Transformative Inquiry

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AND THE TI RESEARCH TEAM
Introduction

Transformative Inquiry is a dynamic process that helps educators negotiate the complex and vibrant terrain of learning~teaching.

Visit the Transformative Inquiry Research Website
www.transformativeinquiry.ca
What is Transformative Inquiry?

Welcome to the process of Transformative Inquiry. The term Transformative Inquiry (TI) refers to a multi-faceted process that includes particular concepts, actions and philosophical approaches. This text is written primarily for the mentors (instructors) and inquirers (pre-service teachers) who participate in the TI course hosted at the University of Victoria. It is a guide for us as we engage in TI together as learner~teacher~researchers. As you grow within the teacher education program, we hope you will join us on this adventure of unearthing ideas, practices, and emotions that relate to your teaching practice.

TI is a practice, where we engage in new activities and routines as educators. We employ different modalities, sometimes repetitively, in order to expand our ways of being in educational contexts. You are not alone in this expansion, the instructors continue learning as well. TI is also a stance, in that it can become a way of being an educator; the lens through which we look that draws from our cultural paradigms and worldviews. Through developing the practice and stance of TI within the course, we hope to transform both practice and stance in order to benefit all future students with whom we interact.

The tone of our text is informal and “we” typically refers to the members of the TI team, while “you” refers to the reader. The limits of this language should be noted however as both you and we are be~coming educators, and the lines between you/we can grow blurry.

Within your process of be~coming a teacher, some of you are likely concerned about complicated and important questions. For example, you may wonder:

- What do I really care about as an educator?
- How can I nourish and maintain my energy as I teach?
- How might my attitudes, beliefs and values affect my teaching?
- What do learners really care about?
- How do I~we build healthy learning community in schools?
- What really matters in our broader communities, both local and global?
- What is my responsibility in tending to the environmental crises we now face?
- What solutions do my students offer for addressing environmental dilemmas?
- How do I help my students follow their own passions?

As you entered the program you were likely focused on learners and your passion to be a positive force in your
students’ lives. Later on, you may have found that as a be-coming teacher you were anxious about securing a position, intimidated by the demands of a twenty-first century classroom, fixated on curriculum, or wondering if teaching is even the right career choice! In the TI course, you are invited to address these and other educational concerns. The course offers time and space to explore your burning issues. By drawing on your own personal passions, you will learn to put that energy to use within a larger, more relational framework in order to improve your teaching practice. For example, past participants have looked at diverse issues such as peer pressure, at-risk youth, math engagement, indigenous ways of learning, feminism in education, the oppression perpetuated by curriculum, teacher identity, teacher burn-out, and much more.

**Transformative Inquiry** is a dynamic process that can help you as an educator negotiate the complex and vibrant terrain of learning–teaching. This includes supporting you in exploring a path of *inquiry* that has heart. TI is rooted in a *worldview* in which:

- All learners (including teachers) have innate instincts towards learning that are personal in nature and that play out in myriad and individual ways. Marie Battiste (2008) refers to this as the *learning spirit* and advocates for educators to nourish the *learning spirit* in all learners.
- At the same time, all learners (including teachers) hold what Shawn Wilson (2007) calls *relational accountability*, a reciprocal connection to all living things. This includes, but is not limited to family, friends, plants, animals, earth, learning communities, larger communities, and global communities.
- Knowledge is seen as a *thing-which-is-becoming* rather than static (Ross, 1996/2006). In this view, knowing focuses on relationships and is co-created by knowers.

The path with heart is good and the journey along it will be joyful. Like all paths, it leads nowhere, but it will make you strong. If you find yourself on a path, then you must stay on it only if it has heart, and it is only your heart that can tell if it so. How do you know if the path has heart, particularly, if you are choosing a topic for inquiry and means of pursuing it…? (Chambers, 2004, pp. 5-6)

**Transformative Inquiry** (both the practice and the course) has been developed in a context where attention to theory intermingles with practice within the course **ED-P 490 Professional Inquiry Project**. The course is a program requirement for elementary and middle years Bachelor of Education and Post-Degree certification at the University of Victoria in the Faculty of Education.

