, lover or self, each engendering a different kind of interaction. Seeing the world as a battlefield or trap engender feelings, attitudes and behaviours of conflict, self righteousness, victimhood, helplessness, escapism, distrust or separation and belong as much to those on the left side of politics, the green side of environment or the transpersonal side of faith as any other side. Perceiving the world as both lover and self calls forward the enormous challenge of an intimate desire that simultaneously empties and fills one.

There is as much terror of intimacy in the education system as there is everywhere else. When cut off from so much of our bodily knowing, glimpses of it can trigger intense desire. This desire is not directly related to sexuality but to intimacy with self. Only when there is

not sufficient self love is this intimacy unable to be experienced with self and thus projected onto others with all manner of resulting problems. Intimacy is not the issue, nor is sexuality. Lack of an understanding that self love is not only preferable but necessary is the crisis at hand. Such self love 'extends to a trusting of our desires so that we can take risks and not be forever worrying about losing control.' (Thorne, 1991, p. 81). Desire and control do not go hand in hand. Desire is transparent and vulnerable and requires acceptance for containment to occur in constructive ways.

The acceptance of desire is crucial to learning. Students are in class because they want something. On the outskirts of their imaginings, the closest destination to access, they may see themselves in class to gain a qualification, be able to earn more money, for a sense of accomplishment or expertise or as a way to operate in or add to the world. At the core of their visions it may be that what is wanted is more of themselves. More of myself is a nebulous and mysterious thing to aim for so often I go for more readily available expressions of connection and knowing that may not require as much of an internal revolution. It seems to me that in every classroom both aspects of desire are at work, the desire for tangible advancement in the phenomenal world and the desire for intangible connection with that which is within and beyond materiality. Too many classrooms address only the first of the above-mentioned desires and in so doing, address it inadequately. It is true that the more tangible requests must be addressed. However doing so in service to and as a vehicle for meeting the more intangible wishes makes for a far richer and more satisfying educative experience. Curriculum is highly relevant, as a bridge across the seemingly great divide between the material and immaterial and as a reminder that they always work together. All paths can lead to peace.

Peace is often what is sought but personal growth is so often initially driven by the desire to get away from something; some pain, sense of inadequacy or injustice. The direction being one of moving-away-from renders the task both unachievable and endless. It is also exhausting and brings with it the inclination to throw the baby out with the bathwater. With enough grace and good fortune, one may find oneself experiencing the daunting murmurings of a desire to move toward, to join with. Daunting it is because the movement is ultimately towards self and therefore all other. One dares to fall in love with oneself, to desire and hunger for oneself as one does for a lover, a state that can feel extremely taboo

and 'self-centred' in a world bent on bowing to and chasing external and plastic representations of inner truths. Such may be the point where personal growth flips over into spiritual transformation and where integral education comes in. Just as moving-away-from may be one of the ground rules for the postures of rejection, destruction or denial, joining-with becomes an act of devotion, acceptance and desire and happens as an act of eros.

Eros is about encounter, intimacy and co-creation, a participatory role in this cosmos as we cannot help but partake and involve ourselves in the movement of Life. Without eros, a mechanistic cosmos is an easier pill to swallow and impose. Education without eros might be felt as 'the wish to possess knowledge without being affected by it, without being transformed' (Griffin, 1995, p. 67). A holistic, integrating curriculum cannot emerge solely from an intellectual exercise but is fuelled and made manifest through a desire for wholeness and a hunger for connectivity. When the curriculum emanates from the group, rather than being imposed from outside, it springs forth in magical ways that connect to each self and also connect each self to each other. Above all, it includes process as content, instilling and supporting the natural skills and love of learning, 'revealing multiple meanings that undergird a rich, sustainable, living understanding.' (Jardine, 2000, p. 100). The teaching of an integrating curriculum asks much more of me than to join the dots analytically across a few varied subjects, no matter how creatively I may go about it. To pull it off with integrity asks of me to be in my own process of integration, making peace with my future as much as with my past, connecting to both the harmonious and contradictory aspects of my nature, allowing in the impersonal and expansive spirit of myself as much as the neurotic, fastidious personality and letting them love each other. I must be in the process of becoming all of me as I teach, in order to connect with that which may be most relevant to the group of students I stand in front of, to earth and to spirit. I must be in my own integrative process and that is endless, belying the notion of a set curriculum, defined and concretised within an inch of its life. How, as an ever-integrating, intersubjective being, can I teach a finalised and objective curriculum? Alternatively, how, as a fragmented and compartmentalising individual, can I teach an integrative and exploratory curriculum? I am what and how I teach.

The transformation of teaching must begin in the transformed heart of the teacher. (Palmer, 1993, p. 107)

An integrating curriculum involves my ability to accept and love many matters, including my solitude and aloneness on Earth. From a place of desperation, I cannot integrate but only cling or deny. My beingness is a gift and so my most inherent and intrinsic experience must be one of gratitude. The world and indeed cosmos is not here for me. It is here for itself and this makes me love it all the more. I desire it as I desire myself and it is this yearning for myself and for other that bring both into the curriculum in a way that is real and vivid; through the articulation of both aloneness and connection, freedom and indebtedness (Jardine, 1998).

Solitude does not necessarily mean living apart from others; rather, it means never living apart from one's self... Community does not necessarily mean living face-to-face with others; rather, it means never losing the awareness that we are connected to each other. (Palmer, 2004, p. 55)

Standing in front of a group of students, fully connected to my desire, is what brings about contact; the here and now, naked encounter (Buber, 1970; Perls, 1969) where our shared humanity becomes the curriculum and the course. What has been patiently waiting, dormant and hidden, tentatively emerges from behind boulders of self protection and defensiveness. Weapons are hesitantly laid down and hearts find the nerve to utter their truths. In a moment, one finds oneself in a state of integrality, where one knows the courage to see and be seen by other. Revelations release decades of secret burdens, learnings are bestowed, destinies accelerated. Observably, students grow into themselves, filling the space from their inside out. Grace is apparent.

As mind is embodied, matter is ensouled (de Quincey, 2005) and one is able to feel the desire, love and meaning in all of Life. Modernity views desire negatively or simply not at all, all the while being run by it. The psychoanalytic approach, founded by Freud (1960) around the turn of the last century regarded the individual's primary force as unconscious, requiring analysis and restraint to not get out of hand. The behaviourist school of thought led by Skinner (1976), which emerged a few decades later believed it found evidence of a value-neutral inner force that could be shaped to respond in various ways through the use of

conditioning. Our education systems still operate under these psychoanalytic and behaviourist paradigms, with a view of much of human interiority as either unconscious or dispassionate, requiring management and direction. It is a position that may be useful in engendering the compliance, time management and repression of creativity and spontaneity needed of the workers in an industrial age but is long since outdated in a world requiring more care and integrality just to survive, let alone thrive.

## Chapter Four

### Space, Time, Participation

#### Space

*What could not be accomplished separately becomes available to those who work together, and the wholeness that surfaces in the deepest of these moments is characterized by a luminescent transparency. This transparency is contagious and its gifts precious. Each person draws from it gems unique to his or her situation. (Bache, 2008, pp. 62-3)*

*We must begin to believe again that silence may be our most articulate response. (Jardine, 1998, p. 30)*

*Each open space is a spiritualisation, each beat a materialisation; and both are sacred, for in one is the spiritualisation of matter; in the other, the materialisation of spirit. (Thompson, 1981, p. 10)*

Embodied knowledge, the knowledge of the body and soul is like a tranquil, dark lake within dense bush. It does not move fast. It is accessed through resonating with its stillness. It requires space, respect and silence to make itself known. One could be walking just a short distance away from it and never see it, distracted by the tangle of undergrowth surrounding it. It calls for quiet observance and the feeling of one's way to uncover the mud maps of one's interior. Such elusive learnings, often difficult to articulate, are often the most significant yet modernist educational culture focuses almost exclusively on clarity and definition in the form of the spoken or written word. To start at the intangible, one might commence with silence, not as an empty ritual but as a vivid action; deliberate, conscious, present. Over the days and weeks, the squirming lessens. The expectant look to the teacher to start the show turns inward. Day dreams make way for presence. Awkwardness yields to intentionality. The internal dominion of silence and space becomes the point, not the



means, desired rather than endured. Class starts with accessing the embodied knowledge in each of us in a room of learners and teachers.

Silence allows me the time to rest into myself, to connect with my own direct experience without judgement or denial, to be as transparent and open as true learning asks of me, to match the unfolding occurring in the room. Silence lets the other know that their presence rather than obedience is called for, that their interiority is respected and paramount to what happens, that the classroom is in service to their direct experience of themselves. Silence tells the student that the skills and theories will fit in around the needs of their being, not the other way round. Silence, and the possibilities for unlearning that it provides, 'become very important antidotes to our excessive obsession with language and learning.' (Nakagawa, 2000, p. 241).

Creating an accepting holding space allows for a sense of safety where whatever arises is okay, relevant and has a place. From within a consistently, firmly and softly held space arises the room to move to wherever the heart and soul beckon, so that learning may take its own direction and anything can happen. The classroom becomes the place of miracles and miracles occur outside time and space. The information we need is all around us in what some scientists now call the Zero Point Field, Quantum Vacuum, Implicate Order or Sea of Quantum Light (Bohm, 1980; Haisch, 2009; Laszlo, 2006, 2007), the space within and around us that is the collective energy field of all that is—a decentralised and unified consciousness that spawns and informs all that unfolds. Far from a vacuum, it is a field of pure potentiality from where the unmanifest manifests. It provides a form of inexplicable universal coherence, a coherence acknowledged both scientifically and mystically (Balsekar, 2000; Bohm, 1980; Capra, 1991; Laszlo, 2007). Astute, appropriate, relevant and transformative information is derived from this field as requested, as wished for, as needed, with gentle trusting intention working far more effectively than intense will or focus. Not only information derives from the field but also all of our experiences, memories and connections, for all past and all future (Haisch, 2009; Laszlo, 2007; McTaggart, 2003). Resonance occurs here also, allowing for limitless healing and learning, as does the knowledge of not where I stop and another start but that I start and start and start... In this continuous field of subtle energy with 'the irreducible element of wholeness' (Stapp, 2007, p. 108), order prevails over disorder, peace over discordance. The field is my silent partner

in the room and serves both myself and my students on our journeys to greater personal and collective unity and lucidity (Bache, 2008). The effortlessness of such classes belies an intense desire for planetary healing, a profound sense of spiritual service, a commitment to truth and an urgency in learning that has a purpose too deep and wide to articulate, but a purpose nonetheless.

In an integral classroom, intentionally resonant with just such a field, each moment is alive with endless fertility and possibility. The presence in the room is potent and the first and ongoing step may be to get out of the way. Getting out of the way can be well served through acceptance (Liquorman, 2000; Welwood, 2002). In fact, acceptance may be a primary characteristic of integral learning: acceptance that learning may well take place, acceptance that the curriculum can relevantly be of service, acceptance that each of us in the room is brought here for reasons as yet unknown, acceptance that the ego may feel bewildered at many points in the day as the process ensues so far out of its fearful control and rational conceptualisations. The classroom could well be viewed as a microcosm of a participatory universe (Braden, 2007; Bohm, 2010). This detail brings with it further acceptance, especially when it is most needed. Experience shows me that connecting with the space or field of energy is enabled by being in peace, even the uncertain peace of accepting my own inner conflicts, doubts and disturbances. The emptiness of peace, a kind of devotion to harmony, is able to encompass the room and all its inhabitants. Sometimes, a surrendering occurs where we all fall into the peace together in a collective whole where the words that are spoken belong to no one and every one all at once and the struggle of all humanity is encompassed in this small drab classroom.

One of the challenges of the integral classroom may lie in the non-locality of the source of knowledge (Bohm, 2010). No one person may claim expertise over the information provided. No individual can feel proud at the end of even the most magical of classes. No being holds authority over consciousness. Working integrally is to be in service and in gratitude for that service. Students often say that they feel the words spoken were directed specifically to them and their situation, even while being aware that other students in the room were feeling exactly the same way. I often have to remind them that the same is true for the teacher as there is so often the programmed tendency to see the visible authority in the room as separate from the process. The information that comes through me is as

pertinent to me as to any other in the room. At other times, it comes through a student and I am as blessed by the guidance provided as any other.

When I unequivocally let there be peace, I feel myself sinking deeper. Sometimes I do not find deepening into myself to be a comfortable or smooth process. There can be the relief and joy of meeting an old friend, a sense of reunification and reclaiming of parts lost. There can also be the experience and establishment of new parts, wondrous, invigorating and liberating. At other times, however, there can be feelings of rage or grief as the implications of past grievances come forward, showing themselves more fully than before. I find myself reliving perceived injustices and needing to find further domains of acceptance and healing to counter the influx of negativity. At times this cycle seems never ending. Such learning requires being available in the moment, which calls for instantaneous and direct action. That action will always be primarily internal, unseen and unheard, and then may or may not be followed by an external or visible action. It may be a simple internal 'yes', a holding of one's ground, a quiet alertness, a gentle presence, a warrior stance, a sense of swaying with the breeze or being buffeted by the wind. Sometimes the best one can do is to be aware of one's breath and ask for assistance when in the midst of thick fog. At other times there is gratitude, perhaps the most powerful of internal actions, the stance of the soul (Macy, 2007).

It is my experience that gratitude creates an open channel between giver and receiver. If desire pulls the tide out by maintaining a focus on what is not, then gratitude brings it in, carrying forth even more of what one is grateful for in even more ways. When learning is happening, even terribly painful or confronting learning, there is often a sense of gratitude that co-exists with the pain, defying commonsense or assumed human nature. In a society of insufficiency and desire for more, gratitude is both subversive and liberating (Macy, 2007). The childbirthing woman knows of this co-existence of intense pain and gratitude and like her, one can be in the midst of agony and in the place of love and unity all at once.

When gratitude or, at the very least, engagement is lacking there can be apathy. The apathy in students that so many educators complain about may be a reflection of their own, quietly unnoticed, apathy and an indication of the despair that grows when learning is promised but programming is delivered instead. The soul's purpose may be to learn and

indoctrination is the stultification of learning and the subsequent deadening of spirit. Apathy occurs when there is so much disappointment, pain or lack of appropriate response that numbness overrides. Sometimes 'despair work' or 'positive disintegration' (Macy, 2007) is required before resurrection can occur. Despair work is about all life forms. All is one and where despair resides, this is known. Yet where there is despair, there is also much else. When one travels inwards there is the possibility of touching the farthest reaches of the cosmos. Everything out there is within and there is nowhere else to go. Getting free of time and space takes time and space. Integrality cannot be rushed or pushed and makes everything accessible from the comfort of the still and awake classroom.

There is time only to work slowly. (Metzger, 2009, p. 294)

Maintaining a focus on what lies within works on many levels that may then not need to be directly addressed. When I work from within, identification with the visibility of the body lessens and with it the existential distress regarding my bodily impermanence as well as the esteem of self or other based on perceived beauty or ugliness (Tolle, 2005). When I dwell on the interiority of myself, I experience the inner aliveness that I share with all of life and thus, degrees of anthropocentrism are challenged and begin to diminish. My inner aliveness becomes 'the bridge between form and formlessness' (p. 53). Abiding on such a bridge, holding both ends of the vast spectrum of experience from form to formlessness, brings me to a quiet stillness within, that is as full as it is empty. Resonating with stillness or emptiness may be a method of getting as close to a truth as possible, from a limited human viewpoint. This is a seriously challenging suggestion to a psyche trained since early childhood in becoming ever more definite, solid and full of thoughts and facts about different things. It is also challenging to a classroom that is supposedly the place to become full of thoughts and facts. When a classroom is geared towards honouring the emergent inner knowings and hearts of its students, working at emptying the space may be more pertinent than aiming to fill it.

...matter is mainly comprised of empty space... (Talbot, 1981, p. 70)

Emptying the space becomes easier as I stop looking for causation and accept what is, within myself and all else. Acceptance occurs when I connect with a whole of me greater than any part that has suffered. When I can't, I enter into a cluttered wasteland of repetitive

thoughts and feelings that contaminate both myself and those that I blame for my pain. To not make others wrong, I must see myself as right, as in all right. When I perceive myself as all right, judgements lessen and defensiveness diminishes. The space opens further, within and around me and I become both more self honouring and honouring of others. The room becomes safer and stiller, less littered with thoughts and expectations. Students respond by experiencing more curiosity and courage in their investigations. The vicinity empties of attitude and fills with presence.

The laws of space are the laws within us. 'Outer and inner space are the same... we have actually been born from space.' (Campbell, 2002, p. 2). We may have been conditioned otherwise but our most secure and natural state may be that of spaciousness. It is the belief in myself as an object made of matter that brings with it the ensuing addiction to collect further matter that causes the anxiety. Space is of itself and requires no validation through purchased items or collected facts. In experiencing resonance with a spacious universe, I too relax into an interiority that has no bounds, opening to a peace that lies in the absence of clutter of mind or matter. In moments when self referentiality lessens, the beloved is closer.

In the areas of teaching and facilitation, there is often much discussion of group dynamics as if such a process could be a bounded thing. Although considered important, it often seems to be covered in superficial and artificial ways, superficial in that it focuses on a set of self-evident and insubstantial theories and terms, artificial in that it concerns itself with a group of participants that leaves both the facilitator and cosmos out of the picture. The nature of both these tendencies may result in the prospect of seeing oneself as an expert but does little to assist one's facilitation skills and the experience of being connected and useful to a group of people, even if only for a short while. Many of the issues and anxieties around group work that lead to the desire to learn about group dynamics resolve themselves entirely as the group's appreciation of sacred space takes effect. As the space is slowly seen in the sacred light that stands waiting, phones begin to get turned off, punctuality occurs more readily, reactivity and resistance lessens, individuals find themselves wanting to participate more honestly and a general ethos of respect, dignity and care starts to take hold. Presence takes the place of dynamics. Allowing the classroom to develop into a sacred space involves knowing that the space commands what I do as much as, if not more than,

the institution. Honouring that space takes precedence over getting things done. I am at the mercy of a direction that has a life and purpose of its own and rarely lets me down.

The love arrives in the spaces between and within. When the spaces are being continually filled with facts, theories and thoughts, the room gets quickly saturated and like a jug filled with water, the only space left is at the top. Activity is relegated to the vicinity of the head. What would it take for me to let the space be? What is required of me to respect the space? That my thoughts, feelings and reactions stay with me no matter how much I would like to discharge the pressure and weight of them onto someone or something else. That I connect with a larger, more spacious experience of myself that has the capacity to contain these incessant murmurings without becoming wholly swamped. Primarily that I find myself worthy of the spaces within and between. They fill with love and silence and rub up against those parts of me that dwell in fear and noise. Then I must tolerate that friction that it too may be gradually consumed by the stillness rather than combust in a dread of dissolution that is then acted out through drama. The quality of my relationship with self and other becomes more about the texture of my relationship with the spaces within and between.

## Time

*Death is certain. The time of death is uncertain. (Buddhist saying in Macy, 2007, p. 76)*

*...every time we observe, there is a new beginning... the world is creative at the base level. (Goswami, 1993, p. 42)*

*...the fundamental process of Nature lies outside space-time but generates events that can be located in space-time. (Stapp, 1977, p. 202)*

*Synchronicities are the universe whispering to us, reminding us of our deep interconnectedness. (de Quincey, 2005, p. 107)*

Nothing takes precedence over presence and when one is no longer directed by the clock, one arrives at a timelessness where time serves the group rather than the alternative. The alternative implies the assumption, often viewed as fact, that 'learning proceeds from the

concrete to the abstract, from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex and from active manipulation to symbolic conceptualisation.’ (Egan, 1986, p. 1). This model of teaching and learning focuses on what we can control rather than what we are called to surrender to, on what is outside rather than within us, on how we differ rather than on what we share. For the majority of the educative experience, it allows for the teacher to remain as expert and for the student to be disempowered through receiving a partial and conditional validation of all that they are.

Another possibility may be to start with that which is harder to define; what we know of ourselves, although it is often classified as the unknown due to difficulties in articulation or lack of empirical evidence. In a mental-rational classroom, one’s being becomes the intangible, the unknown and the complex, needing to be put aside until more tangible, known and simple matters are learned. Such abstractions can be handled later, a later that, with sufficient programming and curriculum development, never comes or one that arrives long after formal schooling is over, letting the education system off the hook.

To start with one’s spirit requires time and a willingness to not be run by time. It calls for courage, trust and conscious intent. It is a way of being rather than a set of techniques, with a view to allowing spirit to point the way, with minds and hearts as servants rather than instigators. It enables the process of transformation and the development of wisdom and trust in self, in short: the empowerment of an individual who is connected to more than their individuality. The acquisition of relevant skills and theories, the more tangible matters, then becomes a natural extension to the experience of a learning self.

Transformation occurs as one disidentifies with certain aspects of self and identifies or re-identifies with other aspects. Integral transformation involves a lessening of identification with sheer materiality; in general with the outside of things, and a furthering of identification with the interiority and subjectivity of things. Such movement allows one to reside within time and space with continuity and care. One begins to want to live with, rather than battle against, to learn from rather than impose. What then emerges is more time and space. The sense of being continually hurried or cramped dissipates. The ‘ecological self’ (Naess, 1995) emerges as does the ‘spiritual self’ (Tolle, 2005). Identity extends to include both the natural world and the formless void. This shift in identification

requires making friends with discomfort and uncertainty. To disidentify from what one has perceived as oneself is perturbing. There can be great disorientation and a cavernous sense of nothingness in the transition from an old, tighter version of self to an identity that is far more connective and consequently continually dissolving as it regroups. Often there is the feeling of having lost oneself or of not knowing anything anymore as the boundaries of the rigid personality soften and disperse into a greater sense that feels itself as part of the whole: an indispensable, unique, small and inconsequential part.

Much of what I write makes no sense from a material realist perspective but all the sense in the world from a quantum mechanics view. Quantum mechanics may now be the accepted frame of reference scientifically but the practical world is slow in catching up and for good reason. The changes required in our mindsets and belief systems are truly revolutionary. A reality of separate substances is replaced by that of one sentient, coherent process of which everything is part. Newtonian determinism is replaced by quantum probability and uncertainty. Particles move in quantum jumps, in other words; discontinuously through space. Trajectories cannot be established. Communication, or rather communion, occurs non-locally, that is: instantaneously and 'without any exchange of signals through space-time (but through) an unbroken wholeness or non-separability that transcends space-time.' (Goswami, 1993, p. 281). Subject and object are inextricably enmeshed. It is the subject or observer that turns an undefined wave of potential spread over vast distances into a definable particle at a point in space and time. Until then, it dwells as latent possibility, requiring both transcendent consciousness, that which is beyond time and space; and immanent awareness, belonging to the tangible world, to collapse into definable manifestation. Connections between manifested objects or events extend infinitely (Bohm, 1980; Goswami, 1993; Laszlo, 2007; Talbot, 1981).

