

Educational Wounding
*An Heuristic Study of the Diminishment of Self
Through Formal Education*

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Project Demonstrating Excellence

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Abstract

Educational Wounding: *An Heuristic Study of the Diminishment of Self through Formal Education* by Shannon H. Simonelli explores Educational Wounding defined by the author as moments in our education that are traumatic to the extent that a part of our whole or authentic self is diminished or splits off. Themes that have emerged from the data include: the use of humiliation, judgment, control, abuse and shaming tactics in an effort to get students to conform to a rigid and narrow definition of success, the development of a false-self in response to wounding experiences, symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, the shamanic perspective of broken spirits and Soul wounding, the salvation found in spiritual connection and ultimately the healing in finding one's own authority. This research addresses the power of direct experience, the value of being seen without judgement, and suggests that love is intrinsic to real learning. The voices of the co-researchers reveal the nature of the human spirit; our ability to survive spiritual impoverishment, disconnection from and constriction of our bodies, and the tenacious and sometimes triumphant call of the Soul home. Home, to the "you of you...to the only thing that will keep you from being depleted by them." This research reflects the lived experience of eight co-researchers, four have dealt with learning differences and disabilities and four have not. The intention of this study is to explore Educational Wounding without narrowing the consideration to people with or without diagnosed learning disabilities and learning differences. Through keeping the scope wide the reader is able to view the occurrence of Educational Wounding from a broader perspective that may include many if not all of us. This study considers Educational Wounding from the fields of

psychology, shamanism, Buddhism, physics, creative arts therapies, modern consciousness research, multiple intelligences, and somatic therapies. The applications of this study affect the fields of general and special education, various therapies, policy development, advocacy, adult education and literacy programs, and for parents. Most importantly, for those who have experienced Educational Wounding, it helps reveal a way for our individual “re-collection” process.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my 13 year-old daughter Amber. She has taught me about joy and generosity of spirit more than any other in my life. She too has made sacrifices through my process of study, which she has negotiated with grace, optimism, and at times wise instruction to me. Most beautifully, she has shown me that this work is deeply important, that healing does happen, not only for ourselves but for our lineage and all those we come in contact with. By telling her truth she opened the door for she and I to create change in her personal story of Educational Wounding, and to impact upon her friends that kids do have a voice and bad teachers can be asked to leave. Namaste'.

Acknowledgments

The strong and clear voices of my co-researchers have guided and inspired the deep exploration and articulation of this work. I am endlessly grateful for their courage and willingness to examine and re-awaken their experience of Educational Wounding. My hope is to tell their stories well and to honor their hearts, brains, and courage on their journey home.

Dr. Sherry Eve Penn has been a beacon of assurance and patient guidance in the unfolding of my voice and my work. She has been the “mama bear” that I needed, the fine tuned ear, and the tender heart. I am grateful for her generosity and for her belief in me.

Dr. Bruce Douglass, has gently guided me with humor, challenge and a familiarity that is lovely. My dear peer Dr. Ross Laird has been a confidante, a rich resource and truly great mind, a reality check, and an embodiment of a fine human being; I would be lonely without him. Dr. Rita Humphreys, is my amazing editor for which I am immensely grateful and always impressed. Her sensitivity and sensibility with education is a valuable component to my development. I am grateful to my two Adjunct faculty who’s grace and willingness to join the committee has been a blessing. Dr. Peter Meyer, what a find and a heart, both personally and professionally a deep well I have been privileged to begin to know. Dr. Irene Corbit has been very supportive of my development as an Art Therapist and professional in the field, helping to guide me through the maze of the American Art Therapy Association.

I have come from a rich lineage of teachers and mentors whose voices have mingled with my own and whose influence is in my body, among them are: Amber Smith, my daughter whose appearance in my life was the first of many wake-up calls back into joy and my body; Kim Pederson, my loving, patient, and gritty therapist who helped me begin the journey back to myself; Jackie Small, who gave me tools and a context to work within – a truly gifted and loving teacher; Bill Guillory and Linda Gallindo who let me play even when I didn't know how; Linda Wolf, my first conscious coyote/shadow sister and birthing mother into my work in the world; Dr. Suzanne Lovell, a dedicated way-shower to deeply opening into imagery; and my students and clients who teach me daily what it means to be more fully human.

I have to acknowledge the community I dance with, my tribe, beautiful souls sweating together weekly in the practice of the five rhythms of Gabrielle Roth's work. The Moving Center with Kathy and Andrea have held space for my deep reclamation and reintegration of dance in my body and in my life. I will never leave the dance again, as my life depends on it.

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Lastly, I must deeply thank and acknowledge my friends, family and loved ones without whose love and support I would have crashed and burned long ago. In

my effort to mention individuals, I am sure to leave out some critical person. If this is so, please be compassionate and know there has been great love in my life which has helped to carry me through. To honor those who have been there for me in various ways, some “small” and potent, others grand and enduring, I must highlight a few and at minimum state the names of others: First, my angels incarnate who have buoyed me during the dissertation process, conversations with them have deepened this work, amazing Michael Pritchard and beautiful Nita Gage. New Horizon School which has given me the gift of time and support to develop my work, specifically Judy White and “M”. The brothers and sister I began this program with, Ian Grand, Terrill Byrd, and Marguerite Butler, my dear friends Chris Harding, Kim Hall, Debra Daniels, Mashanko Banda, Alex Trebisan, Ann Burrows, my helpers, Annique, Pam Taylor, The Boorsteins, The Wickmans, The Goldburgs, “Sweet Sistor” Stephany Simonelli, and my beautiful girl, Amber Smith.

In closing I want to honor my parents Dr. Mitzi Simonelli, and Ron Simonelli...they always told me I could do what ever I wanted to. By the grace of God, I believed them.

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Preface

I invite you to open your heart and body to the material that you find here.

So delicate yesterday, the nightsinging birds
by the creek. Their words were:

*You may make a jewelry flower
out of gold and rubies and emeralds,
but it will have no fragrance.*

Rumi

(Barks, 1987, 63)

Chapter 1

Introduction

Clark Moustakas speaks of the heuristic research process:

“The heuristic process requires a return to the self, a recognition of self-awareness, and valuing of one’s own experience. The heuristic process challenges me to rely on my own resources, and to gather within myself the full scope of my observations, thoughts, feelings, senses, and intuitions; to accept as authentic and valid whatever will open new channels for clarifying a topic. . . .The story of a crucial human experience must be told in such a way that in itself it enables self-transformation.” (Moustakas, 1990, 13)

The following heuristic study is born from my own experience and has held the healing transformation of my own Educational Wounding. The voices of the eight co-researchers have illuminated the exploration of the lived experience of Educational Wounding, defined as moments in our education that are traumatic to the extent that a part of our whole or authentic self is diminished or splits off.

Based on this study, Educational Wounding is experienced by people who come from backgrounds where they have been labeled as being learning disabled to bright (although it is thoroughly possible for the same individual to be both). Educational Wounding is experienced in public and private schools, boarding schools and catholic schools, special education and home schooling.

The methodology of heuristic research requires the primary researcher to dig deep into the well of his/her own humanness in illuminating the research question through the stories of his/her co-researchers. It is a subjective methodology, valuing and inviting the dreams, images, and inspirations that come through the primary

researcher to be woven through the research. Deep immersion in the data, the musing, the imagery, the palpable question, in an alchemical process bare the ripe fruit of more fully understanding an element of the human experience.

In Chapter 1 the reader will find subjective personal background information, statement of the problem, and the research question. Chapter 2 is a literature review. Because this is a new field of study and there is no direct lineage to the topic, I have pulled from the fields of psychology, shamanism, Buddhism, physics, creative arts therapies, modern consciousness research, multiple intelligences, and somatic therapies. I have chosen not to become embroiled in the field of education in an attempt to examine the issue of Educational Wounding from “outside the box.” A discussion of heuristic research methodology comprises Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 covers the methodological specifics of this study, including the process of coming to the research question, the shaping of the question, co-researcher criteria, participant selection, and data collection. In Chapter 5, the reader will find data presentation, analysis, and the creative synthesis, and Chapter 6 holds the summary blending the data with the literature, limitations and generalizations, implications of research, recommendations for future research and finalizing statements.

Personal Background

One of my happiest and most vivid memories of my childhood was spinning around and around in circles until surrender to the earth and sky was my only option. I would fall to the lawn laughing and screaming as our yellow house, the neighbor’s huge pine tree, and the blue sky spotted with clouds would twirl around and around me. I would feel pinned to the earth and strangely out of my body at the same moment...

*The reckless abandon that young bodies endure
That souls love and children crave
The joy of being in a body
Connected to the earth as supporter and sky as protector of my world*

In retrospect, this was such a pure form not only of my essence but of my natural process, connection with my body, movement, the earth, the sacred, and my place in it all. I now understand that these things inform my being, inform my intellect and are the seat of my intelligence. I am beginning to understand that my life-long relationship with dance and image has been more than an expression of creativity and intelligence. It is the way I “think”, and has served a vital role in my self-preservation. Naming this awareness and consciously working with it has become self-healing medicine, a retrieval of my essential creative and learning self.

My mythology of school began at four-and-a-half. I was not quite old enough to start kindergarten with the big kids. I was sure they would have amazing adventures that I would miss out on and that certainly, I would be left behind. They all looked so important in their new school clothes, hair slicked down, heads held high, parading on the first day of school right past my living room window. I couldn’t wait to be a kindergartner. In that year of waiting, I remember my love of books, my favorite one pulled out into a long accordion of scalloped edges that I would encircle myself with: it was my castle with a mote for extra protection.

School must not have been all I had hoped. All I can really remember for several years thereafter was playtime. By third grade I remember several humiliating and ultimately quite damaging experiences. I couldn’t read very well and was made to read aloud to my mother for practice. Every word was a struggle, I would see SAW but the word was WAS. Letters switched places in my brain, words appeared out of sequence, I couldn’t even count on the individual letters to stay right, b was d, q was p, and on and on. The more attention I put on the individual words, the less I understood what I was reading. I would get so upset with the continual interjections from my mom to look more closely, to pay attention, to settle down, to sit still and

concentrate. After many sessions like this I began to develop an allergy. Literally, itchy throat, runny and itchy eyes and nose, the stress was so tremendous my body was in rebellion, working to protect me from the anguish of not being able to read. Once, my eyes got so puffy they were swollen shut!

I was given a reading tutor. She would come and get me out of class and all my friends would ask who she was; that was embarrassing, but I was happy for the attention and the help. As I started to slowly improve, she felt my speed should also improve. She introduced me to The Reading Machine, hell on earth. It was a window frame about paragraph size and it was on a track. She would set it at the pace I was reading and gradually it would begin to move faster and faster. I remember one particular time, she was called out of the room and I was left with The Reading Machine. Soon the words I was reading were beginning to disappear under the moving frame of the machine. I could feel the anxiety building as I tried to stay with it, even just to read the last lines before they disappeared. I would skip words that were hard but soon that didn't even help. By the time she came back to check on me, my only response was to burst into tears.

The years were filled with numerous experiences of over and over again being shown that I just wasn't getting it. I was submitted to many tests with various specialists: was I unable to see well, to hear right? Was I just not very smart? Could I put the blocks in the holes quickly enough to show them I wasn't too stupid? They decided I was Learning Disabled, Dyslexic, and Hyper Active. They told me I had little explosions going off in my brain where and when they weren't supposed to. I remember being horrified and scared, what does that mean exactly?! They put me on Ritalin. A little yellow pill twice a day, I needed medicine to be able to do school like the other kids. At first I was ashamed of my lunch time pill concealed beneath a little piece of masking tape over the face of my watch, but soon I noticed a sense of relief. I don't remember why exactly, specifically, but I do know I never forgot to take my pill.

As I have chosen to pursue an advanced degree I have also reawakened this deep-seated wound that was forged early in my academic life. I am now on Ritalin again, the piles of reading material kept growing and I couldn't focus for more than twenty minutes without getting sleepy or losing interest. Once again the little yellow pill has helped me to perform in an academic arena that isn't easy for me, in a way that isn't natural for me. I continue to have mixed feelings about taking the little yellow pill.

Statement of the Problem

This project grew from focused exploration through a Peer Day on "What does it mean to live an authentic life?" (A Peer Day is a required component of The Union Institute Graduate program with learners creating and exploring together designated topics of their choice.) The discussion involved three women: *Gordie Jahner-Psychology & Creative Arts Therapies*, *Leslie Shelton-Transformative Education*, and the author *Shannon Simonelli-Imaginal Psychology & Creative Arts Therapies*. Our conversation brought light to our personal passions, challenges of our doctoral programs, and our growing vocational interests.

As a very body-oriented learner, I spoke about the ongoing difficulties I experience within the demands of the academic arena; particularly with reading and focusing my intellectual energy. Diagnosed and labeled as a child with Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (Hyperactive in 1973), with Learning Disabilities, and Dyslexia, I shared with my learner peers that I was still dealing with deep seated self doubt, shame, and embarrassment learned through the many difficulties in my young school years.

Leslie Shelton is the Director of Project Read, a community service of the public libraries of South San Francisco. Leslie quickly supported my experience stating that many of the learners she works with in her literacy program speak of these same issues. She shared Dr. Howard Gardner's model of Multiple Intelligence Theory (1993), indicating that until recently, her program was the only adult literacy

program in the country looking at the “emotional wounding” that accompanies learning difficulties.

As the day progressed and the many strands of connection between our passions began to reveal themselves, our conversation began to take on a “naming” process. We discussed that literacy work is not only teaching people to read and write more effectively, but that it is actually healing work. In the willingness to re-approach this challenging and emotionally charged piece of learning, adults begin to reclaim parts of themselves that have been abandoned, shamed, isolated and unsupported. We discussed that many of us, arguably each of us at some point, had experienced what we began to call “Educational Wounding”. After the Peer Day, in later months as my own thinking deepened and I connected with my personal experiences, this term suggested that learners are wounded by their educational experiences to the extent that how they bring themselves to the world is diminished rather than enriched. Ultimately not only the individual suffers; the entire community is affected by this tremendous loss of potential.

To quote Dr. Gardner (1993) in Multiple Intelligence: the Theory in Practice, “In my view the purpose of school should be to develop intelligences and to help people reach vocational goals that are appropriate to their particular spectrum of intelligences. People who are helped to do so, I believe, feel more engaged and competent, and therefore more inclined to serve the society in a constructive way” (9)

I have a bias that considers Educational Wounding, on a simplistic level, the failure of the educational system, but more holistically a failure of our culture to engage, challenge, and create an environment that inspires and supports children and teens in their natural curiosity, creativity, and passion; their divine nature. Regardless of our level of academic success and or achievement, whether labeled “learning disabled” or “academically successful,” I believe we each have experiences of traumatic moments impactful to the point that part of our whole and authentic self splits away

(Horney, 1950). When this happens we are diminished. I was moved by this poem as quoted by John Bradshaw:

*The greatest poem ever told
The one all poets have outgrown
The poetry innate untold
Of being only four years old
Born comrade of bird, beast, and tree
And unselfconscious as the bee
Innate explorer of each sense
Without dismay, without pretence
In your transparent eyes
There is no conscience, no surprise
Life's queer conundrums you accept
Your strange divinity still kept
A life that sets all things in rhyme
Would make you poet too in time
But there were days oh tender elf
Where you were poetry itself*

(Christopher Marley as quoted by Bradshaw, (1989)PBS broadcast)

Through this study I hope to learn more about the experience of educational wounding. I want to identify elements of this experience that severely damage our inherent poetry and track their manifestations within the course of a life.

I am considering this issue from the perspective of various illness/healing modalities including psychology, education, indigenous wisdom, and shamanic consciousness which views illness as lost, stolen, or split off pieces of our soul. Although there are many instances where teachers and school systems are violating children on a soul level, I perceive this wound to extend beyond the way schools are teaching children; to scapegoat the schools alone would be viewing one facet of a multi-faceted gem. I believe Educational Wounding reflects, or is a manifestation of a deeper split in our culture. A three century old assault on the soul, the Newtonian-Cartesian view of the world which reduced our culture's view of the world to a mechanistic, solid (atoms) matter, linear time, and cause and effect existence with no place for soul or spirit. This departure from a more holistic view of the world embodied in the perennial philosophy has systematically discounted and shamed us out of a deeper knowing and spirit-embodied life.

Research Question

The process of defining the research question was a deep and revealing experience. I greatly respect the adjustments and refinements that surfaced. In working with the research question as a living breathing entity, it changed only slightly, with the definition of Educational Wounding expanding to include the term “diminishment”. The question is:

What is the lived experience of Educational Wounding?

In order to ensure a simple and common understanding of the language used in the research question, I defined each term.

What is: “used as an interrogative expressing inquiry about the identity, nature, or value of an object or matter” (Webster’s Dictionary, 1990, 1341)

(the)

Lived: 1: “to be alive” 8: “to have a life rich in experience” (Webster’s Dictionary, 1990, 699)

Experience: 1 b: “the fact or state of having been affected by or gained knowledge through direct observation or participation” 4: “something personally encountered, undergone, or lived through” 5: “the act or process of directly perceiving events or reality” (Webster’s Dictionary, 1990, 437)

(of)

Educational Wounding: Wounding: “a mental or emotional hurt or blow” (Webster’s Dictionary, 1990, 1361) Education: 2: “the field of study that deals mainly with methods of teaching and learning in schools” (Webster’s Dictionary, 1990, 396)

Term definition: There are moments in our schooling that are traumatic to the extent that we are diminished and/or split from our authentic (whole) self. (Horney, 1950)

This poem is from a co-researcher

The Lack of Belief

I believe in myself. And I do not remember being believed in.

Knowing yourself. Trusting yourself.

These qualities I came into the world with.

Yet, now, I limp along.

These pillars of support no longer have their full strength or balance.

How did they come to be contaminated.

Uncle Carl died when I was eight.

My brother and I had to stay in his apartment during the funeral.

We weren't old enough to go.

Uncle Carl was one of the few people in my family that I genuinely liked.

In the fifth grade, I didn't pass the test for being in the gifted class.

My mom made the principal give me the test again.

I didn't even know what the test was for.

I sat alone in the empty cafeteria.

I passed the test.

In the gifted class they had singing – the first time since first grade.

I was one of the three people who couldn't sing with the class.

I couldn't sing on key.

I had no idea what that meant.

Mrs. [teacher] didn't explain or teach.

I grew up in a family that didn't ask and didn't discuss.

The list goes on.

There is another list. A list of the people who did believe in me.

Who did something extra for me.

There is also a list of when I believed in me.

When I committed to something

And I accomplished it.

And, yet, it seems that each of my accomplishments is met with some disbelief.

A not quite fitting with reality.

As if I've stepped outside the view of the visible of the people around me.

Now, I've certainly enough of the strength and imagination to go be alone

And leave the other people be.

Yet, All of my desire is to be with people. To PARTICIPATE.

To dance the ever changing connections.

How do I bring my belief in myself

And my abilities

And my actual accomplishments

That I view as accomplishments

Into the view of another person's eyes.

How do I build the bridges – the ephemeral bridges –between me and another.

The effort seems so much effort

And every time I built with the family,

No one came across to meet me.

How do I find the concrete readiness to build bridges.

How do I find the bridges others build to me.

I believe in myself. I do not believe in myself.

Behaviors, constantly updated,

reinforce both.

I have a path, yet it seems split in two.

All because, I learned that I was

separate from you.

That I was separate from me.

In moments of joy, I join together, gathering my pieces

Praising gloriously the oneness of life.

Praying for the heat of my unbowed

heart

To radiate throughout the temple of my

body

Waking every part with the clarion call:

In the depths of human beings is where spirit learns.

Between human beings is where the song of spirit soars.

Opening myself and letting spirit sing me

Sing me a song

Show me the dawn

The lightness touching me

Warming my heart

Telling me that each day is a start

And with my heart

*Gathering my clan
Strong agile my hand*

Touching you me

I believe I believe

*Making my voice my voice
Making my voice my voice*

It had become urgent to have a someone to be.

*Evolving and slowly growing got lost as
the proper path.*

So, I filled myself up with what was available.

I look other's views.

I took in them as me.

I used them to fill me up.

I used them to generate me.

I short changed myself – at my own expense

I forgot that I did this.

*Until now I never went back and
examined my work*

*Or, committed to replace the cheap
stuff.*

I commit.

I commit to create me

A RADIANT COMPLEX ME.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Literature Review:

In this section I will summarize the literature research process the PDE has required, the resources that have emerged, and what thinking they have stimulated in me. The reader will find a deeper examination of the connections and comparisons between the literature and the data I collected through personal interviews in the summary section of this PDE.

When I began the literature review, I was focusing my research question specifically on learning disabilities and emotional wounding; therefore my first search began there. It is important to point out this starting place because I quickly discovered there has been little research done on the intrapsychic and psychosocial experience of people dealing with what we call learning disabilities. This lack of research identifies not only a niche for study within the specific focus of learning disabilities but supports the need for research on the broader question I asked: *What is the (your) lived experience of Educational Wounding?* I explored this question broadly, interviewing people ranging from successful academics to the “learning disabled” and have discovered that people falling within this broad spectrum have had wounding experiences through their schooling.

As my thinking deepened and my question evolved, I worked with wounding from the theory of splitting or splintering of the whole or authentic self. I considered a

range of theory on this subject from Freudian-based theorists to Howard Gardner's work with Multiple Intelligence to aboriginal/indigenous cultural perspectives. In this grand spectrum I drew from writings on shame-based wounding, formation of the false self and shamanic soul-loss. Eventually I was left looking at the evolution of educational theory and the founding thoughts the educational system is built on.

I began my search with PSYCINFO, a computerized database produced by the American Psychological Association. It provides access to international journals, dissertations, conference proceedings, book-chapter and book literature in psychology and related disciplines such as education, business, medicine and law from 1984-present and is updated quarterly. I began with the key words *learning disabilities* and began sorting through many listings, none of which were germane to emotional wounding associated with learning disabilities. Of the 150 listings I reviewed, two books peaked my interest: *Succeeding Against the Odds: Strategies and insights from the learning disabled* (Smith, 1991), and *Challenging Voices: Writings for, by, and about people with learning disabilities* (Tuttle, & Tuttle, 1995). In the book *Challenging Voices* (Tuttle, & Tuttle, 1995) children, adolescents and adults wrote poems or told short excerpts of their experiences of feeling stupid, of being ostracized, of feeling exposed and embarrassed. However, the thing that touched me so deeply in their writings, and ultimately in my own experience was the realization of the endurance, the strength and brilliance of the soul, to keep going, keep trying. I see that there is an amazing place between embarrassment/deep shame and hope, the great hope of being seen, understood, and understanding clearly.