As a student in the course, you will begin by unearthing significant issues that you care about, both personally and
professionally. These will be topics relevant to your own journey as a learner–teacher–researcher and therefore, topics that also matter to your peers and other educators beyond the university setting. Your **inquiry** should show evidence of gathering from all four of the following areas (Interactive 1.1):

- **Inquiry Partners:** What do colleagues, parents, students, community members believe? What is the relationship between what they tell you and your beliefs around the topic? How does what they say inform your question?

- **Classroom Observations:** What stories from the field are related to your question? What is the history underlying these stories? What social context may hold influence?

- **Self Study:** What can you learn from your personal experience? What is your intuitive knowing about the topic? Why are you passionate about this? How does this relate to and/or shape your question? How could you use yourself (including thoughts, emotions, intuition) as a study site?

- **Academic Literature:** What is the larger academic community thinking about your topic? How do your questions fit within this context? What will make your exploration empirically sound? (Are your sources trustworthy?)

The TI process is assisted by a series of mentoring sessions with the course instructor. These are similar to a graduate student advising sessions, in that they are designed to support you in your exploration, rather than tell you how to proceed. It is very much about supporting your learning process – we will walk our talk here, as best we can (Tanaka, Nicholson, & Farish, 2012). The mentor’s role is akin to facilitator, coach, or co-knower, rather than a **sage on the stage** that imparts fixed knowledge (although this can at times be appropriate).
I have never been challenged so much by self-directed learning and broadening my knowledge about a topic that I am actually interested in. ~Former student

As you continue to practice TI, you may find that it becomes a lifelong journey, full of useful ‘aha!’ moments, but also more continuous transformative learning.

[TI can be likened to] ...an approach to engaging the world and other persons that is not just more of the same, but of a different kind and quality. I have come to see that the "Eureka"-type experience...is not a onetime change. Rather, it is the first transformative change in a series of changes that will occur if one continues to push up to and beyond the limits of one’s understanding on an ongoing basis. (Anglin, 1996, p. 96)

Our Purpose

The overarching purpose of the TI project is to help you as a teacher become aware and sensitive to three questions indigenous science educator, Greg Cajete asks: How do we solve the pressing environmental issues on the planet? How do we learn to get along with each other? How do we care for our own souls? We believe that by focusing mindfully on the needs of individual learners (including yourself), your community, and Earth, we can make changes that bring out the best in who we are as learner-teacher-researchers making the world a healthier, more enlivened place. The purpose of this book then, is to clarify and articulate the process of TI so that it becomes accessible to you as an educator. This is done with the intent to help you navigate the swampy terrain of learner-teacher-researcher to the best of your ability.

We hope to create fertile ground for engaging in TI so that you can embed it in as many places and ways as is useful. We recognize this to be an organic, ongoing process that we fondly refer to as “scuttling towards the light.” In many ways we are creating understanding of the process as we go – it is an autopoetic or self-creating undertaking into the unknown. We encourage you to think together with us, outside the box of traditional schooling.

Our commitment to transformation runs deep in part due to our experience as mentors of TI (to date we have worked one-on-one with well over 900 students among us). We have seen be-coming teachers engage in powerful learning that breaks down binaries, deconstructs the archetype of the teacher as transmitter and addresses the role of privilege; for many the TI process has cracked open the tough exterior plaster that surrounds antiquated notions of teaching to reveal light, possibility and hope.

Through the TI process, you can become more engaged in your own learning as well as the lives of other inquirers. You might feel a stronger sense of care for each other, yourself,
and the Earth as you explore implicit connected relationships in this course. We have been witness to the success of transformation in many teachers’ development in this course and we feel compelled and somewhat obligated to help ground student experiences through work by scholars and learner–teachers other than those in our immediate community.

For more information on our project, please visit: UVic’s Transformative Inquiry Website or Facebook: Transformative Inquiry or Twitter: @TInquiry.

On Transformation

The mentors of TI do not expect that all of you will transform within the timeframe of this course, rather we hope that some of you will find for yourself a practice of mindfulness, a deeply attentive awareness, around ongoing changes you will experience as a learner–teacher–researcher. To help you tap into your passions, an ecological, highly inter-related view of transformative learning theory provides a valuable foundation (O’Sullivan, Morrell & O’Conner, 2002).