The implications are vast. Healing and learning can happen in leaps, within a second and do not require logical steps. In the classroom, any internal movement or growth in awareness by an individual affects everyone in the room as well as the capacity of the group field (Bache, 2008; Laszlo, 2007; Sheldrake, 2009). Once connected, always connected. Time and space are flexible. They can bend, shrink and expand and may as well be put to good use. Any change changes everything because Everything is all there is. Quantum theory readily understands the integral classroom. What I hold my focus on is likely to become accessible



in the room. How unconditionally I hold that focus seems, at times, to determine the quality and quantity of information that becomes available. How much love I access in the process appears to impact the level of safety that students experience and therefore the risks they are prepared to take in their quest for knowledge.

Consciousness may be singular and non-located in nature, an unbroken and transcendent wholeness, but one's apparently separate, personal and time bound awareness is just as real as it dwells in immanence. Both realities occur within a cyclical, self referential system involving a flash of discontinuity, the component that enables self-referencing to take place (Goswami, 1993). I long for oneness yet there must be separateness to perceive the oneness that I am one with. And so I love the apparent separateness that enables me to perceive the oneness self referentially. Without self-reference, I cannot experience the Oneness. Being self-referential, I cannot fully experience myself as One. The integral classroom knows this and dwells in both worlds: the transcendent and immanent and, in so doing, honours sentience in all its forms. One form of sentience might be viewed as living the paradox of both separation and oneness, the bitter sweetness of the human condition. 'The universe is self aware through us.' (p. 190). My purpose is clear: to witness and feel my life. I have everything I need to fulfil the job. My very own life with all its sensations and feelings, as it is, suffices. The transcendent and immanent are one in a tangled hierarchy, a strange loop (Goswami, 1993; Hofstadter, 2007), a self-referential, cyclical system of consciousness and manifestation, eternal possibility and subject/object dichotomy.

Such notions have the side effect of decidedly bringing one into the present moment yet the presence of time also allows for the notion of development, which although valid, often has the accidental effect of letting me off the hook. I will get to it later... When I am more present I will... As soon as that is sorted, then I can.... I am not yet quite up for... Later there will be more confidence and courage to act on what I now know to be true. There are also numerous developmental learning models that are highly relevant and useful. Hart (2001) offers a model that 'moves through six interrelated layers... information, knowledge, intelligence, understanding, wisdom and transformation.' (p. 2). Whitehead (1967b) describes three cyclical stages in the learning process: romance, precision and generalization. Integrality, however, is an instantaneous process. Integral learning asks that I start where I want to end up, that I do not put off my vision of what true education might

be, that I immerse myself in that vision from the moment I first set step in the classroom or even earlier as I place a series of teaching blocks in my yearly calendar, that I commit to the process unambiguously and immediately. There is no time to waste so that there be much time to be present together.

Thankfully, time is often spent well. Synchronicities and parallel situations occur time and time again as people come together for learning or healing. Matter is sentient. The body is not ruled by a dominating mind nor the mind propped up by a dead body. '...bodies move themselves guided by... consciousness... because they are sentient, knowing and volitional.' (de Quincey, 2005, p. 119). Everything works together in the shared cause of an implicate order, an unfolding, intelligent force that is constantly on the move in an evolutionary process far more rapid than sheer randomness would allow (Bohm, 1980; de Quincey, 2005; Laszlo, 2007; Neville, 2012). My 'destined' evolution, the evolution I bring to the table, mostly unintentionally despite my best efforts, is both my gift and my birthright.

Such knowings bring egoic references into question. Dualism looks absurd from an integral multi-perspective as does blame and judgement. When I perceive myself as a victim, a simultaneous identification with a perpetrator arises. Such identification may be hard to see at first but over time, shows itself as a self-hostility, repulsion or judgement equal in intensity to that which I hold for the other. The other may be an individual, a multinational corporation or reality itself—it matters not. I feel the violence in myself that I externalise onto another. Transcendence is called for, not the appearance of transcendence, with repression of pain as the actuality. With grace, the liminality of integrality, with its lack of attachment to any one position and absolute clarity, shows its face and releases me from bygone hurts, long grown old and dull. A sense of timelessness or deep time emerges alongside the living of a time filled and time short life.

There is no formula for accomplishing the breakthrough into the arational-integral consciousness. It is an organic process that cannot be stereotyped, although we may identify landmarks in it. It can also not be rushed. Rather it presupposes that we assume a new relationship to time itself. (Feuerstein, 1987, p. 189)

## Participation

*Come sit down beside me,  
I said to myself,  
And although it doesn't make sense,  
I held my own hand  
As a small sign of trust  
And together I sat on the fence  
(Leunig, 2003, p. 51)*

*A bird with a repertoire of songs has to decide which one to sing next.  
(Hartshorne, 1997, p. 48)*

True participation cannot be enforced or demanded. True participation involves the giving of oneself to the moment, to the room, whether it be wholeheartedly, with fear and trepidation or outright resistance. Participation may be lovingly invited, a loving invite always containing the acceptance of a decline of the offer. To participate is to give of oneself, the greatest gift, and does not tend to occur under obligation or worse. True participation is of far more than the intellect. It involves one's being and thus tends to articulate wisdoms and truths not consciously known until they escape one's mouth or pen. Old models of teaching assume an obligation of participation and begrudge it when it does not occur, a recipe for both resentful students and teachers. Inherent in a transformative model is the knowledge that it is not possible to prescribe one's own learning journey, let alone that of another. Participation occurs in its own good time and place.

Participation requires playfulness. It is a dance of reaching out and receding, waiting, grabbing the moment, hide and seek, all best played with an air of amusement. No game is fun when played too hard, too seriously or with a need to prove oneself. Lightness brings out the best in us and renders participation an easier prospect. Learning is a daunting task. Humour smoothes the humbling and awkward journey from unaware ignorance to aware ignorance to awareness, an infinite cyclical process.

In some classes, as the feelings in the body are reconnected with, there appears to be enormous reticence, resistance and fear, sometimes parading as boredom, usually motivated by a profound knowing that becoming more whole and connected with oneself will send ripples, initially small but building to seismic proportions, into one's life. Often, amongst the students, there is the awareness that much of the structure of their lives is directly related to the compartmentalisations in their heads. A subsequent, initially unspoken, understanding then arises that many external aspects of their lives may collapse as the internal structures creating and holding them up begin to dissolve under the weight of desire to become more whole and alive. And so, we tread slowly, intently resting in the body, gently acknowledging the feelings, quietly sharing the thoughts, hesitantly questioning certain premises, and speaking softly lest the rest of the world hear our doubts and fears. The room, at these times, is often pervaded by a sense of guilt or disloyalty, as long held beliefs, tacit agreements and generational and cultural inheritances begin to be unpacked and revealed for the prison-like dysfunctions that they are. Sometimes students feel that they betray themselves by letting their pain be voiced. Others feel that their pain betrays them, voicing itself without their conscious consent. At times like these, there is a quiet yet shattering encounter going on between long held, 'normal' and even societally rewarded allegiances and the longing to be whole and real, unedited and self loved.

Learning might best be exemplified through the notion of connection rather than acquisition. When we connect to something, we know it, although we may not understand it, and we also come to love it. The necessary skills develop organically and the knowledge required is illuminated by the thing itself. We feel the matter in the inner recesses of our organs and within our bones. The learning is transformative. Connection requires participation, the participation of the self where commitment and detachment are paradoxically simultaneous (Bolen, 1984). It occurs in the here and now even when the subject matter being considered arises from the past. It is as relevant for the sciences as the humanities. Parker Palmer (1999) calls it recovering the sacred. He writes of the Nobel prize winning scientist, Barbara McClintock, who worked with ears of corn and learned to think and feel like them in the process of her investigations. Evelyn Fox Keller wrote of McClintock that, in her relations with ears of corn, she practiced 'love that allows for intimacy without

the annihilation of difference.’ (p. 164). True connection respects the mystery of the other and of oneself and, in so doing, involves both strength and vulnerability.

Participation is not about how often students attend class, verbally contribute or read assigned texts. One can do all of that and still be going through the motions. In fact, most educational institutions reward just that. It is my experience that true participation is with one’s being and leads to direct experience. Direct experience is when the arrow hits its mark, when one’s question is specifically answered even if it was still hovering below consciousness, let alone not actually verbalised. Direct experience is when the learner and the learning become one. Such learnings happen in the core of our being and have ramifications for other times and places. They are hard to speak of and even harder to assess. Talking about something mostly requires us to disengage from it. Hence direct experience is hard to talk about and so we become wiser if not cleverer. Towards the end of a subject, students often report that they feel they learned a great deal yet can’t quite remember what and have few notes to show for class after class where we sat on the edge of our seats sharing discoveries of soulful proportions. Where the learning becomes more evident is in the clear and tangible positive changes in their lives, their relationships and their attitude to learning. They often find themselves communicating better with others, accepting themselves more, making peace with past pains and having more empathy and respect for that which is around them, both human and non-human. The power of direct experience is that it changes one from the inside out and therefore changes everything. Nothing is untouched which is what can make such learning both brutal and loving.

At times, the participation in the room seems to make tangible the group mind or morphic field (Bache, 2008; Sheldrake, 2009), ‘a self-organising region of influence, a matrix or medium that connects two or more points in space, usually via a force whose properties may or may not be initially understood.’ (Bache, 2008, p. 49). The presence in the room becomes impossible to ignore. The experience asks of me to consider that my mind may not be located in my head but that our mind is all around us, resonating, connecting, vibrating in the spaces within and around what we see with the naked eye. Individuality is wondrous and even more so because it stems from a kaleidoscopic, unified whole. Our individual personalities may worship the cult of separation but our souls hunger for a greater connection that is.

Often I struggle with the curriculum. The depth and feeling at which I place myself as teacher and the superficiality and rationality of the curriculum appear at great odds with each other. Curriculum is important and I am accountable for conveying it to the students in a meaningful way. However sometimes it has not been developed from a transformative, holistic or loving perspective. Often, demands of auditors, time frames, expectations of consistency and the commonsense approach of forging future workers compliant with an atomistic world view have taken precedence over learning. And so I offer the curriculum to spirit, to consciousness, to a wiser, greater force than my own, to bring resonance between it and a more integral truth, to bring it into the service of a greater good than institutional requirements and work ready competencies. I have learned to trust that the curriculum always comes back to me in ways I never would have thought of, ways that allow for and even instigate learning and healing. For each group of students, the curriculum is handed back quite differently, in ways that specifically and pertinently resonate with that group so that although the syllabus is always covered, one would sometimes barely recognise that it was the same subject being taught.

Integrity brings grace with it. Grace could be viewed as the moments when an empowerment, ability or awakening occurs beyond one's self-owned capacity (Liquorman 2009; Macy, 2007). When grace seems to come through me in those moments of transparency, my ultimate experience is that of being a vehicle for a far greater force, a mere puppet, albeit a deeply loved one. The irony of spending my life trying to own my power, find out who I am and what I am here to do, only to eventually stumble upon the purposeful, fulfilling, exquisite moments of knowing myself as the vehicle of another. Personal power and ability come into question as well as the authorship of not just these aspects of myself but all of me. 'The reason I let you go through all these things was so that you could become the person I purposed you to be.' (Voice to student in Bache, 2008, p. 214). There is nothing outside the One and sometimes the veil is lifted from my eyes and this is known rather than thought. Participation is a pathless land, as is truth (Krishnamurti, 1992) as is the trajectory of the quantum particle (Goswami, 1993). One cannot put a foot wrong (Tzu, 1990). Participation is akin to creativity, a leap from the known into the unknown, incorporating the quantum modalities of communication and inspiration alongside the classical modalities of information and perspiration. Both modalities are

needed for idea to take form. 'The ego has to act – but under the guidance of an aspect of the self that it knows not.' (Goswami, 1993, p. 228)

The word 'participation' is often egoically loaded, carrying the assumption that it is I, of my own free will, that participates. This is one level of participation but there are many others where the indistinct dance of destiny and choice play their part in a growth, simultaneously, of both human and cosmic proportions. At times it seems to me that it is very much a student or group's need that has called forth a degree of clarity or insight that I would not have otherwise felt and expressed. The frequency in the room seems to change. I feel myself transported from an I-It way of being; a subject-object mode of distant and partial communication, to an I-Thou mode of direct and essential contact (Buber, 1970), to an I-Am fundamentality where there are no longer two or more individuals relating but the one organism, recreating itself anew in that moment. Growth is inevitable. We participate with or without our own volition. Those I-Am moments may be terrifying but they also declare a truth that I cannot deny.

As any identification brings about fragmentation, the movement towards wholeness arises only in a ceaseless movement of disidentification (Nakagawa, 2000, p. 239), ...yielding to a spiritual identity that excludes nothing. (Bache, 2000, p. 20).

We live in a constructive, participatory, postmodern era. Many may resist, and many parts of those that are willing may resist, but even if one goes by the outdated modernist belief that science knows best, this is a consensus now hard to avoid. Despite the best of intentions to maintain the rational and linear status quo, quantum physics has exploded the notions of order and control. A deconstruction is necessary; the shattering of such an egoic world view. Any shattering of the ego, whether therapeutic, educational or cultural brings with it a sense of nihilism. A void opens up and at first there is nothing to replace the sense of forged certainty and false mastery. It must be so. To fill the crevasse too soon would simply produce more of the same, under the facade of a different form. The human psyche must lick its wounds and grieve its losses. Nihilism, despondency, depression; these are signs of profound change that take time to evolve to notions of possibility and potential.

And so they do. It is the nature of the cosmos and of all living things. The concepts of chaos and complexity arrive to let us know that there is order below the random surface but it is not of our making. Exquisite formations lie within the turbulence of our lives but they are not of our design. Autopoietic, self-evolving, dissipative structures reach levels of turmoil and confusion and then find new multidimensional, ordered states of being, surpassing anything that human intelligence could muster, let alone imagine (Prigogine & Stengers, 1985). The classroom too is a complex system where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts and is highly sensitive to initial conditions or minor fluctuations. Parts interact nonlinearly to produce emergent behaviours not seen in the individual components of the system. There is a continual, irreversible, participatory, constructive process taking place, a dynamism that does us and that increases exponentially. We cannot separate our human existence or evolution from that of the Earth or cosmos.

Paradigms emerge throughout history 'precisely when that paradigm resonates with the current archetypal state of the evolving collective psyche.' (Tarnas, 1991, p. 438) and certain conditions seem to support the emergence of new paradigms more than others. Given the scientific, social and cultural developments of recent decades, we currently have:

...a crisis in our ability to know anything reliable about the world... Now aware of our marginal placement in an evolving universe of immense scope and age, of the inescapably interpretive nature of all human knowledge, and of the bewitching effect of all culturally embedded metanarratives, the postmodern mind experiences itself to be profoundly adrift in space and time. (Bache, 2000, p. 22)

Such a postmodern condition lends itself to an emergence of a new paradigm or, more profoundly; 'structure of consciousness' (Gebser, 1985). A predicament of this nature brings with it the confusion and bewilderment that occurs before the birth of a new life or mode of being. When such movement occurs, all prior modes of experience require validation for there to be a willing relinquishment of control. Deny any aspect and it will either rise up in resistance, unwilling to share the lime light or hide in the shadows, conducting secret sabotage. For earlier modes to have a generosity of spirit and transcendence of self interest in support of an evolving process requires that they feel heard, loved and safe. The



alternative is disruption in one form or another of what may be an increasingly unifying experience that allows for a growing multitude of perspectives and realities. This dynamic seems to apply at many levels, from the intrapsychic, to the social and political and is a reminder that there is no one place to rest our focus.

Such a dynamic is also a reminder of the 'psyche's archetypal self care system' (Kalsched, 1996), where progressed parts of the psyche forge ahead in life, while both holding down and protecting regressive or wounded parts. In this way the appearance of participation can hide a deeper non-participation. I have strived for, what seems to be, an endless array of distractions from myself: to be successful in my work, to have children, to be attractive, to find a partner, to have a beautiful home, to be a good person, to be happy, on and on it goes.. Now I find myself having attained all those things and more, to some degree and at some time in my life. The striving thus becomes sufficiently neutralised to expose the fuel that feeds it. Such fuel might be seen as the genuine original sin (Moore, 2004; Thorne, 1991); the belief that I cannot trust myself and my longings, that I am intrinsically flawed or not okay as I am. All these years of striving, no matter how productive, have also been acts of avoidance, of compensation, a non-participation with that part of me that feels itself soiled and abandoned. As human, I must claim and love this unlovable part lest I fear it forever. As counsellor and teacher, I must own and know this untouchable part, lest I project it onto others that I may then come to their aid as healer, undermining their exact divinity while becoming further defended from my own. Participation would have me hold to my inner absence, that I may come to behold the fullness in the room, the fullness in my students and clients and the fullness that belies my own internal barrenness. Simultaneously the supposed fullness of identity that has formed as compensation and cover dissipates as I participate with rather than against myself. Sometimes becoming peaceful feels more like a loss than a gain, more of a surrender than an accomplishment. Such capitulation may be part of the evolving ego's 'uncharacteristic struggle with its own inflation and power complex in order to work with the self as a co-evolutionary participant in the evolution of a new psychic paradigm and a new transcendent consciousness.' (Bernstein, 2005, p. 61). Integrality may be just such a consciousness where home may not be one dimension any more than any other but the state where many versions of reality are inhabited at once, an

integrative, multidimensional, complex state of simple, encompassing presence with whatever is.

## **Reflection**

These last two chapters consider the multitudinous conditions that seem to be co-present in the arising of integral experiences. The six elements explored work as both doorway and method in the quest for the kinds of learnings and healings that can bring about experiences of transformation and wholeness. It would seem that if one feels sufficiently empathised with and loved, if one finds that what they truly want for themselves is desired for them by another, if neither time nor space are rushed or segregated in the pursuit of outcomes incongruent to one's felt needs and if participation is inclusive of all that one is, taking heed of and validating all that is present, then one may feel able to bring all of oneself into the room as embodied and cognisant experience. All of oneself comes to include the personal and transpersonal, the past, present and future, the self and cosmos, sensory and non-sensory ways of knowing and being, the immanent and transcendent. One result of such an inclusive self is that experiences of time-, space- and ego-freedom begin to occur with profound healing and learning results. Gebser viewed such experiences as pertaining to an integral structure of consciousness, a mode of being or form of identity that is integrative, conscious and expressive of all aspects of self including the spiritual. This mode of being is the focus of the next chapter.

## Chapter Five

### Integrality

*It is the originary presence that has itself attained consciousness because one of its bearers, man, has undergone the spatio-temporally conditioned unfolding of consciousness, which he has enjoyed but also had to suffer through. (Gebser, 1985, p. 138)*

*As the cricket's soft autumn hum  
is to us  
so are we to the trees  
as are they  
to the rocks and hills.  
(Snyder, 1992, p. 287)*

*The peace that is here meant is not the negative conception of anaesthesia. It is a positive feeling which crowns the 'life and motion' of the soul. It is hard to define and difficult to speak of. It is not a hope for the future, nor is it an interest in present details. It is a broadening of feeling due to the emergence of some deep metaphysical insight, unverballed and yet momentous in its co-ordination of values. Its first effect is the removal of the stress of acquisitive feeling arising from the soul's preoccupation with itself. Thus peace carries with it a surpassing of personality... (Whitehead, 1967a, p. 285)*

An integral identity may be a contradiction in terms but the thought assists me to expand that which I identify with to that which does not seem to include 'me'. It is both juxtaposition and marriage of the personal and transpersonal, the inherent tension between

the two providing the tightrope to be enigmatically walked in a process that is both emotionally redemptive and spiritually alive. Movement occurs in a slow, cyclical progression from broken to whole, unsafe to safe, alone to with, personal to transpersonal, to a state where both polarities exist simultaneously in a way that continually corrodes the dominance of the rational mind because it does not make sense. The more I claim and care for the space within and around me, the more I find that it is not me doing the claiming and that which is doing the claiming is also claiming me. Spirit is in the room and it becomes okay even to feel not okay. This chapter considers integrality primarily in the light of Gebser's theory of consciousness. The archaic, magical, mythical and mental-rational structures are outlined before turning to an exploration of integral consciousness and its characteristics. This is then followed by a consideration of the integral structure through both transpersonal and postmodern lenses in ways that may support further comprehension. The latter parts of the chapter concern themselves with how this mode of being may be enabled through the use of the six elements explored in chapters three and four and how it seems to present itself in both learning and healing environments.

It is four months now since my dear dog Vani did not return from her nightly bushwalk. I might have known what was coming. There were dreams but more than that was her disposition. For the two months before her disappearance, there was at times a look in her eyes that was new and unmistakeable. If words had been present, they might have been: 'I am complete here. The world no longer holds me to itself. There is no longer a fit between this self and this life.' Each time I saw this look it would provoke momentary horror but I did not have the courage to consciously consider its consequence nor validate her mood through my presence and witness. Instead I would deny both of our experiences, recoiling from my fear and attempting to distract her distantness with jolly words or scratches behind the ears. For this I have profound regret. Our last months could have been far richer and more congruent on my part.

I could not conceive that she would not always be with me. The allure of permanence fools me again and maybe for all time. Time passes or maybe, more accurately, I pass through it. Precious time allows the space to be savoured and for things to appear before me as if they will always be. Treasured space allows for a swelling and relaxing of time. The full apprehension of both seems to allow for their absence in a timeless, spaceless and

therefore personally authorless expression of consciousness itself. And so this is where my dear Vani may dwell not as herself but as Her Self and where we may again meet. Growing into integrality is like a death. That which I primarily identify with, my very own personal egoic self, years in the making, that I have come to be so proud of and yet find so deplorably inadequate in providing any fulfilment, remains at the door if it insists on sitting at the head of the table...

### **A Gebserian view**

*The grand and painful path of consciousness emergence, or, more appropriately, the unfolding and intensification of consciousness, manifests itself as an increasingly intense luminescence of the spiritual in man. (Gebser, 1985, p. 542)*

Around the same time that quantum physics began annihilating the egoic notion of a separate world whose sole purpose was to be understood, controlled and used by the human species, the theorist Jean Gebser was doing the same from a cultural perspective. His study involved the observation and insight that human evolution was emerging through a number of discontinuous 'structures of consciousness' that characterise how self and world are experienced and expressed. Each form of consciousness arises fairly suddenly, inexplicably and is texturally different to previous ones, hence the important distinction between structures which are discrete, emergent transmutations, and stages, denoting a developmental, hierarchical progression (Feuerstein, 1987). Each structure begins with a more constructive or positive manifestation before giving way to a more deficient or destructive form as its domination over the other modes becomes excessive. Such imbalance decreases the capacity for creative, variances or multi-perspectival responses to self and life, thus creating the ashes through which the next structure arises. Each structure latently holds both the previous and latter forms within it, hence the underlying capacity for more complex and nonlinear experience than any one structure alone would grant, and all structures of consciousness are underlined by the primordial and ever-present spiritual Origin, that immaterial intelligence that is both Life and the source of Life itself.