Misunderstood Child
Jenifer Becker age 13

Some of us reverse B's and D's
Some of us cannot read with ease
Perhaps our problem is with math
Or maybe it's a language path
But if you check our I.Q.s
You will see that there are clues
That you should take great heed
Because we will succeed
Just take a look
In any history book
To see those of us you could not tame
To see those of us who have achieved great fame.
(Tuttle, & Tuttle, (compiled) 1995, p.11)

When I read this poem I began to weep, I couldn't stop. I continued to cry for over two hours. The single stanza that struck me to the core was "To see those of us you could not tame". I believe my response touched my experience with education as having felt very much like the struggle to tame my spirit.

Next I added the key words "emotional wounding" to learning disabilities; of course nothing came up. I then consulted other sources – computer based, professional and personal – and I changed my approach to using the key words "shame, learning disabilities" and still came up with no listings for learning disabilities and shame combined together. I was amazed. I searched "shame" on its own and was drawn to two books as possibilities:

Bradshaw, J. (1988). Healing the shame that binds you. Florida: Health Communications Inc.

Nichols, M.P. (1995). No place to hide: Facing shame so we can find self respect.
New York: Prometheus Books.

I found my greatest resource in building the literature review to be deepened through conversations with professionals in the field. I spoke with four people in particular who were helpful, Dr. Aftab Omer, referred me to three sources focusing on shame:

Omer, A. (1990). Experience and otherness: On the undermining of learning in educational organizations, Cobb, E (1993). The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood, Sussman, L (1995). The Speech of the Grail.

My professor, Dr. Suzanne Lovell, referred me to three books that proved to be rich with cross-cultural perspectives on human development, the concept of splitting and indigenous wisdom. These books are:

Lawlor, R. (1991). Voices of the New Day: Awakening in the aboriginal Dreamtime. Liedloff, J. (1977). The Continuum Concept. , Maybury-Lewis, D. (1992). Millennium: Tribal wisdom and the modern world.

My Core Faculty Advisor, Dr. Sherry Eve Penn, referred me to the works of Karen Horney and Larry Morton Gernsbacker to deepen my references to the creation of a false self in the wounding process: Gernsbacker, L.M.(1985). The Suicide Syndrome. Horney, K. (1939). New Ways in Psychoanalysis. Horney, K. (1950). Neurosis and Human Growth.

My initial research on Multiple Intelligence Theory, (Gardner, 1993) lead to discovering Dr. Thomas Armstrong's work, of which I have reviewed:

Armstrong, T.(1993). Seven Kinds of Smart: Identifying and Developing Your Many Intelligences, Armstrong, T. (1995). The Myth of the ADD Child.

I liked Dr. Armstrong's thinking and decided to contact him directly to ask for his input with my literature review. In my initial contact with him I indicated I was not interested in becoming steeped in the rhetoric of the education field, and that I was considering what we have come to call learning disabilities as a split in our authentic self, as *Educational Wounding*. I asked him if he was aware of any literature in the field that may speak to this issue, and/or to the issue of learning disabilities as shamanic soul loss. He e-mailed me and confirmed that this was new and "virgin" territory. "It's right that you shouldn't get bogged down in the veneer of educational jargon - clearly it's the entire façade of this enterprise that is responsible for creating the disjuncture that you speak about in relation to wounding and soul-loss. You're attempting to get under all of that, or perhaps away from it far enough to see the way it buries the learner."

(T. Armstrong personal communication, e-mail, October, 17, 1998).

Now let's begin to explore the literature I have reviewed which retraces the lineage of my thinking, demonstrates the gap in the current research, and which demonstrates the need for my research topic.

Educational Theory

Although this work is not focused on educational reform specifically, the historical development of the system we currently live with and suffer under is relevant.

Although this is by no means an exhaustive or even in-depth exploration into the development of educational theory it does orient the reader by painting the broad brush strokes that lay the foundation for the imagery of Educational Wounding. To understand the under pinnings of current educational theory, I went back to Plato and Aristotle in Greece, which lead through Cicero in Rome, to the influence of early Christian education, the dark ages and medieval times (which did not reflect much change), and into the Renaissance and the very beginning of educational reform. From this I moved through the seventeenth and eighteenth century and the emergence of liberal education, and finally into the nineteenth and twentieth century where there is hope, conflict, broadly applied and unapplied approaches and a reoccurrence of fundamentalism and conservatism in education. In this research the points that are of most interest to me are the discussions about the purpose of education, how education was made available, beliefs about God, spirit and the soul, intelligence, and the split between the mind and the body. These are the driving forces that lie just underneath the surface attempts at educational reform. These are cultural issues that shape a society.

Although educational reform has been discussed since the early 19th century with various experimental attempts and even broadly implemented practices, we are building these efforts on a deeper foundation of thought that can be traced back to Plato.

Plato saw man as embodying two elements, the mind which was the highest quality, the seat of reason and spirit (the masculine principle), and the material world of the body, home to irrationality (the feminine principle). Plato felt only the most intelligent (rational) were fit to be developed intellectually and eventually to rule, because he believed that reason was rooted in the spiritual soul of the child, all children were given educational opportunities in their youth with the most intelligent groomed for leadership through further education. Education was built around rote memorization and imitation of the teacher. Imagination and the senses were perceived as opinion and not the truth, with the senses in service to the mind's recollection of ideas known from birth. This implies an interesting concept of remembering our wisdom, although this point was not developed in the research I did on Plato's thinking. Plato felt that knowing was due to reason and not related to experience, leading the education of the time to focus on the classics and consider athletics only in service of disciplining the body, as Plato believed a healthy body housed a healthy mind. The arts were considered frills. I would argue that many of these founding ideas of educational theory from over 2000 years ago are still the deep underpinnings to our educational system and our cultural context today. Aristotle followed suit, only adding that the intellect could be developed independent of the faculties of the body. In other words, the disconnect is so great and the influence of the body on the mind or visa versa was irrelevant, we were minds simply transported by bodies. Amazing, and yet much of our culture lives in this reality today. (Dupuis, 1996)

Plato's founding beliefs weave through Roman philosophy and carry through to early Christian education. As one might imagine, Christian influence holds consistent with the mind/body split and adds the element of evil associated with the body. The theory is developed from our fall from grace, into sin where our body fell out of control of our intellect, will and soul. With our animal nature in the desires of the flesh we are placed in the battle of our lives to subject our bodies to the higher will of our spirit and soul (intellect and will). The goal of education in Christian theory is to use the intellect to conform the body to God's will, because the intellect can fall prey to the evils of the flesh, scripture holds the role of providing guidance and the ultimate goal of salvation. (Dupuis, 1966)

Let's jump now to the early to mid-nineteenth century and the founding of the American school system. The development of the American Common School, in theory, allowed for high quality education to *all* Americans free of charge. In good conscience I must point out the deep and painful reality of racial inequity and segregation present throughout the South in particular, and woven into the fabric of the entire country.

In reviewing this time in history I was touched by the genuine effort of this system's creators to develop an educational system that was reflective of the hopeful rise in democratic values and humanitarian thought. "Insisting that through the rational treatment of the problems besetting him, man could aspire to ever higher levels of

happiness, it vigorously asserted the dawn of a new era.” (Cremin, 1951, 16) Again, we are met with the rational attack of problems, which as Plato and his predecessors remind us, this is the terrain of the mind and the spirit, a concept of spirit that is accessible through intellect.

School reform was very focused on neutralizing whatever differences students may have, particularly related to socio-economic disparity, with leveling the rich and the poor as a primary objective of this time. Schools also admittedly were the training grounds for good citizens, workers, and future leaders of the country, “The answer lay in the school’s carefully inculcating in the young the values implicit in republicanism as a form of government and as a way of life.” (Horace Mann as cited in Cremin, 1951, 71) There was lengthy discussion about neutralizing differences and teaching political and moral ethic that were non secular. Although a middle-of-the-road approach is one that makes sense for mass education, I couldn’t help but pick out this: “Thus, the political influence of schoolmasters was not to concern itself with the ‘outbreaks of unregulated passion’ “ (E. Washburn as cited in Cremin, 1953, 72) I found myself wondering without passion, and with the commitment to neutralization, finding the middle road, what was lost? What beyond the curriculum was dispassioned and neutralized?

As we moved into the early 20th century and public education became more of an established reality we start to see the beginning of shifts away from education as primarily the transmission of knowledge into some allowance for self-expression.

The thinking about children had also changed over time, “The earlier attitude that the child was born in sin and destined to perform in sin if not rigidly controlled by external discipline has gradually given way to a more sympathetic and humane attitude toward the child as one to be loved, cared for, and appreciated for his own sake.” (Butts, 1953, 566) This point is one that some of my co-researchers would be surprised to hear, as their experiences were different from this general cultural shift indicated.

In reviewing the historical development of the educational system it is easy to trace the lines that have lead to the place of Educational Wounding, to a forced conformity and soul-crushing dis-appointment, a dis-appointment of our passion, individuality, and individuation.

Educational theorists who speak out against the educational system have buoyed me through this research. They range from thoughtful, to outrageous, to soulful. Dr. Roy Fairfield’s work focuses on the potentially liberating effects of a higher education that is self-directed and learner driven:

One conclusion I’ve drawn from my experience in working with more than a thousand master’s and doctoral candidates in free-form matrices is that once a student crosses the threshold of risking and internalizes a new sense of being and self-verification, a whole new universe opens. He feels a sense of power in self-programming. She dares to try other styles of life and expression, to think the unthinkable, and to defy (often with a vengeance) parents, school counselors, or other brainwashers who have attempted to define her life for her. He gains a sense of release and joy. Then he’s in danger of becoming a true believer! (Fairfield, 1977, 23)

Alfred North Whitehead was an amazing find for me, although he originally

published this work in 1929, I felt a deep companionship with his passion and his thinking as well as found contemporary relevance to his words:

In the history of education, the most striking phenomenon is that schools of learning, which at one epoch are alive with a ferment of genius, in a succeeding generation exhibit merely pedantry and routine. The reason is, that they are overladen with inert ideas. Education with inert ideas is not only useless: it is, above all things, harmful...Every intellectual revolution which has ever stirred humanity into greatness has been a passionate protest against inert ideas. Then, alas, with pathetic ignorance of human psychology, it has proceeded by some educational scheme to bind humanity afresh with inert ideas of its own fashioning.

(Whitehead, 1957, 1)

Mankind is naturally specialist. One man sees a whole subject, where another can find only a few detached examples. I know that it seems contradictory to allow for specialism in a curriculum especially designed for a broad culture. Without contradictions the world would be simpler, and perhaps duller. But I am certain that in education wherever you exclude specialism you destroy life. (Whitehead, 1957, 10)

The above quote speaks to Educational Wounding so poignantly, as does the following:

To put the matter simply, their popular practice (the ancients) assumed that wisdom could be imparted to the young by procuring philosophers to spout at them. Hence the crop of shady philosophers in the schools of the ancient world. The only avenue towards wisdom is by freedom in the presence of knowledge. But the only avenue towards knowledge is by discipline in the acquirement of ordered fact. Freedom and discipline are the two essentials of education...The antithesis in education between freedom and discipline is not so sharp as a logical analysis of the meanings of the terms might lead us to imagine. The pupil's mind is a growing organism. On the one hand, it is not a box to be ruthlessly packed with alien ideas: and, on the other hand, the ordered acquirement of knowledge is the natural food for a developing intelligence. Accordingly, it should be the aim of an ideally constructed education that the discipline should be the voluntary issue of free choice, and that the freedom should gain an enrichment of possibility as the issue of discipline. The two principles, freedom and discipline, are not antagonists, but should be so adjusted in the child's life that they correspond to a natural sway, to and fro, of the developing personality. It is this adaption of freedom and discipline to the natural sway of development that I have elsewhere called The Rhythm of Education. I am convinced that much disappointing failure in the past has been due to neglect of attention to the importance of this rhythm. (Whitehead, 1957, 30-31)

The neglecting of natural rhythm is expressed from a different perspective in The

Student as Nigger:

School is where you let the dying society put its trip on you. Our schools may seem useful: to make children into doctors, sociologists, engineers – to discover things. But they're poisonous as well. They exploit and enslave students; they petrify society; they make democracy unlikely. And it's not *what* you're taught that does the harm but *how* you're taught. Our schools teach you by pushing you around, by stealing your will and your sense of power, by making timid square apathetic slaves out of you – authority addicts. (Farber, 1970, 17)

In the new compilation The Heart of Learning many contemporary authors from various backgrounds have spoken out about the issues this research addresses, although they do not call it Educational Wounding, they are addressing the soul level sickness that is weakening the fabric of our society.

Call the sides what you like, but in our towns, our country, and our time, a real and painful battle is being waged: one with many casualties. The struggle comes down to a split about how to deal with (or heal) a very human, very personal sense of disconnection: one that threatens to tear apart not merely individuals, schools and communities but the living fabric of our world as well." (Glazer, 1999, 1) "Spirituality in education is about intimacy with experience: intimacy with our perceptions – the experience of having a body; our thoughts – the experience of having a mind; and our emotions – the experience of having a heart. Spirituality in education is rooted in experience. (Glazer, 1999, 2)

This is the first book of its kind to address these issues in a format that is written for the general public, the time has come for this message to be opened for discussion on the layperson's level.

The Mind-Body Split

“There is no body without soul, no body that is not itself a form of soul” (Sri Aurobindo, as cited in Adler, 1991)

At this point I must draw some bridges between the Platonic split of body and mind (spirit) and the Christian concept that the soul is in the intellect, with more contemporary research that speaks about the body as the door-way to the soul, to the divine, and that couches our intellect as running throughout our body.

The foundation of our culture and by extension, our educational theory and practice is in the distancing of ourselves from our bodies. In this distancing we look outside of ourselves, pursue knowledge that is transmitted to us and we are taught that the teacher, the preacher and the political leader are the ones that will lead us to the truth, to our salvation. We have institutionally forgotten direct experience, “Words are essential but...when we rely too much on words we begin to substitute a world of indirect knowledge – knowledge about – for the immediate intense impact of what is actually there before thoughts and words arise.” (Bancroft as cited in Adler, 10)

There is another way, a more humane way that honors the depth of our human experience and opens the heart, touches the passion, and enlivens the spirit:

Fabulous possibilities are open before us. A marvelous future, full of surprise and joy, is awaiting us if we know how to grasp the right thread of our evolution and have the courage to look at ourselves objectively.

To begin with, our own matter, our body, *already* contains every miracle and every marvel in a dormant state, as it were – we must ‘awaken’ or un-cover them, put them in contact with their solar counterpart above: we must join the Divine below with the Divine above. (Satprem, Luc Venet, 1985, 25)

The manifestation of the love of the Divine in the world was the great holocaust, the supreme self-giving. The Perfect Consciousness accepted to be merged and absorbed into the unconsciousness of matter, so that consciousness might be awakened in the depths of its obscurity and little by little a Divine Power might rise in it and make the whole of this manifested universe a highest expression of the Divine Consciousness and the Divine Love. (Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, 1973, 1)

Candice Pert, Ph.D. is proclaimed as “the most creative research scientist of our time, being credited as the pioneer of the emerging new science of life that finally overcomes the Cartesian split between mind and body.” (Pert, 1997, book jacket)

Dr. Pert has identified that there are peptides released in relationship to emotional responses and receptors to lock and key hold the emotion-released peptides. These receptors are located throughout the body, tending to collect around the chakras, organs, and up and down the spine. This discovery indicates that our “brain” as we have considered it in the past is really throughout our body, that we “think” on a cellular level.

These recent discoveries are important for appreciating how memories are stored not only in the brain, but in a *psychosomatic network* extending into the body, particularly in the ubiquitous receptors between nerves and bundles of cell bodies called ganglia, which are distributed not just in and near the spinal cord, but all the way out along pathways to internal organs and the very surface of our skin. The decision about what becomes a thought rising to consciousness and what remains an undigested thought pattern buried at a deeper level in the body is mediated by the receptors.

(Pert, 1997, 143)

With this research it is clear that the mind is throughout the body. This puts a new consideration into the arena of education, learning and intelligence, one that is picked up on by Howard Gardner’s work which appears later in this literature review.

Shame:

In my initial research on shame I found core pieces to support my thinking specific to wounding and the wounding of not being seen, witnessed, or mirrored in our development. “The first stab of shame comes from sudden and unexpected exposure to the critical eyes of another person. . . . Just as exposure is the immediate cause of shame, the immediate response is to hide. In fact the linguistic root of the word shame is to hide or cover up.” (Nichols, 1995, 9).

When we extrapolate out the idea of hiding, we begin to see the multiple layers that shame-based wounding creates. When we experience shame around a part of ourselves, we begin to not only hide that part of ourselves from others, we hide that part of ourselves from ourselves. This creates a splintering of the multiple aspects that make up each one of us, valuing one small part over another. “Shame is internalized when one is abandoned. Abandonment is the precise term to describe how one loses one’s authentic self and ceases to exist psychologically.” (Bradshaw, 1988 11). Abandonment of children by adults, which may be internalized by the child against part of him/herself; the child becomes an internal system of self-held shame and abandonment.

As Bradshaw speaks about abandonment, he includes the lack of mirroring from adults (for children), or loved ones. Mirroring is the process of having our emotions,

our being-ness, reflected back to us. When we are without a source of reflection, we are abandoned, we are not seen, and in that place a hole is left in our image of our whole self.

Jung refers to these disowned and splintered pieces of less valued parts of who we are as our shadow selves. (Jung, 1933) As we hide these disowned, shadow pieces, they suffer from the abandonment of not being seen. With no mirror, or witness, we experience a sense of psychological alienation from our true self. As the nature of shame is to escape or hide, our alienation from our authentic self leads to its replacement with a false self. For many people, the false self is the only one they know. The task of healing, transformation, and individuation is to awaken the authentic self and reclaim the shamed pieces we have abandoned over time.

The False Self:

Karen Horney's work grows out of Freudian theory and develops psychological thinking about the formation of the false self. She explains that as children are growing up, they need both inner and outer security and freedom to explore that they are both individual and within the group. The healthy version of this process leads to developing a sense of belonging, an experience of "we", as well as an integrated experience of self-confidence and the experience of representing our true self in our world. (Horney, 1950). When this does not happen for a myriad of reasons, the child begins to experience basic anxiety. As this anxiety builds with time and experience, the child draws on her/his imagination and creates the idealized image of the self.

Eventually the child may begin to so deeply identify with the idealized image that it gradually becomes an idealized self, no longer holding a separate place within the child's imagination, but usurping the place of the real self.

As the growing child becomes more identified with the idealized self she/he believes this will solve all her/his difficulties, when in reality it is moving her/him further and further away from her/his natural talents, gifts and grounded way of being in the world. "Speaking in these symbolic terms, the easy way to infinite glory is inevitably also the way to an inner hell of self-contempt and self-torment. By taking this road, the individual is in fact losing his soul – his real self" (Horney, 1950, 39). "In terms of the devil's pact, the abandoning of self corresponds to the selling of one's soul. In psychiatric terms we call it the 'alienation from self.' This (latter) term is applied chiefly to those extreme conditions in which people lose their feeling of identity" (Horney, 1950, 156)

In the developing child there is a shift, "This transfer of his center of gravity is an entirely inward process; there is no observable or conspicuous outward change in him. The change is in the core of his being, in his feeling about himself... While the healthy course at this phase of development – and at *any* phase – would be a move toward his real self, he now starts to abandon it definitely for the idealized self." (Horney, 1950, 23) Her reference to the transfer of gravity within a person towards the false or idealized self, away from the true self is an intriguing image for me as a

mover, and supports my experience of dance as a way of returning to a more authentic experience of my true self.

Oppression:

The dynamic of oppression is linked with the experience of repression. My research shows that this dynamic, experienced as ridged pressure to conform and succeed, and carried out through the use of humiliation, control, judgement and shaming, is wounding and affects the spirit and receptivity of the child to learning. “Oppression has enduring social consequences because it is internalized by the individuals who are being oppressed. This internalization is itself repressed. Where there is oppression, there will be repression; the converse is also true.” (Omer, 1990, 138) It is in this dynamic that we can place the abusive and violent acting out behavior we see in our adolescents today, the many manifestations of self abuse and the violence against others. Dr. Omer refers to The Book of Laughter and Forgetting:

The struggle of people against domination is in fact the struggle of memory against forgetting. The interdependence of oppression and repression comes to light further when we consider the converse process. We are empowered by remembering the repressed, and we can remember by empowering the oppressed. The oppressed carry the repressed for the dominant group. (Kundera as cited in Omer, 1990, 138)

I can't help but ask: What as a culture are we repressing, reflected in our treatment of children in the educational system? What in our humanness have we placed so deeply into our shadow that we can consider kids the enemy and narrowly defined success the primary commitment?

Let's consider the distortion that children experience surrounding the overt and covert constraints and expectations that exist around learning in the school setting. The natural curiosity, growing autonomy, spontaneity, and empathy intrinsic to learning and creativity in its purest form is systematically corrupted out of children in our educational system. The price we pay for a pervasively applied control mechanism is not only manifest in the child's corrupted development of spontaneity, but in the compromised ability for the child to express his/her vitality and participation in the organic flow and development of life process. (Gernsbacher, 1985)

Posttraumatic Stress :

My research shows that Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms are suffered by some people who have experienced Educational Wounding. (Simonelli, 1999) With PTSD a person experiences a traumatic event which shatters previously held beliefs that people are trustworthy. People specifically related to the traumatizing event, as well as others who represent similar threat represent a danger to his/her safety. In particular, if a person feels he/she has no control over the situation, if it is perceived that he/she are helpless to make the situation different, the situation becomes overwhelming which makes it more traumatic. This could easily be the perception of a child in the face of authority, or the pressure of peers, or under the pressure to succeed. Trauma creates chemical changes in the brain and sets up an imprint or template pattern of neuro chemical response. (Goleman, 1995) This fear response is triggered by situations that are similar to the original trauma. This

response simultaneously blocks any new learning the brain might do to correct the response to the traumatic event. (Goleman, 1995)

Stan Groff refers to this same phenomenon as a COEX, a condensed experience which can trigger a variety of responses to present day situations that appear to be “over reactions”. These reactions are born from deep-seated wounds which hold a similar energetic charge to the situation that is occurring in the present moment. The body reacts to the present stressful situation with all the stored pain and power of the past traumatic events which have compounded over time. (Grof, 1985)

Development of identity through “Other” and the divine third:

Edith Cobb speaks about the development of identity in children:

In the creative perceptions of poet and child we are close to the biology of thought itself – close, in fact, to the ecology of imagination, in which the energies of the body and mind as a unit, an ecosystem, and the energies of nature combine in a mutual endeavor to adapt to nature, to culture, and to the societies devised by man to embody culture. (Cobb, 1993, 109)

Cobb’s research demonstrates how critical a learning community is for the whole development of the child. It is through inter-relationship with the other and their world that children are able to develop a strong sense of themselves and to ultimately make a rich and meaningful contribution through their lives to their communities and beyond. Cobb makes the case that our evolution depends on the relationship of childhood creativity to nature and is deeply experienced through the body, which builds the psychology and physiology of the child fully into his/her genius.