For some, the course involves transformation of deep, structural changes in basic premises of thought, feelings and actions (Dirx, Mezirow, & Cranton, 2006). The result is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters ways of being in the world. This shift can include increased and more nuanced understanding of yourselves and your self-locations, as well as your relationships with other humans and with the natural world. It also involves developing awareness and understanding of the relations of power in the interlocking structures such as class, race, gender, and bodily awareness. This can extend to visions of alternative approaches to living, learning and teaching and our collective sense of possibilities for social justice, peace and joy.

As a teacher I value the idea that learning is dynamic and constantly transforming the individual. Being involved in Transformative Inquiry reminded me of the importance of keeping all doors open and never blocking off a path that may lead to another perspective. My inquiry has allowed me to follow a path with heart...My self-study collage reflects that I honour...each student [as] an individual [that] holds a unique gift... ~Former student

Our use of the term transformation may require explanation in relation to pre-service teacher education. Educational researchers suggest that learning is less about amassing facts and figures or even constructing knowledge and more about transformation of spirit and mind (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, & Kleiner, 2000). We agree on the need for an expansion of the traditional notions of knowledge construction as predominantly cognitive in nature. This expansion of knowledge could include emotions, feelings, habits, and thoughts (Li, 2002). We also
believe educators need to attend to how schools and schooling might transform in response to the needs of learner-teachers.

Learning then becomes synonymous with the capacity for change. “Deep learning takes place when new skills and capabilities, new awareness and sensibilities, and new attitudes and beliefs reinforce each other” (Li, 2002, p. 402). According to Clark (1993) a critical feature of transformational learning is the deep change in how individuals see themselves and their world. Further, Kegan (2000) suggests that through the process of engaging in transformative learning we don’t simply add to what we already know, but we profoundly alter how we come to know. This capacity for internal change is significant as you grapple with who you are becoming as a teacher; we hope you will feel empowered with the capacity for and belief in change as fundamental to your practice as a teacher.

**INTERACTIVE 1.2 Concepts of TI**

In schools there is ‘space for their heads but not their heart, soul or spirit. What’s more important than that? The head could come last. We can develop that anywhere. It takes a very special space to develop heart, soul and spirit.’

- Dr. Marie Cooper, Tsartlip Elder

This slideshow may be used during class
Dear Inquirer,

Welcome to the awkwardness! Transformative Inquiry is a complex, organic and often intuitive process in which you may find yourself traversing liminal spaces, the places in between what you think you know and what else might be possible. Here, your worldviews are challenged and may be reconstructed to reflect the complex issues in education. Churning beneath this process is the myth of the perfect teacher. It would be lovely if it were possible to fully equip you to deal with all eventualities in the classroom, but this is not the case. In any relationship there is no one formula for success. The vibrant fabric of learning and teaching is all about relationships and this complexity requires flexibility and the vulnerability to go into spaces of unknowing. The work of TI can be uncomfortable, convoluted and complex. At the same time, our research on the process shows that TI can also be highly rewarding, useful, and even fun for teachers. Teaching is not for the faint of heart. This frequently noted phrase may resonate with you as you find courage on your path of be~coming.

Welcome the awkwardness! We hope you enjoy your journey.

The TI Team
Negotiating the Swamp as you are Be~coming

The TI approach is specifically concerned with questions of be~coming. In this text we use the tilde (~) in words like be~coming and learner~teacher~researcher, because while you are learning to be a teacher, in some ways you already are a teacher. You are both being and becoming at the same time, hence, be~coming.

Teachers are often primarily concerned with learning and teaching, yet research can be a valuable aspect of a transformative endeavor as well. And, if knowledge is a thing-which-is-becoming (responding and transforming to the experiences and provocations of life) our roles as learner, teacher and researcher will overlap, intermingle and inform each other. As much as you may be hoping that there is a toolkit method that will be able to guide your teaching, there is no simple or prescriptive approach to pedagogy. We need to attend to how we are all be~coming learner~teacher~researchers within educational settings.

Learning~teaching is a complicated and untidy process that can be likened to a swamp – a habitat that is ever changing, multifaceted and difficult to make sense of.

...Imagine now, that you are walking barefoot into this swamp. You have been told what teaching is, experienced it from your perspective as a learner, or even from an observation chair at the back of the class. But now you actually enter in. Your first steps feel alien as your feet sink deep into silt. The water is murky, and you can only see vague shadows of what lies below the surface. Unexpected movement, interesting smells and unsettling sounds surround you. There are hidden processes at work here, and you are unsure how to proceed.