## **The archaic structure**

The archaic structure of early humanity is one of total affinity, zero dimensionality and complete identification with the natural world. It is preconscious and prereflective, experiencing little or no awareness of a world outside itself. It operates instinctually, bearing the seeds of an 'ecological unconscious' (Roszak, 1995) and in its simplicity and lack of self consciousness is viewed as the structure closest to its spiritual origin. It is 'a consciousness of maximum latency and minimum transparency' (Feuerstein, 1987, p. 51). Deep dreamless sleep and trance like states connect us with our inner archaic which, like all other structures, is present and active in our lives (Neville, 1996). When this mode is alive in the classroom, there emerges a state of oneness, mindless and motionless. It is a resting place for the soul, an opportunity to relax between topics and gather strength for the next sojourn. It allows for the integration of what has just been covered without obstacle or interference. Its gift is the kind of undefended presence that one usually succumbs to only when alone or asleep.

## **The magical structure**

This 'participation mystique' mode is one of point like, one dimensional, egoless existence. 'The soul is not yet inside but strewn among all events' (Mickunas, 1997, p. 10), making everything intertwined and exchangeable, enabling ritual, symbolisation and identification. There is a 'merging with nature, which in its spacelessness and timelessness also connotes a remarkable boundlessness' (Gebser, 1985, p. 55) that supports those magical processes. There is the emergence of clans and there are no words but there is music. It is an instinctual and emotional life that occurs in a dream-like state where world and self are not distinct. One experiences life through the magical structure when one is carried away by a compelling affinity with the tribe, whether that be family, religion, nation or concert crowd and within this structure also lies the oneness that is felt with a lover or newborn (Neville, 2012). This self knows of a connectivity and fluidity that allows for the natural existence of intuition and telepathy and there are the beginnings of intention and will, the stirrings of differentiation and the development of the hunting and gathering way of life. In the magical mode, client and counsellor are able to surrender to the strong emotions in the room

without explaining or intellectualising them. It is what it is, both the suffering and the joy. It may not be resolvable but it can be accepted, allowed and made peace with.

### **The mythical structure**

Individuality begins to emerge only with the mythic structure which carries the capacity for imagination, memory, poetry and storytelling through the development of language. The two dimensional awareness of circularity and circular time arises as does the growth of agriculture, animal husbandry, village life and matriarchy. With the birth of creativity and contemplation, come tool development, craftwork, artistic expression, culture and religion. The 'internal world of the soul' (Gebser, 1985, p. 66) is born along with conscious experiences of liminality, rhythm and the cycles of nature. Life is seen through the lens of complementary polarities such as life/death, earth/sky or day/night, rather than through opposing and disparate dualities (Feuerstein, 1987). In the mythic mode lies the stories we use to understand ourselves. The theories and topics covered in the classroom and the histories and beliefs considered in the counselling room are examples of such narratives as are the cultural presumptions regarding the purposes and activities involved in teaching and counselling. The sense of a time bound teaching semester that will involve a beginning and an end amidst a much larger circular event is the experience of the mythic self and there is the awareness of a living universe and a communicative and reciprocal relationship with the cosmos.

### **The mental-rational structure**

While the previous structures are of a collective nature and focused more on the state of being, this mode brings with it a more individualistic nature with a subsequent view to having. The mental structure, of which the current rational mode of, approximately, the last five centuries, is its latter, extreme and deficient form, heralds the separate, egoic and self-centred frame of reference and three dimensional awareness. There is the capacity for abstraction, the concept of causality and linear time which is future oriented. The mental mode engages the intellect with precision, insight and the desire to understand; important

facets of an effective classroom. The rational aspect does the same but demandingly, exclusively and with no capacity to reflect on its distorted expectations and denial of the rights of other structures of consciousness. There is apparent objectivity and much invention, philosophy and science as well as the rise of patriarchy and its ensuing suppression of the feminine. Perspectival space:

...fixes the observer as well as the observed: it fixes man on the one hand and the world on the other. Compelled to emphasize his ego ever more strongly because of the isolating fixity, man faces the world in hostile confrontation.  
(Gebser, 1985, p. 94)

When one is externally focused, dwelling in the head may be the safest and most plausible option. The body has been evacuated and thus its sentience and that of the Earth and cosmos are denied. Mind over matter thus replaces the sense of an ensouled universe and 'doing' takes the place of 'happening'. The awareness of complementary polarities that arose with the mythic mode becomes an actuality of adversarial dualities, fragmentation, quantification and the separation of subject and object, time and space (Feuerstein, 1987, 1993; Gebser, 1985; Mahood, 1996; Mickunas, 1997; Neville, 2012).

Gebser warned that it was the domination and overemphasis of any one structure that would bring about its destructive form as well as allow for only a deficient form of expression of any other structures. The linear and overconfident mental-rational structure that Eurocentric Western culture is currently decaying in, is extremely pervasive and involves a denial of the existence of other structures and ways of experiencing no matter how obviously and frequently they present themselves. Such deficiency is also expressed through the worship of complexity for complexity's sake; a militant multiperspectivity that renders everything the same and therefore meaningless. There is an obsession with progress and growth, which as Gebser points out is also a progression away from our spiritual origin and therefore a conceptual fallacy. It is an excessively cognitive approach, driven by the death throes of an ego that can feel alive only when attempting control or mastery. With recent scientific, cultural, technological and environmental evidence that it can do neither, the rational ego is rendered powerless and therefore terminal. An emergent integral structure of consciousness has its own volition. Once it takes hold:



It will grow...  
Relentlessly replacing  
You with Itself  
Until you are gone.  
(Tzu, 1990, p. 38)

### **The integral structure**

The emerging integral structure depends on the very activity that the mental-rational mode would deny: the recognition, acceptance, and inclusion of all structures into one that is texturally unique and ego-, space- and time-free. Integrality renders everything that is latent, transparent and perceivable, including our spiritual origin, thus making everything constructively accessible. Aperspectivity and atemporality allow for an intensification of time and space that is non-measurable, in a world where duality dissolves into differentiated unity and there is 'an openness to the future and the past.' (Mickunas, 1997, p. 19). It is a four dimensional, arational mode of being, made lucid and luminous through its conscious experience and integration of all ways of being and the underlying divine origin. There is the insight that consciousness and rationality are not the same thing and it is the intensification, rather than expansion of consciousness that marks integrality, expansion being a hallmark of the conquestual mental-rational mode. Such intensification is also not a heightened emotionality, which would be an expression of the magical mode (Mahood, 1996) but a vibrant clarity, where one experiences that which one perceives.

Integrality renders real and whole that which has seemed abstract and fragmented from the perspective of the mental-rational mode. This occurs by means of an aperspectivity, where all sides and dimensions are apprehended at once, and perceived through one's interiority rather than from the outer world, a process Gebser (1985) called 'awaring-in-truth'.

Paradoxical and ironic thinking is involved in the integral mode, such thinking being the bridge between the rationality of the mental mode and the pre-rationality of the magic and mythic modes. It is 'a form that mediates between oceanic and perspectival thinking.' (p. 259).

In the integral mode, one is both manifestation of and co-creator with Origin. They are not contradictory positions and in fact come together in a way that clarifies both. I am mere vessel, vehicle and expression of Origin, yet there is nothing mere about it. In being made by and of Origin, I am part of that which creates, loves and breathes Life. I am both 'letting-happen and making-happen' (p. 138) and there is the concretion of the spiritual into consciousness. One can be time-free, only having concretised those experiences of archaic pretemporality, magic timelessness, mythic temporality and mental temporality. One can be space-free, only having concretised those encounters with archaic prespatiality, magic and mythic spacelessness and mental spatiality. Concretising, the process of making real and tangible, enables integration and it is integration that permits both internalisation and detachment, thus setting one time- and space-free, a precondition for both awaring the whole; and for diaphaneity, the transparency and manifestation of the spiritual into everyday life.

Such integrality may be far more knowable than understandable. It seems to come about through 'meetings with no agenda yet serious intent' (de Quincey, 2005, p. xiii). It appears to involve knowing through relationship; a 'non-sensory, non-linguistic connection through presence and meaning' (p. 2), not limited to human to human relating. Experiences of integrality seem to light up the consciousness of all things; a 'primordial subjectivity (or) ontological interiority' (p. 87) within everything, a panpsychist reality that allows for communion rather than communication and that enables experiences of both oneness and distinctiveness simultaneously. I become indispensable and also dissolvable in an instant.

Another paradox of integrality lies in its seeming neutrality about passion and passion about neutrality. Depersonalised and without an objectified focus, one's awareness spreads as peripherally as it does internally. Horizontal and vertical connections occur at once (Nakagawa, 2000). One might feel intensely calm or calmly intense. Silence bursts forth and the intelligence and love of all individualised life forces are immanent. Part of the sanity of integrality may be in its aperspectival and therefore inclusive nature, a nature that allows for constant fine retuning through its multiplicity of focus and balance of care.

Without the oxygenating breath of the forests, without the clutch of gravity  
and the tumbled magic of river rapids, we have no distance from our

technologies, no way of assessing their limitations, no way of keeping ourselves from turning into them. (Abram, 1996, p. x)

My unspoken focus lies as much outside the classroom as in it, as much with earth and spirit as with the humans I dwell amongst. I can no longer return to a primarily human-oriented focus. I feel between worlds, with the world and not of this world more than ever, sometimes as a bridge, sometimes as a vessel, sometimes as a vehicle and sometimes still as an obstacle.

## **A transpersonal approach**

*This life of yours which you are living is not merely a piece of the entire existence, but is in a certain sense the whole; only this whole is not so constituted that it can be surveyed in one single glance... In all the world there is no kind of frame-work within which we can find consciousness in the plural; this is simply something we construct because of the spatio-temporal plurality of individuals, but it is a false construction... It does really rest on direct experience, inasmuch as we never in fact have any experience anywhere of a plurality of consciousness but always and everywhere only of consciousness in the singular. (Shrodinger, 2008, pp. 21-34)*

Just as my own transforming consciousness may be indicative of a larger cosmologically evolving consciousness, theories of transpersonal life stage development may be useful reflections on the nature of evolving structures of consciousness (Neumann, 1954; Wilber, 2001). While states of consciousness are temporary experiences of the diverse hurdles and capacities able to be known and lived and stages are more generic milestones or signposts across the lifespan of individuals, structures of consciousness are similarly signposts or landmarks that occur throughout the lifespan of a species, thus being a process of transpersonal evolution rather than of individual development (Gebser, 1985; Neumann, 1954; Wilber, 1981, 2006). Current transpersonal or integral developmental models such as those of Wilber (2006) and Washburn (2003) shed light, not so much on the relatively arbitrary demarcation of stages, but on the development process itself. Wilber's model

involves a holarchic progression where each stage reached incorporates the faculties of the previous ones and where one advances, usually unevenly, across a number of different streams simultaneously. Washburn's spiral model necessitates a moving away from the deep psyche and fundamental dynamic ground one is immersed in early in life in order to make way for the important task of egoic development, before returning to that which one has arisen from, but from a more mature and conscious state. From this perspective, the prepersonal, like the archaic mode, is the version of development closest to the divine origin yet lacking in awareness of the fact. Reconnection must occur with that primordial ground, yet from a more conscious state, to cultivate true whole psyche integration.

My own experience is that growing up, as Wilber's framework implies, equates to the growing in of Washburn's theory. As my process carries me inward bound, there becomes less and less distinction between the inner and the outer, the complex and the simple, the higher and the lower. Transformation is both an exercise in transcendence and a cognisant reclaiming of earlier tacit knowings. The arising of integrality entails that of the conscious archaic yet is also more than that. It is both embodied and transcendent, joined and distinct, intimate with both arriving and passing. Wilber's valid concern with such a model regards his concept of the pre/trans fallacy (2001, 2006) which involves the confusion and self-delusion that occurs between prepersonal and transpersonal modes of experience. Gebser, however, clarifies the difference between progressive and regressive acts of reunification when he describes the archaic structure of consciousness as space-, time- and ego-less and the integral as space-, time- and ego-free, where one is aware of space, time and one's individual identity yet simultaneously free to experience beyond those bounds. It is a conscious, intensified and transparent state of being as opposed to the undifferentiated, opaque participation mystique of early humans or human infants. Each arising structure of consciousness delivers more of what was latent into transparency, enabling further complexification of experience and conscious awareness of and participation with the divine. It is a simple yet not simplistic view of integrality suggested by Gebser (1985); that of a non-dualistic, aperspectival, arational structure of intensified consciousness that renders transparent self, world and the spiritual origin that is the source of it all.

Much transpersonal theory, however, is unfortunately not transrational. Ferrer (2002) suggests that there are three main premises underlying much modernist transpersonal

theory that may produce more obstacles than ease for the emergence of a more integral perspective. The first is experientialism: the view that transpersonal experiences are 'had' by an individual experiencer. Such a view continues the subject/object duality inherent in modernity as well as exacerbating issues of personal pride, shame and competitiveness in areas of transpersonal development. The second is empiricism: the notion that such experiences should be able to be evidenced and thus ranked. The third is perennialism: the belief that spirituality has certain unquestionable and universal truths that various belief systems can be measured against along a spiritual scale. Ferrer suggests, as does this study, that spiritual growth or transpersonal evolution, on both the individual and collective scale, are events that occur through participation with a larger whole, a whole that participates with itself in a multitude of ways and through a great diversity of life forms, human and non-human, person and place. From such a participatory perspective, we play diverse and creative roles in divine self-disclosure. The characteristics of the integral mode that Gebser provides allows for an 'ocean with many shores', a relaxed and respectful spiritual pluralism where the only commonality may be the liberation from an ego-centred version of reality (Ferrer, 2002).

Ironically, various transpersonal frameworks at times seem to imbue my own and others' experiences with models saturated in definitions and segmentation, which although potentially useful across a wide variety of settings, work in an opposite direction to that which I am interested in and experience. They can be colonising in their assumptions and also highly directive in practice. For myself, the involvement of an overly rational and systematic framework to make sense of transrationality is not supportive of an increasingly paradoxical, rationally ambiguous and encompassing way of living and breathing where the transformative process is increasingly reliant on a surrender of the need to know, make sense of or map (Todres, 2000). Hence terms such as 'integral practice', implying an individual intentionality leading to mastery, are not relevant to Gebser's framework. The ego itself does not become integral—it is a stage along the way (Wilber, 1981). Simpler stages and structures of consciousness cannot experience or make sense of more complex ones and nor can more complex ways experience simpler ones. An attempt to do so might be seen as a category error: a situation in which inappropriate methods of knowing are applied to specific areas of knowledge, as in the use of cognitive or sensory empirical

approaches to understand the transrational and non-sensory transpersonal dimension (Rock & Klettke, 2009; Wilber, 2001). The personal is not sufficiently impersonal to accurately perceive the transpersonal. Integrality cannot be experienced from the mental-rational mode that precedes it. It must be participated with through the very act of self-transcendence (Feuerstein, 1987).

Such an act is endorsed by the basic concepts of quantum physics and complexity theory and echoed by the voices of the mystics (Capra, 1991; Haisch, 2009; Rock & Klettke, 2009; Talbot, 1981, 1991). My beloved spiritual teacher Ramesh Balsekar (1917-2009) spoke repeatedly of the One without a second, that Consciousness is all there is, that the human organism, like every other event or phenomenon in space-time, is a manifestation of the noumenon, that which is beyond our knowing (Kant, 2007). The spirit that moves us is not our own even as we so assuredly assume the opposite, hence the redundancy of such feelings as guilt and pride. Regret and gratitude may have more usefulness within the broader comprehension of ourselves as apparently individual organisms within a much larger event that we can never fully appreciate or understand the entire workings of. Sitting in Ramesh's little room in Mumbai where he gave his talks, I came to know this as direct experience rather than as hopeful idea. The ever-present origin is just that, abiding throughout all states, stages and structures of consciousness. It is the source of life and life itself, irrespective of its form of manifestation.

## **A postmodern perspective**

*A kind of security arises when we abandon concern for security, and our lives are saved when we are willing to lose them. (Shaw, 1988, p. 4)*

Such notions also have resonance from the perspective of a postmodern, process based spirituality which leans towards the view of non-duality, the primacy of non-sensory experience and the presence of divinity and creativity throughout all life (Griffin, 1988, 1989). Postmodernism, with its ruthless undermining of singular perspectives, its deconstructive and reconstructive properties, is a form of cultural, collective therapy (Paris, 2007). It is the product of change and a change agent in itself. Integrality, like constructive

postmodernism, turns out to be 'a creative synthesis of modern and premodern truths and values' (Gill, 2000, p. xii), producing something quite texturally different and bringing its own rewards and challenges.

Adapting to new paradigms or structures of consciousness can seem like very hard work, nearly impossible, as in the changing of old and ingrained habits. In truth, the emergent paradigm does itself and like a woman in childbirth, one is required to participate with and respond to what is, in each moment, neither leading nor following (Budin, 2001). In recognising this inevitability, one may find some relief, maybe even joy, amidst the turbulence and confusion. We are, each of us, dissipative structures of consciousness amidst a larger one; self-organising, evolving and interconnected systems (Prigogine & Stengers, 1985). Imagining a change to a more integral, ecological and sound self may be far more possible and achievable than thinking our way there (Neville, 2012).

Inner imagery needs periodic updating because the virtual realities going on in the psyche need to change all the time. When the old script offers no more surprises, no more room to move, one needs a new identity. (Paris, 2007, p. xv)

I am indebted to myself and those humans and non-humans around me to envisage a greener, truer, more soulful existence, one in which there is enough for everyone and the planet is loved for the sentient being that it is. In fact a sustainable way of life becomes a necessity to avoid a 'culture of infantile adults' (p. 240), expectant of every need and want met with no consequence, and to develop a community, hinged on mutual interdependence with the planet and cosmos, rather than on parasitism. Inversely, having the human community grow in its capacity for emotional and spiritual maturity becomes a necessity for developing a genuinely sustainable culture.

Integrality brings forth just such a maturing ego, one that is willing to surrender its monopoly on defining reality and recognise a transpersonal version of object constancy, where one's primary connection is to self and spirit rather than to a parent (Washburn, 2003). It is a spiritual intimacy, a unity with what is, a re-searching for what has been lost, a re-uniting with what has been repressed or denied, a coming back to oneself and finding every self: the archaic, magic, mythic and mental selves. This very process amounts to a

bringing back of the body and the earth; in short: the return of the feminine principle and the conceding of the male principle. It is a process allowing for a balance and communion between two polarities long held at bay by the elements of rationality, differentiation and autonomy gone mad and now coming full circle, to a conscious reunion with primal oneness, with feeling, imagination and soul (Tarnas, 1991).

Within a modernist culture, the development of language plays its part in our mental-rational ways in that it 'functions largely to deny reciprocity' (Abram, 1996, p. 71), and even meaning. Both sensory and non-sensory perception intrinsically need and recognise embodiment, meaning and reciprocity. Mental abstractions occur however, seemingly exclusively, in the human mind, uttered by an abstract, conceptual language, and alone are assumed to be evidence of the superiority of the human race and its separateness and entitlement in regard to the rest of the cosmos. Yet if all language is initially born of feeling and participation (Abram, 1996; Merleau-Ponty, 1962), then 'we find ourselves in an expressive, gesturing landscape, in a world that speaks.' (Abram, 1996, p. 81). The modern, rationalist view assumes language and sentience to be exclusively human domains, rendering the rest of nature as mute, robotic and therefore subservient. Such a view has been shown to be both incorrect (Goswami, 1993; Laszlo, 2007; Lovelock, 2000; Sheldrake, 2009) and unsustainable and as such, may well be its death. Life might thus be found by exploring a connected sentience and common language with the rest of the cosmos, the 'more-than-human world' (Abram, 1996). Such a language may be engendered by sensory or non-sensory experience. It may be facilitated by the experiences of empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation. It may involve listening and responding to the 'song of the universe', that song whose singing continues to bring everything into existence (Abram, 1996; Reaney, 1994). It may be a language that is 'the voice of no one, since it is the voice of the things, the waves and the forests.' (Merleau-Ponty, 2004b, p. 270). It may require the emergence of an integral structure of consciousness that melds subject and object and is truly integrative in both content and process, thereby knowing a sentient, articulating cosmos and an inclusivity and reciprocity with all of the more-than-human world.

In the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, as women burned, the last of reciprocal, participatory, non-sensory relationship with nature and spirit in the Western world was extinguished and modernity was catapulted to the forefront of a sensorily perceived reality



where fear dominated decision making under the falsehood of mastery and knowledge was sought without the receptivity to be altered by it (Abram, 1996; Griffin, 1995; Merchant, 1980). That the mental-rational era emerged alongside the torture and death of the midwives and herbalists did not bode well for its future capacity to live well with self and other. Midwives are the harbingers of life, and herbalists are those who learn from the ecology. The negative aspects of modernity have brought much destruction and denial of the wisdom of life and sought to simplify and mechanise an endlessly autopoietic and complex reality that surpasses any attempts at explanation. We have all, women and men, chosen to forget, to unlearn what we have known, in an attempt at a frail and rigid safety, within a paramountly dangerous lifestyle. Much of what men call their personal authority or integrity is loud forms of ego attempting to maintain a withering stance of power and control. Much of what women call their power is reactive outburst while still feeling intrinsically invisible and under the thumb. Our lives are short. The remaining health of the planet is also short. There is no time for retribution or further rehearsal. Despite the damage it has caused, Cartesian dualism and its offspring: objectivity, with its sense of distrust and disownership of one's experience, due to the excess promises of rationality, has had a relatively short life. Starting roughly around the thirteenth century with the heralding of the Inquisitions and establishing itself with the Copernican revolution of the seventeenth century, the deficient rational mode was, theoretically at least, dismantled by the quantum revolution of the last hundred years (Tarnas, 2006) so that we are now in a position to appreciate ourselves as subjective objects and embodied subjects (de Quincey, 2002, 2005). We are asked to remember, to unforget, and as I move toward integrality and land there, even for a moment, there is the recognition that it was always both moving me, and waiting for me.

Such moments of integrality, in being both personal and transpersonal, can bring some sanity to a disquiet and struggling ego. As I acknowledge those real and transrational 'borderland' experiences of communion with the more-than-human world (Bernstein, 2005) that grace the awareness that is mine and not mine, the more psychologically borderline emotions of invisibility, rage, shame and despair, that have, many a time, plagued my existence seem to dissolve into a greater sense of self that allows for more acceptance, trust and resilience (Bernstein, 2005). While trauma does require caring attention and healing in

its own right, therapy geared to the normalising of the individual into a predominantly rational and disconnected society brings about further trauma to beings seeking wholeness while holding the seeds of that wholeness already within themselves in the form of transrational knowings, transpersonal experiences and integral encounters. While it is true that borderland and borderline experiences can exacerbate each other through the activities of mutual avoidance and protection, they are not one and the same (Bernstein, 2005). Much that is transrational and borderland has been pathologised and much that is excessively personal and rational has been worshipped. Integrality might be seen as a postmodern, accessible and organic version of mystical or spiritual practice, not one held ransom by any institution or specific dogma and without the ornamentation of velvet and parchment books, stained glass windows or paternal figures in flowing gowns.