Body image and world image overlap in the work of the perceiving nervous system; the identity of each and every person is, therefore, an ego-world unity.

But richness of personality in a culturally valuable sense can only be measured in terms of human relations and the capacity of the individual for compassionate intelligence. (Cobb, 1993, 110)

Compassionate intelligence includes the body as intrinsic to deep knowing. I imagine this level of development and inspiration is not occurring in many of our classrooms today as the norm is dis-embodied learning through intellectual engagement, where many kids feel little connection to the material being taught. (Simonelli, 1999)

A conceptual underpinning to Educational Wounding lies in the damaged or lacking development of a healthy relationship with the other; the other who sees us, who provides mirroring of our becoming and validates and confirms who we *are*, not who they want us to be. “So long as each of us is required to be symbolically endorsed by others; so long as all aspire to taste vindication in however vague a sense, we search for our own meaning in a design not of our own devising.” (Nelson as cited in Omer, 1990, 136) Dr. Omer continues:

If others are so necessary and our dependence on others so essential, then we must ask the question: How can someone be an individual, have an ego, be one’s own person, and become oneself? Paul Federn said that “It is love that first creates the ego and sustains it.” And Stuart is eloquent and clear that individuality is achieved only through the care and love of others:

...whatever my endowment, something is added to me or taken from me or twisted in me by the way my neighbor treats me. My nature is increased by his grace and by his disgrace, diminished...Being loved, we are loving, we feel within us the core of our own reality and we feel good. If we have not had lovable objects, if we have not become sufficiently differentiated, if we do not feel good, we are unable to love outside ourselves. We are, in fact, bad...Yet, the Siamese twins of the flesh are not more of an aberration undifferentiated, and the operation that would separate them is as delicate and dangerous...the child is separated off from the mother in love – loved, one might say, into apartness. For it is love only,...which is at once strong enough

to allow, objective enough to enjoy and secure enough to desire the real separateness of another person. (Omer, 1990, 137)

Dare we consider love as intrinsic to learning and education?

With the healthy development of ego through mirroring by the Other we now have to consider the paradox of the relationship of I and Other. Let us consider the witness, the one who looks on with no judgement, who holds space, who sees. This has been the realm of the mystic.

Saints, poets, mystics, philosophers, believers, and theologians throughout the ages have wrestled with the dilemma of description. The language of paradox seems the most accurate: God is both and neither/or, both is and is not. The mind is pushed beyond conceptual limits. I restate what to the mystic is obvious. But we can no longer afford for this to be an insight of a few. It needs to become our common understanding. Without it, we fall too easily into polarization, duality; we imagine that there is an ‘other.’ It is our mistaken notion of the *other* that threatens to destroy us as we imagine ourselves separate from and different than the world of nature. And from each other as beings who together share this fragile planet’s fate. (Galland, 1996, 158)

In this culture dis-embodiment is the norm, our deeper human roots call us to our compassionate intelligence, which requires our interrelationship with the body and the earth as intrinsic to deep knowing. In this place cavernous splits in our soul are not required to keep our bodies among the walking dead. In this place we remember the third element...the divine third that dances with us, through us and between us. This third takes us out of the duality of I and Other. This third is what physics and Buddhism speak of when they talk of inter-origination, or paratantra.

Bootstrap theorists recognize that all atomic particles, such as electrons, cannot exist independently of one another. They are actually “interconnections” among particles, and these “particles” are in turn “interconnections” among other particles. No particle has an independent nature. This is very close to interdependence, interbeing, and interpenetration...A scientist who realizes the nature of interdependence among particles is likely

to be influenced in the way he or she perceives reality even in every-day life. Former concepts of “one’s self” and “objects” dissolve and they see themselves in everything and all things in themselves.” (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1988, 84, 88)

This is what Martin Buber refers to as the I/Thou relationship. (Kirschembaum & Henderson, 1989) It is through the breaking apart of our constructs of duality... good/bad, right/wrong, inside/outside that we open to direct experience. “William James suggests that direct experience is ‘..something more like a sensation than an intellectual operation’” (James as cited in Adler,1991,8) Joan Halifax says that “the shaman acquires direct knowledge from direct experience” (Halifax as cited in Adler, 1991, 7)

The [her] dream of the Dalai Lama: no one can verify your experience for you, not the Dalai Lama, not the Pope, not all the professors, lamas, rimpoches, teachers, friends, family, or people one considers wise in the world. There is only the effort to be in relationship with what some might choose to call God. (Galland, 1990, 287-88)

As we venture further into this territory we begin to discover that direct experience is also the voice of our own authority. Now we have stepped into a new arena; we are dancing with the divine. This is the place that is described as an awareness of oneness with all things, or the emptiness and simultaneously the all-ness of enlightened experience.

It is in direct experience, in the voice of our own authority, through being witnessed without judgment, or constraints or constriction that we find our genius. The lack of this understanding and practice in an educational setting is at the seat of, is the essence of Educational Wounding.

The Split and Splitting:

Returning to our working definition of wounding as an experience of splitting off a piece of the self, I found a gem of an article “Splitting in hospital treatment” (Gabbard, 1989) that encapsulates the issue within a western philosophical paradigm. This article defines splitting as “maintaining contradictory aspects of intrapsychic experience separate from one another” (Gabbard, 1989, 444). The article goes on to state that the authors they researched would agree that splitting is considered a normal part of development, “Although Freud seemed to prefer the defense of repression to that of splitting, references to splitting of the ego are scattered throughout his papers.” (Groststein as cited in Gabbard, 1989, 444) “By the time of his death, Freud had become convinced that splitting was a virtually universal feature of human psychopathology which derived from infancy and persisted in neurotic as well as in psychotic and fetishist patients.” (Groststein as cited in Gabbard, 1989, 444)

I don’t know why I was somewhat surprised to see such an ethnocentric perspective from the Western, mechanistic, Newtonian reality construct that Freud grew out of: *that intrapsychic splitting is a normal part of all human development.* My bias is that I believe splitting has become the norm of our development in this culture, but I do not believe that it is a natural state or experience in the broader scope of human development through time and place. For example, I researched the Aboriginal world view and was reassured that this cultural group has a rich and deeply

embodied order that grows out of the land, the Dreamtime and the Songlines that create the individual's context for relationship within him/herself, kinship relationships and most importantly to his/her place on the land. This cosmology is very layered, taking energy and space as the primary forces to orient the traditional Aboriginal. There is an ability within this construct to hold both the individual, the community, and the sacred connection with space through the Dreamtime. The concept of splitting does not exist. (Maybury-Lewis, 1992)

The words *individual* and *intellect* are two terms that have stood out for me in this research process. “*Individual* is derived from the Latin root *individuus*, meaning divided into parts or fragments, and related to the Latin root *invidia*, meaning to *envy* or, more precisely, *to look wantonly upon that which is outside one.*” (Lawlor, 1991, 233). When we are coming from a place of the “rugged individual” as we have in this culture, we are evoking many concepts and constructs which play out through our lack of relationship with the land, each other, our resources, our diversity, and our educational, religious, and political institutions. When we incorporate the intellect, defined as: “the power of knowing as distinguished from the power to feel and to will: the capacity for knowledge, the capacity for rational or intelligent thought especially when highly developed” (Webster's, 1990, 628), we continue to see the many splits within our concept of knowing, the body, creativity, learning, and intelligence. The Continuum Concept makes the point:

the less the intellect interfered with instinct in the formation of behavior patterns, the less rigid the structure would need to be on the surface (about behavioral detail, ritual, requirements for conformity) and the more inflexible at its core (in attitude toward self, attitude toward the rights of others,

sensitivity to the signals of instinct that favor survival, health, pleasure, a balance of types of activity, an impulse toward the preservation of the species, economical use of the plants and animals in the environment, and so on). In a word, the more a culture relies upon the intellect, the more restraints on the individual are necessary to maintain it. (Liedloff, 1985, 27).

In my view, Liedloff's thoughts reflect the modern day educational system in our country. Clearly, the connection we have with our unique, indigenous, embodied, instinctual way of knowing, being curious and learning is the thread of survival we are searching for as a culture with a collapsing educational system. As many of our infrastructures, based on individualism and intellect, continue to decay, our birthright of deep knowing and connection to ourselves, each other, and the sacred through curiosity and the creative process of learning is waiting to be re-membered.

Remembering:

Re-membering is entering the territory of the Shaman. Jung wrote about the shaman's ecstatic trance state, that in the journey with his spirits the shaman became whole and true to his spiritual personality. Jung saw the connections between analytic psychology and shamanism and perceived the shaman's trance journey and symbolism as a projection of the individuation process.

The [shaman's] ecstasy is often accompanied by a state in which the shaman is 'possessed' by his familiars or guardian spirits. By means of this possession he acquires the mystical organs which in some sort constitute his true and complete spiritual personality. This confirms the psychological inference that may be drawn from shamanic symbolism, namely, that it is a projection of the individuation process" (Jung 1967, 341)

I feel this response, within the theory of Jungian analytic psychology, speaks to the larger process of becoming individuated within the framework and constraints of society, of growing into the soul we have been given.

Through the lens of shamanic consciousness, I am considering the splitting of pieces of the self as containing elements of shamanic *Soul Loss*. Classic shamanic tradition considers the manifestation of soul loss as a sickness experienced by the one suffering from the abducted or wandering soul. (Eliade, 1964). “The conception of disease as a loss of the soul, either strayed away or abducted by a spirit or a ghost, is extremely widespread in the Amazonian and Andean regions,...and is even attested among the Yahgan of Tierra del Fuego.” (Eliade, 1964, 327). “There is no need to cite here all the data relating to loss of the soul and the search for it by the North American shaman. It will suffice to observe that this belief is quite common in North America, especially in the West, and that its presence [(is)] in South America as well...” (Eliade, 1964, 310).

Sandra Ingerman speaks about the shamanic process of our leaving or abandoning pieces of who we are because they are shamed aspects, not valued, or given room to develop. Sometimes we have pieces of our soul or authentic self taken by others. When considering reasons one might steal another’s soul the issue of power is undeniable, not personal power but power over another (Ingerman, 1991). This concept directly relates to data collected from co-researchers in this study; the experience of being forced into a frame that not only did not fit but diminished abilities, gifts, and talents.

The wandering off of souls in traditional shamanic literature is particularly discussed around the initiation period in adolescence when some children are called through illness, dreams, or temporary insanity to become “seers” and/or shamans. (Eliade, 1964). I connect with this point through the dreaming, as much of my adolescence was jarred by teachers, parents and other adults calling me back into the room from daydreams that were triggered by some earlier element of the conversation in the room prior to my daydreaming departure. Now I wonder what those imaginings held, if and how they related to my understanding of the material we were learning and what different perspectives I might have offered to the class.

Intelligence: a broad perspective:

From an education perspective I have researched Multiple Intelligence Theory, Dr. Howard Gardner’s work from Harvard (Gardner, 1993). Gardner has languaged and studied an approach to intelligence that not only challenges the premise of the highly used IQ test. He challenges us to take intelligence out of the mind, and to develop a multidimensional definition of intelligence. Multiple Intelligence Theory has identified seven areas of intelligence with no one area valued over any other one: Linguistic; Logical-mathematical, (these two are traditionally considered the only intelligences); Spatial (ability to form a mental model of a spatial world and to maneuver using the model, e.g. sailors, engineers, sculptors, painters, surgeons, choreographers); Musical; Body-kinesthetic (dancers, athletes, surgeons, craftspeople); Interpersonal (ability to understand others, how they work, what motivates them); Intrapersonal (ability to understand self and to use that information

to operate effectively in life). (Gardner, 1993) This framework has given me a structure to continue to consider and speak about diverse approaches to learning; for that I am grateful.

In my research I found a companion thinker in Dr. Armstrong (1993) who shares “ [As a teacher] I became disenchanted with the way parents and teachers all too often plucked the learning potential from blossoming children by focusing too much attention on words and numbers at the expense of other gifts and talents” (Armstrong, 1993, 5). Armstrong encourages us to look at the natural tendencies of childhood not as a pathological malfunction but as a barometric reading on the health of the approaches that we are using with our children within the school setting.

An important companion piece to Multiple Intelligence Theory can be found in The Soul’s Code (Hillman, 1996). From many positions Hillman challenges us to ask the question: *What is our soul’s longing, what is the calling from deep within the essence of who we are?* He applies these thoughts to what we call learning disabilities:

Dyslexia, chronic lateness, distractibility, hyperactivity make up ‘attention deficit disorder’ - and what patience it demands. Yet how else contain and tease out what this ‘deficit’ also shows? Children so categorized, and adults too, are often those with above-average intelligence, given to day-dreams, and with such widely open sensitive souls that their ‘ego’ behavior is noncompliant and disorganized. Ritalin, Prozac, Xanax – of course, they work. But because they work against the deficit does not confirm the cause of it or disclose its meaning. Why is this disorder so prevalent today? What does the soul not want to attend to, and what might the daimon [*(soul’s urge)*] be doing when it is not reading, not speaking and not fulfilling performance

expectations? To discover this takes patience and that imaginative perception that Henry James described as ‘a prolonged hovering over the case exposed’ (Hillman, 1996, 126).

Exploring and languaging the issue of Educational Wounding is new research in the various fields this topic touches. As is the case with shame-based wounding, Educational Wounding has been “in the closet” and not talked about directly. Until now it has not been defined and specifically identified as it has been in this study. Educational Wounding is woven into our individual experience of ourselves as learners, has been integrated into the fiber of how we see ourselves as students, and reflects how we hold our intelligence and what we feel we are capable of. Through this research a strong and clear voice has emerged, building the language and laying the stepping stones of the theory of Educational Wounding and the journey of the Self, (Horney, 1950 Jung, 1933) home to healing.

Chapter 3

Heuristic Research Model

This study was conducted using the Heuristic research methodology. Heuristic research is subjective, exploratory, process oriented and descriptive. It requires the primary researcher to go deeply into self-inquiry and to invite the co-researchers, through dialogue, reflection, dreams, intuitions, art and personal exploration, to dive into the deep well of human knowing through direct experience and recollection. (Moustakas, 1990).

Heuristic research asks the researcher to uncover human experience as it is, not to prove or disprove a theory, but to explicate the basic nature of a human experience at the core or foundation of that experience. (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985)

Heuristic research requires the researcher's self to be acknowledged, present and explored as part of the research process, while simultaneously holding a neutral space. As Patton explains:

Any credible research strategy requires that the investigator adopt a stance of *neutrality* with regard to the phenomenon under study. This simply means that the investigator does not set out to prove a particular perspective or manipulate the data to arrive at predisposed truths. The neutral investigator enters the research arena with no axe to grind, no theory to prove, and no predetermined results to support. Rather, the investigator's commitment is to understand the world as it is, to be true to complexities and multiple perspectives as they emerge, and to be balanced in reporting both confirming and disconfirming evidence. (Patton, 1990, 55)

The Heuristic process is a rigorous and gentle process, requiring the primary researcher to have commitment and passion about the research question. In gathering the data with the co-researchers the primary researcher must create a safe space for time and place to stand still as they together enter into the research question. The primary researcher focuses attention on the experience being shared by the co-researcher and simultaneously on his/her own felt experience related to the data. (Moustakas, 1994) Because the exploration is focused on the lived experience of the co-researcher, he/she is considered the "expert" of his/her own experience, with the primary researcher creating a supportive environment to encourage deep disclosure and exploration of the research question. (Douglass, Union Institute Seminar, 1999) As the nature of Heuristic research is to work deeply with the data

gathered through each in-depth interview, it is considered valid to work with anywhere from 7 to 12 co-researchers in any particular study. (Douglass, Union Institute Seminar, 1999)

As the researcher works with the data, in an attempt to explicate and articulate the area of inquiry a dialogue with the self begins. “The process of *self-dialogue* makes possible the derivation of a body of scientific knowledge that is useful. Such a process is guided by a conception that knowledge grows out of direct human experience and can be discovered and explicated initially through self-inquiry.” (Moustakas, 1990, 17).

The methodology of Heuristics requires the researcher to enter into a world beyond the daily time space world and into a place of surrender to the voices of the co-researchers. Below are the elements of Heuristic research further defined:

Tacit knowing refers to knowledge that can not be put into words; it is having a deep knowing of the totality or wholeness of something through knowing its parts.

Moustakas quotes Polanyi: “ ‘Knowledge of the trunk, branches, buds, flowers, leaves, colors, textures, sounds, shape, size – and other parts or qualities – ultimately may enable a sense of the treeness of a tree, and its wholeness as well. This knowing of the essence or treeness of a tree is achieved through a tacit process’ ”

(Moustakas, 1990, p.21). It is important to realize that tacit knowing not only plays

a role in its own right, but is invoked in the process of understanding and naming explicated material.

Intuition is an acknowledged process in Heuristic study, valid and valued. Through intuition the researcher is able to read underlying patterns and emerging themes.

Intuition presents itself to me as a felt sense, often as knowing or seeing something in its wholeness.

Indwelling refers to sitting within the knowing, moving with and into the spaces between what is known. It is through the process of indwelling that the researcher develops an intimate relationship with the inquiry, the data and the explicated meaning

Focusing requires inner attention and creating space to clearly identify themes, to draw connections, to invite further explication. This process can be practiced in the interview phase of research, creating an environment for co-researchers to explore new ways of seeing. Additionally, while the researcher works with the data, focusing will aid in the process of more fully and deeply knowing the individual and collective material gathered through the data collection phase of the process.

There are six distinct stages to the Heuristic model: Initial Engagement, Immersion, Incubation, Illumination, Explication, and Creative Synthesis. I will define each stage as well as indicate highlights of this study's design.

Initial Engagement: The researcher feels compelled; there is a calling to a theme, concern, or problem. There is a personal connection springing from the researcher's lived experience that propels the passionate inquiry into the emerging theme. There must be a willingness to fully live in the emerging personal and social meaning and to open to tacit knowing and intuition. This process leads to the formation of the heuristic research question which is interested in learning about qualities of lived experience both personal to the researcher and to the co-researchers participating in the inquiry.

Immersion: The researcher fully enters into relationship with the question. Self-dialogue, reflection, tacit knowing, conversation, reading, videos, all become possible resources for further knowing the question.

Incubation: In this phase the researcher steps back from the intense interaction with the question. There is a detachment period that allows the gathered information from the immersion phase to settle and steep in its own juices. There is much going on during this phase of the process, however it is subterranean. This is a powerful time allowing for the growth and ultimate maturity of the prior probing, questioning and reflection.

Illumination: When the time is right, the child is born. Often when the researcher is not preoccupied with the question, when the intensity of focus is relaxed, tacit knowing finds enough space and breathing room to reach us. This is when we understand the question at a deeper level, possibly correcting distortions or changing

the focus of the question to more fully reflect the new awareness. “In illumination, it is just such missed, misunderstood, or distorted realities that make their appearance and add something essential to the truth of an experience. The illumination process has been continually recognized in creative discoveries from the earliest thinkers on science”. (Moustakas, 1990, 30).

Explication: Once more information has been brought to consciousness the researcher gives a more detailed explanation of the data. This process allows for the layers and angles of information to be explored. “In the explication process, the heuristic researcher utilizes focusing, indwelling, self-searching, and self-disclosure, and recognizes that meanings are unique and distinctive to an experience and depend upon internal frames of reference”. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 31) Moustakas goes on to emphasize the importance of focusing and indwelling in the process of explication of deeper textures and nuances for more fully teasing out the complete essence of the phenomenon.

Creative Synthesis: This is the final phase of heuristic research and one that the researcher has prepared for through all the layers of exploration of the data. At this point the material generated from each researcher and from sitting with the data as a whole has permeated the researcher. The creative synthesis is approached as a tacit and intuitive bringing forth of information that has been examined from a multitude of angles. It is important in this phase that the researcher not be overly focused on the details of the research in any way, “permitting an inward life on the question to

grow, in such a way that a comprehensive expression of the essences of the phenomenon investigated is realized". (Moustakas, 1990, 32).

Heuristic methodology offers a scientific model built from concepts and processes of Self-Dialogue, Tacit Knowing, Intuition, Indwelling, Focusing, Immersion, Incubation, Illumination, Explication, and Creative Synthesis. This research process offers the curious a scientifically valid form to engage in full-bodied immersion into a personal experience of being human.

Procedure for analyzing data:

The phases of heuristic research are the foundation for analyzing data. In the first phase the researcher gathers all the data through interviews on audiotape, image work, and notes. The researcher is immersed in each participant's material individually, allowing the story, essence, themes and full experience to be understood by the interviewer. The incubation of this material requires that the researcher step away from the data before revisiting it once again to build an individual depiction from the data. At this point the researcher checks the validity of the individual depiction with each participant, confirming that the depiction matches the felt experience of the participant. If there are distortions that require further clarification and/or revision, the participant/co-researcher provides the correction to the researcher.

Once the researcher has verified the validity of the research through the individual depiction with the co-researcher, the researcher moves on, repeating the process with the next individual in the study.

When all individual depictions are complete and verified, the researcher reenters the immersion phase with each of the individual depictions. The intention of this phase is to explicate the universal themes. When the researcher has allowed appropriate time for tacit knowing and intuition to inform the process, the researcher creates a composite depiction of the universal themes and qualities that have emerged. The composite depiction can draw on direct quotes from the interview process, material from the individual depictions, image and movement work.