Nevertheless, you take small steps, and you begin to attend differently. Rather than base your actions solely on what you know intellectually, you pay attention to what you feel through the bottom of your feet. Is that a rock? How deep will the water get? Are there any holes? Suddenly, you lose your footing! Little fish scurry away from you as you frantically try not to fall into the slimy unknown. Your hands grasp convulsively, searching for balance.

No intellectual description prepared you for this. Luckily you find your balance through motion and intuition. Whew! That was close. Your pants are wet to the knees now, and your recovered sunhat drips greenish water down your ears...

A swamp is it’s own habitat with layers of complexity and multiple living creatures. It is a necessary filter for water in this ecosystem, and provides suitable habitat for creatures large and small. Some of these animals...
are endemic to that swamp alone, while others are merely passing through. The swamp sits in the context of a larger space. As you move through the space, you gradually improve your ability to proceed without falling. By giving the swamp your attention the sense of it being alien starts to fade. Gradually, you are able to remember where that treacherous hole is, and how to navigate around it.

Like a swamp, many of the questions you have as a teacher will be unbounded (Henderson, 1992). They will have no clear parameters of understanding. These types of questions can evoke unease, and even fear – especially when there is a cultural expectation that teachers be well-informed experts in their area. These questions, and your passion around them, can invite you to examine your emotional knowing as well. Examining unbounded questions promotes engagement in the process of generating understanding, as opposed to the discovery of a set answer or solution. They are rich sites for transforming education into what you imagine it can be.

An unbounded question is far more complex because it can legitimately be defined in many different ways (Henderson, 1992).

TI is a process of following these unbounded questions wherever they may lead us. In the course, you are expected to remain within the complexity of your questions, as “unbounded [questions]...may be predicaments that are never fully resolved” (Henderson, 1992). These often perplexing questions are the guide to your process, the root of the complexity of teaching, and the entry points into taking a TI stance. Attending to unbounded questions becomes your guide through the murky swamp. In chapter 4.4 we discuss the process of helping construct a safe-enough space to support you in this swamp.

Throughout this book we will support your journey. In Chapter 2 we share student vignettes to help you understand the journey that students have engaged in. The following chapters will introduce various supporting concepts: re-imagining schools; attending to emotions; considering knowledge, lens and worldview; practicing interbeing; being relationally accountable; recognizing Earth and panarchy; and enacting transformance. We trust these readings will inform your inquiry ideas and introduce you to the exciting process of TI. For now we continue with an overview of the process.
SECTION 3

TI Model

Our research

This iBook has been generated from the findings of a 4-year study funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). In this study, we employed a phenomenological narrative methodology as we examined the personal practical knowledge of teachers (pre-service, instructors and mentors) through listening carefully to the richness of their stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

With over 200 participants to date, data gathered includes student assignments, transcriptions of instructor-inquirer sessions, transcriptions of focus groups, and participant generated images (e.g. collage and season counts). These data were analyzed using a dialogic team process where we as researchers, entered “humbly into the life world” of each participant to gain understanding of “his or her wholeness and specificity” (Thomas & Pollio, 2002, p. 7-8). This phenomenological approach develops “the art of being sensitive to subtle undertones of language” so that nuanced interpretations of the data could be made (van Manen, 1990/1997, p. 111).

Our method also applied a reflexive technique where attention was turned onto each of us as researchers who were an integral part of the social phenomenon being studied (Ahern, 1999). Our assumptions have been carefully described and acknowledged at various points (for example, see Tanaka, Tse, Stanger, Piché, Starr, Farish, & Abra, in press), in order to make “visible and audible the complicated interconnections between the topic of the writer’s gaze, and her ideas, values and beliefs, as well as the feelings she attaches to each of these” (Chambers, 2004, p. 2).

While researcher knowledge is considered as a valuable source of data (Oberg, 1989), to provide further veracity this knowledge was recursively examined and contextualized for relational accountability within the broader context of researchers, scholars, practitioners, artists, and thinkers who also engage with the topic (Chambers, 2004; Wilson, 2007). Overall, the project draws heavily from a team approach that engages multiple perspectives in the project design, data coding, data analysis and dissemination. The multifaceted points of view brought forward in team conversations encourage humility, as team members help each other to be critical of what each thinks they are hearing in the data, thus our multiple perspectives lead to a sense of crystallization (Richardson, 2000).