### **An awakening consciousness**

*To see all things in the self and the self in all things—to be aware of one being everywhere... (Aurobindo, 1958, p. 317)*

It may be that growth often germinates with the coveting of that which one perceives as outside oneself. For growth to eventuate, however, calls for an altogether different process, that of incorporating and becoming what one has initially set one's gaze upon. The latency of various structures of consciousness in Gebser's framework allows for the projection of that which is quietly held within us, eventually leading to its reclamation and integration. 'The reintegration of the projection is itself an act of the awakening consciousness.' (1985, p. 203). That which is unknowingly within may initially need to be conceived as symbolic representation before being internalised and consciously birthed. Such a process is a revolution in its own right, each small time it happens (Combs, 2002; Feuerstein, 1987).

The leap from rationality to integrality may require the retraction and reintegration of the projections of individualism, the world and God, that these facets come to dwell within, and in the process, light one up from the inside out. The transparency or diaphaneity of integrality that Gebser writes of is the very conscious existence and expression of the divine, shining through our more physical and psychological membranes.

Our concern is to render transparent everything... to render transparent our origin, our entire human past, as well as the present, which already contains the future. We are shaped and determined not only by today and yesterday, but by tomorrow as well. (Gebser, 1985, pp. 6-7)

The intention and act of soaking in empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation involve just that: an internalisation of these elements so intensely that they render the bather washed clean of that which would obstruct the translucent fluidity and liminality of consciousness. Gebser's focus was on the intensification rather than expansion of consciousness, an accurate and useful distinction. A focus on expansion lends itself to fuelling the conquestual mind of rationality and easily leads us astray as in the case of much new age philosophy which involves the spiritual dressing of a rational paradigm. The activity of intensification, however, leads us inward, with expansion as a possible by-product. There is a complex simplicity to such an occupation, an acceptance of all of myself at once; a fluid liminality that does away with the notion of the unconscious or the need for a specific psychological centre that would hold me in battle with the wind, the river and the underlying suppleness of my consciousness.

The mental-rational structure of consciousness may be the end of the line for more cognitive and concrete development, as confronting as that is for the ego. It would seem that 'further progress begins to soften into a more luminous awareness.' (Combs, 2002, p. 148) that can allow for multidimensional and multistructural recognition. The six elements that this study explores as aids to a more integral experience of reality fit loosely with the efficient form of each structure of consciousness as Gebser has outlined them. Hence I participate with all of myself through the gift of each structure. The projections and externalisations of each era come back to roost through the unconditional acceptance required for the tasks of retraction and re-integration. The non-divisibility of the archaic mode allows for the gift of empathy, that I come to feel another's pain as if it were my own, that my child's joy rises like bubbles from my heart and my dog's loyalty brings me to a dedication of nearly equal measure. The bonding of clans and resonance with nature of the magical structure guide me in a growing capacity for love and community with both the human and more than human world. The imagination and creativity of the mythic mode makes desire possible through the capacity to want that which I perceive as separate from

me. The sense of space and perspective that arises with the mental structure allows for a sense of increased distance between self and cosmos thus opening the door to the appreciation of my distinct uniqueness. Even the deficient rational mode intent on doing battle with time, through the worship of hurried and misguided notions of progress as an antidote to mortality, points me towards the absorbing of time as the only sane response; that I find myself able to stand still amidst the bustle. Awakening requires a measure of sleep to emerge from. I come to retract and reintegrate the notions of space and time, an act only made possible by the projections of the mental-rational structure, through a fluid embodiment and receptive and yielding participation with myself. The mutual melding of all modes of being into one supple whole facilitates a process that enables both the transparency and concretion of the divine into everyday life.

### **An applied view**

*Where ever one of us goes, to some degree we all go. (Bache, 2000, p. 20)*

*This life, well its slipping right through my hands.*

*These days turned out nothing like I had planned.*

*Control, well its slipping right through my hands.*

*These days turned out nothing like I had planned.*

*(Powderfinger, 2001)*

For the healing of grievances or the learnings of a transpersonal nature, I must listen and act with my body and spirit as much, if not more than, with my mind. When I do so, the reciprocal acts of listening and speaking become impersonal and arational and can then match the seemingly non-real liminality of the client's unbearable experience or a group's, until now, unspoken yearnings. Impersonal witnessing and embodied participating, rather than understanding or interpreting, become the activities of healing and learning. Transrational by nature, they plummet the counsellor or teacher into such states themselves and also make available a space for the client or student to come to their own non-dualistic insights and resonances, not in avoidance of, but in acceptance and transcendence of their pain to an 'origins story' that existed prior to the 'trauma story' that

has swallowed up so much of their history and identity (Bernstein, 2005). An origins story will be highly unique for each individual, deeply felt and mostly inarticulatable, its commonality with other origins stories being its kaleidoscopic co-creation by the individual and their ever-present origin.

Both an individual's and a community's experience of self and world change drastically when one's primary narrative moves from a trauma story to an origins one. The deficient aspect of the mental-rational structure of consciousness could be seen to be founded on a trauma story. One is alone in a mechanistic and therefore uncaring world, singular master of one's own destiny, with the consequential need to control both self and other. As such, one is also destined to be the harbinger of trauma to self and other. It is essentially a lonely and fearful story. The integral story, relying on the setting of the rational story to catapult from, is one of co-creation and companionship between self and spirit. Thus the current movement of consciousness might be seen as essentially one from primal fear to primal trust (Gebser, 1972, cited in Feuerstein, 1987) and it asks that I do the same.

The evolutionary process is neither random nor determined but creative.  
(Berry, 1999, p. 169)

Radical change often arrives unannounced, challenging perceptions and ways of living as well as those institutions that seem to define such standards. Originating with a crisis resulting from the limitations of the current world view, ruptures and innovations occur, both nihilistic and reconstructive, as in the more efficient and deficient aspects of postmodernism. A new paradigm emerges that is non-cumulative in its development and incompatible with the old. At first such transformations occur amongst a few individuals alone but as the new world view offers responses to the crisis that the old one intrinsically cannot, a shift begins to take hold of a community bringing about transformation. This is often how scientific and political revolutions take place (Kuhn, 1996) but it also aptly describes the transitions of human consciousness through various structures, a movement that is 'inscrutable and may be permanently so.' (p. 90). Such movements occur way above and below our cognitive faculties, hence the need for other faculties to be operational in the classroom and counselling room.

As counsellor or teacher, that which I would gladly grant or desire for another must be also granted to myself that I may also drink from the rivers that flow through me.

Counterintuitive as that may be to the helping professions, it ensures that I have far more to abundantly and accurately add to the process than I am often personally able. Clients and students sense the offering and invitation and rarely decline, also often contributing well beyond their self deemed capabilities. New references are formed and identities transformed as the best of each of us participates in a symphony of slow words and silences, tears of relief and smiles of recognition for what was once known and lost and now found again anew. Purposes are fortified even as they are softened. Minds and hearts are wed. Bodies are loved. There is peace.

We do the work that does us, and in the end we are the work, its living embodiment. (Romanyshyn, 2007, p. 185)

The mainstream alternative is what Gallant (2005) identifies as the six characteristics of our current schooling system determined by the more deficient elements of the mental-rational structure of consciousness: 'oppositional thinking, duality, rationalism, abstraction, goal setting and an emphasis on the future' (p. 10). These characteristics facilitate what Gallant calls 'the living dead', students who exhibit levels of 'disengagement, conflict, confusion, loss of self and a desire for connectedness.' (p. 10). Given the often relatively dysfunctional authoritarian influences on their lives, it is not then surprising that many students find themselves drawn toward fairly deficient or destructive forms of connection to compensate for profound levels of disengagement and lack of holistic validation. With the current mental-rational state responsible for the living dead, it is unlikely if not impossible that the said state will be the source of bringing us back to life (Gallant, 2005, 2007).

More integral education however demands our acceptance, and even embrace, of ambiguity, open-endedness and humility (Hart, 2001).

This is an education where growing down, embodiment, is the means to growing up and where the focus is on the dynamic process of knowing as much as on the accumulation of specific knowledge. (p. 2)

Again and again I observe that the emergence of integrality in the classroom seems to arise through the request of a student, either implicitly or explicitly, through a stated need, question or observation. Often the query at first appears to be for more information but the feeling behind the words reveals a yearning for far more than facts and theories. If a response emerges from within me that matches the intensity of the request from the other, then the topic at hand becomes a source of transformation for everyone in the room to various depths. It usually seems, at this point in class, that less is more and there is usually a refrain from speaking or the outlining of certain tasks or theories that seemed so important a few minutes ago.

Such transformations are the most consistently effective events in my own process and that of students and clients; events of 'personal' knowledge of the transpersonal, knowledge gleaned through one's own direct experience. Such moments, even if only fleeting, can sooth and distil years of pain and isolation and lessen the tight and involuntary grasp on the past in ways that the talking therapies and modernist educations alone cannot. Despite the best of intentions, writing, reading or talking about the transpersonal from the mental-rational structure of consciousness still maintains the entrapment of the modernist, linear, body-denying, space- and time-bound standpoint and is indeed the greatest weakness of this study. In the moment, spiritual experiences are wordless while brimming with information, non-sensory while being felt with the whole body and profoundly participatory despite it requiring that the experience subside for a misrepresentative articulation to occur. Even as I resonate with the words and experiences as I write them, they do not do justice to the moment nor can they offer any procedural explanation of the process involved. Integrality, like any awakening, is and arises through its own volition and making (Balsekar, 1999; Gebser, 1985; Liquorman, 2009).

What is therefore clear to me, beyond a shadow of a doubt, is that I cannot 'try' to access the integral mode or attempt to 'get' another person there. The leap from rational to integral consciousness is not a self-willed one and cannot be orchestrated by a personal ego, no matter how well intentioned. Rationality simply does not have the aperspectival breadth and depth of awareness that is required. It is a different tool altogether with a different purpose. Perhaps counterintuitively, however, as I immerse myself in the seemingly

personal and elemental experiences of empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation, I find myself adequately absorbed, sufficiently swallowed up by factors accessible to my person, that an opening may arise for a different vibration to stealthily and subtly appear at the peripheral edges of my awareness until it takes over the space rendering it an 'indivisible and unanalysable' whole (Bohm, 1980) that has a life and direction of its own and that I become a willing and loved instrument of.

The reversal of effort is not a way of getting our goal, as much as it is a redefinition of the goal. Letting go becomes the goal. Therefore, we needn't do something right, but only stop doing the wrong thing; the hyperintention of security in a situation irredeemably precarious. (Shaw, 1988, p. 112)

It is doing through being, movement through stillness, an arriving without striving that integrality asks of us. Gebser (1970) saw it as an '...unconditional trust and self-opening... characterised by the kind of unintentionalness that has nothing to do with passivity...' (cited in Feuerstein, 1987, p. 163). It is a highly conscious and active state that asks much more of its participants than the habitual, driven grasp of 'the wanting mind' (Levine, 1979) and creates far more effective conditions for and experiences of profound transformative learning. The striving for 'having', seen through Western eyes as the only and indirect route to 'being', as false a promise as that is, requires a shift to a soft focus on 'being' as foremost, journey and goal aligned as one. It is the act of a soul 'yielding to a spiritual identity that excludes nothing.' (Bache, 2000, p. 20). Such a process leaves one both disempowered and empowered. Students and clients find themselves disoriented through the holding of contradictory feelings. Yet both sets of feelings are true. Over time one learns to find compassion for the modern self consumed with the need to predict and control and increasingly unable to do so. One also gradually learns to identify with an alternative sense of self, a self that knows a power that is not one's own and never will be, a power that holds one in good stead yet can never be wielded, a power that is excellent company yet respects one's aloneness and interiority.

The notion of an external goal, of there being more to understand or conquer that is 'out there' is predominantly a function of the mental-rational structure of consciousness. Integrality requires a turn around where the external is reached through a sufficient



intensity of internalisation to dissolve any boundaries between the outside and the inside, leading to a fundamental intimacy with both embodiment and transcendence. In the classroom, providing a safe environment in which one may turn one's attention inward requires the absence of overly rigid external benchmarks and signposts. What then arises is the opportunity to come into contact with one's own internal structuring that has been put into place to compartmentalise and deny both our pains and joys, both personal and transpersonal. Such a process starts slowly, even resistantly, becoming more self sustaining as one's view on what feels safe begins to revolutionise. Internalised structures start to fall away in an osmotic way and students feel their stifled pain and rage but also their integrity and dignity that is so often repressed alongside their sorrow. They begin to integrate, to become whole, to touch on the unnameable, to know the unknowable, to be with themselves without definition and with transparency. Such a process is without measure if they are to witness and support the same movement in their future clients.

The sadness, fear and sense of being lost that many feel is real and valid, not dysfunctional and requiring resolution. There is grief for the end of a relatively workable era, fear of the unknown that can no longer be avoided and a feeling of being lost literally between two worlds. Such feelings are a sane and sensitive response to these times and are to be built on as an exercise in learning to listen to and trust one's feelings that may have little material evidence as justification. We are, all of us, asked to listen, not just in times of crisis but all of the time. Listening may be the primary action involved in both getting out of the way and into the present. Listening brings about inner silence and receptivity and outer gentleness and humility. The act of constant listening solves many problems without dealing with any.

There is less here  
Than meets the eye.  
(Tzu, 1990, p. 33)

When I hold with integral moments unconditionally, unflinchingly and unapologetically, I find that others come to abide there with me at times, having their own direct experiences of consciousness. This is not always easy. At its most severe, I find myself becoming obsolete and the terror of that can snap me back to a modern self of a rational era where personal identity and authorship are everything. But my intention is the continuance of surrender

and the experiences that thus arise and teach me. From an integral perspective, experience and intention are more relevant than beliefs and ethics. Many a time we may operate in ways that appear ethically sound yet our hidden agendas are far from that. Our beliefs too may hide a deeper resignation that does not share the same certainties. In a universe that knows no bounds, my intentions will come to fruition in some way at some time through my own direct experiences.

It is a question of experiencing everything. At present you need to live the question. Perhaps you will gradually, without even noticing it, find yourself experiencing the answer, some distant day. (Rilke, 2000, p. 35)

Ethical practice then, involves the awareness and refining of both my overt and covert intentions and experiences and the willingness to let my actions follow in brave and authentic ways. What I hold to abides with me in the form of greater intensities within myself and through the company of others, both human and non-human. The invisible foundation blocks of counselling and teaching: intention and presence, collaborate to generate love and wreak havoc with what appears to be a cognitive and safe curriculum, transforming it into a weapon of mass destruction to unsuspecting egos waiting expectantly for information that might strengthen their grip on a sense of expertise and qualification. Spirit can turn anything into a teachable moment....

And does so every day... The thin, brittle ego shell is cracking to reveal an altogether different earth and sky, one not bound by gravity or cause and effect, where the only root cause is that which is causeless, and all that is Is. The invisible ceiling that I have hit my head up against so very many times in distress and desperation is giving way to a space-free and spacious eternity that interpenetrates my earthly, time bound existence. This is no longer torture. This is love; the gift of this textural, bodily exchange of possibilities. Many times before, the ceiling has cracked open to unveil its secrets yet the mental-rational self thought itself the focus of the invitation and unknowingly disrupted the meeting. The egoic self has never been invited. It is a stage to move through, a structure of consciousness to evolve from. It is not an end in itself but a step towards a more integral relationship with Life, one of Love.

## Chapter Six

### A Nature of Knowing

*We are not to know why*

*This and that masters us;*

*Real life makes no reply,*

*Only that it enraptures us*

*Makes us familiar with it.*

*(Rilke, 1975, p. 87)*

One may come to work one's craft as much through the way one learns the craft as through the content of the learning. And the way one learns that craft may be as much about the nature as the methods of knowing. While chapters three and four have focused on the elements that might facilitate an integral opportunity and chapter five has considered possible processes involved, this chapter moves beyond the confines of the counselling and classroom to explore the nature of knowing that may be suitable to an integral structure of consciousness. A study in counselling education is, in essence, a study in the facilitation of the evolving of consciousness. It is the craft of working with the self or being of a person, both the person of the counsellor and of the client, and may be aided through the consideration of philosophers who have contributed their reflections on the experience of knowing and being and, therefore, the subsequent acts of learning and healing. Husserl, Heidegger, Polanyi, Gendlin, Merleau-Ponty, Rogers, Whitehead and Plumwood are theorists whose thoughts, as I understand them, dovetail to support a more integral and organic version of knowing, one that may lead us to a greater understanding of the writings of Gebser and his perspective on integrality. As mentioned in previous chapters, I refer to integrality in the form Gebser uses it: to indicate an evolving form of consciousness that enables experiences of time-, space- and ego-freedom, and not as an all-inclusive meta-theory as is used in various transpersonal writings (Wilber, 2000, 2006).

Husserl may have been referring to a methodology similar to Gebser's systasis and synaeresis when he wrote about intuition as a way of transcendentally and multiperspectively coming to know the essence of a thing, in a way that might be truer than the form of knowing set by the cultural and positivist assumptions and demands of the natural sciences. Heidegger's view represents a process view of life where the very act or experience of being rather than the focus on a person who is being is the heart of the matter. For the human experience of being concerned with the issue of being, he used the term *Dasein*, which for Heidegger was bound up in a sense of time and the immanence of the world. Yet it is my own experience, from a transpersonal perspective, that the sense of being may be simultaneously both bound with and transcendent of the material world and its temporal and spatial dimensions. Such a view is supported by Polanyi's notion of tacit knowing and Gendlin's felt sense; that embodied knowing which is ever-present and yet difficult to articulate through a language that is mostly separative and externalising in its approach. Language allows for talking about a thing far more than it makes for talking from within a thing or as William Irwin Thompson put it; 'Language is the articulation of the limited to express the unlimited.' (1981, p. 15). Yet my own tacit knowing allows for and remembers a way of being and perceiving that is both within this world and beyond it, a way that, as Merleau-Ponty suggested, is altogether intertwined and reciprocal with other in such a way as to be both embodied and transcendent. It is this knowing that primarily informs my counselling and teaching practice and which leads me to the work of Rogers and his focus on the quality and depth of relationship as the primary condition of the learning and healing environment and therefore of the nature of knowing that transforms the self and its sense of identity.

Forms of knowledge change as society changes. Sometimes these changes are small and incremental; at other times the changes are transformations of the structures of knowledge and not merely its contents... (p. 3)

A form of identity might be thought of as a structure of knowledge. They are co-elements in the formation of a perspective on life and experience of the world. Whitehead's process metaphysics and Plumwood's ecofeminist ethos of encounter with the more-than-human world challenge the dualistic, non-relational and anthropocentric forms of knowing and thus of being that hold us captive and severed from a far richer world. Despite the costs, neither

our world view nor our identities are often voluntary participants in the act of change. Hence when such structures change, it becomes; 'not so much a matter of what we think, but what thinks us.' (p. 7).

Sometimes I find myself at the cutting edge of my awareness and skill level when I am working. The vibration that descends upon the room is palpable and breathtaking. The stillness does not allow for diversion, flippancy or pride. So much information becomes available, I find myself rushing to convey it all. My time management skills are profoundly challenged and sometimes fail altogether. I am again at a loss and shaken to the core. I cannot even recall enough of what has occurred to reflect on the process. The increased voltage throws me into uncharted waters once again and I am called upon to be more receptive, that there be no skirmish between that which is emerging and that which is familiar. Increased receptivity relies on further surrender of the need to know or understand; capacities that only really occur in retrospect. There must be more trust in both the force that moves me and this personal body that is moved. As yet, they are not one and the same and therein lies the crux of the matter: the battle ground of fear and falsely claimed territory. Such a battle derives from the lack of trust or 'primal fear' (Gebser, 1972, cited in Feuerstein, 1987) inherent in the ego structure due to disconnection from its spiritual foundation. An egoic and dualistic framework inevitably leads to betrayals and transgressions. As I slowly make peace with the apparent events that have tested my fidelity and innocence, I regain a sense of trust in trust itself and find myself transported to the timeless transparency that integrality requires where there is no battle but one commensurate state responding to the felt needs of the group of which I am a member. The mental-rational era is subsumed by that of integrality through a 'processual transformation' (Thompson, 1996, p. 14) that is dramatic even in its disregarded subtlety.

Death is an insult to individuated man with a name. (p. 140)

And so, too, is integrality to an ego that assumes control despite countless evidences to the contrary. Integrality asks of me that I see my true powerlessness that may in turn be my greatest power yet so often is what I fight against. When darkness descends, I must wait it out. I take some small comfort from the earth that holds me to itself when I would rather be let go and the forest that continues its whispers to me, refusing to take heed of my attempts

to shut it out. The rocks offer me their stillness and I am forced to form a renewed relationship with time and therefore with acceptance, one that is not conditional on optimism.

The world is awash with vibrations unseen. Change is upon us as it has always been. It is time that the doubting, fearful, depressive self meet the self at work that simultaneously flies with the winds of awareness and sits with the rocks of peace and constancy. Integrality nullifies the search that is fuelled by:

...the loveless contraction hidden in the heart of the separate-self sense, a contraction that drives the intense yearning for a tomorrow in which salvation will finally arrive, but during which time, thank God, I can continue to be myself. (Wilber, 1998, p. 282)

There is grief as the melancholic, insecure self sheds and a vacant head as old thoughts lose their relevance and there is, as yet, not the intelligence for new thoughts. And so I lean on the reflections of others....

## **Husserl and the life-world**

*Perhaps it will even become manifest that the total phenomenological attitude and the epoche belonging to it are destined in essence to effect, at first, a complete personal transformation, comparable in the beginning to a religious conversion, which then, however, over and above this, bears within itself the significance of the greatest existential transformation which is assigned as a task to mankind as such. (Husserl, 1999, pp. 372-3)*

Husserl (1859-1938) was working and writing at a time when the positivism of the natural sciences threatened to engulf scientific exploration with a rigid empiricism that viewed those aspects of a thing that could be measured as the thing itself. He drew on Brentano's work on inner experience and the intentionality of consciousness (1995) to develop his philosophy of a science that became known as transcendental phenomenology. While the natural or empirical sciences may be suitably matched to the study of a mechanistic and

separative model of both the brain and the cosmos, phenomenology, the study of the experience and essence of phenomena, may be the form of inquiry most appropriate to an ontological approach that views consciousness as primary and rationality as not necessarily the most appropriate way to investigate a subjective universe 'permeated with meaning, volition and intention'. (Radin, 2007, p. 23). Husserl, in his later years, used the term 'life-world' to clarify the embeddedness of the immediate, personal and intersubjective human experience within this earthly, living 'permanent ground of being' (1999, p. 298), viewing it as elemental to any lived investigation. Such investigation might involve the kind of thinking that is more of a meditation than a conceptualisation; allowing for a direct I-Thou relationship between apparent subject and object, where essences and meanings are intuitively revealed (Buber, 1970; Husserl, 1999).

Husserl argued that the reason, logic and positivism of the empirical sciences was more method than truth, misleadingly superficialising and silencing much of the world of life and the living, while falsely assuming itself to be objective in the process. He considered *epoche* or bracketing to be the epistemological tool that could deliver the subject outside such mental and cultural paradigms and limitations, resulting in a lack of hindrance by the structures and preconceptions of one's time. Through such a tool, sensory evidence and intellectual assumption are suspended, allowing for an empathic gleaning of the essence of a thing. Epoche involved the dual but simultaneous movements of the reduction or bracketing of one's natural or assumed attitudes and the reconstitution of a more essential meaning as a result. Such information came about intuitively and was seen to be 'given' from the thing itself, forming an experiential and multidimensional basis to knowledge.