Returning again to the individual depictions the researcher selects two individual depictions that clearly represent and embody universal themes that have emerged from the group through the composite depiction. In this phase it is important to state, as is the intention of the entire heuristic research process, that the integrity of the individual story is maintained. It is through the power of the individual story and meaning that the universal truth is revealed.

The final stage in heuristic study is the creative synthesis, which comes through the researcher. Trusting in the heuristic process and in the creative process, as they are closely related, the researcher surrenders to the developed intimate understanding of the issue. The creative synthesis is a unique expression of the issue through the

researcher as it has grown from the depth of inquiry and discovery with the co-researchers. It can take many forms including creative expression.

Teacher

*Somewhere in the life I got stomped on.
Not only that, but I believed it and took it to heart.
It was easy to take it to heart.
Because the stomping was by somebody close, important
Or it resonated with an idea or commandment
That was previously absorbed as important.*

*How I got out of the compressed crushed twisted results
Of being stomped on
Was with a facilitator.
Who, gradually,
Was able to help me connect
My distraught pieces together.*

*Holding them in my hands
She showed me how to sing songs of healing and health*

.....
*She is a real person, officially my singing teacher, mostly she listened.
In her listening to me, I learned to listen to me.
My writings and expressions started long before I met her,
But, learning how to listen to myself was the key action to owning them.
To creating a sense of the entirety of my self and my depth.*

(poem by a co-researcher)

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter chronicles the process I went through in coming to the research, designing the research question, and how I selected the co-researchers, how I collected and worked with the data. With heuristic methodology, each primary researcher takes his/her own way to understanding and embodying the data collected; dreams, personal reflections, art, poetry, and inspiration are all considered valid and greatly honored in the heuristic process of deeply understanding human experience. Throughout the process of defining the research question, collecting the data and deeply working with the stories of each co-researcher I often found myself moving the imaginal material, sometimes through art work and mostly through my body. There were many points where I would feel so full that all I could do was dance, allowing my body to move the emerging truth. I now know that it is through my movement and the wisdom in my body that I think. In the past I used to hear, “Shannon, if you could just sit still and focus.” Now I understand that it is because I move that I can focus and think clearly.

Coming to the Research:

In keeping with the overall approach to my studies, I have allowed the PDE to develop organically. It has been a highly challenging and rewarding experience that has brought me in a twisted and round-about way to a core issue in my life...what I have come to call Educational Wounding.

About nine months into my Ph.D program, I had an experience in an Art Therapy class that undeniably revealed the deep-seated nature of my wounding, diminishing experiences in education. Through the direct experience of art process and through my growing ability to follow and validate my own authority, I had a break-through experience. This experience helped me to see how I had not only been unsupported in my early years in school, as a visual and kinesthetically smart child, but I had

been shamed and left to feel uncertain of what was true for me and ultimately left feeling stupid and confused. This remembering and break-through experience was the conception point of this study. Over the months I worked through my own process and awareness of Educational Wounding until I was able to come to my own resting place and prepare to work with others in the telling of their stories.

Shaping the Question

For a period of several months I worked with the heuristic question and the heuristic question worked with me. I began from the place of my own experience of being labeled learning disabled. The question went through various permutations focusing on the lived experience of shame in being labeled learning disabled. As I sat with these questions, they were missing something, they were too narrowly focused. The reading and thinking I was doing was considering the experience of Educational Wounding to extend far beyond the experience of students dealing with learning disabilities or learning differences. I wanted to know how all kinds of people experienced their education as wounding, to shed light on the emotional damage that happens in school through the narrow definition of what is ‘smart’ or ‘successful’. Through my own dance with the topic and through sample interviews and conversations with others I was able to refine the question to the one I have worked with: What is the lived experience of Educational Wounding?

Co-researcher Criteria

Following the Heuristic standard, I selected a small group of researchers to allow for deep exploration of the data from each co-researcher (Moustakas, 1990). I selected my eight co-researchers based on the following criteria:

- Diversity between men and women
- Diversity between people who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities or learning differences, those who may have undiagnosed learning disabilities or

disabilities, and those that did ‘well’ in school, who had a ‘good’ education and were considered smart, but who still claimed to have an experience of Educational Wounding.

- Co-researchers who were able to identify and share their experience of Educational Wounding
- Co-researchers who were able to set aside the time required for the interview and validation phase of the research
- Diversity in primary learning styles or intelligences were taken into consideration in selection of co-researchers.
- Selection was not made based upon racial ethnic or religious diversity
- Selection was not made based upon the sexual orientation of co-researchers

Locating the Co-researchers

Through discussion of my research topic with friends, co-workers, fellow learners and professional associates I had many volunteers interested in being interviewed. The ones who continued to truly be interested after follow- up phone contact received letters of introduction (see Appendix A) to the question and the process. Three people chose not to participate at this point; two because of time constraints and one because she did not think she was interested in the subject as much as she initially thought.

The co-researchers whom I did interview have emerged through work connections and referrals and through personal referrals and associations. The names of all the co-researchers in this study have been changed and any specific identifying information has been changed to a more general form to maintain confidentiality.

Rain: high school graduate, 23 years old, dyslexic, working as a receptionist and support person. She is married and has no children.

Chip: high school graduate, late 20s, dyslexic, working as a mechanic, has had a variety of work experiences. He is not married and has no children.

Dan: 40 years old, grew up Jewish, “bright”, four year college degree, independent consultant.

Karla: 48 years old, never completed college, successful independent business owner.

Terry: 30 years old, prestigious educational background, Law School Graduate, interested in theatre.

Angie: 55 years old, Ph.D. music composition, intensive care nurse, raised 7th Day Adventist with missionary parents.

Anthony: 41 years old, Doctor of Accupuncture, Homeopath, Martial Arts teacher, manager for structural steel paining, raised Catholic.

Mark: 50 years old, Police academy graduate, professional comedian and humanitarian.

Data Collection

I met with five of the co-researchers in their homes, one co-researcher I met over a meal in a local restaurant, and two co-researchers I met in the art therapy room at the school where I work. I tape recorded each interview in its entirety.

When we sat down to begin the interview I tested the tape recorder. I always had extra tapes and batteries in case of any problems. Three of the interviews began with casual conversation. I turned on the tape recorder to make an easy transition into my stating the research question when the time felt right. I told each of the co-researchers that I considered them the experts of their own experience and wanted them to tell me whatever they felt was important or relevant to the research question. I asked them if it would be helpful or of interest to hear some of my personal story,

briefly, to orient them to my experience. Four of the co-researchers were interested in my relationship to the question and four of the co-researchers were involved in responding to the question before I could even offer.

I had indicated in the introductory letter to each participant that I might ask the co-researchers to work with imagery in their exploration of the research question. Of the eight co-researchers, I asked four to do image work, four offered additional creative work they had done in the past that they felt related to the question, and only one participant interview process did not take any formal art expression. I am aware that my listening and witnessing training has taught me to experience language and body movements as part of the imaginal expression. I did not feel the one participant contributed any less due to not making art during the interview or submitting art previously done.

Upon completion of each interview, I wrote notes or spoke into the recorder in private if I felt compelled. I had all interviews professionally transcribed by Rapid Transcription Services, a group that was recommended to me. While the data was being transcribed I allowed the process to continue in me. These interviews were in my thoughts, under my skin, in my imaginings. There was one particular situation that is worth mentioning regarding the potency of this research and the timeliness of the issue. I interviewed Terry on April 20, 1998 from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm. When I left the interview, I drove one block and had to pull over, speaking into the recorder:

SHANNON: Post interview comments and notes after we turned off the recording.
I just need to say I've gotten in my car and I'm driving away, and I'm realizing how altered I feel, how deeply affected I feel by... what I suggested to Terry was almost like a post-traumatic stress experience. The experience at [school] taught him from the time he was 14 until the time he was 18 to be ever vigilant, and sort of no place to be safe. And he couldn't relax unless he was, you know, in his room or with his family, and how that leads to this experience of post-traumatic stress and anxiety. And that's actually kind of how I'm feeling at the moment. I'm feeling very altered, ungrounded, activated, anxious, and disconnected from a sense of self, like an integrated

sense of self, I'm feeling scattered, and there's an urgency around... I just feel an urgency around I don't know what... trying to find comfort. Because it would seem that the experience of [school] and the continuation of that through other academic interests or pursuits really left him... there was no safe place, there wasn't a safe place, in a sense of home, there wasn't a safe place in a developing grounded sense of self, there wasn't a safe place in friendships because of the competition, and everybody else was so fucking fearful in that environment that they were all trying to one-up each other. There was no safe place in the relationships, or the lack of relationships that he had with adults. His only safety was really in feeling that he could achieve academically, but the whole experience was really couched as an academic experience, and so much of that experience was wounding, and disorienting, and fracturing for him. So I believe that he is still suffering from that in a lot of ways right now.

Later that same day I heard the report of the shootings at Columbine High School which had taken place during the time of our interview. I was hit hard by the combination of these experiences, so related to me in my felt experience of them.

When the tapes and verbatim transcripts were returned from the transcriber I listened and followed along with the written script. I highlighted the phrases or sentences that stood out to me. I wrote notes in the margins and on separate pages of paper. I did this with each interview. When this was completed I again reviewed what I had considered important and created a separate document of just the selected phrases or sentences for each interview. When this was done, I wished that I had stuck with one interview and worked it all the way through instead of doing one step with all the interviews together. Initially I thought working with all the data in the same phase of explication would be best, however, after going through these two steps with all the interviews I would choose to do it differently in the future. I found that I had to retrace my steps and reorient myself to each interview when I went back to the interview to compile the list of identified phrases and sentences. At this point I identified individual themes in each interview, selecting a word to summarize a type of experience. Each interview had about five to seven themes.

On 18"x24" paper I wrote the themes for each interview, identifying the co-researcher on the paper. I wrote the specific statements that created each individual theme under the theme.

Next, I wrote all the themes on a separate paper, creating one big list. Each participant's individual themes were represented. In consulting with another learner in her process of heuristic research, I was guided to only consider themes that were mentioned three times by different co-researchers. After grappling with this method I felt it was too reductive for the question I was working with. I decided to consider all the individual themes in the process.

After I wrote the list of individual themes I began to see a natural clustering of individual themes into five major themes. These major themes became overarching textural descriptions of the individual themes from which they grew, just as the individual themes were distillations of the phrases or sentences that stood out in each interview. This was both a distillation and a pooling, layering, or collecting process. In the next chapter I have presented the data in a manner reflective of this process.

From the large sheet of paper for each interview, with the individual themes and the supporting phrases or sentences, I was able to write the individual portraits. I wrote the group depiction to follow the major themes, painting the portrait with the layers of individual voices, coming together to create a new work.

The exemplary portraits were selected for the extreme places they hold on the spectrum. As I worked with the data, a spectrum between the eight co-researchers began to emerge. The spectrum goes from those who have difficulty taking themselves out into the world, who have difficulty seeing their unique talents or intelligences and/or applying those things in the world, to those who have worked with their way, found their own authority and/or have a deep spiritual connection that carries them in the world. Dan's portrait holds the end of difficulty while Mark's portrait holds the end of spiritual connection.

The creative synthesis was a free flowing experience, which came to me while working with the data. It was rewarding to naturally return to my favorite

myth/story of childhood, The Wizard of Oz, which lent itself easily as a metaphor to the issues of Educational Wounding.

Chapter 5

Data Presentation, Analysis and Creative Synthesis

*“The giving of Love is an education in itself” Elenor Roosevelt
as quoted by a co-researcher*

Introduction:

“We have used conformity, rigidity, judgement, oppression, humiliation, fear and shame to make us successes. Those are the building blocks of educational success and achievement in America.” As Mark sweeps a broad brush stroke on the picture of Educational Wounding other co-researchers echo, enrich, deepen and expand on the power of this first interview. Some of these stories collect around pain, frustration and the felt restrictions of negotiating the world, some are imbued with an internal light and high spiritual connection, while others hold a precarious balance between the two.

In working with the collected data I not only listened to the co-researcher’s words, I allowed the imaginal material (artwork, poetry, spontaneous movements and submitted creative works) from the interview process to inform me. For some co-researchers the art or creative process was a gateway to communicate more deeply about their experience, for others the art was a satisfying opportunity for integration and/or embodiment of their experience. For example one co-researcher, Rain, was struggling with explaining her experience of Educational Wounding, I asked her to show me. In her artwork she showed a person (herself) in a cage with nature and life going on around her. In her creative expression she was able to explain her experience more deeply, in a way that pin pointed it differently than words. Her image helped me to more deeply understand, informing me more fully about her lived experience of Educational Wounding.

In immersing myself in the data, with all the interviews, I kept the artwork out, allowing it to be part of the data, part of the story. Although I didn't analyze or interpret the artwork it was in my presence and having it there informed me differently than if I had not had the art. I was able to experience the co-researchers experience more fully or dimensionally than just through the language of the experience. Although it was prohibitive to include the art in the appendix of this work, I feel the imagery has deeply informed the writing of this work and is woven into the text of this document.

As I collected these stories from my eight co-researchers, I was moved by the nature of the human spirit. We are amazing beings. Our Souls hold hope, sometimes quietly, sometimes boldly. Somehow we survive through impoverishment of the spirit, abuse and neglect from authority, and constriction of our bodies and our spirit's creativity. The stories found here speak not only to survival, but to the tenacity and sometimes triumphant call, the Soul's call home. Home, to the "you of you...to the only thing that will keep you from being depleted by them."

My co-researchers are three women and five men. The women range in age from 23 to 55. They are all employed, two have settled into their careers; one owns her own business, the other is a Nurse and a Composer, and one is working as a receptionist and support person.

Of the men, one is finishing Law school, one is a mechanic, one is a full-time supervisor for a state job and has a part-time Acupuncture and Naturopath practice, and the other two are independently employed; one as a comedian doing humanitarian work with children and one as a software designer and consultant.

Seven of the study co-researchers live in the San Francisco Bay Area and one lives in Salt Lake City, Utah. Mark and Anthony come from Catholic backgrounds and attended catholic schools, Angie comes from a Seventh Day Adventist background with missionary parents and was home schooled through her elementary years, Terry

attended a prestigious private boarding school for high school and ivy league colleges, Karla, Chip, and Dan attended public schools, and Rain received a special education placement in the 8th grade.

Rain and Chip have diagnosed learning disabilities and speak about their experience of Educational Wounding through this deeply impacting and far reaching experience in their lives. Anthony and Mark report that they probably have some learning disability that has never been diagnosed, Karla and Angie were well within the norm of what we consider average students and Dan and Terry report being considered bright.

Family of origin dynamics were not explored in this study although all co-researchers come from two-parent families. They range from only children to having three siblings.

In this chapter the image of the co-researcher is fleshed out through the development of individual portraits drawn from each interview. These portraits will be presented first to help orient the reader to the individual stories and voices that have revealed the lived experience of Educational Wounding.

Following the individual portraits, true to heuristic methodology, the reader will find the data presented in five ways (for a complete verbatim transcription see Appendix C):

- An overview list of Individual themes from interviews organized into categories with an overarching Major theme will provide a map or bird's eye view for readers
- Deeper explication of the Individual themes through direct quotes pulled from interviews are organized under the Major themes
- The Group Depiction presents the individual voices as a group experience, further expressing the research question
- Two Exemplary Portraits will be presented with selected verbatim transcription

- Lastly the Creative Synthesis is born from the primary researcher's experience of immersion in the data.

The reader will find brackets [] to indicate the removal of confidential information replaced with more generic information, for example, the specific, identifying name of a school would be replaced with [school]. *Italicized entries* are the primary researcher's comments left in tact to help explicate the material more fully.

Individual Portraits:

Mark:

“The educational, academic, intellectualization that preaches conformity of spirit, squelches many of the people of the salvation of the world...they are squelching people who have answers.”

Through a Catholic education beginning in 1956, Mark experienced relentless, harsh attempts to control and humiliate him. “It’s a horrible holocaust of spiritual depravity on the human spirit...they attack people’s spirits in order to get them to perform, and crush and humiliate their spirits in order to get them to conform to their own rigid paint-within-the-number system.”

In elementary school Mark discovered his humor or “high hilarity” was not only an authentic expression of his “blithe spirit”, but a powerful tool of rebellion. He uses his humor to shine the light on ignorance and oppression. Mark’s deeply embodied friendship with God imbues his life with great insights, humor, and compassion which he shares with children and teens across the country as a professional comedian and open-hearted voice of love amidst the chaos, crushing conformity and insanity in the lives of children in America.

Chip:

“When people read out loud and they’re having problems, I freak...’Oh, shit,’ you know. Because I’m waiting for the world to cave in...into them.”

Chip is dyslexic, he is also tenacious, exuberant and has a very big heart. In his late 20s, his years have been filled with many frustrations beginning with homework horrors; when his father was trying to help he'd lash out, 'God, it's 'the.' Damnit, it's a simple word!' "He never understood." Chip explains, "there's this man screaming at you because you're missing 'it' and 'and.'" "And doing the work and failing. Then getting frustrated and not wanting to do the work anymore." Kids were cruel and he felt he was on the "bottom of the totem pole constantly."

Then there is the frustration and pain of professional rejections...Chip has pursued being in the Navy and trained for EMT certification (twice), he couldn't pass the written part of the test. He has worked in security and as a Fire Ranger and on dispatch, a hard earned position with dyslexia. Currently Chip is a mechanic and enjoys his work, except the computer part.

Chip has reclaimed much of his self-love that had eroded over the years. His courage is evident as he talks about his ever-present fear of rejection, humiliation and being hurt by others. "I want to be loved, I want to be cared for. I want to be respected. I want to give...I enjoy helping people and some day I may do that...I'm scared to do that."

Angie:

"The teacher made a comment that stays with me...I had a tendency not to stick with things. That has stayed with me all my life..."

Angie has chosen two careers; she is an intensive care Nurse and a composer with a Ph.D. in Music Composition. She gets negative remarks from both professions, "Jack of all trades, master of none...so you're not really good at either one of them." Although Angie hated nursing throughout her training and well into her career, she stuck with it, "I wasn't going to be a quitter...Wow, this really goes right back to that...that's really extreme." Even though nursing was hard, it was an easier field to be in "cause that's not where my soul was. There's more wounding in the music area, 'cause that's where my soul lives."

In studying classical music “there is only one way to be successful, our way...rather than develop your own particular talents and make your own way in the world.” Destructive experience built up including abusive nursing training to extreme gender bias in the field of classical composition, sexual abuse from a music professor and clearly being dismissed by the music department and by teachers for being a woman. Angie teetered on the edge of suicide several times...she has drawn on her tenacity, even in the face of the impoverished situation, “although the cost has been tremendous.” She feels she is still recovering from the pallor of there being no right way to be, no room to move and no way out...she uses the words “soul death”.

Terry:

“I was living the Captain Kirk male mythology, basically, I was entitled to become president of the United States. I was this very smart boy and that’s where I was heading.”

Terry was raised under the “cult of success”. Prestigious schools were chosen to support him in his love of learning and ideas; they also took him on his journey of “willful self denial” away from, and eventually returning to a grounded sense of self.

“I didn’t want to just be kind of good at what I did, I wanted to be the best.” Terry lived this dream out in the “complete hell, battle zone” of high school 3,000 miles away from home where rank, status, and prestige depended on his sport coated external presentation to deny his “soul crushing” internal experience. As Terry built the shell of his false self, he longed for home, for his family and obscurely, for himself. Interestingly, through the years Terry has found healing and friends in ideas and learning, “Oxford was a journey of grounding, like putting the roof on a house I had built for years...I live in that house now.”

As he finishes Law School, Terry feels hopeful, and that he is finding his way, freed from the myth that “he was going to lead the world out of chaos”, he is exploring other things. “I’ve gotten a great education. And where does that get you? Then you

have to figure out what you want to do.” His love of beauty, ideas, story, language and aesthetic finds expression in theatre as an actor and director.

Rain:

“I’m tired of being strong and having to deal with it...I know I have to deal with it for the rest of my life. It’s totally sad. I’m 23 and I’m just tired.”

Rain is dyslexic. The school district wanted to place her in the “retarded class...where kids were banging their heads against the walls, drooling...They were basically saying I was retarded. I wasn’t, but they made me feel even more retarded than I ever had.” Rain considered suicide in the fifth grade.

She and her family have had to fight with bureaucrats in the school system to get special placement, she has had to educate employers about her spelling problems, deal with behind-the-back teasing of co-workers, and has chosen not to take new jobs for more pay, “I was scared. I didn’t want to have to deal with it.”

She feels lonely and isolated in her suffering, “no one really understands...They have never lived like this. They can pick up a menu and they can read it perfectly. They stand up in front of a class and read perfectly.” She is hesitant to have children for fear they will be faced with this problem. “I feel like I can never break away. Like I’m just kind of stuck there.” She has a well developed imagination and rich dream life but also feels these images are stuck in her with no adequate outlet.

Rain is a caring person and gets pleasure from helping others, her sense of justice and advocacy is developed, although she says she mostly sticks up for others. Her gentle exterior covers her anger and pain. From the time she was a very young girl, Rain has felt she was being spiritually punished. “I must have done something wrong in a past life because why else would I have to be born like this?”

Karla:

“There’s a Buddhist slogan that says, ‘Of the two witnesses, trust the principal one’...you must go back and trust yourself.”

Karla “connected the dots differently than most people, I could see connections but couldn’t tell you why.” It has taken her 48 years to develop the ability to articulate what she sees, “rather than accepting that if they don’t see it, it must not be there...like something’s wrong with me, or I misunderstood.” This was her experience through much of school where she tested bright but “did not do well in school...I just couldn’t sit still, I had to move around.” She has felt isolated in and shameful about her experiences at school. She couldn’t comprehend what she was reading until puberty and felt as if she was always running to catch up.

Karla is a mover; she knows things in her body before she can articulate them...this is where her wisdom lives, this is where her early wounding lives. At four years old in dance class she was asked to dance and then say her name, she was so committed to her dance, “so out there that I said somebody else’s name.” The depth of her shame and worry about how smart she was still brings tears to her eyes.

Karla’s embodied wisdom has led her to the top of her profession, first as a state-wide program developer and then as an independent business owner and movement teacher. “When you are intuitive you finally develop a faith in your way.” “I think the seat of most people’s pain is not admitting to their own originality, they are stuck in imitation.”