Future focus of the project includes analysis of gendered response to TI and interviews across Canada and internationally with experienced educators who resonate with the TI approach. We are also very interested in following our
participants into their careers in order to see how TI plays out amidst various schooling contexts.

Over an 18-month analysis phase, the data were read to identify meaningful units as well as a sense of the whole, then clustered by themes, and finally, a thematic structure was developed (Thomas and Pollio, 2002). Frequent team discussions focused on understanding the meaning of the data through careful and reflexive listening, resonance with our personal practice as educators, and carefully “mining the data for metaphors” (p. 36). Analysis continues to be ongoing and recursive. We fully expect our models to change as we continue on.

In addition to the purpose of the book as a way to illuminate our findings, Interactives 1.3-1.7 show an overview of the components of TI that we have garnered from the analysis thus far. The model is a series of concentric and nested circles that have wobbly and unclear edges. These edges should not be interpreted as hard-boundaries but rather as ever-changing places that concepts can flux and transfer amongst the layers. The dark green centre holds Cajete’s three questions for educators; these are the stars that guide us. Moving outward from there, we have a small ring that states our purpose: to help pre-service teachers navigate the swampy terrain of learner–teacher–researcher to the best of their abilities. The next circle, attend, describes the key features we believe need to be in our awareness as educators, such as knowledge, power, and re-imagining the purpose of education. From there, the mentor ring shows some of the intentions of the course instructors, and the engage ring highlights how pre-service teachers engage in the TI process. The outer ring is called the power of the circle, a phrase that has come to mean more than simply $\pi r^2$! It represents the value of taking time and space to be intentional in our learning for ourselves, each other, and Earth. The Power of the Circle is the power of relating and supporting each other through a journey. It can simply reflect the literal space of learning but also the community in which we are learning. It is the ‘safe-enough space’ that we create together in the classroom that allows us to be emotionally engaged, connected, and generous.

Complicated? You bet. But as we go, we see some inherent simplicity and will try to relay that to you in the following pages. You can click on each of the components of this model to better understand each bit. And please keep in mind that this is a model, a simplified version of a complex process that needs to be experienced to be fully understood.

Over the next few pages, you will see the model of the process of TI built and described. It might be confusing at first, but keep returning to it as you read through this book. You should notice that the concepts, language, and organization represented by this circular model are reflected in the organization and structure of this book. Physical versions of this model will be shared with you in class.
Soul Earth Community
INTERACTIVE 1.4 Cajete’s Questions on the Purpose of Education

- Earth
- Soul
- Community
- Intent
Attend

re-imagining the purpose of school
relating personal + professional
connecting to personal passions
emotional engagement
relational accountability
considering knowledge
decolonizing power
lens + worldview
 Attend

INTERACTIVE 1.5 Attend
Mentor pods facilitation techniques helping inquirer navigate walking our talk edge of counselling practice of vulnerability safe-enough space and time + space introduce + question models explore other ways of knowing empowering learner (autonomy) ‘gems’ - intuitive wisdom disrupting binaries facilitating techniques pods disrupting binaries

INTERACTIVE 1.6 Mentor
Engage 
comfort with failure 
vulnerability 
struggle 
touchstone stories 
pods 
letting the questions guide you 
reflexivity 
transformation 
mindfulness 
risk taking 
trusting the process - flow 
dwelling in liminality 
rest 
shame 
marinating 
percolating 
comfort with failure 
power of the circle 
Engage 
Power of the Circle
Resistance

At this point, we would like to acknowledge that some of our past students have resisted the process of TI. Some people just prefer not to go into the swamp at all and Interactive 1.8 describes some of the common resistance points in more detail. As a student in the course, you may want to refer to this when you feel you are “stuck” somehow. Resistance can occur in many forms, such as flight (skimming the surface, apathy, pleasing the instructor, etc.), fight (perfectionism, seeing TI as airy-fairy, etc.) and freeze (fear of failure, worry about what others think, etc.). Other indicators include ignorance (being oblivious to the process), shame and the overarching culture of anxiety in which we all live. The analysis of this data set is still ongoing. Again, click on each aspect to read more.