Of essential necessity there belongs to any 'all-sided' continuously, unitarily, and self confirming experiential consciousness of the same physical thing a multifarious system of continuous multiplicities of appearances and adumbrations... (Husserl, 1999, p. 71)

Such multiperspectival and intrinsic 'seeing' made room for the investigation of those non-sensory and non-rational phenomena that the empirical sciences had deadened through their denial. Although still bound by the empirical version of rigour stamped by the natural sciences and modernity's dualism of mind and body, transcendental phenomenology was an

attempt at a transrational approach that was free of the spatio-temporal and cultural restrictions that rationality brought with it.

Husserl may have been ahead of his time in developing what was, in some ways, an integral epistemology of both lived embodiment and ego transcendence; of experience over conceptualisation, in the service of a knowledge that was structurally intersubjective and elemental in its value and mission (Behnke, 2008). The notion of epoche, so fundamental to transcendental phenomenology, seems to me to be only truly possible in moments of transcendence of the personal and communal ego with its spatio-temporal references and private agendas, in other words: through an experience of integrality. Without such a shift in consciousness, even momentarily, genuine and complete bracketing is, as Heidegger (1993) suggested, an impossibility. Becoming one with what one comes to know, learning from 'the thing itself' (Husserl, 1999, p. 196), is a form of ego transcendence. In a transformative therapeutic process, a pre-defined and boundaried version of myself has the opportunity to give way to a greater acceptance and nonlinearity that defies a previously self-purchased identity....

I had been at it for weeks in search of release but this afternoon, sitting on the verandah, unable to appreciate even the vivid red sunset over the valley or the warble of three magpies graciously asking for seed, I begged for help. In the next instant I had surrendered to the intense pain of betrayal and in the instant after that, it had vanished. Weeks of torment gone in an instant and in its place; silence... silence and emptiness. It was not what I was expecting at the moment of redemption. There was no joy or satisfaction or even relief, just emptiness and a profound and unapologetic indifference that has, at this time, only slightly subsided. This indifference is not unloving and in fact assists me to see my own wrongdoings more succinctly and those of others as the passing waves suspended over their oceanic selfhoods. Indifference reveals itself as the foundation and sibling to love, a love that is as indifferent to my own petty squabbles as it is to those of others.



## Heidegger's being-in-the-world

*We have not only forgotten the question of being and how to ask it, but the forgetting itself...has been forgotten. (Schmidt [Ed.] in Heidegger, 2010, p. xvii)*

*That which one has 'not reckoned with' does not get forgotten. (Heidegger, 1962, p. 43)*

Heidegger (1889-1976) was Husserl's student but he became frustrated with Husserl's epistemological focus on phenomena over that of a 'fundamental ontology' whose purpose was the elaboration of the question and meaning of being (Heidegger, 1993). While Husserl offered an integral way of perceiving, Heidegger's view of 'being' as primary lends itself to both an integral view of reality and an existential one where our authenticity is found through the exercise of care and the making of conscious and individual choices, in regard to how our time-bound lives are spent.

Heidegger believed that the notion of being was both ultimately undefinable and immeasurably important. Such a question could be avoided by reframing the verb as a noun as in 'a being' yet its mystery forms an insoluble and unanswerable inquiry that determines how one lives and loves even as the question dare not be posed to the forefront of one's mind. Yet Heidegger also felt that to ask about something requires prior recognition or knowledge about it, no matter how tacit. Hence, pondering the question of being means that 'the meaning of being must therefore already be available to us in a certain way.' (Heidegger, 2010, p. 4). And so we find ourselves in the enduring hermeneutic circle (Craig, 2007; McConnell-Henry et. al., 2009), already here in the midst of lived and felt beingness even as we attempt its exploration through the unpacking of one segment or another, in order to become more aware and embracing of the whole. Some segments will have more leverage than others in contributing to our connection with all that is, and counselling and teaching may be a lot about deciphering which segments carry the most weight and how to carefully unpack them for optimal value in ambiguous, confronting and crucial areas.

Like Husserl, Heidegger felt that the dominance of rationality at the cost of other forms of investigation or understanding was leading humanity down a futile and meaningless path. His focus was on the indivisible experiences of knowing, being and meaning, and he coined

the term 'being-in-the-world' to denote the unitary concept of an entirely relational state. In exploring these areas, he used hermeneutic phenomenology; a phenomenology of interpretation, reflexivity and of simultaneous revelation and concealment, as the ontological method (Craig, 2007). Heidegger was insistent that a different kind of thinking was required of humanity, one of:

...hunting down the alienation from itself with which it is smitten... becoming and being for itself in the manner of an understanding of itself...

Terminologically it may be defined in advance as the wakefulness of Dasein (the being who explores the matter of being) for itself. (Heidegger, 1999, pp. 11-12)

It was, on these grounds that Heidegger wrote: 'Thinking itself is man's simplest, and for that reason hardest, handiwork.' (1993, p. 381).

When one comes to counselling for healing and learning, there is already a tacit sense that there is more to living than is currently felt, that one's perspective on life or connection to the world and cosmos could be more vibrant, that one's capacity for self care and love might do well with some fine tuning or maturing, or one would not be presenting. These are all questions of 'being' rather than 'a being', of becoming more aligned with oneself in an indefinable yet more accepting and encompassing way. Such a movement may result in definable or measurable changes regarding relationships, eating habits, addictions, quality of life, etc but these must be the symptoms of a more internal metamorphosis for change to be lasting. Such a process is aided by both the client and counsellor becoming more aware of their own organic and tacit knowings of themselves and the world, a process that Heidegger viewed as 'unconcealment' and which required, if anything, a meditative kind of thinking that could carry one beyond the limitations of rationality: 'The quiet heart of the clearing is the place of stillness from which alone the possibility of the belonging together of Being and thinking, that is presence and apprehending, can arise at all.' (p. 445). Such is the state where one's knowings and oneself merge and emerge together.

An integral focus: an intention or direction toward making that which is latent transparent, for the purpose of increased integration and wholeness, is the kind of action that allows for the revealing of that which has been concealed, surely an apt description of the counselling

process when it is about ‘trying to mend and understand the broken heart, or heal the tortured soul, or promote the acceptance of painful realities’ rather than ‘trying to medicate, manage, re-educate, control and correct the irrational behaviour of people whose suffering is inconvenient to the larger culture.’ (McWilliams, 2005, p. 140). Such a focus, on being, and therefore revealing, requires a sense of space and permission, both psychological and spiritual (Welwood, 2002). And it is this consensual space, both internal and external, that makes room for the speaking of the many unspeakables, the detecting and acknowledgement of those tacit knowings and felt senses that are both personal and transpersonal, both in the body and around it.

### **Polanyi’s tacit knowing and Gendlin’s felt sense**

*We cannot truly account for our acceptance of such theories without endorsing our acknowledgment of a beauty that exhilarates and a profundity that entrances us. (Polanyi, 1974, p. 15)*

A buzz term of late in the counselling field is ‘evidence based practice’ yet ‘the process of formalising all knowledge to the exclusion of any tacit knowledge is self defeating’ (Polanyi, 2009, p. 20). Polanyi (1891-1976), a scientist and then philosopher, had, like Husserl and Heidegger, grown weary with the positivist paradigm. He saw reductionism as an obstacle to knowledge and the modern goal of objectivity as a fallacy. Polanyi felt that true knowledge was personal, participatory and usually fuelled by commitment to an intrinsic quest. The concept of tacit knowing, that Polanyi felt was his greatest contribution, relies on a recognition of one’s embodied being, that part of us which defies articulation or definition, because it includes the body of the Earth, cosmos and life itself and is primarily non-sensory. It is the unthought known (Bollas, 1987) and has its pleasurable and unpleasurable aspects yet often both prove difficult to integrate through their transrationality and therefore lack of formal or social recognition. It is that part of us aware of our non-verbal and beyond-verbal sorrows and desires that are specific to each of us and yet we carry as part of life’s condition. It is that part of us that carries the pain of life itself and that simultaneously knows of our resilience, beauty and eternity. My being is made up of all these parts as well

as the minutiae of daily living and coming to know and accept all of these aspects of myself is part of a holistic healing and learning process that may carry me further and hold me more unconditionally than more exclusively positivist, evidence based models of practice (Berg, 2008). The unthought known defies empiricism and often even verbalisation and yet is ever-present and fundamental to the healing environment.

Such tacit knowings are difficult to validate or articulate because they are part of what we are rather than what we have. An underemphasis on self and being along with an overemphasis on underpinning all understandings or practices with evidence trains a counsellor to push clients for verification of their inner experience in ways that may hinder the mystery, spontaneity and trust needed for healing work. This is not to say that evidence based practice is not useful, simply that it may work best when tempered with other forms of knowledge, that we may develop an 'evidence pluralism' rather than the 'evidence hierarchy' currently in place (Berg, 2008). The laws and methods of science 'include no conception of sentience.' (Polanyi, 2009, p. 37) yet the deeper forms of learning and healing are primarily concerned with just that.

A sentience unboundaried by anthropocentric assumptions knows of the non-local, non-sensory, reciprocal communication occurring at every level of existence. Modernity, in reducing 'the ineffable to its own proportions rather than stretching to meet, even partially, the boundless mystery of life with symbol and metaphor' (Spretnak, 2005, p. 77) deadens that tacit part of us which is inextricably linked with a more integral version of ourselves. Accessing tacit or latent integrality might involve resting primarily in my subsidiary or background awareness, which brings with it a more peripheral and sensitive vision and hearing, an awareness which is usually secondary to that focal or foreground awareness of immediate specifics (Polanyi & Prosch, 1975). And further in the background, behind that tacit awareness, which is still an awareness of knowing, may be detected the sense of not-knowing; an entirely fertile, creative enigma that is as full as it is empty. It is that which Eastern philosophy calls the dimension of non-being or the zero point of consciousness where everything is deconstructed and cancelled out (Nakagawa, 2000). The postmodern deconstructionists, with their ensuing nihilism, may have found their way there but forgotten to return, an equally crucial part of the journey according to Eastern teachings where the zero point is only the half way mark and the best is yet to come. Polanyi himself

felt that meaning was to be found in our distal rather than proximal knowings (2009). How much more meaning might be gleaned from further distance, fundamentally from that place of not-knowing that subsequently leads to communion? Modernity's need to know forbids us from dwelling in such a place as our primary reference, and holds us to that which can be known: the details. In doing so, it has reduced us to a meaningless and communionless existence that consequently requires the addiction to conflict to provide a temporary sense of the connection and aliveness that is enduringly offered in an expressive and evocative cosmos.

For the ontologically lost male, peace is boring; it is the long wave of time, the enduring pattern of the Goddess, but war is sharp, an intensification of the feeling of time as the thrilling instant, as now. (Thompson, 1996, p. 166)

Such drama occurs when thinking is privileged over feeling and looking privileged over listening; when knowing and being are held distinctly apart and mind and matter lie separated, scared and lonely. When they are not, that which is latent and still to emerge is as present as that which has passed. As such, Polanyi felt that we could have 'a tacit foreknowledge of yet undiscovered things.' (2009, p. 23).

All the time we are guided by sensing the presence of a hidden reality toward which our clues are pointing. (p. 24)

Such intimacies are held in the body, the instrument and root of knowledge; through the process of indwelling; an empathic kinship between subject and object, a participation with that which we are knowing, an act of integration (Polanyi, 2009). Thus it may be a remembrance of embodied being that leads us in the journey to integrality, its relational knowings reaching further than the capacities of a disembodied mind....

it is with my body that I hear the voice of the forest, give due respect to the grass trees as the natural guardians of this land, care for the ferns as their attendant and know that I have walked these ridges and gullies for aeons, that they have always been in me and I now dwell again in them. I am home and this land is both my mother and companion. I am held, fed, comforted and asked to honour my meaning and purpose. Closing down will not do. Fear is

to no avail. Self doubt has no place. A balance is due: of giving and receiving, of care and caring, of learning and teaching.

A balance of implicit knowing and explication through conceptualisation is also due and the clues of such a process are handed to us by Gendlin (born 1926). Through his counselling work and research with Rogers, it came to his attention that it was the clients who were able to dwell on and within their interiority that reported the most positive outcomes. He went on to develop a technique known as focusing (1992, 1997, 2004) which was specifically designed to teach people such skills. Focusing involves articulating the initially inarticulatable, through travelling to the edge of one's awareness where there, at first, appears to be nothing, allowing a felt sense to arise and then 'carrying it forward' through the challenging task of congruent expression; bringing what was not known into the known and then into the word for the loving act of releasing to self and the courageous act of sharing with other. From a felt sense, language arises rather than separates from the body and is an act of both inclusion and revelation.

The process of inquiring into the felt sense is, by its very nature, transformative and limitless, naturally leading to the use of embodied and congruent language, that language most suited to a living and interactive process. The felt sense is different to emotions or thoughts in that it lies at the unknown edge and involves sensitive exploration and discovery, rather than the expression of familiar, identifiable or repetitive components of one's chosen autobiography. It is contacted through an admittance of 'not knowing' and a respect for the body as guide and holder of information (Gendlin, 1996).

Our bodily knowledge is synonymous with environmental interaction and happens prior to any distinction between implicit and explicated forms of knowing (Gendlin, 2009). Bodily process could even be seen to be 'a carrying forward by the environment' (p. 342). We do not only exert our influence and making on the environment but the environment both influences and makes us. The formulation of our words is to be seen as the explications of a much more complex, rich and subtle process than can be symbolised through language yet, by our very nature, must be endeavoured. When we speak from the 'implicit intricacy' of life, we speak for more than ourselves (Gendlin, 2004).

Experiencing is the continuous receptivity of our bodies toward life. (Sharma, 2011, p. 181)

Such experience and interaction precede perception. Hence, focusing on the primacy of perception creates, not only an unseen divide within us between experience and perception but also within the world, through an immediate duality of perceiver and perceived (Gendlin, 1992). Perception seen as secondary allows for a primary focus on the interconnection and convergence of self and environment, immediately loosening those anthropocentric and egoic boundaries correlated with the mental-rational structure of consciousness and rendering one as much perceived as perceiver in a reciprocal and therefore communal way.

There is an implicit interactional bodily intricacy that is first—and still with us now. It is not the body of perception that is elaborated by language, rather it is the body of interactional living in its environment. (p. 353)

Integral learning and healing are conducive to, and even require, participants making the acquaintance of and eventually bonding with their implicit understanding (Gendlin, 2009) and its frontier through the medium of the body and its surrounds. One learns to receive information from one's interiority, where that which is not yet known or long forgotten is latently, patiently waiting. The more I dwell in and with my implicit understanding, the more it reveals of itself. Of all of one's being, one's interiority most resembles oceanic and outer space, comparatively boundaryless, beyond space and time, inarticulatable, ever-present, a force in its own right. When one's interiority and exteriority work coherently, one lives relatively free of space-time while dwelling within a spatio-temporal world. Neither reality is denied, a critical factor when moving from an exclusively mental-rational mode that only acknowledges the sensory and logical world to an integral mode and its inclusivity of all ways of being. 'We understand and think with the body' (p. 339) which is inseparable from the rest of the cosmos. Our own flesh and blood blends with the flesh of the world.

## Merleau-Ponty and the flesh

*We must recognise that primordial being which is not yet the subject-being nor the object-being and which in every respect baffles reflection. From this primordial being to us, there is no deviation, nor any break. (Merleau-Ponty, 1988, pp. 133-4)*

The quote above could have been written by Gebser, as part of his articulations on the ever-present origin and its concretion into conscious awareness with the arising of the integral structure of consciousness. Merleau-Ponty was, in a similar fashion, writing about his ontological concept of the flesh, that embodied and fundamental substance-process from which everything arises. His philosophy is indicative of the emergence of such a non-dualistic, aperspectival awareness into consciousness.

Merleau-Ponty (1908-61), although greatly influenced by Husserl, rejected his view of consciousness as primarily transcendent. Like Polanyi and Gendlin, he saw the body as primary in the process of knowing and being. His explorations initially focused on the nature of perception as a path into the embodiment and reciprocity of self and the world yet as mentioned earlier in this chapter, such a focus still belied the inherently dualistic assumption of a separate perceiver and perceived. His later works took the notions of embodiment, reversibility of the self-other relationship and thus the ambiguity of being both object and subject ontologically further, into the notion of the flesh; a non-dualistic 'ultimate notion, that is not the union or compound of two substances, but thinkable by itself.' (Merleau-Ponty, 2004b, p. 257).

The flesh, a metaphor that 'stands between direct signification on the one hand and mystical or poetic silence on the other' (Gill, 1991, p. 64) speaks of that permeable substance, or substance-like process, that is both the world and myself, that we are of each other yet not the same, made from the same stuff yet diverse, able to touch and be touched by each other, to see and hear and be seen and heard by each other, in short to be witnessed and loved by each other as well as assaulted and cast aside.

Alterity and intimacy have been expanded to the point of recursive interpenetration. (Varela, 2001, p. 71)



Body as incarnate subjectivity does away with any opposition between transcendence and immanence, mind and matter or self and world. As I am subjectivity incarnate, so are all others. Through the intertwining and reversibility of the sensed and sensing, does everything become sentient (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). The flesh of the world is the flesh of my body.

Inside and outside are inseparable. The world is wholly inside and I am wholly outside of myself... The act which draws together at the same time takes away and holds at a distance... In one way I understand the world and in another way it understands me. (p. 474)

Such a relational, panexperiential approach describes an embodied and integral way of being where everything is both/and and contradictions are left far behind. Such tacit knowing involves 'a continual integration and reintegration of knower and known' (Takaki, 2009, p. 28), an incessant process from becoming to being to perishing, and a constant instantaneous flipping between the role of knower and known until all melds into one aperspectival, ambiguous and immediate expression of life itself where my transience is as sharp and clear as that of a spring flower and 'every object is the mirror of all others.' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 79). Not only does the body experience the world but the world experiences both the body and itself, in all of its diversity, through the body (Abram, 1988; Merleau-Ponty, 2004b).

Whether we are dealing with organisms or animal societies, we do not find things subject to a law of all or nothing, but rather dynamic, unstable, equilibria in which every re-arrangement resumes already latent activities and transfigures them by decentering them. As a result, one cannot conceive of the relations between species or between the species and man in terms of a hierarchy. What there is is a difference of quality and for this very reason living creatures are not super-imposed up one another, the transcendence of one by the other is, so to speak, lateral rather than frontal, and one meets all sorts of anticipations and reminiscences. (Merleau-Ponty, 1988, p. 165)

Merleau-Ponty's central tenet is that both knowing and being are participatory and reciprocal processes within the unitary and primordial concept of the flesh that

encapsulates both myself and the cosmos and incorporates both the visible or immanent and invisible or transcendent. Cartesian dualism and the ensuing deadening and mechanisation of the cosmos, an inherently anthropocentric position, is done away with through the felt sense of an entirely bonded interiority and exteriority; a position that opens the way for a philosophy of both deep ecology and integrality through its inclusive, experiential, inherently meaningful, multiperspectival and transrational approach (Langer, 1990). An ontology of 'the inextricable intertwining of the visible and invisible' (p. 126), of a transparent and porous diversity, allows for an intensity of both the sensate or spatio-temporal and incorporeal or transcendent faculties, and through this simultaneous awareness of apparent opposites, a freeing up can occur of the stranglehold of a linear and seperative egoic frame of reference, into one of reciprocal relationality.

The paradoxical reversibility of self-sensing flesh... escapes all our categories, dissolves our dichotomies, and installs us beyond ourselves so that we are in kinship and participation with the whole world—and through it, with Being.  
(p. 129)

## **Rogers and relationship**

*And perhaps we are touching the cutting edge of our ability to transcend ourselves, to create new and more spiritual directions in human evolution.  
(Rogers, 1980, p. 134).*

From many years of clinical practice, teaching and research, Carl Roger's (1902-87) primary finding was that it was the quality of the relationship between client and counsellor or student and teacher that held the most sway in enabling a healing or learning experience. He was not the only one to address this topic. Noddings (2003) sees relationship as ontologically fundamental. Kessler writes that 'connection among souls is ultimately what education is about.' (2000, p. 159). Thorne (1991) offers tenderness as a factor in the healing relationship. Miller (2008) states that love is crucial to education and that 'ultimately it is the presence of the teacher that can be the most immediate source of love in the classroom.' (p. 12). Palmer writes that 'relationships—not facts or reasons—are the key to

reality.’ (1993, p. 53) and Jung (1970) saw true healing as being analogous to developing a more conscious connection and relationship with oneself.

Essentially when one talks about quality of relationship, one is speaking of love. Yet love is hard to define and even harder to operationalise. Rogers (1957) identified empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard or acceptance as core conditions required to provide an optimal healing and learning relationship and thus environment. Such an environment enables the movement from a false or idealised self, created by the mental-rational mode and continuously living in the anxiety caused by being unable to live up to its own compensatory aspirations, to a more real self or integrated state of being (1980, 1995), where peace, connectedness, self-knowledge and acceptance naturally lie, those insights of a self in contact with more than itself. Empathy is akin to direct knowing and is not limited to sensory perception, proximity or humanity. It is a state of intersubjectivity, knowing the other as the other experiences itself (Hart, 2000b). Congruence involves a willing transparency, an ongoing referring to and expressing from the felt sense that is as revealing and informative to self as to other (Doi & Ikemi, 2003). Unconditional positive regard, I experience as acceptance, an acceptance of what is, in whatever way it is. Such acceptance is not to be confused with approval, agreement or condonement but makes for a lack of resistance and judgement that allows movement to occur where there may have been paralysis. The offering of these core conditions results in a processual way of working hinged on the immediacy and co-creativity of the moment by moment healing experience. It provides an environment that accesses and facilitates the kind of relationship that allows for a sense of oneself that enables deeper transformations than those of behaviour modification or intellectual advancement, transformations that involve one’s being and being-with, one’s connection not only with self and those in close proximity but with the whole of the more-than-human world and the cosmos at large and so very near.

The humanistic person-centred approach was concerned with the individual’s subjective experience and process, an important position to take in the conforming climate of the 1950’s. Over time however, and without contradicting the principle of honouring the individual, Rogers also came to express a more collective view of growth and potentiality that was not human or even earth-centred. Husserl, following Brentano, had offered the

insight that consciousness was always intentional. Rogers (1980) saw that intentionality at all levels, the universal as well as the individual, and overarchingly directed towards fulfilment, wholeness and actualisation:

I hypothesize that there is a formative directional tendency in the universe, which can be traced and observed in stellar space, in crystals, in micro-organisms, in more complex organic life and in human beings. This is an evolutionary tendency toward greater order, greater complexity, greater interrelatedness. In humankind, this tendency exhibits itself as the individual moves from a single cell origin to complex organic functioning, to knowing and sensing below the level of consciousness, to a conscious awareness of the organism and the external world, to a transcendent awareness of the harmony and unity of the cosmic system, including mankind. (p. 133)

Rogers may have started his career in the positivist psychology environment of the 1940s and 50s but his study of relationship, its attributes and impacts, fittingly led him to a more philosophical, even mystical, relationship with the more than human world through his own process of self-actualisation.