Anthony:

“In first grade there was a nun that really disliked me, she said, ‘I don’t trust you boy.’ That always kind of like stayed in my mind that she told me that she didn’t trust me.”

The depth of school-related anxiety that Anthony deals with extends into his daily life, even at an accomplished 41 years of age. His external appearance of a strong

body, rich accomplishments as an acupuncturist and homeopath and day job as a state construction supervisor cloak his internal experience in any new learning situations. “A lot of times I don’t even know what the hell is going on because of the anxiety.”

“I believe that my reading and learning problems are psychological and come from anxiety that I picked up from bad learning experiences when I was younger in Catholic school.” “They tried to force-feed you and humiliate you...I think that’s a crime, a very serious crime.” After first grade he “didn’t like school anymore and felt like a dummy”, “It was more of a survival environment than a good learning environment.”

For years Anthony worked as a bridge builder. Through his immersion in martial arts he received an opportunity to study acupuncture, “I never thought I could become a Doctor. It was like a dream, ‘I couldn’t do that I’m not smart enough.’” Anthony is not only smart enough, he has developed his skill as a synthesizer of several systems and has a deep and rich way of working with mind, body, and spirit.

In discovering his learning ability to “tinker with an idea...get to know every aspect of it through my body,” he also uses imagery for learning and has discovered he has a photographic memory. “You know, if they would have taught me from the beginning a way that fit the way I learn, I would have surpassed this...It would have been in my nervous system, not just in my brain to regurgitate. It would have been who I am.”

“I think there is such a thing as trauma and I think that a lot of people have it. I can see it in kids...you need to connect with them in different ways and they’ll produce. It’s just not happening...because the system is just one way. And it’s an old way that has been effective for some, but for the general public, look how many people make it and how many people don’t...so you’ve got the guy that is thinking the only thing he’s good at doing is picking up garbage.”

Dan:

“It’s sort of like I disappeared.”

In the beginning of the 4th grade Dan, was exuberant, bright, and involved in class. He would often raise his hand to answer questions. By the end of the 4th grade “I had been trained out of asking questions.” “I don’t recall ever being explained anything. She just stopped calling on me, and then I eventually stopped raising my hand.”

5th grade brought singing, which Dan loved, but because he couldn’t match the pitch pipe he wasn’t allowed to sing. “I was just crushed basically, I couldn’t participate.” From there Dan slowly slipped into becoming “invisible to the world”, “I was one of 3 kids in a senior student body of 900, without a picture in the yearbook.”

Much of Dan’s disappointment stems from an outgrowth of conformity in his school experience. “It’s like I was giving them what they want, not developing what I want...The assignment is X, we’ll do X, feed it back. It’s like there is no real questioning going on.”

List of Major Themes with Individual Themes

Below the reader will find a *Major Theme* written in the form of a sentence. The Major Theme is an overarching textural description of individual themes or phrases that stood out in each interview. Under the Major Theme the reader will find the *Individual Themes* from various interviews that support the Major Theme they are grouped under. The data is presented first in list format to provide the reader a map or bird’s eye view:

Major Theme I:

Educational Wounding is experienced as pressure from the ‘cult of success’ to conform; humiliation, judging, shaming tactics, control and abuse are used as tools of the trade.

Conformity

Control

Abuse
Humiliation
Shame
“Stupid”
Competition
The ‘Cult of Success’
For the Sake of a Good Education

Major Theme II:

Educational Wounding pushes us to forget who we really are, lying to others and ourselves. We tell ourselves we don’t fit in, that we are a ‘Jack of all trades, master of none’; to get through it we develop a false self, feeling like imposters in our own lives.

Tendency Not to Stick With Things
Giving them what they want, not developing what I want
False Self
Jack of All Trades, Master of None
Imposter

Major Theme III:

With Educational Wounding we suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), we live with fear to risk, we feel stuck, frustrated, tired and angry.

Fear
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
Frustration (pain)
Tired/Angry
Stuck
Spiritually Punished

Major Theme IV:

Educational Wounding over time breaks our spirits, crushes our soul; the crushing disappointment of not being allowed to discover who we are is soul wounding.

Break your Spirit
Soul Wound
Disappeared (soul wound)

Major Theme V:

Amazingly, our hope and high spiritual sense feed our self love. Over time we are able to find our way, our own authority, to discover our unique learning styles and rich abilities. As we recollect our selves, we remember we love learning.

Rebellion
Hope

Trust & Faith
High Spiritual Sense
Learning Styles & Abilities
Finding my Way
Loved Learning
Being Seen
Wisdom
I know it in my body
Finding My Own Authority

Explication of Major and Individual Themes

Below the reader will find deeper explication of the Individual Themes through direct quotes pulled from interviews and organized under the Major Theme they support.

Major Theme I:

Educational Wounding is experienced as pressure from the ‘cult of success’ to conform; humiliation, judging, shaming tactics, control and abuse are used as tools of the trade.

Individual Themes:

Conformity:

...first your body conforms to lining up and moving in a certain way and the rows of desks...

being an average student, never excelling, never, you know, going to a point in any way to do anything other than to conform and be with everybody and not be noticed.

And that was my first eight years of experience.

Everybody stays rigidly attuned to the frequency of achievement through conformity.

These are people that live in fear of what will happen and not live in the hope of what can happen if people are unshackled and not cuffed from that kind of stupidity. And if we don't do that, the same educational, academic, intellectualization that preaches conformity of spirit, squelches many of the people of the salvation of the world. They are squelching people who have answers.

Everybody has an essential wound. And what that wound does is it separates the originality from the practicality. It's like a practical side comes forward that manages the world for the originality that's too afraid to come forward.

It's why it took me 20 years longer to discover those gifts of a photographic memory because they had no clue of how I learned, and I didn't know how I learned, and they were never going to teach me how to learn how to learn. They were going to teach me to conform to what they thought learning was about.

...there are clearly these little rules in the society that are pretty solid about the way certain things are done and you know, what you are supposed to do. And this whole disappointment, "Why can't I go make up my own thing."

I have this disappointment about why can't I do the thing my way.

I think that... that education needs to realize that everyone has their own way of doing things. And they try to force students into doing certain things a certain way.

...somehow I felt different most of my life...whenever we had to pick our own subject projects or something like that, I always felt like I was picking sort of off the norm. Some kids were supported in being different, but mom was very conformity, role-based, 'do it this way,' 'there's a right way to do it,' and all that stuff. So I always felt like not quite able to be me in some way.

Control:

Shame and humiliation were tools of the trade to keep you under control. And they were very effective tools. Unfortunately, they were also encumbering your spirit and your spirit's growth.

To them education was about controlling your spirit. And that's the absolute quintessential worst idea that education ever had. It's to imbue the spirit, to build the spirit up, to get the spirit to believe in itself and know that it can accomplish great things. Not to control it and make it less than, for your own purpose, say the purposes of any institution or political or religious institution, but to the allow the spirit to become what it can as an individual to feel the great ability to change your institution and make your institution a better, more loving, more kind place.

Kurt Vonnegut said, 'So-called civilized man has murdered 90 million of his own kind since the beginning of this century. So much for so-called civilized man.' I mean, you have to look at the nature of our control and our ability to... we kill what we cannot control.

Abuse:

When I went into the first grade there was like a nun that really disliked me, she said, 'I don't trust you, boy.' That always kind of like stayed in my mind that she told me that she didn't trust me.

But I had gotten sick like in the first grade where I missed like almost the whole year. So by the time I went in they flunked me, but nobody explained that to me. They just flunked me and kept me back. So, of course, you get from a social standpoint, the grade that you were in looked down at you and make fun of you. Well, I had to go into another class so all the friends I made were in the other and made fun of me, flunkies see. They are labeled dumb. And the teacher... I had to spend two years with a teacher who didn't like me in the first place.

...he would take me back into his office and fondle and kiss me...so I quit, and thought I quit because I wasn't good enough to finish.

Oh, I can remember slaps, pinches, bruises, and punches.

Humiliation:

But the cruelty, I think, of the teachers in those days, an unconscious cruelty, not to be blamed and attacked and scapegoated, they grew up in a system that there was shame and humiliation... shameful-based and humiliation-based education. They used those as the tools to empower you. It's a horrific tool, it's not love, it's shame and fear and humiliation. So you are cheating and you're learning not to succeed, but out of fear of failure and out fear of being identified and humiliated.

The wounding place when these guys would humiliate you and intimate that there was something wrong with you, that you had... that started in my freshman year of high school. The priests were so angry that they accused me of being everything. You know, that I was effeminate, anything to try and get me to stop. Any accusation to control my behavior, to humiliate me.

Each teacher took a whack at trying to humiliate me educationally. You know, pow, pow, pow. And I was a totally liked kid. I was like... it was not going to impact me. So I ended up graduating from high school with 11 straight suspensions and a straight D average, but I got my diploma which that was the ultimate.

So I got past that grade, but after that I felt like a dummy, and I never enjoyed school. And in Catholic school, the nuns are mean. They would do things like if a kid was talking when they weren't supposed to or something, they would put a bow, that you would put on present, in their hair so everyone could point and laugh at

them. Or they would like put a girl's dress on a boy and stand him up in front of the whole class. They were sick.

And they [nuns] had no business teaching children. This was in first grade. They would do stuff like wash your mouth out with soap. They would keep you in the corner. You know, make you do... you know, humiliate you in front of people. They would call on you and make you get up. They would put pressure on you to answer stuff, you know?

And that's where the real wounding takes place, in feeling that even if you had a voice what good would it do. I was angry that I could get up and tell the truth, but it wouldn't make any difference to the adult because they were still going to do what they were going to do.

There is nothing more detrimental or humiliating or wounding to you than to feel that you could get up and give the truth and have it have no impact.

It's a horrible holocaust of spiritual depravity on the human spirit to think back at a time when you were encouraged by those in the upper echelons of education to attack peoples' spirits in order to get them to perform, and crush their spirits in order to get them to conform, and humiliate their spirits in order to get them to conform to your own rigid paint-within-the-number system.

In the third grade, I was forced to sit in a corner for four days in a garbage can, by a teacher who I liked a lot and was good to me. But I was forced to sit in that garbage can at age 8 for four days and face the wall. I had laughed inappropriately, and it was part of my nature to laugh because life made me laugh. I could not start without laughter. And that was part of the conformity.

Shame:

I started in 1956, in Catholic school, in the first grade—there was a rigidity and a real serious control of the psyche through guilt, through fear, through intimidation, through threatening. You know, everything was built into our minds, our little minds, there that we were, you know, literally human stains on pure white canvass.

I just couldn't keep up. So I just didn't do it. I just sunk, you know, which is definitely an ego pattern, [for me] that surrounds a core wounding. That pattern is a real pattern, I know its not the real me. You go into completely deflated...there's a deflation. And to me, that's a character, you know, that I can watch how I let that character come to the fore...it's like... take all the air, let it out fully.

I never graduated from college, I couldn't finish the final papers. I have all the course work, I just didn't do the papers. I don't know why, I just couldn't quite do it. I couldn't quite do it. Interesting, huh? I finished everything, except for like a couple of final papers...and very few people know about that.

Well, it's more like, uhm, I told everybody, I have it on my resume, that I have a Bachelors of Science...it's a lie...I don't.

Most people determine for themselves what their goal is and what they are going to do. Not me. I went to the guidance counselor at college and said, 'What amount of credits do I have for what degree?'

There's many situations that I could mention to you, where I did feel that, 'My, God! I'm just not the brightest bulb in the circuit here.' And I think that there were a couple of factors in that. One, I am a very non-linear thinker, I am a very tangential thinker. So I have all these random ideas, and I make connections, but they are not what normal people would connect to.

I played a concerto...where the piano plays the solo part and the orchestra plays the other part, so I was playing with the orchestra – one of the professors came in on a wrong note, and it threw me off and I got lost because I was doing all this by memory. And they had to stop the orchestra, and I had to get the music and start all over again. And I had so much shame, that I was ready to kill myself that night too.

Its taken me almost 50 years to begin the process of articulation of what I see...like taking the time to explain it, rather than just accepting that if they don't see it, it must not be there...like 'something wrong with me, or I misunderstood.'

They held me back in second grade. And said, 'We're holding you back because you're a slow reader.'...of course, get the kids teasing, 'You're really stupid. You're being held back.'...bottom of the totem pole. Constantly.

'Oh, what do you mean you've got dyslexia? What the hell's dyslexia?...Are you going to die from this?' No, I'm just stupid.

I wanted to get into the Navy. Well, my dyslexia held me back. The Navy told me the only thing I was good for was washing dishes.

The wounding was very real. I mean, you would take that home. I would sit and I would say, 'What is wrong with me that I can't do this?'

“Stupid”:

I thought I was stupid because I couldn't do it their way.

She's just a little behind and that's all she is.' My mom kept asking them. Every time they had a meeting she'd say, 'Is she dyslexic? Are you sure she's not?' You know, I still wasn't learning how to read and I could tell how behind in my reading I was back then. I could tell that I was so far behind everyone else. I felt very bad. I mean, I felt stupid. I felt like I was retarded. I mean, I was so behind because I was

at a third grade reading level and I was in the eighth grade at the time. And my spelling was pretty much the same.

I remember sitting there thinking—I'm getting really angry—I know exactly what program they want to put me in. It was literally the retard class. It was the class for kids that, I mean, were banging their heads, were drooling, that couldn't go to the bathroom by themselves, you know, they just peed... this is where they wanted to send me. They were basically saying I was retarded. I wasn't, but they made me feel even more retarded than I ever have felt in my life.

When I write messages, I really second guess myself. I might spell something right, and I'll end up spelling it wrong because I don't believe that's how it's spelled.

Competition:

But I do remember a pretty shocking experience when competition first reared its ugly head was third grade, because I was in a neck and neck race with [name removed], who was another student, doing a multiplication... or addition, subtraction, multiplication, division timed test. It was just introduced to us as if this was perfectly natural, that you try to be the best and you try to out-rank all the other kids in the class.

I think there was like the first sort of sense of resentment of somebody else, you know, achieving or something,

I didn't want to just be kind of good at what I did, I wanted to be like the best.

The 'Cult of Success':

Teacher comments like... 'it'd be such a shame if he didn't get in a great school cause he's really... he's really special,' And it's almost, you feel guilty, or you feel frightened by them, like 'Why... what does that mean?' You know, 'Do they know something that I don't?' [kind of disorienting, exciting, builds your self-image and what if you don't live up to it]

For years, I was sort of recovering from that emotional thing. It was like... you know, it created a real armor, you go into a situation, you're really sassy, you know, 'Who, who, who can I use here, who... what do I need to do to impress them?' And to take off that armor took a long time.

I think I was torn between the glory of achieving and, you know, the prestige of it, and... versus the reality of this complete hell, you know, this battle zone.

'Cover me Rockwell, I'm going in.' ...that's what it was like, you know.

I think I clung to the adolescent picture of being President of the United States, ever tight... more tightly. Because if I was going to suffer so much, at least... at least I was going to, you know, lead the world out of chaos.

For the Sake of a Good Education:

Lord of the Flies. I mean, no adults, nobody cared. [boarding school] They didn't ever care about who we were. So I had basically no parental figures, and it was just like 24-hours-a-day dealing, trying to... trying to be cool and do the right thing. It's like, you know, going to college four years too early, and you don't even... you're not informed. Hell.

... I went back to [boarding school], I wasn't going to quit... and I thought... and I always told myself, 'At least I'll get a great education.' ... it was hell. Lots of suicides there, lots of lonely kids. Anytime I ever hear of somebody going to boarding school, I'm so happy to say, 'Don't go. Don't do it. You can get a good education near, you know, home.

it's just... it's just traumatic.

And every, every vacation I would come home, about the third night, I would just sob, and my mom would just just come in and hold me. And I couldn't even express it, but I was just like... 'cause it was like unwinding, you know, safe again.

Major Theme II:

Educational Wounding pushes us to forget who we really are, lying to others and ourselves. We tell ourselves we don't fit in, that we are a 'Jack of all trades, master of none'; to get through it we develop a false self, feeling like imposters in our own lives.

Individual Themes:

Tendency Not to Stick With Things:

The teacher who corrected my papers...she made the comment that stays with me...I had a tendency not to stick with things. That has stayed with me all my life, sort of 'Jack of all trades, Master of none.' So that has stayed with, you know, my choice of having two professions and, you know, whatever influence that has had. It has been, I'd say, not a positive thing, but a negative thing.

Impossible. So no matter what you do, it's not the right thing because it's impossible...and then have the teacher tell me I was stupid, and then go back to the dorm and cry...it just seems to go back to that first thing of, 'Oh, dear, I'm a quitter. I better not quit again.' I mean, God knows, I have never quit before. But that message, somehow, that was the piece that really...*(that was the wound)* Yeah, I mean huge. I will finish it, but at what cost...the price has been tremendous

Giving them what they want, not developing what I want:

...there was never this thing like ‘the point of being here is to get educated,’ which means something like pursue interests or find out what your interests are, or learn how to learn things, so when you figure out what your interests are, you learn how to learn the thing. It was always, ‘take the test, do the assignment, this is good for you, you’ll be better for it.’ There’s no real live questioning going on.

Like that was sort of part of school, it’s like, ‘The assignment is X, we’ll do the assignment. We’ll feed it back.’ ...I’m not doing something unique or interesting, or even different with me. I’m not even taking the risk.

...literal response to the assignment, rather than the imaginative...It’s like I somehow ended up dealing with what they gave me, rather than taking it as an impetuous or a place to start from. It was like an end point. Like school ended up being an end point.

...well, the modern school system is about your grades not about your learning or education

False Self:

I was living the Captain Kirk male mythology, basically, I would... I was entitled to become president of the United States. It was just a matter of time, you know, that I was this very smart boy, and I would... you know, that’s where I was heading.

I saw like who I really was, you know. And it was like so far from, you know, the John F. Kennedy that I thought I was, And, and I basically retreated far from that for, for a long time now... all I cared about was just watching my life. 'I'm just an observer in my life, and I'm just doing the thing, and you know.'

And I walked out,[of the interview for an International Fellowship] and, uhm, I felt like I was a complete phony, like I finally realized that I was just a phony, like I didn't know... The myth, the, the adolescent boyhood, like notion of... started to really crack. And I was going... suddenly, 'I am, who am I really?'

Jack of All Trades, Master of None:

The fact that I have two professions...I've had my boss tell me that, uhm, I use the job to support my other life. In the music world, I've had the same feedback... if I'm not full-time, I really am not a composer, and I don't deserve to call myself a composer, aside from the fact that I'm a woman composer.

'Jack of all trades, and master of none.' 'So you're not really good at either one of them.'

You see, Centuries ago, it was called the Renaissance movement, the Renaissance movement. You know, that interdisciplinary, all kinds of possibilities, that come to then bare on something. And then it got translated into 'have no focus.'

Imposter:

Everyday, as I went under the toll plaza to go to Marin, I would think, 'This is going to be the day she's going to find me out... I don't know what I'm talking about.'

Major Theme III:

With Educational Wounding we suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), we live with fear to risk, we feel stuck, frustrated, tired and angry.

Individual Themes:

Fear:

And we achieve more out of fear of not achieving than finding a special gift that we're good at. We are going there out of fear of not going there. We are not going there because we are encouraged to go there and learn. We are going there because if we don't go there we are failures.

I'm not going to let you be hurt... let myself be hurt by you or by anyone else or myself. So I'll tell you stories. I'll tell you what you want to hear. I'll make everything okay. I'll make peace in the world. Because I don't want to be hurt. And so I won't speak my truth. I won't own up to who I am or what I've done.

And then once you got into high school, never ask questions. : I just didn't want people to laugh at me. And, you know... 'What the hell's wrong with him? He's stupid... You know, what are you asking a dumb question like that for?'

When people read out loud and they're having problems, I freak. I just... 'Oh, shit,' you know. Because I'm waiting for the world to cave in... into them.

People were handing me stuff that... they filled the page. Not four or five words. I'm like... And they're not spelled right. I know they're not spelled right. They're going to look at this going, 'This guy's a complete idiot. He can't spell. He can't write.' So here I am, going, reading this to people, going, 'Jesus Christ.' I'm not ready to deal with their writing because I'm more concerned about what they're thinking.

(Why lie like 'I do my homework,' or whatever.) It's just something to get everybody off their back. You feel guilty. You feel that you can't keep up with your older sister. Or you can't keep up with your classmates. And, uhm, you don't want to be an outcast.

I enjoy helping people and some day I may do that. I'm scared to do that.

You know, at work. Uhm, you know, and there's part of me that's scared. Doesn't want to venture out. And I like to play with computers, I'd like to venture out and do something else, but I'm scared. 'I'm not smart enough.'

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

We crush the spirit of the ADD and the dyslexic kid to the point where, you know, I see the same impact in them that Viet Nam veterans with post traumatic stress disorder have. They are so emotionally abused and wounded from an educational system that can't comprehend they're different that they just assault them psychically, emotionally and spiritually until they are depleted.

I mean if you are shy, you're screwed. So I hated it. That's when I started really hating school and became very anxious. There was like more of a survival environment rather than a good learning environment. You know, because if I was called on, if I didn't have the answer, they would shoot you down. You know, just talk shit to you.

Yeah, it seemed like there was an anxiety to that which got worse as I got older.

So I went ahead and started studying it [martial arts] again. I remember I was slower at learning than everybody else. I had a hard time memorizing. Everything looked so big. Everything was such a... every time I ever learn anything it always seems too difficult in the beginning. So when that difficulty comes, instead of just kind of working through it, it likes put pressure and anxiety on me.

I believe that my reading and learning problems are psychological. And it comes from the anxiety that I picked up from a bad learning experience from when I was younger from a Catholic school education.

It's like a form of anxiety that I've learned.

My experience became a negative experience of learning, that is really the source of my learning disability, and that is a true trauma rather than a lack of ability. Of course, I might have been slower and maybe because I had a different way of learning, maybe I wasn't interested and just knew better when I was younger. But they put their labels out and they tried to force-feed you, and humiliation and stuff. I just think that's a crime, a very serious crime.

So we have enough stress in the environment to learning. So now when I read, or I'm under stress, or I'm around some authority, I have a hard time dealing with, because there's a certain amount of anxiety.