You will notice that some words in the following models are surrounded by coloured boxes. These boxes indicate a particularly dynamic connectivity with another ring or resistance concept, for example, shame. These connectivities arose from the data and indicate the complexity of overlapping concepts amongst the rings.
Resistances are the things that get in the way, inhibit, or block the TI process. Notice that they are categorized as flight, fright, freeze, ignorance, culture of anxiety, shame, and instructor interference. The analysis of these categories is ongoing.
How to use this book

You may want to think of this book as a boundless table covered with an intriguing buffet of food. While readings will be required for class, ultimately you will choose which ‘foods’ (sections) appeal to you the most. It is designed so that you can navigate organically through the complexity of TI based on your own interests and the needs of your inquiry partners, those individuals who will be part of your TI journey. The book offers suggestions for trying new ways of attending, being, and doing, and you will decide what works best for you as an educator. It is up to you to adapt the process for your own needs and your particular learning situations.

We often talk about the usefulness of TI and continuously seek ways for it to be practical. On the way to practicality however, we ask you to be open to possibilities that you may not have considered previously. For example, TI often requires attention to intuition and other ways of knowing such as those you might access in the inquiry journaling process. While not everyone is comfortable with creative activities such as collage, our hope is that you will suspend your assumptions and dive into the unknown for a while. Many past participants of the course have been pleasantly surprised by what they have learned through what appeared at first to be unusual, awkward and even disconcerting approaches.

While this iBook is in many ways a linear text, the process of TI is anything but linear. This iBook should be considered a modular resource (start or stop reading this book at any chapter/section) for your experience in the TI course and beyond. We suggest that you return and re-read sections of the book periodically. We have also included hyperlinks to bring you out of this iBook to resources that resonate with our work. New experiences can lead to new perspectives that offer other lenses from which to understand the process.

Definitions

Many students have noticed that there are a lot of new words (some of which we made up!) in this text. You can always look for it in the glossary if you need to find some more clarity on certain terms.

An iBook in the state of be~~coming

Please note that we are continuously updating the contents of this book and appreciate your feedback to continue to develop its relevancy. Specific suggestions are particularly appreciated. What is unclear? Where would more information be helpful? How can the organizational structure be tweaked? Let us know your thoughts, by sending us a quick note via your instructor or to: tinquiry@uvic.ca. Student feedback has been greatly useful in developing the content of this book to this point.
About us

Over time, the TI team has consisted of instructors of the course, graduate students, and undergraduate students of the course. Among us we have extensive experience in schools and schooling including, pre-school, kindergarten, elementary, middle years, high school, and adult education and have found ourselves in the roles of learners, teachers, teachers-on-call, and principals. We, like you (we presume), are all educators concerned with making our classrooms better places of learning. Whenever possible, we consciously disrupt the “sage on the stage” model of learning~teaching~researching in order to honour the knowledge we can all bring into the TI process.

Acknowledgments

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REFLEXIVE QUESTIONS

1. Transformative learning is both an organic and structured process that can occur without premeditation. In this class we invite you to consider your own transformative processes. What sort of transformative learning experiences have you had in the past? Were they in formal education settings? What made these experiences transformational?

2. Cajete’s three questions are integral to the TI process. Which of these questions resonate with you the most deeply? Why? Which, if any are distant in your mind?
CHAPTER 2

Transformative Inquiry Vignettes

TI was uncomfortable at times, confusing, felt too big and fuzzy but it was intriguing, informative, enlightening and a chance to not have to give a definitive answer. A chance to have time - to reflect, to breathe, to get lost in thought and to not have to know.

- Former Student

Click here for the Transformative Inquiry Research Website
The following vignettes will give you a sense of what the TI process has been like for some of our past course participants. One set of our data includes the mentoring sessions of sixteen participants. This set has been closely analyzed, leading to a working model of TI and to the creation of this iBook. Seven of these data sets were used to create these vignettes.

Data were gathered from the summer of 2010 to the fall of 2012. Most of the students in these vignettes were enrolled at a time when the course was offered after the final practicum at the very end of the teacher education program. You might notice the rich experiences that the final practicum offers to the process. Words in italics are direct quotes from the data, which have all been made anonymous.