### **Whitehead's living universe**

*Life is porous, the whole world leaks.*

*There's no such thing as a perfect seal.*

*It all gets out, it all gets in;*

*Everything leaks into every thing*

*So that every thing can heal.*

*(Leunig, 2010)*

Relationship might be seen as meaningful and multifaceted interconnection, not just between individual life forms, but the kind of connection that facilitates the coherence of ourselves and the universe, or in actuality, allows for the conscious recognition and experience of such an inherent phenomenon. Within the comprehension of such a

fundamental interconnection, our more exclusive relationships with particular beings become both a possibility and a symptom of a more universal coherence and may be celebrated as such. Laszlo's use of the term integrality (2006), in referring to the coherence, relationality and interconnectedness of the universe at large and therefore everything within it, has relevant and supportive parallels to Gebser's use of the same term.

Gebser refers to an evolutionary mutation of consciousness leading to an integral experience of reality that occurs through the conscious interconnectedness and incorporation of all structures of consciousness that we carry within us. Laszlo points out that any mutation leading to evolution rather than devolution must be 'massively co-ordinated' (2006, p. 16) for the change to benefit, rather than hinder, the organism's complexity and survivability. One specific mutation alone without the co-ordinated change of many other aspects of the organism is more likely to thwart rather than expand its possibilities. Similarly, evolving to a more integral reality may require systemic changes in the organism on all levels for the change from a mental-rational to integral reality to be successful. Yet we are not alone in this process. Contrary to initial Darwinian theory, changes in the genome are impacted by changes in the phenome and its environment (Laszlo, 2006; Sheldrake, 2009). The genome or holder of genetic information, and its phenome or organism are also coherent. Evolution occurs through interconnection, intentionality and agency. For any autopoietic system; the more connections, the more instability. The more instability and fluidity; the more nonlinear complexity and interconnection. Consciousness is a cyclically ever evolving system, its transformations irreversible and aided through receptivity and open invitation (Plumwood, 2002). Rather than being an epiphenomenon of the physical brain (Dawkins, 1989; Dennett, 1991) consciousness may be 'a vast field that constitutes the primary reality of the universe.' (Laszlo, 2006, p. 89), wholly coherent, fundamental and integral....

It was everything and everything was it, but there was no 'it' because there was no 'not it', nor was there a 'was' because all that happens, happens in a now that is not a 'now' because there is no 'not now'. And all is, in absolute emptiness that is absolutely full, entirely intelligent, intentional, creative and potent, reasonless, of and for itself, of a grandeur, love and dynamism that encapsulates everything and defies articulation. There is no 'I' yet there is Experiencing. I have never been yet I AM.

Such a processual and unified view of reality is articulated by mystics, philosophers and scientists alike (Balsekar, 1992, 1999; Capra, 1991; Laszlo, 2006, 2007; Liquorman, 2000, 2009; Nisargadatta, 1973; Whitehead, 1968, 1978). Whitehead (1861-1947) wrote of a process view of reality in which verbs play the principal role and we all, human and more-than-human world derive from primordial potentiality, an 'unconditioned actuality... at the base of things.' (1978, p. 344). His, like Rogers', was a living, creative, experiencing cosmology, made up of 'micro-cosmic' organisms rather than objects: 'actual entities, also termed actual occasions... drops of experience, complex and interdependent' (p. 18), each involved in the process of becoming and imbued with both mind and matter in unified form. Larger organisms are made up of a conglomeration of actual occasions strung together, in a continual process of momentary events of experience. It is a view of the universe as self-determining, entirely connective and evolving, as are all the organisms that are derived from it.

In a reality where the cosmos is made up of incessant and interdependent activity rather than multiple objects, the bifurcation of nature (Whitehead, 2010), that mind/matter dualism and its ensuing mechanistic materialist view, loses its hold. We live in a feeling cosmos made up of a multitude of layers and dimensions of agentic events, within a unitary creative process and a world that is 'felt in a unison of immediacy.' (p. 346). Like Laszlo, Whitehead felt that:

The fundamental concepts are process and activity. The notion of self sufficient isolation is not exemplified in modern physics. There are no essentially self-contained activities within limited regions... Nature is a theatre for the interrelations of activities. To this new concept, the notion of space with its passive, systematic, geometric relationship is entirely inappropriate... It has thus swept away space and matter, and has substituted the study of the internal relations within a complex state of activity. This complex state is in one sense a unity. (1934, p. 15)

Such an ontology requires the involvement of different kinds of knowing; that of a sensory, spatio-temporal and here and now world, which Whitehead called presentational immediacy and that of a direct, embodied, non-sensory, internal awareness that heeds both

past and future and is possible only in an interconnected universe. This kind of knowing he called causal efficacy and both are needed for integration and symbolic reference or the making of meaning (Neville, 2007; Stenner, 2008; Whitehead, 1978). Such meaning making on Whitehead's part led him to a panexperiential position and the valuing of all life in a participatory and relational ontology of both temporal and timeless proportions.

The prehension... of each creature is directed with the subjective aim, and clothed with the subjective form, wholly derivative from... all inclusive primordial valuation. (1978, p. 345)

Like Merleau-Ponty, Whitehead saw relationship as fundamental and reciprocal, including between a primordial spiritual origin, the 'absolute wealth of potentiality... not before all creation but with all creation' (p. 343) and each actual entity. And like Gebser, he saw that spiritual origin and those organisms in a continual and patient process of concrescence or growing unity with one another. A processual, relational and unitary ontology has much to offer the counselling and classroom; namely a trust in the organic nature of learning and healing. Whitehead's cosmology argues for both transformation and wholeness as implicit in the makeup of the universe and therefore of ourselves.

While Gebser did not have much to say about integrality's relationship with the more than human world, it is my experience that integrality may be synonymous with a conscious panexperiential position (de Quincey, 2002; Whitehead, 1978). Ego-freedom is, amongst other things, a freedom from anthropocentrism, from denied dependency and relationality, a freedom that brings with it a world that I may have been living in for centuries without seeing. Freedom from time and space brings the capacity for connection with those others who operate under different spatio-temporal realities, such as rocks and moths.

## **Plumwood and interspecies ethics**

*Perhaps the most important task for human beings is not to search the stars to converse with cosmic beings but to learn to communicate with the other species that share this planet with us. (Plumwood, 2002, p. 189)*

Husserl rightly saw that the natural or assumed cultural attitudes held the capacity to obstruct or distort a true or essential experience of something. One such cultural view, so ingrained within our mental-rational way of relating that it is still hard to detect, is the attitude of entitlement enacted through colonisation, a view that self has unquestionable right to another. Although such a perspective is now apparently clearly seen for its inherently exploitative and destructive ways, its activities and flavour still operate in both overtly violent and more subtle, paradigmatic ways in many areas including that of our relationship with the more than human world. Plumwood (1939-2008) was an Australian ecofeminist theorist and activist who applied matters of philosophy and ethics, normally directed towards humans, to the environment and the non-human world. She argued for an ethic of responsibility and care toward those that modernity would so readily oppress with 'a range of conceptual strategies, which are employed also within the human sphere to support supremacism of nation, gender and race.' (Plumwood, 2003, p. 9).

Such oppression is primarily justified through the unquestioned dualisms of human/nature, mind/body, male/female, white/black and rationality/emotionality, essentially, as Plumwood writes, through the view of a superior and masterful pole and an inferior and subordinate one, of inflated difference and refuted likeness. Conceptual strategies that make colonisation of a collective possible include omission of that group from the possibility of being identified or empathised with, seeing all members as the same and therefore interchangeable, seeing the group as contrary and in opposition, rendering the group invisible, inferior and inconsequential, and defining it solely in terms of its use (Plumwood, 2003). Countering such anthropocentricity might involve recognising commonality and links, decentring rationality, admitting our own animal nature and dependencies on the more-than-human world and acknowledging the other's internal diversities, true difference, independence, intentionality and agency. One might also heed nature's collaborative presence and interactions (Plumwood, 2002). Such actions are part of a feminist or indigenous ethic of care, respect and responsibility for all of existence, of intimate relationship with the more than human world and personal connection to land, more than an androcentric selective ethics of justice, rights and fairness, impersonal and non-contextual in its approach (Gilligan, 2003; Graham, 1999, 2009; Plumwood, 2003, 2010; Rose, 2004).



Within my colonialist culture, it is the assumption of 'human-centredness... a complex syndrome which includes the hyperseparation of humans as a special species and the reduction of non-humans to their usefulness to humans' (Plumwood, 2009, p. 116) that most misses out on examination. When consciousness or subjectivity is seen as a primarily or exclusively human domain, both 'the mind-like aspects of nature and the nature-like aspects of the human' (pp. 116-7) are denied, rendering both nature and humanity poorer and deadened. Such human-centredness is akin to male-centredness, a view that sees the male human as 'part of a radically separate order of reason, mind, or consciousness, set apart from the lower order that comprises the body, the woman, the animal and the pre-human.' (p. 118). Integrality would have us all, both female and male, recognise and re-integrate these devalued and severed aspects of ourselves, which, in our irrational rationality, are intertwined in ways that diminish each other. For the mental-rational self, such a process may feel like a conceding or even relinquishing. For the integral self, it is the route home to an embedded and embodied embrace of all selves from all times and places.

If I, as embodied being feel, then I have no reason to believe that other such organisms do not (de Quincey, 1999, 2002). As such I am implicated in a dialogic rather than monologic relationship, in a subject-subject rather than a subject-object context, with the more than human world (Plumwood, 2002). This entails:

...listening and attentiveness to the other, a stance which can help to counter the deafness and backgrounding which obscures and denies what the non-human other contributes to our lives and collaborative ventures... Openness and attentiveness... allow(ing) us to be receptive to unanticipated possibilities and aspects of the non-human other, reconceiving and re-encountering them as potentially communicative and agentic beings with whom we ourselves must negotiate and adjust. Closely allied stances are those of invitation, which risks an offering of relationship to the other in a more or less open-ended way, and receptiveness to presence and response. (pp. 194-5)

Plumwood's words may guide us in the revolutionary act of inclusion of a multiplicity of selves, both internal and external, selves that may live through a diverse range of spatio-temporal dimensions and forms of knowing. To accept and live with all of the selves within

us with equality and care, may bring about the acceptance of and living with all of the selves around us with such ethics.

## **Integrality; a processual, panexperiential perspective**

*It is not I who sees, not he who sees, because an anonymous visibility inhabits both of us, a vision in general, in virtue of that primordial property that belongs to the flesh, being here and now, of radiating everywhere and forever, being an individual, of being also a dimension and a universal. (Merleau-Ponty, 2004b, p. 259)*

The notion of being may be an entirely relational and processual state. I do not 'be' in a vacuum but in continuous, rolling relationship with myself and other, at least somewhat undistorted by the colonial, empirical and rational attitudes of my inheritance. Knowing through being means becoming through the process of being with, through connection and kinship, and ultimately through direct experience. The arising of the integral structure of consciousness entails the recognition, integration and embrace of all aspects of selfhood including those that operate under spatio-temporal and subjective experiences of self and world distinct from the mental-rational mode. In acquiring the capacity to resonate with diverse forms of subjectivity within myself, I become able to recognise and hear many other forms of self and agency. In identifying the multiperspectival versions of being within myself, I am also able to appreciate the countless expressions of life that surround me. Gebser was explicit that it was the process of Origin itself that was underway in evolutionary changes and that the human species was only 'one of its bearers' (1985, p. 138).

The six elements of empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation considered in chapters three and four make up part of the fabric of such a processual, panexperiential and integral experience of life. Empathy is that attribute that allows me to feel the subjectivity of another and the porous fluidity of our supposedly separate realities. Love is primordial — that which is always there when there is naught else and that acausally links me with everything. Desire is the passion I feel towards the Earth and cosmos. This is no mundane relationship that calls me by day and by night, as I listen to that which I cannot hear,

envision what I cannot see, and am continually affirmed by the responses I cannot verify. Time and space are those attributes that make for movement and change, that if sufficiently accepted allow me the experience of that which is ever-present and eternal. Participation, if full enough, renders me transparent, diaphanous, and embracing of all aspects of selfhood, structures of consciousness and spirit.

Integrality may mean being willing and therefore able to know and relate to all of myself and therefore of other, a way of connecting not limited to spatio-temporal and self serving boundaries, a way of transcending certain bygone limitations. Such knowing and relating fills me with bounty even as it floods me with sorrow, has me know eternity as it holds me to my transience, dons me in perpetual loneliness while holding me in loving embrace, allows me the exquisiteness of this immanent world even as I also dwell transcendently. It is all true. There are no contradictions.

Such intense and disparate feelings also flood the shores of student or client as they unite with a more processual and pan-experiential self. No longer can one deny the disconnection of these times, all the while feeling the quiet joy of communion. No longer can one disregard one's part in the denial of other, all the while knowing of the others' love for oneself. Romanyshyn (1999) views grief as the 'greening of the soul' (p. 53) and 'a cosmological opportunity' (p. 109). In class and in counselling, tears must be shed for what has been falsely clung to as a panacea for one's isolation, even if it appeared as one's greatest strength. For some it is the capacity to call forth a myriad of sexual partners, for others an overbearing confidence that has often gotten them what they wanted. It may be the capacity to hide that must be rescinded or a helpfulness that denies one's own needs. Forms of addiction are released as are protracted conflicts. Often it is the approval or acceptance of others that has come at cost to self, as one finds their own voice and truth, which might also include starting to hear the voice of one's garden or guides. Underlying such changes and many more, lies the dissolution of the sense of separateness and independence, states that can be comforting in their segregation. There are losses that there may be gains.

I want less from the world now, much less than ever before. In my best moments now, in those moments when my soul can sing its lyrical improvisations in celebration of the world, I have only a kind of care-ful

regard for the world. On these occasions of regard, I take a second look, with softer eyes.' (p. 120).

And yet as I write this I feel profoundly challenged and my words partially insincere. 'When I reveal most, I hide most.' (Merton, 1999, p. 312). Relating to the more than human world has always been obvious and come with ease. Relating to the human community however has been sometimes beautiful but mostly awkward and often painful, a disorienting minefield I have not known how to traverse. I am 'both implicated in and wounded by' (Rigby, 2009, p. 178) the acts of severance perpetrated by my people and at times the guilt and grief is almost too much to bear. Classrooms and counselling rooms have been my healing ground through the finding of shared purpose, growing honesty and respectful intimacy. Such learning concerns 'never merely the oppressive situations which we seek to escape, but that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within each of us, and which knows only the oppressors' tactics, the oppressors' relationships.' (Lorde, 2007, p. 123). I can no longer deny relationship with the human world any more than others may do the same with the more than human world....

But for now I must go and attend to the burning off of parts of the old gum that surrendered its stature in the last big storm and the shovelling of wheelbarrows of gravel that rushed down to the bottom of the driveway in the torrential rain. It will be hot and sweaty work but the birds will inspire me with their songs even as my body resists the labour. The echidna will walk on by as if I am not there, a reminder of my relative place in all things. The dogs will look on lovingly and I will appreciate their company and friendship and that will also make it easier. I adore this land. It remembers me and has unequivocally taken me in and given me home.

## Chapter Seven

### An Immanent Transcendence

*Faithfulness to one's self and faithfulness to being-itself are one, and... the refusal of one is the lack of faith in the other. (Gunn, 2000, p. 7)*

*The experience of Peace is largely beyond the control of purpose. It comes as a gift... It results in a wider sweep of conscious interest. It enlarges the field of attention. Thus Peace is self-control at its widest,— at the width where the self has been lost, and interest has been transferred to co-ordinations wider than personality. Here the real motive interests of the spirit are meant, and not the superficial play of discursive ideas. (Whitehead, 1967a, p. 285)*

Traditional idealist and dualist perspectives have rendered transcendence a movement beyond the body, Earth and a love of life, resulting in a dismissive and harsh relationship with that which loves, shelters, feeds and converses with us. It has been wed to the notion of rising above and away from this messy planetary existence of dirt, sweat and ambiguity to a cleaner realm of abstraction, intellect and certainty. Such a view is firmly authorised by a modernist, patriarchal god who acts as moralist, controller and endorser of the views of the human establishment of the time (Cobb & Griffin, 1976). A more useful and indeed genuine way to consider transcendence: the movement beyond, might be in humble relation to self and identity, and through the necessarily complementary process of immanence, that of being present, inherent and manifest. While the previous chapter considered the nature of knowing relevant to an integral structure of consciousness, this chapter reflects on the nature of change that may be most suited to the unfolding of a new structure of consciousness, suggesting that it requires the complementary movements of immanence and transcendence. Such change is not necessarily volitional but obligatory all the same, when one is faced with the emergence of a new and radical way of being, as those of us of mental-rational ilk are.

This chapter reflects on a number of themes to substantiate the understanding of deep change through the processes of transcendence and immanence. The sense of emptiness is

considered in the light of enabling the possibility of change through a surrendered investment in that which has been known. Such emptiness of mind and heart may lead to a more onto poetic form of relating with self and world, a relationship that has the capacity to change one through its non-dual, felt and imaginal communicativity with the more-than-human world. The concept of decolonisation is then offered as both a suggested route to and result of the acknowledgement and integration of a multiplicity of selves both internal and external. Such a process allows for richer and more nuanced ways to experience both time and space, ways that offer some liberty from exclusively linear and perspectival frameworks. Freedom from a solely mental-rational view of life allows for the option of transcendence as a form of transformation through the capacity to be more fluid and relinquishing with one's sense of self. Jung's transcendent function operates transrationally, through the acceptance of polarities, in a way that requires the inclusion of embodiment or immanence for deep change to occur. Deep and ongoing change is the very nature of an integral methodology through the dual and complementary activities of systasis: a direct and holistic way of perceiving, and synairesis: a multi-dimensional form of knowing. Both activities, in being primarily experiential rather than cognitive, transform identity to a more integral version of self that continues to change through continuing to know.

Research and writing are inherently vulnerable activities. That which wants to be explored and expressed is often that which has been dismissed, invalidated or suppressed, and carries with it all the unworthiness, fear and shame that such actions create. As such, it is both a transcending and embodying process. That which is transcended is voicelessness and the identity of sameness. Truths are salvaged. Fraternities are broken. The dull, heavy latency of the topic slowly sheds, emerging into a vibrant transparency as it rewrites itself back into the heart and life of the researcher with the ferocity of one set free after a long imprisonment. Such awakening occurs through an indwelling with topic, a surrendering into being with that which devours the researcher in its wake and brings the topic into flesh, blood and breath; into immanence. And so the cyclical process continues.

It is the premise of this study that the grand, processual, loving subjectivity explored in the last chapter is life itself and the basis of my own existence and that of all others. A force that is continually transforming itself in perpetual, self-directed motion and immanent creativity as the basis of who I am implies such characteristics as my own fundamental attributes....

When I sit quietly enough, embedded and embodied in just such a world, there is a force within the very matter of my being where immanence and transcendence operate as one movement as palpably as my breath. The smell of ginger emanates from my tea, the breeze rustles the leaves. Short bursts of birdsong course through the air and cricket sounds reverberate. My shoulders are sore from recutting the steps into the ground where they were washed away in the weekend's storm and there is a vibrant silence within me that eradicates the fear that is so often present. At other times, this silence becomes an enduring emptiness that fills me with overwhelming panic. It is a disorienting and bodily experience; the feeling one is in an ongoing disappearing act that never climaxes.

## Emptiness

*Wholeness is created and maintained by the power to hold oneself in being and simultaneously to give oneself away. (Spangler, 2011, p. 257)*

Nothing propels one more into the possibility of transformation than contact with mystery. In the light of my own 'not knowing' there arises the freedom to know that which I have not yet recognised, to have surface wisdoms from what seems way underground, to invigorate aspects of self that have felt themselves to have been numbed or killed off. A sense of not-knowing enables a fluidity that allows self the freedom to identify as process rather than substance, as incessant transition rather than stability, making change far more accessible and paving the way for a self-transcendence that involves identification with a far larger process than my own.

Growing is not something we do. It is not even something that happens to us.

Rather, it is a cosmic event in which we participate. (Neville, 2007, p. 3)

Growth, transformation, evolution. All require emptiness. Movement from one state of being to another rarely happens without some sort of transition, an intermediate zone where that which is familiar has either slipped away initially unnoticed, been abruptly vanquished or a mixture of the two, and that which is arising has not yet taken its new and rightful place. Pushing forward into more productivity or acquisition, or going back to that which I have already lived are both lifeless propositions, no matter how lively they may

appear. Making the acquaintance of the emptiness within, so loud that it is hard to ignore, requires a stillness, a slow pace, a waiting with what is, to allow what's next to emerge.

Emptiness is the key to the paradox of full selfhood. (Gunn, 2000, p. 10)

Gebser's integral structure of consciousness, is both a transcendence of other structures and their full and immanent embodiment. Seen in this light, self-transcendence, the transcendence of familiar identity, is akin to arising at a more multi-faceted self acceptance; a self-renunciation that leads to further self-love (Conn, 1998). For transcendence to be more than a colonising falsity involving the dominance and repression of other selfhoods, it demands the balance of immanence. They are co-constitutional in the process of change. As I come home to my body, I come home to the cosmos, a moving into that entails a moving beyond. My work is my availability, an ongoing emptying out process and simultaneous intentionality toward that which is.

Integrity, in being both immanent and transcendent, is simultaneously self-embracing and self-releasing. How can it be both? Because in being free of the key components of duality: space, time and ego, it is essentially non-dualistic and therefore inclusive of both Every Thing and No Thing, encompassing all of physicality and all of non-physicality. Even small glimmers of such a non-dual reality have the capacity to temporarily obliterate an identifiable self. And with such absolution comes emptiness and possibly peace, an instantaneous transformation that, while maybe transient, leaves one forever with the knowledge of a more boundaryless form of identity or alternatively, an identitylessness. Such experience might be called Presence and could be seen as 'Being aware of Itself' (Prendergast, 2003, p. 5), a state that, with grace, is somewhat osmotic by nature. As a state of both transparency and intimacy, for counsellor and client or teacher and student, it is likely to involve the 'eventual... encounter (with) a profound sense of emptiness that has been fiercely defended against... what at first appears to be annihilation and in time reveals itself as unconditional love.' (p. 7).

I swing from a personal sense of annihilation to an impersonal peace that is consistently loving in its non-interventionism even as it is lead to dispassionately intervene. Although a seeming contradiction, it is not so when the interventions arise from a bed of acceptance and trust, rather than conflict and judgement. When such foundational states are not



present however, helplessness can easily turn to turmoil and bitterness. I may, at these times, look to issues of attachment, habitual dysfunctions of personality, unhelpful and long held belief systems that render me alone and hurt, and the fears and challenges of a world gone mad to explain those moments of drowning in the injustice of it all, and they would all be valid, useful and endless. At some point the inquiry leads to the question of identity and its sincerity seems to bring forward a more integral and onto poetic possibility, a mode of being that dwells both within and beyond the overt world. With grace, one may slip into other worlds that exist alongside the busy one. Dwelling in silence and surrender, and also in the desire and movement of life, I am both transcendent and immanent in the same breath, in both perpetual motion and ever quiet stillness.