Well, to take risks and to push myself through things that I'm afraid of sometimes. In other words, you know, I would probably function better if I was thinking I'm getting by, but even though I'm having anxiety, I've learned to keep a good poker face. So I look strong, talk and act a certain way, and be able to bluff most people. But a lot of times I don't even know what the hell is going on because of the anxiety that is going on. So I can't keep up really with what's happening sometimes because of that.

I really feel that there was a trauma that is very much tied into this. Yes, there might have been some learning disabilities that you could possibly..., you know, I'm a little bit slower, but maybe not.

I think that there was such a thing as a trauma and I think that a lot of people have it. I can see it in kids. Some kids grew up really easy with the system the way it is, they play right into it. You can just see that you have to connect with them in a different way and they'll produce. It's just not happening.

My experience with it now is like a, ah, it's like a... you know, one of those plastic things that holds the snow or something. You know? . It's kind of like something to examine or look at. But that's why it's hard to move inside of it. *[SPLIT]*

Frustrations (pain):

In math I'd write a problem down and I'd write it bassackwards. The first two numbers are okay, the last two numbers I'd transpose them. And I'd come up with the right answer for what I had in front of me. But it wasn't the answer that was in the book.

And doing the work and failing. And then getting frustrated and not wanting to do the work anymore.

...a lot of my trauma, I have to say, a lot of it has to deal with my father. With the learning, of a dyslexic. He never understood.

He was a very...very frustration person to read with. You know, you're reading out loud because the school's wanting, you know, 'Get him to read. Get him to read.' I hate reading. To this day I hate to read. Dad was attempting to get me to read and I only read a few things and I missed.

I'm very frustrated and he gets very frustrated when you're reading with him...really upset, really mad. 'God, it's 'the.' Damnit, it's a simple word!' 'I'm sorry.' And he never understood. You know, here this man is screaming at you because you're missing 'it' and 'and ' and 'a'. 'God, leave me alone.' And then he'd get pissed. And then he'd just get so mad, he'd just, you know, broke down, run off, and cry.

It was real frustrating when people didn't understand where I was going. I mean, I still do it to this day. It's I've seen so much, so quickly, that's it's all just 'Boom!' and it's there. And I ...I'm not organizing it.

Tired/Angry:

and I actually don't like... I'm very angry about it. I really am. I mean, I know... I feel why do I have to deal with this because other things in my life have been hard, too. And I think here's one more thing that I have to deal with. And I hate it.

I actually had another job offer come in that would have paid me like \$3 more an hour than I do here, but I was scared. I didn't want to have to deal with it. I think I've gotten tired of being strong because I've had to be strong and I'm tired of being strong and having to deal with it. I'm tired of it... but I know I have to deal with it for the rest of my life. I know that is like totally sad. It's like I'm 23 and I'm just tired.

Stuck:

This [dyslexia] really holds me back. It holds me back from being my true self. Of being who I can really be. It holds me back on everything.

When I do have kids, it's like I want to be able to read to them. I want to read stories to them, and I feel like I'm not going to be able to.

[about art] Like I can never break away. Like I'm just kind of stuck there.

it's hard for me to show what I'm trying to get out no matter what--talking, putting it on paper, anything. Because I have more things in my head but it's hard for me to get it here. Like I don't know how to do it. Like, when I, uhm... especially with artwork. As I... I have this feeling that I should be doing artwork, that I have in me... what I will think of in my head, I can image, I can never get out. Even if it's with clay or anything. I can't get what's in here, here.

I'm actually very good at visualizing things. I can just never get them out. I'm not really good at explaining to people what I'm thinking, but I'm really good at visualizing it. Sometimes I wish someone could just take a picture inside my head and pull it out.

Spiritually Punished:

And I do wonder sometimes 'What did I do? What did I really do in a past life?' I sometimes ask myself that...about karma, past lives and sometimes wonder if I did something wrong in a past life. Because I do... I do not treat this [dyslexia] as a blessing. You know, I try so hard to be good here. I know that I do some things that are stupid or I didn't think and it's like... and I'll apologize for it. But I sometimes wonder what did I do a long time ago that... I have always asked myself that since I can remember being alive. I've always known that was something different about me.

I want to have kids eventually. I really do, but I'm also scared to have kids because I don't want them to have to go through what I've gone through.

(on some level it's like you say, like you've done something wrong, or you are being punished, or like there is something damaged, or shameful about who you are. You are shaking your head.) Yeah. ... I guess it's my way of dealing with it, is thinking that I must have done something wrong because why else would I be born like this? I have people say, 'Well, you shouldn't be thinking such a bad...' That it's a bad

thing but these are also people who don't have this problem either. They have never lived like this. They can pick up a menu and they can read it perfectly. They can stand up in front of class and read perfectly.

Major Theme IV:

Educational Wounding over time breaks our spirits, crushes our soul; the crushing disappointment of not being allowed to discover who we are is soul wounding.

Individual Themes:

Break your Spirit:

I had a history teacher who was... who took me aside and said that I was too arrogant, that I talk too much, and that hurt my feelings, and I remember crying, because I was just excited.

'This is crushing my soul.' I was crying inside, and my soul was being crushed.

a lot of people kind of give up on academics from going to those schools. They, they... it doesn't come from inside of them so much, it's like its been co-opted, you know it's not a natural outgrowth of like, you know, then interacting with the world through your education.

And so what I felt was it was sort of imploding to kind of like lonely, very lonely place.

Soul Wound:

it was easier to be in that [nursing] field, 'cause that's not where my soul was.

There's more wounding in the music, music area, 'cause that's where my soul lives.

I was about four, maybe five, my mom was a dancer, and so she from a very early age, I mean, loved to dance. So she took me to an interpretive dance class, which was in those days...it's like modern dance...freeform, non-ballet. We had this recital, and you had to get up and do a little dance. We were all sitting in a circle, do a little dance, and say your name. [crying]. Well, I got up and I did my dance. And I was so out there that I said somebody else's name. I wasn't even...I didn't even say my own name. [laugh] And everybody laughed and thought that was really funny, but it wasn't funny. You know, and it wasn't like, you know, my mom was, you know, terrible about it. She wasn't. It was no big deal to her. But, ah, I do remember thinking, 'My God! You can't even remember your name.' That's not a good sign.

Because of the message when I was a kid that I had a tendency to not finish things, I made myself finish nursing and was very close to doing suicide, because...because I was so miserable, because I hated every minute of it. I wasn't going to be a quitter...'Wow, this really goes right back to that.'...that's been really extreme. I did this because I wanted to prove to myself that I could finish something even if I hated it. So I finished nursing...but, oh, my God! What have I been trying to do with all my life?

Disappeared (soul wound):

There were three of us that couldn't match the pitch-pipe [5th grade], and so we didn't get to sing during singing class. I was crushed in some way because I liked to sing. I don't really recall singing any other time around that period or even before, but I like to sing, and, uhm, there's something about it I liked. I don't think I even knew that at that time, but it was just sort of like I couldn't participate.....it just sort of stuffed me, I guess, or crushed me. Because she didn't teach, and at this time, you know, the phrase I have is, you know, I'd already been trained out of asking questions.

Well, the 4th grade experience was I was in some other 4th grade class, and , uhm, so, anyways I was probably one of the raving geniuses of the class and I like knew the answer to every question, and so I kept raising my hand and going "I know the answer to that, I know the answer to that" because I thought that was what you were supposed to do in school, is like answer all the questions, right? I don't recall her ever talking to me about it. She just stopped calling on me, and then I eventually stopped raising my hand and having beaten myself against a brick wall there, and that was the way it was for the rest of the 4th grade.

At this time I had no motivation, I was invisible to the world. I was a lost kid in those days [senior year in high school]– one of three people [in class of 900 seniors]

who didn't have their photo in the yearbook... You know, it's just sort of like I disappeared.

I went to [University] where I was a special student, which means you aren't good enough to get into the Master's program to learn how to compose. While I was there I took a course in electronic music from a male professor and all male classmates. And he gave each one of them a special project to work on, but to me he just said, 'Oh, whatever you want.'

...there was a woman composer on the faculty. That was the first time that I knew there were women composers. I was thirty.

...she said, 'That's a beautiful piece of music.' That was the first validation that I got as a musician, ever, at the age of 36.

Major Theme V:

Amazingly, our hope and high spiritual sense feed our self love. Over time we are able to find our own way, our own authority, to discover our unique learning styles and rich abilities. As we recollect our selves, we remember we love learning.

Individual Themes:

Rebellion:

it [humor] was the most effective medicine I had at rebellion. I realize it was the beginning of my career in high hilarity and rebelliousness against conformity and

towing the line, and, you know, rigid intolerance of any kind of independence or any kind of questioning of authority.

the beginning of my realizing that humor was one great weapon of freedom in a world of rigidity and intolerance of kind of a blithe spirit.

I was so happy to come here [school for kids with learning disabilities and differences] and I was so determined to prove them [the school district administrators] wrong that I was going to improve from a third grade reading level, and I was not going to graduate with that. You know, in one year I moved from a third grade reading level to a seventh grade.

Hope:

You must go to the spirit village of self and the fortress of self to prevent yourself from being depleted by really ignorant and pathetically cruel people who are trying to control you rather than enlighten you and educate you and uplift you and imbue you with the sense of your gifts.

Trust & Faith:

When you are intuitive, when you are an intuitive person, what goes along with that is that you finally develop a faith in your way. Maybe it just takes you longer, or

different, or whatever, And so along with that, whether it's shame, or uncertainty, or all of the above, and maybe some more, is a certain faith in process. I do have faith that my process does eventually work. It just may not look like most people's.

High Spiritual Sense:

I had the angel of my nature telling me. I had always been a very close friend to God. It's hard to explain to people. Getting up at 5:40 to crunch through the snow. I wasn't going to serve an austere God. I was going to be with my best friend. So I would crunch through snow. You know, although, it was a religious experience for me it was no different than anything spiritual. It was such a spiritual thing to go be with your best friend.

I think that's where wounding that takes place in young people's lives is when they don't realize that there is an angel of higher nature inside of each and every one of us.

A great line by Ali Widsalis is, when we died and we go to see the creator, the only thing the creator says is, 'Hey, why weren't you more yourself.'

Robert Frost's line is correct, 'Home is that place that you go where they have to let you in.' And that is no different than your spiritual home which is inside your body. That's the place where you have to be permitted back because you are coming back to your true self because that is the journey of life.

You ultimately have to come back to the only fortress of your own salvation and that is your essence of you. The you of you is the only thing that will keep you from becoming depleted by them, that educational structure that has always said, 'Test scores, test scores, test scores.'

Learning Styles & Abilities:

I could see connections but I couldn't tell you why they made sense to me, I just knew they made sense, really were connected.

I connected the dots differently than most people connected them. It still was a picture, it was still recognizable, but my picture was different. That was more the experience.

It's like I feel more like I grope around until I start...the dots start to connect. And I go, 'That's the picture I'm supposed to be getting.' I never had the idea first. I never say I'm going to draw a bird. I always find, 'Oh, it's a bird.'

I would take basic concepts and pretty much go, you know, kind of like go through an abstract way of thinking. I was able to figure a lot of things out

I mean limited study and my study habits were bad. I couldn't sit still. I'd lose interest right away. It wasn't something I really liked. I liked being more physical.

But through martial arts it kind of helped me to focus a little bit. And practice is where I learned that repetition was the key. You know, I just was stubborn and persistent. So I just kept at it. After a few years, the people that were ahead of me were less than me because I would be able to do it forward, I would be able to do it backwards and not able just on the right side, and I would be able to on the left side.

I really just basically studied just basics and like all my peers would study like crazy memorizing all that stuff, and I would only stick to basics and trying to understand what it all meant. I used art. I used art because a lot of times it was hard to memorize that. I would use artistic analogies to do my work because I was able to remember the drawing.

I would tinker with the idea. I would just totally get to know every aspect of it through my body. So at times it became very kinesthetic. I'm that way anyway. But when it came time to shoot questions back and forth, I was able to answer them and explain why the answer was right. They were just trying go over their memory for the answer. I understood more... mine came from understanding. And that came from being very visual and kinesthetic because I feel, I see, you know, I play it. It becomes three-dimensional

You know, if they were to teach me from the time... , you know, from the beginning of time a way that fit the way I learn, I would have surpassed that.

(Do you think you would have surpassed where you are now if you would have had that kind of...?) It would have been in my nervous system. It wouldn't just be in my brain to regurgitate. It would have been who I am.

like a synthesizer. I've been called that, it seems like I am able to use so many different things all at one time mainly with just technique things. And that has been my gift because of my kinesthetic sense, my intuition and my creativity—those three outmatch the intellectual side of me—by far have exceeded the intellectual side of myself. And I've worked on my intellectual side very hard and because I know I lack that. Sometimes I have to say that the intellectual side gets in the way. It makes it difficult, but it's challenging and sometimes I feel that when I'm challenged and frustrated I'm learning.

I Know It In My Body:

“You probably solve things through your body, you know things in your body before you can articulate them...” (S) Absolutely, yes. *“It's like you know it.” (S)* I know it. I can't describe it, but I know it. That's exactly right.

‘Karla would do so much better if she could only sit still.’ And I couldn’t, I just couldn’t sit still. You know, I had to move around. I would wrap my legs around my neck, that’s how I’d sit in class, that was what was comfortable.

I had no time to like sit there and absorb all this flow around me...part of what I need...is that sitting down and being in a place for a while to get the energy before I go forward. Rather than droppin’ in and just sort of running. You know, that running stuff...I need transition time. I remember missing that in junior high and it sort of set a tone and it was like never quite grounding or something...it was like my body didn’t quite...it was moving too fast or something.

There’s like no space, there’s no room for slowness, even in our day when I was going to school. ...there’s not even like time off, you know, like do nothing for an hour...like everything’s programmed – you got to do this, you’ve got to absorb this by this time, and stuff.

This is before someone diagnosed it and said, ‘You’re dyslexic.’ I always knew I was doing something like when I spelled things and when I didn’t understand when I was younger was I would get headaches. When I’d be writing, like my reports that I’d be writing and I’d start getting this really bad headache. Then it would kind of go away. You know, it gets really tense, like right here. I realized that after I was told. ‘You’re dyslexic,’ and I started watching myself and I started realizing that when I flick my letters around I’d get a headache. It was like really weird. My head would start hurting. It was like my head... it was like my body was telling me that I

did something. So then when I noticed that and I'd change it, I was okay. It was really weird...I just noticed that I would just get these headaches and I'd realize, 'Oh.' Because I'd be writing and I'd go back and I have a headache, and I'd go 'Oh, my b was that word.' Or my g was a b and it shouldn't have, it should have been a g. Then I'd correct it and my head was fine.

Finding my Way:

I've done exactly what all those clichéd commencement speakers say you should do. Right? I've pursued my own interests intellectually, I've gotten a great education. And where does that get you? You know? Then you have to figure out what you want to do.

I had to learn that I wasn't super intelligent, that I was as intelligent as, you know, as most people, that I had my own strengths and my own weaknesses, and, uhm, that couldn't be like a secret weapon.

I am beginning to see the level of ideas that Isiah Berlin speaks about in Humanity as a crooked timber, like becoming comfortable with the rough edges, like it doesn't have to be perfect. There is a band called "Built to Spill", I think we are too.

Loved Learning:

That was kind of where I was at because I always liked learning and was pretty enthusiastic. Then when I went to school I really wanted to go to school, and I went through kindergarten and I went to a Catholic school, that's an important part.

It really engaged me. I loved... I loved ancient history. Yeah, and I was... I was excited about it. I think I probably, during those years tended to talk a lot in class.

My [internship] job was outreach and education, I loved it, madly, passionately, in love with it. I was asked to be part of a 'train the trainers' program, which to me was the turning point in my career. My job was to teach people how to train other people. So there was no content. They plugged in the content, I plugged in the framework...I got trained in the process of education and training.

All these fabulous experts, and we designed this program together. That we gave feedback to each other at the end of each session I mean, I was in hog heaven. I was getting the technology of education under my belt.

'I'm going to grade you against yourself.' It was the best thing anyone had done for me in years. It was like someone taking the time and paying personal attention to me. He challenged me to show up with some better skills and it was a personal challenge. He was willing to do that for me...it brings up a little tears... that was like one of the rare good teachers in my life. Not that the others were bad, but

institutionally, they can't be great. Mr. Smith was a nice guy, he graded me against myself. It made a difference...

Wisdom:

Going through this I realized that I didn't like who I was. I didn't love myself. I didn't respect myself. I didn't like the way I looked. And that was all part of who I was. And that dealt with dyslexia. I mean, I had a real problem with... I couldn't read, I couldn't write. Even though, I could write. But I couldn't write. You know?

They said that one night just to go home and look in the mirror. And I found I grew a lot. And it was just like, 'Boom! There it is.' I realized... Actually, I realized this the second day, that I didn't love myself, I didn't care about myself. I didn't respect myself. And that's where the change is.

I realized I'm a rescuer. I want to help people. I want to save everyone from themselves. Now... but that's a bad thing. You know? And that's part of my dyslexia. You know? I know that I have a problem, but I know I'm smarter than that. So if I could help you out, help you work through your problem, whether it's a math problem or reading problem, a project, it makes me feel better. I can help you go through something else.

And I've got to respect myself. I've got to care about me.' ...The ownership.
Owning up to yourself.

Finding My Own Authority:

I'm a firm believer in our originality, and how that is the seat of most people's pain. If they don't admit to their own originality, if they don't see their own originality. I think it's a major source of pain for people. They're stuck in imitation.

Stoking the fire of that essence. And that's my life's work. I am into being the bellows for stoking that fire.

Well, I'm only beginning to realize ...I've taught this way for many years really, consciousness said I will be this way. (*Yes. And you're inviting the dialogue with the student*) And some of them are not comfortable with it...they prefer to be told what to do.

There's a Buddhist slogan that says, 'Of the two witnesses, trust the principal one.' ...you must go back and trust yourself. Is it right for you right now? Of the two witnesses trust the principal. The principal always being yourself, even if they are right.

Group Depiction:

I invite you to view the Group Depiction as you would a layered, rich, multimedia work of art. There are different media being used, different voices expressing textures that are similar, overlapping and diverse. I have written the Group

Depiction to follow the Major Themes of this research, painting the portrait with layers of individual voices, coming together to create a new work. The expression of each held and simultaneously viewed as part of a whole, a work that is affected by each and together comes to present something new. The Group Depiction will be told in first person plural and in present tense, paraphrasing from the interviews is drawn upon to help paint this group picture.

We suffer under the pressure and weight of conformity, we hear the message loud and clear that there is only one way... “Our way”. We fall into competition among our peers in an effort to succeed, some of us are painfully aware of how behind we are getting. We worry that there is something wrong with us because we have experiences that set us apart, and we realize we see things differently than “everyone else.” We feel separate, we feel like an outsider. We are ignored, overlooked, dismissed, humiliated, controlled, judged, shamed, abandoned, abused. We feel lost. We are children, teens, and young adults, we are the future of America.

We learn to lie, to show them what they want to see. It starts with lying to others, to cover that we aren't doing our homework, that we don't understand what we are reading, that we don't understand the way they are explaining things, we get confused. We begin to judge ourselves against their standards, over time we absorb their voice. We tell ourselves we don't fit, that we have a tendency not to stick with things, that we are a jack of all trades and master of none. We wonder what is wrong

with us that we aren't "getting it." We believe we aren't good at much of anything, we have no direction, no goals.

We suffer with Posttraumatic Stress: anxiety related to any situation of exposure; can we understand the new learning or do we understand what they are saying, or will we be able to communicate and justify our thinking clearly, or can we read or spell what we need to. With this stress we deflate, we may keep a poker face but we go blank inside, we don't know what is happening around us. Sometimes we are on the outside, watching our lives as if observing a shaken snowy Christmas-globe. We live with great frustrations from trying and failing over and over, we feel stuck in our condition, we are tired and angry, hearing ourselves say, "I just don't want to deal with it." We feel fearful to take risks, to open ourselves to the inevitable pain. We live with a gnawing fear, certain that we will be found out as the imposters we are; that we don't know what we are talking about, and when we are found out we wait for the world to cave into us.

Over time, experience after experience layer on us: discouraging our enthusiasm, disorienting us from our own experience, filling our sense of self with falseness, excluding us, dismissing and overlooking us, expecting us to conform. This breaks our Spirit, we are impoverished, we disappear and live with soul crushing disappointment. We have suffered a Soul wound.

There is another side to our wounding, the place where we find our own way, valuing our own authority. We find our rebellion, our voice, our learning style, we know things in our bodies. Our lives show that we love learning what interests us, in our own way. Some of us have a strong spiritual sense which nourishes our sense of hope, trust and faith. We each have wisdom, some of us don't see it, others share it. For all of us the thread of wounding is woven into our lives, for some it is a central highly charged theme, for others an ancient echo.

Exemplary Depictions:

True to Heuristic Methodology, two portraits have been selected from the eight interviews. The portraits I have selected speak to the group as a whole while simultaneously holding the widest ends of the spectrum of experience. Together they deepen and enrich the exploration of the research question. I have selected verbatim text from each interview, not including much of my commentary and editing the interview to highlight the most poignant commentary.

Dan

Dan is a 40 year old independent contractor, designing and installing large business soft-ware systems. He was raised Jewish, and has a 4 year old daughter. Dan's story of Educational Wounding, when looked at through the individual situations, appears to be small things. The linking of these subtle experiences over time transforms these "seemingly small things" into a powerful portrayal of their devastating effect.

Exemplary Portrait I

Dan: “I sort of like disappeared.”

There were three of us [in the 5th grade] that couldn't sing on key. You know, we couldn't match the pitch-pipe, and so we didn't get to sing during singing class. I was crushed in some way because I liked to sing. I don't really recall singing any other time around that period or even before, but I like to sing.

I couldn't participate

I was just crushed basically, I couldn't participate...it just sort of stuffed me, I guess, or crushed me. Because she didn't teach, and at this time, you know, the phrase I have is, you know, I'd already been trained out of asking questions.

I just didn't ask. I didn't ask about anything.