There are two aspects of the course that should be described at this point in order to explain the context of the vignettes. First, many of the vignettes refer to a required article by curriculum scholar Cynthia Chambers, Research that matters: Finding a path with heart. In this article, Chambers discusses autobiographical inquiry, a journey that most TI participants eventually take. In particular she considers the importance and difficulty of upholding integrity through the practice of ethos, pathos, and logos – character, emotion and reason. She writes that often, logos overshadows pathos and ethos in academic discourse.

I’m reminded that pathos and ethos matter, too; that listening with open ears and an open heart makes good relations between and among others possible. But how do we learn to listen, how can we hear hearts speaking —our own as well as others? Where do we find what matters, the path with heart? (p.8)

It is just such a journey that TI takes us on.

Second, there is a final assignment, called the Guided Inquiry Conversation (GIC) that all students complete. The GICs happen as part of a final podfest – or celebration of the TI journey. Each person has time (typically 20 minutes or so) to share their TI journey and engage the rest of the class in the things that matter to them as educators. This sharing is explicitly not a presentation. Rather, it is time and space to engage others in your topic in useful ways. For example, you may highlight significant features of your TI journey; asking the group to explore an aspect of your topic that you are still struggling with; or engaging the group in experiential learning of your topic. All these are with an eye towards usefulness within your practice.

Note that embedded in each vignette, students’ journeys are mapped on the TI model introduced in Chapter 1. These diagrams should be seen as accompanying the text to help illustrate the process of TI that the students underwent.
In her early assignments Ashley thought a lot about the importance honesty holds for teachers, remarking in her description of her collage that she made a strong effort “to be honest and true” to who she was. Shortly after, the Chambers article led her to write,

*Our profession puts so much responsibility on us to do great, to be aware of everything, to not make these mistakes... How do we be honest about the situation when we are so worried about what parents will think, what the public will think, what our principal will think? [This] ties back to the question about writing ...to please what we think the reader will appreciate vs. writing from the heart. It is important to monitor but to what extent? Do we really have freedom of speech?*

Initially, Ashley painted a rosy picture of her practicum, seeing the inherent challenges as learning opportunities.

*Although I was nervous and didn’t know if I was ready, it all came together when I got in front of the class and immersed myself in teaching. With the help of my supervisor and mentor, I grew into a confident individual and this allowed me to grow immensely as a teacher.*

Ashley believed strongly in the importance of her heritage as a Métis woman, and felt it was her job to pass this knowledge on; thus her initial inquiry questions:

- What does Aboriginal Education look like in different districts?
- What does Aboriginal Education entail?
- How, as a student teacher, do we know when/to what extent we can incorporate Aboriginal Education?
- What is immersion vs. integration?
- What are the benefits of Aboriginal Education in schools?

Coming into her first TI mentor session, Ashley had a clearly developed plan of inquiry in which she would interview her grandmother, read family documents, check out professional literature on the subject, visit the local Native Education Resource room and maybe talk with some of her fellow pre-service teachers. The tone of her inquiry began to shift however, when she shared that she had withdrawn from her
practicum before completion, due to issues around her “being too creative” with her teaching style.

At this point, her TI mentor assured her that she was not alone - other students in the program had similar situations. Together they explored how her experience might relate to her particular inquiry. After explaining that some members of her family still struggled to identify with their Aboriginal history, Ashley admitted that she didn’t really know where she was going with her inquiry yet. The mentor supported Ashley in her spaces of uncertainty by responding that it was okay and better to be in a space of uncertainty than one of over-certainty, where every step was laid out ahead of time. You “don’t want to get too narrow too quickly,” she suggested.

Together, they discussed worldviews, the purpose of schooling and different tools that Ashley might use to explore her topic more fully (eg. moveable mind maps, defining language). As they talked, the mentor eventually asked about the elephant in the room, suggesting that Ashley might want to explore what went wrong in her practicum. This led them to a discussion of how her creative ways of teaching might be in line with indigenous ways of learning, but in discord with her mentor teacher’s expectations. Ashley began to show an interest in connecting with her topic on a more personal level and wondered aloud about how she might begin to “break the mould of schools.” Ashley worried that she might not want to share such a personal process with her peers. Recognizing the richness of the topic and also the vulnerability, the mentor told Ashley that when the time came, an alternative assignment could be arranged if needed.