## **Ontopoetics**

*Our lives harbour possibilities of poetic manifestation far larger than those defined by the materialist terms of modern societies. (Mathews, 2009a, p. 3)*

Ontopoetics, a term offered by Mathews, an Australian philosopher, involves the meaningful 'communicative engagement of self with world and world with self.' (p. 1). Such contemplation requires a radical empiricism (James, 1988, 2007); an epistemology that includes all direct experience including that which is non-sensory and non-measurable, therefore also allowing for the attribute of perception and experience in subjects without the human senses. Such an approach is far more than a mind-in-matter view where mind and matter are still two but somehow come together. It involves a living-process rather than mechanical-substance approach where change, rather than stability, is the condition of reality as is the universality of life and subjectivity. A universal subjectivity entails a capacity for communicativity inherent in all of Life's manifestations and also suggests the possibility of a non-dual reality. A loosening of exclusively rationalist and materialist ways of thinking along with a radical empiricism, makes room for intuitive and other transrational ways of communicating and knowing that bring into possibility an onto poetic way of relating and being, a way that can transform identity itself because it transforms one's epistemologies and ontologies in one fell swoop.

From my mental-rational, linear and colonising perspective, an onto poetic way of being is both a relinquishing and a progression. Yet in truth it is neither, being more of a returning and a being with. It involves 'offer(ing) ourselves up as terrain for poetic inscription... rather than insisting on sole authorship of our lives—which is to say, rather than insisting on life as autobiography' (Mathews, 2009a, p. 4). Time is both defied and yielded to. I arrive at a world that is and has always been here. Agency is not measurable nor sourceable. One might hear with the inner ear, see with the inner eye and most importantly, learn through a receptive heart and a 'reverential mode of thinking' (Kealey, 1990, p. 49). Finding 'the world within the world' might involve 'surrendering one's subject/object mind set' (Mathews, 2009b, p. 100). It could include immersion in the six elements previously explored in this study, to fall into the meaningfulness of the world and its poetic order. It may require a receptivity to the image or sense at the instant it appears (Bachelard, 1994) to allow oneself to be addressed, touched, written upon, tattooed with love. To recall it, even a moment later, is too late. An onto poetic event occurs in the present moment and will not hang around to let the logical mind relegate it to the past. Its arationality renders it difficult to memorise in its fullness. It does not let itself be held and 'speaks on the threshold of being' (p. xvi). Attending to such events in healing and learning settings might involve working with the immediacy of the moment, that we learn to hear the quiet and to notice the peripheral. It may include the acknowledgement of other voices not usually attended to. In doing so, it could make room for what Kegan (1982, 1994) calls fifth order thinking. His theory centres on the evolution of meaning making through the development of qualitatively different relationships between subject and object or self and other at various stages. Like Gebser's theory, his orders of consciousness are texturally different rather than simply progressive and all are co-active though some feature far more predominantly than others. Fifth order consciousness is one of self transformation and interpenetrability, involving:

...the recognition of our multiple selves... the capacity to see conflict as a signal of our overidentification with a single system... the sense of our relationships and connections as prior to and constitutive of the individual self... (and) an identification with the transformative process of our being rather than the formative products of our becoming. (1994, p. 351)

An ontopoetic or integral view of the world restores the mental-rational mode to its relational and processual Origin-foundations. As such it is both a returning to something known and an arrival at something new, new because modernity has never known how to both individualise and be One. It has polarised such states as adversarial and in so doing, designated itself as the only significant, meaningful and lonely life form.

Ontopoetics implies a felt meaningfulness not exclusively owned by humanity but shared with the world. Where sentience lies, there lies meaning and also responsiveness.

Imagination may be the primary mutual language and even form of cognition across cultures, species and even galaxies, a difficult approach for those of us brought up in a society that derides such modalities as infantile or delusional, but either way; nonsensical (Mathews, 2009a). Additionally challenging may be the ontopoetic suggestion of a non-dual reality, an understanding or appreciation allowing for a greater sense of meaning that I am but a part of, a story that echoes through me rather than about me and a place that holds me to itself rather than that I own. Ontopoetics is a dialogue rooted in the immanent world, yet transcendent in its imaginability and beckoning of the secrets that the world longs to share if I am but to listen.

## Decolonisation

*Spirit is not in the I but between I and You. It is not like the blood that circulates in you but like the air in which you breathe. Man lives in the spirit when he is able to respond to his You. He is able to do this when he enters into this relation with his whole being. It is solely by virtue of his power to relate that man is able to live in the spirit. (Buber, 1970, p. 89)*

*In time, even conquest will cease to be the dream. (Jung, 1976, p. 502)*

True listening might be seen as a decolonising stance. I am primarily mental-rational as others are primarily magical, mythical or integral. I am mental-rational for all of us and have held the loneliness and bewilderment of this egoic life in a dead cosmos for long enough. Others have held the banner of the magical, mythical and integral ways and have paid a far greater price through the multitudinous effects of colonisation, including decimation. In a

coherent universe and an interconnected world, under the heat of the sun and the light of the moon, we do not all need to be and do all things. Sometimes things converge.

Self-transcendence is the... aptitude for, and actual application to, exploding the 'myth of otherness' created by the self-habit. (Feuerstein, 1987, p. 157)

And so it is in our meetings with and within ourselves and each other that further integrality may occur, through our co-constitutional genesis; that remaking of self through both distance from and closeness to other (Kramer, 1993). In Gebser's framework, no structure of consciousness is an improvement on any other. They are mutations, not developments, each wholly distinct rather than progressive and all current; the notion of linear advancement and time yet another mental-rational symptom of assumed superiority. It is only in integrality that all structures integrate with profound results, remembering that integrality too will have its deficient form, yet to be seen. Such meetings bring about a transcendence of previous identity, an extension of self akin to a diminishment of self; where I start to want what the earth and cosmos want and what they want me to want (Mathews, 2003, 2011).

It is one of the premises of this study that change must be internal to flow on externally. The mental-rational mode has colonised, not only many peoples and lands but all other aspects of selfhood or structures of consciousness. This study revolves around the decolonisation and liberation of these other aspects of self, using Gebser's framework as a guide to their demarcation. In the Eurocentric mental-rational mode there is little experience or accrued wisdom in decolonisation (Rose, 2004) yet integrality may be a place to start for it may be only through our own internal decolonisation that our actions may then sincerely and congruently follow in the decolonisation of others, both human and non-human. Integrality, like the practice of decolonisation, involves an ahistorical stance. All selfhoods are present and significant, having much to teach each other. The mental-rational mode would have itself as both teacher and current, while other is relegated to both past and student role (Rose 2008). While cognitive faculties may be highly developed in the mental-rational mode, the attributes of other structures may be not only underdeveloped but also warped and wounded through their repression and denial, unavoidably leading to the distortion and restriction of those cognitive capacities. The mental-rational mode has forgotten that there

lies a fundamental intelligence and wisdom within each selfhood which when honoured, contributes to the concrescence of the integral, five minded animal (Ferrer, 2002; Neville, 2001).

Modernity has yet to understand that difference does not denote inferiority or lack (Rose, 2002). It does however denote a boundary or threshold, however porous or sheer, one that might 'exist to connect difference and thus to facilitate interdependence.' (p. 314). Rose suggests that it is within the liminality of such thresholds that reciprocal dialogue and learning take place, that relationship occurs, a relationship that 'is always in the act of becoming' (p. 318) precisely because of its place at the edge, that liminal edge that lies in a here-now that is inherently connected to the full continuum of time and the cosmic field of space.

A permeable and becoming self is an unfinished project and thus invites considerations of mutual care. (p. 322)

An ethic of encounter, entailing responsibility, care, mutuality and respect, is predicated not on the knowledge of other but on the very fact that the other can never be fully known precisely because it is other and not same (Levinas, 1996; Mathews, 2003; Plumwood, 2002). Such a stance is a transcendence of self interest and therefore of self, a crucial and foundational factor in both the ethics of decolonisation and the emergence of integrality. Possible further expressions of decolonisation have been mentioned in the previous chapter (Plumwood, 2003; Rose, 2004) but in short they amount to countering the violence, negation and invisibility we imprint upon the other. To attempt a way forward in the decolonisation of others while still colonising ourselves, only leads to more subtle and disregarded forms of oppression. We are also other to ourselves, not fully knowable, mystery in the constant making. Grief may be a good sign, the symbol of movement, that a wound that has been free-floating throughout one's consciousness and relationship with everything is finally being consigned to the past, to the source of its bidding (Rothschild, 2000). Integrality is a silent and vibrant dialogic state with all parts of myself, including those that I have held as other by relegating them to the past, future or a faraway present.

## Time

*And the truth is, we have all the time in the world. Which is just another way of saying that we have only the time that we do have, but that our words, our myths, our reimagined concepts will have lives, will have times, of their own—the duration and consequences of which we can neither predict nor control.*  
(Tatman, 2008, p. 405)

For Gebser, evolution does not travel along the modernist, linear notion of progress, but is discontinuous with tumultuous transitional surges ushering in different mutations or forms of consciousness with varied consequences for humanity and its cultures. The arrow of time may be irrefutable for the mental-rational mode but such linearity and certainty may conceal or falsify the world more than make it known. Gebser offers a multidimensional view of consciousness in the integral mode that is porous and transparent, creatively complex in the ways it relates to itself and the world, ever in both transcendence and immanence. It involves an equitable integration of the many aspects of selfhood or mutations of consciousness, and therefore the many aspects of the world. Integration has no end point. One can always integrate more through letting the apparent other impress further. In the integral mode I am always at the beginning and at the end; uncertain, grateful, ever both student and teacher, healed and healer. The mental-rational mode that holds me within a facade of mastery, ever anxious and afraid of being discovered for my fraudulence gives way to an acceptance of mystery, an intensification of experience, the peace of not knowing. Bosnak calls it 'knowing in an unknowing kind of way' (2009, p. 85), a knowing that provides no outcome or sense of expertise except for the connection it provides me to the more, to that which provides meaning to my otherwise singular life. The present can then take on the significance it is due. Its fleetingness is not cause for its discounting.

It is in the present that interrelationship occurs. Hence integrality requires an acceptance of the present as where living occurs, rather than in the good old days or a better future. Such denial of the present moment enables the unethical behaviours of both internal and external colonisation, that can be disregarded because the present is only a means to a

future and has no significance of its own (Rose, 2004). The mental-rational relationship to time and progress is a losing battle.

There is a sense in which we will never achieve the resolution we may believe to be our future state precisely because it is always already posited as a future state... Our lives are thus suspended in a web of time concepts that hold us always about to be that which we would believe we truly are... The now becomes a site of such alienation that it hardly bears thinking about, and... we are suspended in a bereft and hapless moment. (p. 18)

Indeed, from the mental-rational mode, a focus on the emergence of integrality lies dangerously close to such deficient notions of time in offering a futuristic solution to the yearning for oneness that is one of the symptoms of a fragmentary and dualistic world view (Rose, 2004). Yet integrality is decolonisation in action, and in the now; not the future, here; not there. The ethics of decolonisation 'embrace the co-existence of the peoples who share this place, and embrace the present moment as the time in which all of us share our lives.' (p. 130). Such peoples may be internal or external, but it is in the current moment that colonisation by the modernist self is transcended and with it linear time and segregated space. It is in the experiences of integrality that salvation by the future becomes a farce and in the present moment that the riches of dialogue and relationship are made tangible and immanent. The mental-rational structure is oriented towards the future and hence always away from and outside of self, which is the basic direction of the egoic frame of reference. Gebser put it strongly:

Anyone disassociated from his origin and his spiritually sensed task acts against origin. Anyone who acts against it has neither a today nor a tomorrow. (1985, p. 532)

In orienting towards origin, one is with what is and with what one is. Time is both intensified and eclipsed by the ever-present Origin.

Such atemporality may, partially at least, revolve around the experience that both past and future lie within each present moment. For the mental-rational mind, it is easier to see that we bring the past with us in many ways. This is a now common psychoanalytic

understanding. Yet in much the same way, our future is also held in our very cells through the ultimate coherence of the universe and its living present which has no past or future. Whitehead explains the future as 'immanent in the present by reason of the fact that the present bears in its own essence the relationships which it will have to the future. It thereby includes in its essence the necessities to which the future must conform.' (1967a, p. 194). Gebser writes that:

...only someone who has integrated the past as well as the future—with the inevitable psychic emphasis on joy and suffering—and freed himself from the tensions and prepossessions of the once-unconscious psychic structure is able to realise the present. (1985, p. 138)

In a coherent self in a coherent universe, all past, present and future moments are indelibly alive and inherently connected right now and in this very space.

## Space

*Unbearable immanence comes as a gift wrapped always in transcendence.*  
(Tatman, 2000, p. 83)

The mental-rational mode would see both self and world as substance, solid, certain, fixative. The permeable, fluid, interconnected vision of the world that quantum theory and the mystics offer is abhorrent to a defined and boundaried ego-self.

Reality, the whole, has no centre and hence it necessarily appears as a consummate madness to egocentric consciousness. The ego feels safe only when it can cocoon itself in layer upon layer of symbolic reality, of meaningfields that give the appearance of predictable, stable reality.  
(Feuerstein, 1987, p. 179)

Space releases, opens up and intensifies as I become aware of my own inherent insubstantiality. The spiritual teacher Adyashanti (2006) points out that the feeling so many have of not being enough, of not being worthy enough or good enough is intuitively true.



One is not enough. One is nothing. Issues arise as one tries to run from that or fill the bottomless hole of non-being with some thing because that thing will never suffice. Such inquiry is taboo to a modernist mind yet may be crucial to the emergence of integrality. Yielding to experience that is ego-, time- and space-free may be impossible while one is trying to substantiate their existence or prove their substantiability. Such death denial forces us to live at a frenzied rate in an attempt to fulfil the unfulfillable; the immortality of the ego (Wilber, 1981). Space and stillness are minideaths of the personal authorship of our rational faculties and must be avoided at any cost. Consequently the very act of allowing space and stillness can be enough for the emergence of integral experiences and knowings that may also inadvertently assist with an acceptance of death.

In counselling and teaching, there lies a balance between overly spacious disconnection and overly intimate merging that seems to manifest the possibility of transformation where 'we meet the other in the same shared home ground, yet this "place" cannot be localised... neither can say where this or to whom this meeting space belongs... (or) who is the host and who is the guest.' (Prendergast, 2007, p. 37). It involves an 'inclusive disidentification' (p. 49) that encompasses closeness and distance, immanence and transcendence, as one singular and multiperspectival point that facilitates deep change by its very nature. One cannot remain fixed and unchanging in the light of both spaciousness and closeness. Whitehead (1978) felt such intimate immanence and infinite transcendence to be the two primary attributes of any organism with its capacities for both differentiation and unification.

Every actual entity... is something individual for its own sake; and thereby transcends the rest of actuality. And also... every actual entity... is a creature transcended by the creativity which it qualifies... The freedom inherent in the universe is constituted by this element of self-causation. (p. 88)

Understanding a paradoxical concept from a rational stance may leave one grabbing at straws. Both/and is a stretch for an either/or way of thinking. Yet such anomalies bring one to a non-conceptual zone, a territory most useful in healing and learning contexts. It releases the dualistic stronghold of certainty and allows time and space to take their own forms, often in ways that prove far more productive than when held in check by rationality.

When I am brave enough to uncompromisingly stand together, in the one place at the one time; the archaic, magical, mythical, mental and integral selves, then I am instantly re-united with all that is, with an ensouled planet in an ensouled cosmos, with Origin. When I do so as part of the teacher-student or client-counsellor event, then it seems to support others in doing the same. Often there is much to shed along the way: grief, terror, rage, loneliness, invisibility. The wounds of the planet are mine and I shed for the Earth as much as for myself—for the whales and forests, the frogs and mountains. Healing and learning occur as part of something greater and:

...no punishment anyone might lay on us could possibly be worse than the punishment we lay on ourselves by conspiring in our own diminishment, by living a divided life, by failing to make that decision to act and speak on the outside in ways consonant with the truth we know inside. (Palmer, 1999, p. 32)

The truth I know inside is that I am nothing and everything. From the undifferentiated existence of the archaic consciousness to the differentiated unity of integrality, I am more vessel than agent of change, although they amount to the same thing. Space swells into a pregnant promise and, along with it, freedom, incommensurate with any perspectival or political notions. Egocentricity and anthropocentricity are relinquished. Language loses its grip, individuality its significance, a self-realization that has little to do with the self and everything to do with Every Thing. Those of us in the room seem to fall into ourselves in a way that defies description, in a way that always was but is ever new, a larger self that is no self at all, a self that emerges as polarities are reconciled.

## **The transcendent function**

*Love is always something that points beyond the human being, even beyond—and that is tragic enough—the loved person. Wherever love binds more than releases, we begin to betray the divine. And wherever we equate love with the divine, we begin to betray the loved person; or, if it is not a betrayal, then it is an unreasonable demand. (Gebser, 1997, p. 46)*

*I am far from wishing to belittle the divine gift of reason, man's highest faculty. But in the role of absolute tyrant it has no meaning – no more than light would have in a world where its counterpart, darkness, was absent. Man would do well to heed the wise counsel of the mother and obey the inexorable law of nature which sets limits to every being. He ought never to forget that the world exists only because opposing forces are held in equilibrium. So, too, the rational is counterbalanced by the irrational, and what is planned and purposed by what is. (Jung, 1993, p. 430)*

The mental-rational structure would have us put our faith in a reality of hyper-dualism. Psyche and matter are divorced and the psyche is simplistically and conveniently divided into conscious and unconscious components rather than being viewed as involving multitudinous modes of being involving 'differing degrees or intensity of awareness' (Gebser, 1996b, p. 84). Immanence and transcendence are at war. Ultra fragmentation and confusion are endemic; the signs of transition, liminality and the desperation of a consciousness in involuntary receivership to an Origin that is in the business of restructuring. Integrality, as already mentioned, requires the capacity to consciously realise and embody all structures of consciousness without being derailed by any one of them. It involves a mutuality of relationship, a non-conceptuality that allows for a conjoining of many opposites to reveal a new mode of being, transparent in its capacity to let Origin shine through. There is differentiation or individuation but not the separateness or isolation that the ego requires as fuel. Under an integral rule, 'rationality ceases to be fragmented and merely instrumental but assumes a sense-making function that is never closed.' (Mickunas, 1994, p. 14). Integrality is fundamentally open-ended and self-transcending.

Carl Jung (1875-1961) spent his life developing significant psychological and transpersonal models and theories but much of the importance of these theories lies in their worth to the process of individuation: the realisation of the self, the archetype of wholeness.

Individuation regards the ever-evolving capacity to consciously recognise and live both one's differentiated uniqueness and one's intrinsic coherence and relationality with the whole.

Jung was adamant that it consisted of far more than the conscious development of the ego.

The emergence of the Self involves incorporation of all aspects of the psyche: both conscious and unconscious, shadow and presentational, the singular and the whole, the

personality and the divine (1976, 1989). It is therefore closely aligned with Gebser's view of the integral self.

Individuation does not shut one out from the world, but gathers the world to itself. (Jung, 1993, p. 122)

Like modernity, Jung's theory of the psyche hinges on opposites but in a vastly different way. Unlike the mental-rational need to cling to one polarity while denying or demonising the existence of the other and in the process, producing a dysfunction and defensive, unilateral experience of reality, Jung's polarities are recognised as holding the seeds of each other, as complementary and even mutually necessary. They are the fertile parents of that which is born through their reconciliation and integration. Jung wrote *The Transcendent Function* in 1916 while painfully immersed in his own confrontation with the unconscious, but like a precious alchemical secret, shared it with very few others until publishing it in 1957. The concept regards the convergence of opposites into an integrative third option that is unforeseen, transformative, arrived at arationally and birthed from the very deadlock it provides release from. He saw it as 'the engine of individuation' (Miller, 2004, p. 83), the primary process in transformation and wholeness, in the differentiation of the self and the transcendence of the ego.

Jung saw the transcendent function as a natural process of the psyche, both personal and collective, but also viewed it as method, requiring conscious effort, courage, resolution and the willingness to move from an oppositional and primarily unconscious stance to an unknown and conscious convergence and transcendence of polarities (1976). He wrote that it involved turning one's 'attention from outward material things to his own inner processes' (p. 466) and the readiness to recognise shadow aspects of the personality 'as present and real'. Jung was clear that it involved 'much painstaking work extending over a long period' (p. 145) and that commitment and perseverance were needed in holding the tension that arises between two opposites so as not to deviate into distraction or collapse into projection.

For Gebser, too, such transcendence was involuntary, coming about through surges of evolution, yet he also wrote of the need for:

...an inner attitude which can disregard oneself; which is capable of unconditional trust and opening; which is unintentional without being passive but which is unstrained and of a... wakeful brightness. (1970, p. 38)

He felt that integrality had the opportunity to arise in 'someone able to place the whole ahead of his ego in his daily affairs' (1985, p. 532) although this was not an either/or proposition, and that had the kind of detachment that leads to tolerance. Gebser mentioned simplicity and open-mindedness as aspects needed to acknowledge the spiritual origin 'from which every moment of our lives draws its sustenance' (p. 530) and he also wrote, like Jung, of the need to close the gap between the conscious and unconscious through the re-internalising of projections and denials:

Someone who has learned to avoid placing blame or fault on others, on the world itself, on circumstances or chance in times of adversity, dissension, conflict, and misfortune and seeks first in himself the reason or guilt in its fullest extent—this person should also be able to see through the world in its entirety and all its structures. Otherwise he will be coerced or violated by either his emotions or his will, and in turn will himself attempt to coerce or violate the world as an act of compensation or revenge. (p. 141)

For both theorists it appears that transcendence is both that which happens and that which may be aided through conscious endeavour.

Awareness extends to incorporate seemingly opposing forces such that a centre point is extinguished by a centrality that exists everywhere. Externalisations are reclaimed, introjections relinquished and defence becomes less compulsive (Hartman & Zimmeroff, 2010). Time and space meld into a form of perception. And who I am, seemingly volitional in my intention and action to hold both positions until they converge into a third, becomes what is required from this event called Viviane-in-this-moment-in-time-and-space by that which is Origin itself.

How does man live? Whichever way he may live, we need to remember that he is also lived by an authority or a power for which there are many names. And, above all, we must remember one thing, namely that whichever way

man lives, he follows, whether he knows it or not, an inner commission that points beyond him. (Gebser, 1974, cited in Feuerstein, 1987, p. 162)

Such ego capitulation may be the change process that integrality requires, a change process that is transformative, uncertain and primarily internal, requiring courage and surrender, resulting in unexpected outcomes that are extremely confronting to the fundamental nature of current mental-rational realities. It is a birth that enforces a death and thus is no easy salvation. There is no guarantee of getting past the turmoil and chaos of multiperspectival polarities, the grief of losing time and space as they have been known, the challenges to an ego hell bent on holding on.