Well, the 4th grade experience was I was probably one of the raving geniuses of the class and I like knew the answer to every question, and so I kept raising my hand and going “I know the answer to that, I know the answer to that” because I thought that was what you were supposed to do in school, is like answer all the questions, right? So the teacher was, I don't know, she just didn't, I don't recall her ever talking to me

about it, so she just stopped calling on me. So then there was a period where I would be like, “oh-oh-oh-oh” louder, louder, louder, me, me, me, you know, I’m here...And I was somewhere near the front, so it was like not, you couldn’t not see that I was raising my hand, and she’d call on other people, you know, okay, as an adult that’s reasonably fair, but I don’t recall her ever talking to me about it. She just stopped calling on me, and then I eventually stopped raising my hand and having beaten myself against a brick wall there, and that was the way it was for the rest of the 4th grade.

It was traumatic, ‘cause I guess if she had explained that there’s 30 kids in the class and everybody gets their turn...I was a nice polite kid, I could understand everybody getting their turn. Like, that would have been okay. I was as far as I can recall, reasonably courteous and wasn’t greedy, arrogant, me-first all the time kid.

I thought the rule was you’re supposed to answer the questions and I know the answer, you know. And no one else would explain that maybe like some of the other people aren’t as smart as me.

...I missed some savoir faire or what ever you want to say. Like clued in about life. That there were actually dumb people.

...that’s clearly one of the tyrannies of school is that, you know, everyone’s gotta be the same.

I got into this other [gifted] class where now I'm actually sort of a reasonably average student because now everybody's "gifted." So I'm no longer the smartest guy there in my particular way. And I guess I wasn't quite, I don't know, prepared for that...

...I've got this brain and it's sort of been a problem. I'm never quite sure what to do with it, like I got the brain but I don't quite got the maturity to go with the brain.

Given my brain, I should be somewhere around Bill Gates's level of success, but given my emotional intelligence, I'm probably right where I'm at, which is muddling along.

I just blew the last 9 months at work...and it wasn't even like I'm bad, like anyone would go Oh that's bad. They just go, it's not quite right. Too rough on the edges or something.

I have no goals.

...somehow in junior high, high school, goals disappeared. I had no goals. My only goal for college was away from home. That was it.

And, you know, I was going to college because I was born to go to college, so there I am in college, well what am I supposed, I don't know, going to college.

...who cares what your degree is, do you have any work experience.

There was a big depression.

...you're human and you got a degree, like so what's important about you... You know, it was like dismissed... It was like, what's your work experience, what's your actual talent, what can you really do, bom bom bom. And so that was like... I thought a degree, instant success, and that's part of that, like, no real clue how the world works and everything.

...junior high school... doing stuff but not really clear what I was doing, and everything, and sort of lost.

I had no time to like sit there and absorb all this flow around me... part of what I need... is that sitting down and being in a place for a while to get the energy before I go forward. Rather than droppin in and just sort of running. You know, that running stuff... I need transition time.

I remember missing that in junior high and it sort of set a tone and it was like never quite grounding or something...it was like my body didn't quite...it was moving too fast or something.

...it was like that big gap, that whole period of gap between 5th grade and the late 20's when I started chanting and chanting and then...on my way to work when I walked...so more and more stuff opened up

that big gap, that whole period of gap between 5th grade and the late 20's when I started doing it that wasn't, uhm, I don't know, it was just like silence.

...the rhythm stuff is, is, it's there and it's not there.

...it took me like 2, 2 1/2 years of dancing here to get to the place where I could hold the beat through like, ah, the silence in the music.

...I couldn't do it. I didn't even know what they were doing, you know, it was sort of like...well that's interesting, how do they know when that beat is.

...I'm intelligent but how do they know

Where did they get that, you know.

Like, I'm well educated, where did they, which, you know, which class did I not take, you know. It was like that very sort of weird fundamental like if you don't know you're supposed to breathe or something. It's like I don't know where that comes from. That sort of missing something.

It's like really like a fundamental missing there.

...she said Well why don't you do that song again. And it's just like this whole feeling of profound disappointment...if there had been 30 more seconds in the silent moment I might have started crying...deep profound disappointment like I couldn't do the one I wanted to do.

...I get that feeling of disappointment so there is some older, deeper thing.

...why can't I just sing the harmony thing.

...there are clearly these little rules in the society that are pretty solid about the way certain things are sung and you know, what you are supposed to do. And, so, but it's like that whole like disappointment. Why can't I go make up my own thing.

...I have this disappointment about why can't I do the thing my way.

I seem to always think a little bit off the Bell curve, I guess I didn't get much encouragement in it and I usually get sort of the funny look...that it doesn't make sense or it doesn't connect to them. I think it's like perfectly logical, you know.

I'm hired help on their projects for their business...and there's sort of this disappointment that comes up for me about I can't do this thing I invented.

...like it really pervades me,...then it's hard for some things to not...to get out from under that disappointment and the, I guess, the emotional reaction that comes with it. I just sort of realize my dreams have failed.

I'm not going to be able to live my dreams, I guess. It's really hard to say that.

...like my subjects (self selected school projects) would be a little not typical...somehow I felt different most of my life.

It's sort of like dodging is sort of a lot of what I've done, it like avoiding things, you know.

...'Okay, we won't directly talk or connect with anybody. You know, we'll just do something. We'll sit in the corner, or we'll go do something over here, or we'll think a little differently, or we'll just be quiet and , you know' ...

...I did the literal assignment. They did the same assignment, but they ended up with this really, you know, interesting poem that was imaginative, all sorts of metaphors...

Like that was sort of part of school, it's like, 'The assignment is X, we'll do the assignment. We'll feed it back.'

...it's like my imagination works, but it doesn't get applied.

...I'm not doing something unique or interesting, or even different with me. I'm not even taking the risk.

I was definitely a good kid, a good student, a teacher's pet in many ways. So, uhm. So doing what people asked of you, or something...putting that nice persona on was there...that was the sort of training, that's how you survived in my family, is you were a good kid, and good student, and all that stuff.

...doing a literal assignment...I always felt a little cheated for myself because these other people thought up these cool, interesting things. And I didn't. It was like, 'Well, I could think up these cool interesting things. I think those things up like when I'm driving in a car. Why can't I think 'em up now?'

...literal response to the assignment, rather than the imaginative...It's like I somehow ended up dealing with what they gave me, rather than taking it as an impetuous or a place to start from. It was like an end point. Like school ended up being an end point.

...well, the modern school system is about your grades not about your learning or education

...when I'm interested in my subjects, I can do amazing amounts of research on my subjects...I could go out in the universe and do this and serendipity that, and bump into these people, this and that...

...I removed a problem, rather than creating something beautiful...that's a piece that's missing that got lost someplace or never developed. You know, that's one thing about school, they don't care about the polish or the finish on the product.

They don't care that you went into all those details, or the ones that were interesting to you. And they don't care why you drew the house this way...like there's more to that drawing than just a couple people and some houses, you know.

I've learned that the important part of the drawing is her explanation of it. But there's a place where I draw the drawing, "Okay, you want a house, there's your

house.’ And it sort of dies there, there’s not this continuation of the details for the things that are important for that. And I guess a lot of school didn’t care.

‘I’m going to grade you against yourself.’ It was the best thing anyone had done for me in years. He was willing to do that for me...it brings up a little tears... that was like one of the rare good teachers in my life. Not that the others were bad, but institutionally, they can’t be great.

At this time I had no motivation, I was invisible to the world.

I was a lost kid in those days – one of three people who didn’t have their photo in the yearbook...You know, it’s just sort of like I disappeared.

[Teachers name] was a nice guy, he graded me against myself.

It made a difference (that he saw me).

...it’s sort of like that rule that you have to be present, rather than get an education

...there was never this thing like ‘the point of being here is to get educated,’ which means something like pursue interests or find out what your interests are, or learn how to learn things, so when you figure out what you’re interest are, you learn how

to learn the thing. It was always, 'take the test, do the assignment, this is good for you, you'll be better for it.' There's no real live questioning going on.

There's like no space, there's no room for slowness, even in our day when I was going to school. ...there's not even like time off, you know, like do nothing for an hour...like everything's programmed – you got to do this, you've got to absorb this by this time, and stuff.

That would be my thesis...The point of school is to be seen because the specific education isn't the relevant thing anymore....the emotional part of being seen gives one the emotional intelligence and with that you can add to what ever intellectual intelligence you've got or don't got.

...you just say the highest goal is to be seen, you have basics you need to acquire, and that you need to acquire them in the next five years.

If every kid had at least one teacher like [Teachers name] every year, multiplied by 12 years, that would be a different result with the same everything.

If you study corporate cultures, it's a really small difference that changes it from a great corporation to a lousy one or vice versa. It's not the big things. And it's always a people difference and it's always something called attitude, maturity, emotionality, what they see in life, perspective...

Mark
Exemplary Portrait II

Mark: “The you of you is the only thing that will keep you from becoming depleted by them.”

Mark is a passionate, self-actualized man of 50 years. He was raised Catholic, educated in Catholic school and continues his spiritual practice within the church. He makes his living as a comedian and humanitarian working with children, teens, and adults. Mark’s story has been selected as an exemplary portrait because he strongly holds the spiritual end of the spectrum in living with educational wounding.

I started in 1956, in Catholic school, in the first grade—there was a rigidity and a real serious control of the psyche through guilt, through fear, through intimidation, through threatening. You know, everything was built into our minds, our little minds, there that we were, you know, literally human stains on pure white canvass.

shame and humiliation were tools of the trade to keep you under control. And they were very effective tools. Unfortunately, they were also encumbering your spirit and your spirit’s growth.

of being an average student, never excelling, never, you know, going to a point in any way to do anything other than to conform and be with everybody and not be noticed. And that was my first eight years of experience.

You gotta be like a crab.’ And I said, ‘What do mean a crab?’ And he said, ‘Well, crabs always move sideways, never forward or back, that way they always fit in. You have to have pinchers because when they pinch, you have to be able to defend yourself. You have to have a really hard outer shell because you could get attacked and you just have to be strong enough to survive. And like a crab, you should have a soft side so you could make a friend for life,

‘Oh, you’re in the dumb room and I’m in the smart room.’ It was another way of us having a system, you know, that put people in their place and you could see the impact that it would have on kids who...

they threw me out of class and I was standing... a Mr. Softee truck came by and I got up and walked over and ordered an ice cream and started to eat it right in front of the nun. And she spun so far out of control and went into such a tizzy that it was the most effective medicine I had at rebellion. I realize it was the beginning of my career in high hilarity and rebelliousness against conformity and towing the line, and, you know, rigid intolerance of any kind of independence or any kind of questioning of authority. And it was the very beginning of my realizing that humor was one of the greatest tools because all of my classmates would howl,

the beginning of my realizing that humor was one great weapon of freedom in a world of rigidity and intolerance of kind of a blithe spirit.

But the cruelty, I think, of the teachers in those days, an unconscious cruelty, not to be blamed and attacked and scapegoated, they grew up in system that there was shame and humiliation... shameful-based and humiliation-based education. They used those as the tools to empower you. It's a horrific tool, it's not love, it's shame and fear and humiliation. So you are cheating and you're learning not to succeed, but out of fear of failure and out fear of being identified and humiliated.

It's a horrible holocaust of spiritual depravity on the human spirit to think back at a time when you were encouraged by those in the upper echelons of education to attack peoples' spirits in order to get them to perform, and crush their spirits in order to get them to conform, and humiliate their spirits in order to get them to conform to your own rigid paint-within-the-number system. And, you know, you could see the damage it did to a lot of people who lived through it and rejected every spiritual value that any church would offer after that kind of experience.

they encouraged me in ways that were not to achieve but to conform.

encouraged to conform and be part of a system than to achieve an independence and use the special gifts that I had in order to become something better. It's why it took me 20 years longer to discover those gifts of a photographic memory because they had no clue of how I learned, and I didn't know how I learned, and they were never

going teach me how I learned how to learn. They were going to teach me to conform to what they thought learning was about.

In the third grade, I was forced to sit in a corner for four days in a garbage can, by a teacher who I liked a lot and was good to me. But I was forced to sit in that garbage can at age 8 for four days and face the wall. I had laughed inappropriately, and it was part of my nature to laugh because life made me laugh. I could not start without laughter. And that was part of the conformity.

From third grade on, after I was ridiculed, humiliated and shamed for my laughter, I just went in a complete opposite direction with my humor and did all humor silently. And I became the Charlie Chaplin of my class

By high school level, and when I was in the seminary, I even became more honed because we weren't permitted to talk the entire time. You were held in absolute silence

I learned to do that as a form of rebellion, but the wounding place when these guys would humiliate you and intimate that there was something wrong with you, that you had... that started in my freshman year of high school. The priests were so angry that they accused me of being everything. You know, that I was effeminate, anything to try and get me to stop. Any accusation to control my behavior, to humiliate me.

... I was dancing one time in class, the priest came in and called my mother and told my mother that he thought that it was very feminine and maybe I could be sexually promiscuous with other boys because I was dancing in the class. I knew that this was his way of controlling. And it hurt because I knew his ulterior motive was to shame me into not being free and open.

It was psychic. He was after me. He had found no tool, no button, no control for me, and it just frustrated him. So, finally, in his complete frustration, he would make that accusation in order to control me and try to humiliate me into thinking, 'I'll spread the rumor that you're gay and that you're sweet and that there is something wrong with you unless you do as I tell you to do, and be what I tell to, and act as I tell you to act'.

Emotional extortion

You know, I find juxtaposition of the serious nature of God and high hilarity after a fart quite spiritual. It's like I thought it was an act of God myself. You know, it was like too much pomp and circumstance, God had to have a little humor there for all of us and, you know, control freak priests are going to freak out.

And he was screaming, spit flying out of his mouth at us and the more rage he created the higher the level of my taking my brain to another place to laugh and not

quite be there literally as he screamed. It became almost *taca psychia*, which is time and mind. Everything slowed down in slow motion. So he's screaming and I'm like 'Oh my, they farted at the same time'.

So then I got back to class and I was jumping up and down and dancing, 'I heard them fart, I heard them fart, they will fart, they will fart,' and the priest came in and it was like so..., you know, I mean, it's like control, control. To them education was about controlling your spirit. And that's the absolute quintessential worst idea that education ever had. It's to imbue the spirit, to build the spirit up, to get the spirit to believe in itself and know that it can accomplish great things. Not to control it and make it less than, for your own purpose, say the purposes of any institution or political or religious institution, but to allow the spirit to become what it can as an individual to feel the great ability to change your institution and make your institution a better, more loving, more kind place.

The wounding was very real. I mean, you would take that home. I would sit and I would say, 'What is wrong with me that I can't do this?'

I had the angel of my nature telling me. I had always been a very close friend to God. It's hard to explain to people. Getting up at 5:40 to crunch through the snow. I wasn't going to serve an austere God. I was going to be with my best friend. So I would crunch through snow. You know, although, it was a religious experience for

me it was no different than anything spiritual. It was such a spiritual thing to go be with your best friend.

But I was a person who, you know, who was going to be with my best friend. And I knew that God loved me and was my good friend and cared deeply about me, even as an alter boy, and would protect and be with me all of my life. And I had that relationship.

I think that's where the wounding that takes place in young people's lives is when they don't realize that there is an angel of higher nature inside of each and every one of us.

A great line by Ali Widsalis is, when we died and we go to see the creator, the only thing the creator says is, 'Hey, why weren't you more yourself.'

Robert Frost's line is correct, 'Home is that place that you go where they have to let you in.' And that is no different than your spiritual home which is inside your body. That's the place where you have to be permitted back because you are coming back to your true self because that is the journey of life.

Oh, I can remember slaps, pinches, bruises, and punches. The worse humiliation was that my dad was very sick with cancer. We were very poor, and I didn't have enough money for eighth grade graduation. The nun called me up to the front and

said, ‘You have not turned in your \$10.’ And I said, ‘Well, I can’t go to graduation because, you know, my family doesn’t have the money for it.’ And loudly, in front of everybody, all of my best friends for eight years in school, she screams in a... I don’t even, couldn’t even... but it was demonic, truly demonic, she goes, ‘Your family doesn’t have \$10 to give you?’ It was the longest walk back to my desk that I had ever taken. I was humiliated, ashamed, hurt. And my friends, my close friends knew it, they knew how bad I was hurting because I was irrepensible, and they could see that finally somebody had kicked me in the spiritual nuts and really did damage. It wasn’t about me, it was about what had happened to my family so that humiliation was all the more right for my spirit. That they had demeaned my father’s poverty, my mother’s incapability. I had to leave school that day. I got sick. I got physically ill.

Through her attacking me and trying to find a way to use me as her emotional pincushion, she drew the ire of these kids that came back at her and made her physically ill. They went after her and they did everything to her that she was trying to do to me.

But it was a contest to see who would break first—me or her. And that’s how sick it was. And I conquered towards the end because I wasn’t part of the gang that was doing it to her. . But you watched them psychically will her ill.

...freedom fighters in their own way. You know, fighting the oppression of individuals under a system that they considered cruel and intentional..., verbal mortar rounds and psychic resistance and sabotage

whenever control is your main objective, I don't care who you are, you are going to get resistance. And it may be the resistance that hurt her health.

I remember one time the priest had me out in the hall, and he was choking me really hard because he felt that I had been inappropriate in something that I did. I pretended that he had really hurt me bad, and I was laying down. Then he picked me up and then he realized that he had maybe gone too far and he said, 'Get back in the classroom.' Because now he was afraid that he was in trouble. . So as I walked into the class, I knew that everybody in the hall, all the kids in the class, all they had heard was 'crash, bam, boom, thud' in the hallway, and this huge, big priest and me, this tiny little freshmen kid, and I walked back in, in front of the whole class, and I looked at them all like this (making sounds) with my hands up like I just kicked his ass.

...each teacher took a whack at trying to humiliate me educationally. You know, pow, pow, pow. And I was a totally liked kid. I was like... it was not going to impact me. So I ended up graduating from high school with 11 straight suspensions and a straight D average, but I got my diploma which that was the ultimate.

And 20 years later, I was inducted into my high school Hall of Fame, which I was the first one and the youngest one at 38 to have that happen. And I thought it was like the height of their own hypocrisy to be standing there honoring me for my emotional work with children.

They said I was a failure, and I refused to believe them. And it is in that belief that we conquer. It is not who they tell you who you are, or your report card, or anything else. It's who you've consistently telling yourself that you are and you become whatever you chose to be. Cummings, the poet, said to be yourself in a hole full of people trying desperately to make you just like them, to fight the greatest battle that ever was or ever will be. Through every [...unintelligible...] of educational humiliation and wounding, there was a portion of myself that was much like a trick party candle that told myself, 'That's their win, but I'm in control of my wick.' And it's what you have to do. You have to be a trick party candle especially children who are dyslexic or ADD or have any special needs because they are completely cookie cutter-oriented.

there's lots of guys out there that over-academic intellectualization into complete achievement, who are completely depleted of any emotions, like somebody shoved a giant wet vac inside of them and sucked all the emotion out, and they are all brain and no soul. And, you know, their entire life is competing.

And I think it's so funny that my job literally is, as I have known how to keep my candle lit to light other candles. And the irony doesn't escape me that I go to places and keep the emotional candle lit. And I've told the kids that you'll notice if you're lighting a candle your flame does not deplete, it actually grows as if you are lighting another candle. When the light appears, the dark is gone.

...you ultimately have to come back to the only fortress of your own salvation and that is your essence of you. The you of you is the only thing that will keep you from becoming depleted by them, that educational structure that has always said, 'Test scores, test scores, test scores.'

These are people that live in fear of what will happen and not live in the hope of what can happen if people are unshackled and not cuffed from that kind of stupidity. And if we don't do that, the same educational, academic, intellectualization that preaches conformity of spirit, squelches many of the people of the salvation of the world. They are squelching people who have answers.

But you watch how people who are a little bit different are not valued to be listened to. And that is a major mistake, I mean, on the part of the educational system.

We crush the spirit of the ADD and the dyslexic kid to the point where, you know, I see the same impact in them that Viet Nam veterans with post traumatic stress disorder have. They are so emotionally abused and wounded from an educational

system that can't comprehend they're different that they just assault them psychically, emotionally and spiritually until they are depleted.

...you must go to the spirit village of self and the fortress of self to prevent yourself from being depleted by really ignorant and pathetically cruel people who are trying to control you rather than enlighten you and educate you and uplift you and imbue you with the sense of your gifts.

...one time said that there are three things in life that are real: God, and folly, and laughter. The humor lets you realize the stupidity of it.

And that's where the real wounding takes place, in feeling that even if you had a voice what good would it do. I was angry that I could get up and tell the truth, but it wouldn't make any difference to the adult because they were still going to do what they were going to do.

There is nothing more detrimental or humiliating or wounding to you than to feel that you could get up and give the truth and have it have no impact.

...you have some really sick people out there in the education profession who have not done enough work on themselves to be given that kind of power over a child's life and their spirit. Because the damage that they can do is so permanent and so devastating to the intention of the gift that God gave them as the life to us as a

community, as a society, as a culture, as a globe, as a village that, you know, for those individuals who have that kind of pain and hostility in them to have control over them and destroy them, smacks of real stupidity on any civilization's part.

Kurt Vonnegut said, 'So-called civilized man has murdered 90 million of his own kind since the beginning of this century. So much for so-called civilized man.' I mean, you have to look at the nature of our control and our ability to... we kill what we cannot control.

'Dad, if they would just leave me in the library and let me learn what I want to learn, I'd be so much better off than them telling me that I've got to learn this because I don't even know if I'm ever going to use Latin again.' But I was depleted of my... in the essence of my brilliance and my special gifts because I was told to focus on things that would..., you know, 'This will make you a better person, learn Latin.'

We're warehousing their spirits and cryogenically freezing their potential for our control.

I really believe that a lot of people that are dyslexic or ADD are from another planet and they are seeded here in order to help these tragically fearful, insecure, uptight people who are trying to march and just be conformist... Oh man like, 'This is the way that life is.' And we're saying, 'No.' 'No, you will listen to me, and this is the way it will be. Life is like this and you must be in here.' 'No, it's like...' 'You will

fail.’ ‘No, it will be all right. You worry too much.’ ‘No, you will fail, you will not succeed.’ ‘Nah, everything will be...’ And they hate you for not being within the lines. And they resent you for not being within the lines, and they oppress you for not being in the lines.

They are just in pain because they are so afraid that they are going to make a mistake or be humiliated, that they’ve conformed and they are the height of that same sick educational system conformed to the point of pyramid.

You know, and everybody stays rigidly attuned to the frequency of achievement through conformity.