All work, the genuine work which we must achieve, is that which is most difficult and painful: the work on ourselves. If we do not freely take upon ourselves this pre-acceptance of the pain and torment, they will be visited upon us in otherwise necessary individual and universal collapse. (Gebser, 1985, p. 532)

A primary result of any 'genuine work' or constructive change process is the maturing of knowledge, which in an integral structure of consciousness, occurs through the interconnected notions of systasis and synaeresis.

## **An integral methodology**

*Desire is the will toward self-realization that is characteristic of all life. In humans, the desire for self-realization includes a desire for knowledge. Thus desire must always bring us into encounter with mystery, and mystery, properly understood (if that is not too paradoxical), must stir up desire because it is never exhausted. Mystery and desire are thus connected through a feedback loop such that each calls for the other. (Rose, 2008, p. 163)*

An integral methodology or way of being brings transformation and wholeness; an ongoing transformation and ever intensifying wholeness to an identity whose nature is to emerge and re-emerge. In those moments when it plays out in the classroom or counselling room, it

usually brings silence with it. If words are spoken, they are few and yet seem to speak of novels. We quiver, hanging on a knife's edge, knowing that even a subtle lean into rationality or resistance will divert the moment. Intersubjectivity as a direct experience is a delicate animal. The various selves of Gebser's framework are not just integrated but intersubjectively alive. Each one speaks while aware of and with the others. Such collaboration makes them more than the sum of their parts. This process involves a model of partnership rather than domination (Reisler, 1990). It entails an inner knowing of both the other's form and formlessness and the capacity to not get lost in either (Crombie, 2009). It seems to include acceptance and use of one's non-local mind; a mental state not rigidly or exclusively attached to one perspective or locality more than another and at home in an imaginal or feeling world as much as a rational one. Learning and healing seem to arise from the co-creative relational field itself, impacting everyone in the room (Blackstone, 2006).

An integral methodology comprises the complementary processes of systasis and synaeresis, words Gebser coined out of a lack of appropriate terminology. In the integral mode, systemisation is replaced by systasis, the process by which parts are seen through the eyes of the whole. In Gebser's own words it involves: 'the conjoining or fitting together of parts into integrality' (1985, p. 310). Systasis is an experiential, multidimensional, acategorical, processual way of perceiving that is inclusive of both process and effect in a way that is fundamentally spiritual by nature because of its inclusivity. It 'gives all structures their due weight' (Feuerstein, 1987, p. 50) and is thus both a familiarising with all of one's selves and an acceptance of one's totality. In so doing it transcends the rational processes of both compartmentalisation and systemisation, processes that hold components at bay even as they may work together. In systasis, new knowledge conjoins with self through direct and participatory knowing. From such an integrative apperception, time and space also no longer hold phenomena apart but become further forms of information. Systasis is not mental conceptualisation, mythical imagery or magical feeling but the transformative act of integrating itself, an act that results in synaeresis.

Synaeresis is not to be confused with the mental-rational activity of synthesis. It is 'an integral act of completion, encompassing all sides and perceiving aperspectively.' (Gebser, 1985, p. 312 n5) and is therefore only possible as we come to perceive and know ourselves

synaoretically through our own multidimensional nature. This occurs, Feuerstein suggests, through the:

...integration of archaic presentiment, magical attunement, mythical symbolisation, and mental-rational systematisation in the integrative act of arational systasis... remember(ing) that all structures are co-present and co-active in us and hence need not be invoked through historical imagination. (1987, p. 195)

It is a way of being grounded in the concretion of space and time, elements that become sufficiently integrated as to render one free of them, their experiencing intensified because it is no longer a constant. Such concretion leads to 'the coalescence of the spiritual with consciousness' (p. 198) and thus the transparency of the whole. Synaeresis, Gebser felt, was a precondition for such diaphaneity; the transparency of everything which has been latent or concealed, including and primarily, the 'manifestation of the spiritual' (1985, p. 6). An integral methodology renders universe and self as one, lucid with Origin, the spiritual causality or source.

The direct knowing and undivided knowledge that systasis and synaeresis herald are dangerous and taboo to an egoic self that exists on the basis of duality. The activity of thinking could be viewed as the key form of substantiation to the modern self which needs to cogitate-about-some-thing and perceive a world other than itself to maintain its existence (Puhakka, 2000). Integral verition or perceiving in truth, the capacity to see reality as a whole and transparent, however, is inherently time-, space- and ego-free, rendering it non-self-centric and therefore also non-anthropocentric and non-androcentric. It is thus an approach that is intrinsically decolonising and pan-experiential in that it is dominated by neither patriarchal, mental-rational nor even exclusively human concerns. In a modern world where identity may be the result of difference rather than the other way round (Deleuze, 1994) and integrality involves 'exploding the 'myth of otherness' created by the self-habit' (Feuerstein, 1987, p. 157), the problems of our mental-rational condition may require integrality for a sincere response.

Through systasis and synaeresis arises eteology, a term Gebser used in reference to an integral form of knowledge where the means of knowing and the knowledge itself are



woven from the same cloth and result in one being that which one knows, and that which one knows being part of an ever intensifying beingness. Far from modernity's take on philosophy, eteology is wholly experiential and cognises the whole, demanding the complementary processes of transparency of self and concretion of Origin into everyday life. It 'perceives thinking itself' (Gebser, 1985, p. 326) yet is still able to partake of it at will. It is a being-in-truth, rather than thinking-about-truth (Mahood, 1996), where ontology and epistemology are truly integrated. Subject and object are rendered obsolete through the intensified awareness of a whole that includes both and more. I am no longer a subject thinking about an object, but that which has been thought into existence along with all else. 'Eteology is an approach of liberation' (p. 11), bringing together a transformative nature of knowing in systasis and an emancipatory form of knowledge in synaeresis. As further contact and integration occur, so does the ongoing unfolding of more that was latent into an intensified, open wholeness where both transcendence and immanence are one in an integral awareness of truth in this moment.

And so it is that the process of deep change or systasis brings one to the nature of deep knowing or synaeresis. In knowing through becoming, transformation is inevitable and continual. In being through knowing, that which is desired and loved is brought into immanence, leading to further wholeness. In the processes of deep change and knowing, I am continually in transcendence of the self I knew a moment ago, a process that gains me a different kind of identity, one that is wed to the movement-within and towards that which has always been, rather than to the moments-of which I claim as my own. It is a diaphanous identity that holds 'the presence of the beyond in the here and now, of death in life, of the transcendent in the immanent, of the divine in the human.' (Gebser, 1985, p. 529). Such an identity is no identity at all from a mental-rational stance yet the only identity possible from an integral aperspective.

This study has taken a fluid and evolving route to its incomplete destination to a more integral identity through the experiences of transformation and wholeness. It speaks to, and sometimes for, a form of consciousness that has always been, and as it is encountered by this writer. Chapter one offered a general introduction and overview to integrality, the methodological approach and the learning and healing contexts the topic arose from, preparing the ground and offering relevant signposts for the journey ahead. Chapter two

reflected more thoroughly on the research process and primarily organic methodology that would allow a nebulous and non-conceptual topic to be experienced, conceptualised and articulated without undue distortion. Chapters three and four explored the six elements of empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation, elements that have been companions, guides and facilitators on this integral voyage. While chapter five involved a more detailed exploration of integrality, relevant processes and how it may apply in both educative and therapeutic environments, chapters six and seven considered forms of deep knowing and change appropriate to an integral structure of consciousness irrespective of the context of its arising and therefore applicable to any context. What has emerged is an integral methodology of direct knowing and undividing knowledge, born of an identity that knows itself to be processual, non-dual, relational and panexperiential at its essence. Classrooms and counselling rooms are microcosms of humanity's desire for learning and healing and therefore offer opportunities to encounter this way of being.

## Chapter Eight

### Inconclusion

*Great learning has happened when students fall in love with the open-ended journey of perpetual learning. (Bache, 2008, p. 63)*

*God be with the mother. As she carried her child  
may she carry her soul. As her child was born may  
she give birth and life and form to her own, higher  
truth. As she nourished and protected her child,  
may she nourish and protect her inner life and her  
independence. For her soul shall be her most painful  
birth, her most difficult child and the dearest sister  
to her other children.*

*Amen.*

*(Leunig, 2004)*

*Ideas are under constant revision by a collective process that often  
masquerades as a highly personal quest. (Donald, 2001, p. 326)*

Integrality might start in the body, wordless and timeless, its core held in the heart. A theory of no words must come to be known through direct experience. There is no other way. And so it is the process that is under scrutiny and the self that experiences and participates in that process. The curriculum could be anything and therefore is everything. A curriculum is fundamentally embedded in epistemological and ontological positions regarding the relationship between knower and known and their inherent matter (Grumet, 1988). Integrality shrinks the space between subject and object until there is none. It is a study of

oneness that brings the world close and intimate, all the while enhancing one's sense of awe and wonder at its complexity and connectivity. Here all subjects are sacred. If mainstream education aims to relocate students from innocence to rationality, an integral classroom may be a place for innocence to be reclaimed, to flourish and strengthen, that it may encompass rationality in a living, breathing domain that honours personal integrity and is not conditional on disconnection with the heartfelt and spirit held.

In both integral and mainstream education, process is primary and content, secondary. The difference lies in conventional education's relentless overt focus on content. This allows the primary process of a persistently modernist socialisation to go unseen and unacknowledged, making it all the more powerful and insidious (Gatto, 1992; Romanyshyn, 2012). Integral education brings process into the light, making its conditions and characteristics not only explicit but central to the learning experience. The classroom becomes a complex, autopoietic system and its gifts occur in the immediacy of the moment. Hence I offer nearly nothing in the way of teaching techniques or methods. I myself have rarely found them useful. What I humbly offer are a set of elements, recursive by nature, reflexive by approach. They may be immersed into unremittingly and only have worth as internal resources. An element held outside oneself becomes a rule used to judge or control self or others with an attitude of superiority, masking a belief in one's inferiority. I have to believe in myself to let the elements reside within me.

There is an ironic nature to each element which is at least a partial explanation for their profundity. In their ambiguity, I cannot grasp any one of them. An alternative relationship, that of immersing myself in them, finds me confronted with their paradoxical aspect so that my focus must widen as it narrows, my capacities in surrendering and intentionality emerging concurrently. To empathise with an individual other, to see the world through their eyes, I find myself tapping into the space around us where all experiences exist simultaneously and interrelatedly. Love for a specific other becomes an act of creativity, a leap into a nonlinear and non-reasonable experience that finds me loving and being loved by a vast unknown. Desire is what fuels the voyage to the space- and time-free experience of integral reality where it dissolves in fulfillment, even if for an instant. When fully present to the preciousness of a particular space and a passing moment, a connection happens that seems to exist always and everywhere. Participation is what I offer with as much courage as

I can muster and, in so doing, sometimes become an expression of a force that has no need of courage and from which I cannot, not participate.

My being is as individual as it is collective and so it dwells within my flesh and bones as much as outside it. As I travel further inward, there is nowhere to be released from. Integral teaching demands ownership of personal authority and guidance, simultaneously serving a greater knowing that is not mine alone but the ground on which I walk and am born from. An integral classroom may be one that offers the room and occasion to move in such domains without denying the fearful defences of personality and history. Everything is valid and therefore a source of knowledge. Integrality and learning are indivisible.

Freedom, like silence, runs deep, way below the babble of habitual speech.

We need space and time to find it. (Grumet, 1988, p. 88)

So too are integrality and healing inseparable. Integrality may well be the most effective form of healing possible. Healing is sought when there is duality, when there is pain caused by an event or perpetrator and felt by a victim or survivor. When there is alienation and disconnection from self and other, there can be no other way. Vanquished or vanquisher—it makes no difference. Within the realm of duality, there is neither a fundamental solution to conflict nor substantial response to the psyche's cries for help. Integrality, in transcending duality, carries one beyond their pain and disconnection, rendering the need for healing obsolete. It is not the study of the transpersonal or holistic. It is both and much more. Integrality emerges in and of itself and is by its very nature impersonal and aperspectival, authorless and causeless, an entirely different form of consciousness than that of the mental-rational level. One cannot get 'there' from 'here', cannot arrive there personally or achieve it individually. One can prepare the ground. The ever-present origin does the rest.

And does so whether I am working at a mainstream, traditional institution or an alternative or transpersonal one. The experiences described and explored in this study span all forms and levels of tertiary institutions and groups of students. In my observations, it appears that nearly all students, to some degree or another, hunger for transformative learning and will take the opportunity if available and those that don't, might do so in a different environment where I am not witness. In a safe environment, transrational experiences can be shared without being, at best, questioned, and at worse, pathologised. It would seem

that the universe will take any opportunity provided, as well as many that are not, to further its evolutionary process. It also seems that, as the teacher, and common denominator in the various groups that I am a part of, I am at least partially accountable for the depth to which the classroom is facilitated at and that my unconditional intentionality for the classroom experience to be one of integrality, companioned by spirit, may be a primary factor, even if essentially not of my doing. This also implies that when groups do not go as well as they might have, that I am partially accountable, my integrity, awareness and personal cohesion lacking on those days or in those areas, thus requiring further reflection and self union. As a transformative educator pointed in the direction of wholeness, my foremost and uncompromising obligation is to transform and educate myself. I teach from who I am, with self as vessel, learner, tool and guide, all at once.

There is little that is precise or concrete and nearly nothing that rings of method in this exploration of the counselling and classroom encounters I experience. The disembodied, externalised, technique and intellect driven approach to both educational and therapeutic settings has no place in an organic study of integrality where my journey starts in the wordless depths of my being-body and must be tenderly gestated into my conscious awareness, carefully born into expression and congruently delivered into the room, all as I stand in front of a group of students that are as yet strangers to me.

It is thus not trivially but rather deeply subversive, wanting to give a voice to the living text and texture of human life. (Jardine, 1998, p. 19)

The learning pangs of confusion, frustration, fear and hurt come to be seen as grist for the mill. It is not the subject matter or information covered in class that is of importance but the alchemical and cyclical process from ignorance to wisdom. The content is a vehicle for the coming together, for the act of transformation and impending wholeness. When the curriculum becomes the focus of attention, the point is missed. When attention is on the true job at hand, the curriculum becomes the highly effective servant of a deeper mission of being and connection.

The work of the integral teacher or counsellor is the work of self. Anything else is a poor excuse for the externalised machinations of the mental-rational faculties. Of course, living with space, time and ego requires one to know the necessary subject matter and skills

pertaining to one's role as well as what train to catch to arrive to work on time. But these aspects are in service to an emerging integral consciousness, not outcomes in themselves. The shift to an integral structure of consciousness requires the redefining of the mental mode as the instrument of another. It entails its humble capitulation to a larger cause. Like a king dethroned, there must be grief, and also likely, antagonism and despondency. The restructuring of roles and the redefining of purposes is a confronting task for an inherently self-important, secular and non-collaborative chief. The goal is no longer mastery but service, love and the wisdom that subsequently flows. It calls for an attitude of:

...complete trust in the invisible powers that preserve us and unconditional devotion to this particular inner attitude that neither the egoless nor the ego-bound but only the ego-free person is capable of realising. (Gebser, 1972, cited in Feuerstein, 1997, p. 190)

One can desire to master only what one deems as smaller or simpler than oneself, hence the mechanistic and reductionist stamp that the rational mode has branded onto the cosmos. Integral awareness involves a surrender that is not submissive and an intentionality that is nonlinear in an openness that is not empty and with a purpose that is not outcome driven (Gebser, 1993). It necessitates a reduction in primal fear: an intrinsic aspect of a humanity disconnected from its origin and a gaining of primal trust: an inherent peace that emerges as humanity reconnects to its spiritual foundations (Gebser, 1972, cited in Feuerstein, 1987). Integrality offers possibilities, not deliverance. There are no shortcuts. Whether I like it or not, there is always congruence between my own process and that process which I facilitate in others.

One cannot integrate or subsume what one has not differentiated from (Wilber, 1981). The mental-rational structure of consciousness has been decisively useful in bringing about the savage distinguishment from alternative modes of being, from a living cosmos and from an acausal, ever-present origin. It has displayed a nature of knowing that denies the reciprocity of the other and a nature of change that relies on suppression. Integrality would have us ever-present with origin, with all structures of consciousness, with a world where knowing occurs through becoming and change happens through the conjoining of immanence and transcendence. The universe is sentient, and breathes life into all the variations of

expression and experience, both positive and negative. The often misused term 'authentic self' is all selves at all times. I have never been alone, either through abandonment by other or self-willed mutiny. This is the realisation of an evolving piece of consciousness, the insight of a healing client, a learning student and an ever-transforming counsellor and teacher.

Everyone has the means today to achieve self-transparency... Everyone today can become aware of the various temporal forms which all point to origin, and everyone can experience timelessness in the union of conjugal love, the timelessness of nightly deep sleep, the experience of rhythmic complementarity of natural temporality which unites him in every heart-beat and rhythmic breath with the courses of the universe; and everyone can employ measured time. The magic, mythical and mental structures may, in other words, become transparent... This is a beginning if only because the individual learns to see himself as a whole as the interrelationship and interplay of magic unity, mythical complementarity, and mental conceptuality and purposefulness. Only as a whole man is man in a position to perceive the whole. (Gebser, 1985, p. 531)

Gebser lived through two world wars and the reality of nuclear tragedy. He saw the rise of technology, industry and globalisation to unprecedented levels and the development and acquisition of tools, skills and a capacity for destruction not commensurate with humanity's current sense of awareness and accountability. These were all expressions to him of a combined deficient and destructive magic, mythic and rational mode. Yet his writings demonstrate a cautious optimism regarding the possibilities for the future and the emergence of the integral structure of consciousness (Purdy, 1994). His contribution to its emergence was through the immense and painstaking work involved in the publishing of *The Ever-Present Origin* (1985), and at times in his writings he implores us to play our part through the necessary work on ourselves.

Everything that happens to us, then, is only the answer and echo of what and how we ourselves are. And the answer will be an integral answer only if we have approached the integral in ourselves. (p. 141)



In offering an integral vision or emerging possibility, Gebser has given us something to work on. His words are not empty. In uniting with myself, I also unite with the world. It becomes harder to do harm and when I do, it hurts more. The integral mode may be a pathless land but it is not without direction. Empathy, love, desire, time, space and participation weave a way through the quagmire of egoic fears and prejudices and assist my ongoing arrival into that which pretends to be elsewhere. It is the revelation of that which has been concealed into an open and participatory wholeness, and has little to do with linear and systemised maps of progress or development.

The immense processes of transformation... are always back-leaps, so to speak, into the already ever-present future. This is the way in which origin, budding and unfolding in space and time, emerges on earth and in our daily lives. (p. 530)

Ambiguity and clarity, mystery and knowing, suffering and joy, need not be reduced to each other. They co-exist in a creative complexity that is inherent from the moment of birth. And like a woman in childbirth who becomes the force of birth itself, pain is not eradicated but nor does it become the measure of one's worth.

This study began in the months after Black Saturday and in the silence that comes after a great firestorm, when there are no insects or birds around to hum or sing or leaves on the trees to rustle in the wind. The land showed me a different way to glean information, to listen and perceive. In some ways I miss the devastation. I could walk the land in any direction, discovering its contours and secrets. It was easier to hear the unspoken and see the unseeable. Now, four years later, the undergrowth is thick and I can be easily distracted by the general activities of gardening and maintenance and the desire for certain outcomes. Yet this place is always present as I write and 'provides balance and rebalance... when used like an ontological compass.' (Graham, 2009, p. 75).

I have studied a topic that I love but more importantly a topic that has loved me into a greater and smaller sense of my place in this cosmos of dynamic love. Its completion involves some grief. Its companionship has been constant over the last few years and I am wary of what may fill its place in my head and heart. When this inquiry began its work on me, I had been rendered empty enough to feel and think things I had not before. It now

leaves me full again, but in a very different way. It is likely, as is the human condition, that I will be emptied out and filled up many more times over the brief duration of this life and each time will bring new knowings and visions that I was too full of ignorance to receive before.

I have been guided by the two elements Gebser felt were primary in his study of consciousness: those of latency and transparency, of bringing that which is hidden into lucid awareness. In doing so, I have laid myself and my world bare. The very private and intimate processes of initiation and transformation, of healing and learning are made public. I am not sure of the wisdom of this except that it felt ordained in such a way that I could not refuse, not necessarily for the benefit of other but to enable my own transition to further self-validity and connectivity.

In taking up the work, (one) transforms a wound into a work... a journey of  
homecoming... that is never completed.' (Romanynshyn, 2007, pp. 123-4)

The wound has been the disconnection and dispossession of a multiplicity of selves that have remained seared on my soul despite their negation over the last few centuries. This study has seduced me into further integrality by demanding that it not be written with the intellect alone but also with the body and affinity of the archaic, the emotion and intuition of the magic, the imagination and contemplation of the mythic and the divinity and transparency of the integral mode. Identity has been challenged, transformed, emptied out, filled up and affirmed. Each of us is the centre of the cosmos in a countless multiplicity of centres (Swimme, 2008) and the ripples that eddy from us sway the movements of the stars and angels. And so I humbly offer my current thoughts to the public sphere in the hope that I do not cringe too soon at their limited capacity, even though it may entail a rejoicing of further evolution.

And what you do not know is the only thing you know

And what you own is what you do not own

And where you are is where you are not.

(Eliot, 1974, p. 187)

When integrality occurs in the classroom or counselling room, I know there are ripples moving out to the far reaches of the cosmos and I feel blessed to be a part of the sentient process that has breathed life into this being known as Viviane. My mind knows nothing and is permanently perplexed by the mystery. My heart knows everything and has no need to understand anything (Nisargadatta, 1973). The spiritual and secular indwell each other. May this study acknowledge and legitimise spiritual growth in education and may it help bring about the healing of teaching and the teaching of healing. These missions are needed for ours to become a genuinely ecological and sustainable community and thus be able to pass down a loved and inhabitable planet to our children, grandchildren and the more-than-human world. The transpersonal is personal and the personal is political. Change one thing and you change everything. Transformation in education is the transformation of education into a learning journey that feeds the whole of the student, the teacher, the community and beyond.

Ours is a coherent, indivisible universe of reciprocal and sensuous interconnection. Every breath, every thought, every action has meaning because it has impact. This study concerns itself with six elements that may support a more transformative, ensouled and whole experience of education and counselling. Essentially, empathy, love, desire, space, time and participation have nothing specifically to do with learning or healing. They are elements of relationship and therefore may be generalised to one's interactions with every thing; self, cosmos, gum trees, frogs and wallabies. Being elements of relationship and our universe being one of interrelationship, they may have to do with how Life relates to us and even more so, how Relationship is all there is.

In truth we (a)ware the whole, and the whole (a)wares us. (Gebser, 1985, p. 543)

Every Thing is my Beloved and I am the Beloved of Every Thing.

A participatory, creative universe is deeply intimate.

I am Home. I am my Home.

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