In response to his art:

You start out with conformity in the earliest elementary education. Then the rigidity sets in because after conformity... first your body conforms to winding up and moving in a certain way and the rows of desks. Then the rigidity sets in where you’ve accepted that conformity and now it’s just part of your being. There’s no freedom of movement or you’re not allowed to be, you’re there. Then the judgement rolls in right at the sixth, seventh and eighth grade level. That’s where you know... at those levels the judgement is what makes us... because it’s like more... you have to succeed now, it’s middle school, you have to succeed so if you don’t, you’re a failure. That is right where it begins. So you move from middle school, this is like elementary, the conformity and rigidity. The judgement and oppression... and the

oppression of your spirit begins with, you know, the absolute belief that you... :
...who do not have the [...unintelligible...] or the stamp of approval, then the
oppression begins. Then it's like l-o-s-e-r. She's a born loser.

...then humiliation, shame, and fear are the high school levels and the college levels.
And we achieve more out of fear of not achieving than finding a special gift that
we're good at. We are going there out of fear of not going there. We are not going
there because we are encouraged to go there and learn. We are going there because
if we don't go there we are failures.

Then we finally get to the final thing. We have used conformity, rigidity,
judgement, oppression, humiliation, fear and shame to make us successes. Those
are the building blocks of educational success and achievement in America.

Homer Simpson has three rules and I've always loved those, how to succeed in any
bureaucracy. 1. Cover me on this, will you, Bob? 2. Great idea boss. 3. We have
always done it that way. If you follow those three rules, you will always succeed in
any bureaucracy.

To me I live here, [outside the pyramid] and not here, [inside the pyramid] and I
have to bring this sunshine to this pyramid because I know that basically that
pyramid is a tomb. It truly is a tomb.

...the thing that really makes one free, is the spirit that's encapsulated within this sausage casing for our spirit. You know, we're spending all of our time with the sausage casing trying to make the sausage casing remarkable and not realizing that we are talking about the casing and not the sausage.

They can literally oppress and crimp your air hose, and move you to the point where the spirit inside the body does not want to live. Unless we get those people the kind of air that they need, and that is the spiritual sense and that spiritual sense is what guides you to wanting the kind of education... because you have the gifts within you that are going to help heal the planet.

Thoreau's line, 'We all march to the beat of a different drummer.' But the first beginning of that prose is, 'Why are we in such haste and in desperate enterprises to keep pace with our companions.'

I don't know if there is such a word but they are humiliatable. I mean, that's their biggest fear. If you can humiliate me, I can be conquered. You've got to be humiliation-proof and the only way to do that is to be an achiever and follow the system. Me, I never followed the system and I have no... there is no way you can humiliate me because I'm going to argue with you about your opinion about my success. You think that I'm a failure. I know that I'm a success, and your opinion doesn't matter to me. They are like, 'Well, our opinion matters.' And you go, 'No, it doesn't' 'Well, then you're just going to be a failure, and we'll all point at you

and call you a failure.’ And you stand there and you say, ‘Well, I’ll feel real sorry for you and I’ll just keep living my life this way.’ ‘Well, you won’t have a lot of friends.’ ‘Oh, but I will because there will be other people that you’ve treated so cruelly that will join me, and they will not join you because they’ll realize that your system is sick, is sad, is oppressive, is torment, is cruel, and totally unacceptable with us. And we ban together and be away from you and we will resist your opinions of how things should be for children.’

...as Rabbi H said, ‘If I’m not for myself, who will be, but if I’m only for myself, what am I? My connection to me is my connection to all.’ So you have to be interconnected with everybody and as quickly as you can wake up to the fact that the good of me is the good of all, the good of all is the good of me.

...the rabbi Shlomo Karlbak (?) saying, ‘No, if you can hear pain and hear tears and it doesn’t impact you, who are you?’ Who are you? If you can literally hear those things from kids in a school system where a teacher is sick and you can go in and you say, ‘Well, you know, I really can’t fire the school teacher because...’

You have to have courage, and a brain, and be brave, and have a heart. You say, well, these are the ingredients that you need to do in order to get home. The funny thing is that home is, and this is what Dorothy found out, is within you. Home is within you, and that’s the point. Home is that place we all want to go to, and we’re

all accepted, and we're loved, and we're all appreciated, and we're all valued. Guess what? That's you.

And that's when you truly wake up. That is what Vaughn was getting at in the Wizard of Oz. The point was you are you. If you don't get you, nothing from the outside is going to make you, you. They can give you a brain, they can give you a heart, they can give you a medal, but that's not who you are. You are you when you wake up, and that's the point.

Well, what's funny was he [the scarecrow] knew it before he got the piece of paper. These are the things that have to be drawn out of us. I think that's the key to this stuff.

Picture being there. You are from Arizona State, you get ready to shoot at a foul line and a bunch of bright, white kids are trying everything they can to injure your spirit so you fail to shoot a hoop. This is where Kenneth Starr had Bill Clinton's kid go. Hmm. How ironic. You think about the fact they're so cruel and yet we call them successful.

And why are they cruel? : Because they've learned to conform, they've learned to be rigid, they've learned to use judgement against each other, they've learned to oppress each other with that kind of judgement and humiliation and shame and fear. They use all of these tools, okay, in order to get you to conform. And it's so funny, I

mean, it's like beyond preposterous because now you are in the country club mind. It's like where they look at you and you have to laugh. They don't realize what a horrible parody they are of their own fear.

You get to a point where you can smell pretension. They don't realize that you can smell pretension. You can literally smell it. It smells like fear. Let me tell you what I own and then you'll know who I am. Let me tell you where I live and then you'll know who I am.

Creative Synthesis:

In keeping with the methodology of heuristics a Creative Synthesis is allowed to develop and emerge naturally as an outgrowth of the primary researcher's experience working with the data.

I wake from a dream where I can only recall the physical feeling of dropping, sinking, settling into me, into who I am in body, spirit, essence, into the me that I have been remembering, the me that I have been becoming. In that liminal, half-asleep, half awake place a knowing comes to me; we are not just our conditions, we are more than that. Our conditions are of our ego life, the "more" is our essence, our Soul purpose, our Spirit incarnate. It is in this awareness that I am invited to come home, home to the me of me.

I am faced over and over again with not only the imagery that emerges from the wounding of the eight co-researchers but strongly affected by their images of healing. There is a synchronistic blending of imagery between several of the co-researchers that interestingly reflects my favorite childhood story, The Wizard of Oz. As I have understood the underlying mythology over the past several years of the Wizard of Oz, I am struck by the potency of the archetypes and their connection with the elements of Educational Wounding.

Dorothy begins her journey of initiation with a tornado, a wind tunnel that brings great change to her life, she is literally blown away. We meet the Scarecrow who wants a brain, the Lion who wants courage, the Tin Man looking for a heart, and Dorothy who wants to get home. They deceive themselves by looking outside themselves for the things they already have. They pursue what they want through an authority figure, the Wizard of Oz, whom they consider to be smarter than they are. After many trials and tribulations he gives them symbols of what they want, symbols of what they already have. For Dorothy he has nothing, she must go inside herself and remember “Home” was there all along, “there’s no place like home, there’s no place like home, there’s no place like home.” Home to the you of you, to your essence, to the uniqueness that makes you who you are, from the heart, from the head, from your courage.

I am so deeply touched by the tenacity of the human spirit to move towards our wholeness, towards an expression of our essence. I see it in each of the interviews I

have done, quietly in some, but there none the less. The soul's calling to heal itself, even when impoverished, as long as the spark, the ember, the essence is still glowing, there is still hope for healing.

Dorothy's journey began with a tornado, the image of a pink cherry blossom filled tornado is shared through the research process from one co-researcher, a healing pink cherry blossom filled tornado, hopeful and exciting. Sweeping away the pain and constriction of our wounds, of our conditions, clearing space for our continued emergence...a healing tornado journey some are stuck in, some are struggling to get out of, and some are dancing with.

Chapter 6

Summary, Implications, and Recommendations for Future Research

Introduction

This chapter summarizes the literature review and the data collected and worked with for this study. The reader will find connections drawn and critiques made, as well as considerations of what this data may suggest in the process of illuminating the question of the lived experience of Educational Wounding. Implications of this work for professionals, parents, systems, and advocates will be considered as well as the rich potential of future research projects to further identify issues of Educational Wounding.

Summary

This heuristic study illuminates the lived experience of Educational Wounding of eight co-researchers ranging in age from 23 to 55 years. In this diverse group of three women and five men there are two co-researchers with diagnosed learning disabilities, two with undiagnosed learning difficulties and four co-researchers range from self reported normal to bright.

I have integrated the literature with the research I have done and am presenting this comparison in the theme groupings that my research has taken.

In Educational Wounding co-researchers feel pressure to conform and that they are held to a standard and measure of success defined for them, outside of their own desires and interests. When students are rigidly held to external requirements of what they should be learning and kept from their own natural rhythm of freedom and discipline there is a great “destruction of life” (Whitehead, 1957). The tactics that are used to implement this conformity and drive for success are humiliation, judgement, control, shaming, and abuse. Through overt and covert constraints these learners experience oppression and with it repression (Omer, 1990) of their emerging true or essential self. (Horney, 1950) This dynamic is particularly wounding as the development of identity is intimately woven with the threads of inter-relationship with and mirroring from the Other (Omer, 1990), inter-play between body and mind as a unit, and the larger environment of learning community and nature. (Cobb, 1993) In this process we are “loved into apartness” (Omer, 1990) and our unique becoming.

As the dynamic of crushing conformity and pressure to succeed continues, learners begin to develop what Horney terms the false self (Horney, 1950); they lie to others and themselves about what and how they are doing and becoming (Nelson as cited in Omer, 1990). They are shamed and in shame they hide from others and themselves (Nichols, 1995).

Educational Wounding leaves many with Posttraumatic stress symptoms which lay pathways in the brain for continued anxious and fearful responses to any new

learning (Goleman, 1995). This experience impacts life choices people make, risks they are not willing to take, and potential contributions they may not be able to make. We all suffer the tremendous loss of this lost potential.

Educational Wounding breaks the Spirit and wounds the Soul. Research co-researchers expressed feeling lost, as if they had disappeared (Omer, 1990, 137). Their experience speaks to the deep split in our culture; the split away from body (Plato as cited in Dupuis, 1966), from earth (Galland, 1996), from a whole expression of who we are as humans. The experience of Soul wounding, from a shamanic perspective implies that the Soul has been stolen or has wandered away (Eliade, 1964, 327). This leads to many manifestations of Soul sickness which would include loss of energy, direction, joy, balance (Eliade, 1964). The healing called for is to retrieve the Soul and reintegrate it with the bodyspirit (Ingerman, 1991), returning the person to a fuller experience and expression of who he/she uniquely is.

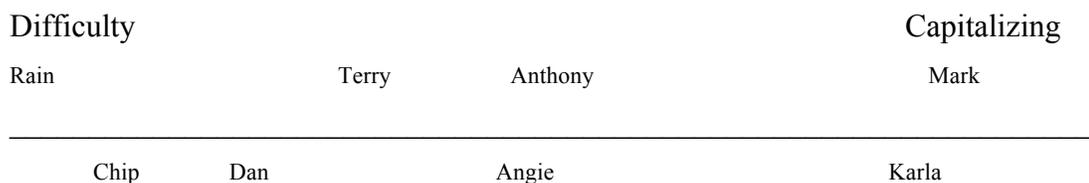
Educational Wounding is part of a tapestry that makes up a life, for some it is only a thread, for others it is a pattern or well-developed theme. For some in this study hope, a strong spiritual connection, and finding and following internal authority are developed and central themes to life. These co-researchers have understood where their intelligence lies (Gardner, 1993), what their unique gifts and contributions are and call on this wisdom while they share themselves with the world. This is the relationship between 'I', 'Other' (Omer, 1990), and the divine third, where the

sacred connection with all things, our One-ness is experienced (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1988, 84, 88), through direct experience (James as cited in Adler, 1991, 8) and deep body wisdom (Satprem, Luc Venet, 1985, 25).

These are the themes that have emerged from this study. They begin to sketch a map of what Educational Wounding looks like and offer a glimpse of what healing involves.

There are two observations that have come to light in this exploration of Educational Wounding:

- Of the eight people I interviewed, five people suffered their most traumatic wounding experiences around or related to the area of their intelligence (Gardner, 1993) and/or passion: Dan – singing, Mark – humor, Angie – music, Karla – dance, Terry – ideas. Although I did not directly include myself as a research participant, I, too, fit this pattern with dance.
- There appears to be a continuum ranging from people having difficulty taking themselves, via their intelligences, out into the world, to people capitalizing on their life experience and creating their own personal way in the world. Based on the data of the interviews, I would place the co-researchers in this spectrum:



There is some suggestion that co-researchers with a strong spiritual connection may capitalize on their life experience and create their own way more effectively than those that do not have a strong spiritual component in their lives. I believe this relates to following their own authority, where the beloved can dance between them and the other, an adult manifestation of healing.

A quiet sub-theme that was mentioned by several co-researchers is the power of pursuing what interested them (Fairfield, 1977, 23). Six co-researchers spoke about this briefly as a component to having successful experiences in learning. Pursuing what interested them was never something that was an intention of instruction, but rather something they stumbled on while at school.

Lastly, as heuristics values and treats as valid what comes through the primary researcher, my current experience in the completion of this research is of importance. As I have dealt with my own Educational Wounding prior to and through this research process, at its culmination I am faced with a deeply embodied experience of the loss of innocence. I am aware that although I am buoyed by many; loving friends, supporters, and most importantly the voices of the co-researchers, I am the lone messenger and I am bringing a message that is potentially controversial. I am aware that in exposing this issue that I am potentially placing myself right back in the fire of my own Educational Wounding. That I may be ‘crucified’, that I may be attacked for my thoughts (Goleman, 1995), that I may be slaughtered or outcast or shamed for standing up for my ideas (Nichols, 1995, 9) , not from my Doctoral

Committee per say, but from the larger public - as I speak about these issues. This is the remaining seed of my Educational Wounding; I also know this is the key to my healing. Through telling these stories and revealing this closeted pain I am shining the light on the Shadow (Jung, 1933). In this act, I am exposing that which has had a tight grip on myself and others. When the Shadow is not revealed it grows and drives our lives from behind the scenes, quietly contorting and controlling our movement, decisions, and development. Releasing this document is both a relief and my darkest hour.

My body has worked to keep me from this edge, I have struggled with carpal tunnel symptoms as I move close to completion... as my hands and arms desperately try to hold on to my truth. The power and timeliness of this message and the ghosts of voices that echo through me will not allow my silence.

Limitations and Generalizations

The heuristic research model takes us deeply into the experience of a limited number of people. The limitations of the research reflect this design:

- The primary researcher takes the truthfulness and completeness of the co-researchers disclosure at face value.
- The relative interviewing and data analysis skill of the primary researcher as well as the complexity of thought required to work with the data hold inherent limitations.
- Co-researchers live in the western states, primarily in California with the exception of one; they are all Anglo, and were able to articulate verbally their experiences. This

eliminated the participation of other forms of articulate expression that were not primarily verbal.

- The study does not consider specifically what may remedy the issue of Educational Wounding or what might be healing for those who suffer from this experience.
- The study can only identify what Educational Wounding is for the eight people who were co-researchers and begin to illuminate the foundation pieces that lead to this issue.
- Although selection of co-researchers addressed diversity in learning styles, differences and disabilities, I did not take other issues of diversity into consideration. No attempt was made to consider racial-ethnic or socio-economic diversity in this study.

In qualitative research generalizations cannot be made; the sample is small and intimately explored. The data and interpretations that emerge are reflective of the specific sample. However, the illumination that is brought to a topic through qualitative research can deepen our understanding of a human experience. Because this is the only study of Educational Wounding, I believe it is a valuable contribution to the field and will pave the way for further research in this area.

Implications

The implications of this preliminary research into the experience of Educational Wounding are far-reaching and impact the fields of adult, general and special education, policy making, advocacy, and therapies. From a prevention perspective, I believe all who are involved with children may increase their sensitivity to this issue.

Equally important to prevention is the reclamation and healing that could open new worlds to those who are educationally wounded and haven't been able to articulate or isolate their experience.

For adults in their own healing and continued training and education, this research points to the validity of each of us considering our own Educational Wounding and healing. This issue is not isolated to adults working in education or with youth.

Consider the co-researchers in the business world who feel unfulfilled, who feel their choices to create change in their lives are limited, or who are stuck in life work situations that are limiting and reductive. For adults working with children, it is critical in creating real change that we heal our educational wounds. In November, 1998, I attended the International Dyslexia Conference held in San Francisco, California. I became painfully aware of how hungry parents and professionals are for a framework that is more diverse in considering students. However, I was saddened to experience how entrenched most adults are in the linear and traditionally narrow way of considering information and learning. Many people at the conference spoke about the Multiple Intelligence (Gardner, 1993) approach to teaching and working with students but very few seemed to embody or to deeply understand the essence and underpinnings of the work. I saw most co-researchers wanting to be spoon-fed approaches and interventions without much evidence of considering the broader issues. I was frustrated and experienced much of the conference as reducing the potential of this theory into a structure that already isn't working. I believe this is the result of these adults being systematically trained out of their creativity and

spontaneity as children in the system they hope to change as adults. I see this dilemma as a result of their own Educational Wounding.

Specifically, this research implies the need for the development and implementation of teacher training, the inclusion of a healing component in all adult education situations and particularly in adult literacy programs. The research also suggest that minimally, policy around core efficiencies which tie the hands of teachers be redesigned, and that potentially our approach to education be redesigned. Implying that we take the importance of allowing children as natural learners room to explore, pursue and fully develop what interests them, and truly seeing the developing child as a healthy and intact ‘Other’.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research is the first on Educational Wounding as defined and explored in this study. The field of future research is as wide as the creative imagination can see. At this point I see interesting considerations for future research with the following focuses:

- A comparison study of how people with diagnosed learning disabilities and learning differences experience and live with Educational Wounding as compared to those who are free from learning disabilities.
- A study of the imagery of people with Educational Wounding.
- A study of the creative expression of people with Educational Wounding.
- A quantitative study to establish from a larger population base, a broader profile of Educational Wounding.

- Further development of the theory of Educational Wounding.
- The development of a healing approach to address the manifestations of Educational Wounding.

The exploration I have done to date in this study has peaked my interest in several of these areas. I feel there is much rich and rewarding research in this newly emerging issue.

Finalizing Statements

Through all the pain and constriction told through this study, I am deeply touched by the resilience of the human Spirit, and reminded that the Soul moves to find its way back to wholeness. I hear myself reflecting, “Where do we go when we lose our way, where do we turn?” The stories of Educational Wounding speak to the rich and varied response to this question, and Rumi calls to me from between the pages. He speaks to the heart of becoming, through his love of Shams of Tabriz he is inspired, “‘What I thought of before as God, I met today in a person.’ With Shams he discovered the inner Friend, the Soul, the Beloved, a constant reminder of God’s presence.” (Barks, Intro., 1987)

*Imagine the time the particle you are
returns where it came from!*

*The family darling comes home. Wine, without being contained
in cups, is handed around.*

*A red glint appears in a granite outcrop,
and suddenly the whole cliff turns to ruby.*

*At dawn I walked along with a monk on his way to the monastery.
“We do the same work,” I told him. “We suffer the same.”*

He gave me a bowl.

And I saw:

*The soul has **this** shape.*

and actual sunlight,

Shams,

help me now,

*being in the middle of being partly in my self,
and partly outside.*

(Barks, translates Rumi, 1987, 7)

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Appendix

Appendix A

Sample contract letter as suggested by Moustakas (1995).

Dear:

Thank you for your interest in my dissertation research on your experience of Educational Wounding. I value the unique contribution that you can make to my study and am excited about the possibility of your participation in it. The purpose of this letter is to reiterate some of the things that we have already discussed and to secure your signature on the participation-release form (attached).

The research model I am using is a qualitative one through which I am seeking comprehensive depictions or descriptions of your experience. This research approach allows for an inquisitive exchange between you and I as you share your experience with Educational Wounding and we more deeply explore the question together. In this way I hope to illuminate or answer my question:
What is your lived experience of Educational Wounding?

The term Educational Wounding has been an outgrowth of my personal experience with moments in my schooling that have been traumatic or disorienting to the extent that parts of who I am have split away from my authentic or whole self. At the time of these events I did not realize this was happening, it was only with reconsideration that I have been able to recall events or situations that have stood out in my memory as important to me although I had not known exactly why. In remembering these experiences I have discovered they have played a role in choices I have made and in the life that I have as an adult.

Through your participation as co-researcher, I hope to understand the essence of the phenomenon as it reveals itself in your experience. During our interview you will be asked to recall specific episodes or events in your life in which you experienced the phenomenon we are investigating. I am seeking vivid, accurate, and comprehensive portrayals of what these experiences were like for you; your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as well as situations, events, places, and people connected with your experience. You may also wish to share personal logs or journals with me or other ways in which you have recorded your experience, for example, in letters, music, poems, or artwork. As part of the interview process I will ask you to work with art materials and body movements to explore our subject matter, this is a playful and non-judgmental opportunity to more fully explore the question we are researching.

The material we are exploring can be emotionally charged and could awaken deep seated emotional issues for you. If this should happen and you need some assistance dealing with the issue, you are encouraged to contact me. I have a list of qualified therapists to refer you to if you are not currently working with anyone.

I value your participation and thank you for your commitment of time, energy, and effort in this project. The contribution you make will be treated with the utmost respect, viewing you as the expert authority of your own experience. If you have any further questions before signing the release form and returning it to me, I can be reached at (415) 492-9140.

Appendix B

Sample consent letter as suggested by Moustakas (1995).

Participation-Release Form

I agree to participate in a research study of my experience of Educational Wounding, as described in the attached narrative. I understand the purpose and nature of this study and am participating voluntarily. I grant permission for the data to be used in the process of completing a Ph.D. degree including a dissertation and any other future publications or presentations. I understand that my name and other demographic information which might identify me will not be used. I agree to meet at the following location (to be decided) on the following date (to be decided) for an initial interview of 2 to 2.5 hours, and to be available at a mutually agreed time and place for an additional 1 to 1.5 hour interview, if necessary. I also grant permission for the tape recording of the interview(s).

Research Participant (print), (sign)

Date

Primary Researcher

Date

Appendix C