The mentor also suggested, “if you can open that up and look at it really honestly, it could help you and it could also help other people... I can guarantee that there will be kids in your classroom who will feel those same pressures.” The tone in Ashley’s voice changed audibly, “that’s way more resonating with me ...I can connect more to it, for sure! ...I feel much better now that I have a direction. ...I tend to want to put it to the side and not think about it when it is painful, but yeah.”

After this, Ashley’s questions shifted:

- How can I effectively incorporate Aboriginal Ed/Ways of knowing and creativity with balance in my future classroom?
- How can I be creative as a student teacher?
- How have my personal experiences affected my confidence?

Ashley continued to explore her topic, and in her second mentor session described how it was easier “now that I have a personal kind of connection to the topic ...and it’s become more of an internal thing.” However, now that she was being more honest with herself, there was a sense of guilt and shame arising from what had happened on practicum. She worried again about sharing with her peers, finally admitting:

I do want to get into a place before my next classroom where I’m able to be okay with it and right now I’m not
okay with it! I still have anger! I want to address the thing, but...

At this point, Ashley’s mentor suggested she might do an anger collage. “Just feel what you’re feeling and see what images you are drawn to...in that anger there is important stuff, there’s useful information for you.” She went on to say that Ashley could take the time to look at what was upsetting to her, why she was feeling hurt, suggesting “not to do it in a self indulgent kind of way, but to do it in a really truly, reflective way where you bring thinking friends in.”

Through the collage process Ashley realized she was dealing with much more than anger. She shared some of this with her mentor at an extra session:

- I was confident and had many dreams before the practicum (Woman with clouds around head)
- I was doing things the way I thought I was supposed to be doing them (robot)
- I felt I was left alone and falling short and being drowned underneath my work (hand in paper)
- I couldn’t get to Maslow’s higher levels of self-actualization (triangle in middle)
- The power of the circle – interconnectedness and sitting in a circle during class where you can see everyone and everyone can be heard (red circle)
- Hands on learning instead of sitting in chairs (diver exploring)
- The poster of the environment (rainbows)
- Everyone is graduating except me (grad)

While discussing the collage, a significant touchstone story came up. In her practicum, Ashley had wanted to incorporate a lesson in which her students would partner up, go outside and put blindfolds on one person in each pair. The blind partners would then be led to a tree to explore it with their other senses. Later each person would remove the blindfold and find the tree. Ashley’s mentor teacher shut down the activity, calling it a “tree hugging” exercise. As Ashley shared this story, she became tearful.

I just felt like I was being shut down and she didn’t really respect who I was. ...For me [the activity] is who I am. It’s like, you’re calling my people...I don’t know...it was kind of hard for me. ....So it made me lose my confidence... I ended up teaching in the sort of methods you were talking about, like up in front of the classroom, and note taking. And that’s not who I am, but it was like I didn’t know what else to do... I was in a
bad spot after my practicum... I felt like who I was, was the problem. ... Like they were against me and not for me.

Ashley’s emotions in the collage extended beyond anger to disappointment, fear, **shame** and frustration around the practicum experience. At this point her mentor felt that it might be confidence building to find a way to share some of her story. She suggested the possibility of framing the story as a vehicle to imagine how she might respond to her mentor teacher’s tree hugging comment. Ashley agreed that this might be useful and at the Guided Inquiry Conversation (GIC), she began by discussing the benefits of creativity and exploring the trees with senses other than sight. Spontaneously, she veered from her plan, and shared that she had to withdraw from this practicum.

The most influential part of my GIC was the support my classmates gave when I opened up about my practicum withdrawal. I was very nervous and became quite emotional talking about my practicum, but I was so happy that my classmates were so understanding and had such good advice to offer me. Our discussion was so open and honest and continued my emotional inquiry journey. I am glad I talked about such a deep issue because it helped me come to terms with what happened on my practicum. If I had just addressed a general question about creativity I don’t think it would have had the same effect for myself or my classmates. Our conversation really helped me think about what I would do in a similar situation [that might arise] in my next practicum. My inquiry is not in any way finished.

Although I have begun to address my path with heart, it is my path with heart that must be followed throughout my teaching career. Right now I feel like I have gone below the surface but there are still issues I have not addressed. Some major questions are still in motion for me.

- How am I going to create a classroom community where creativity and Aboriginal ways of knowing are fostered and supported?
- How can I be creative in my next practicum?
- How will I teach my history with confidence, especially as a student teacher?
INTERACTIVE 2.2 Ashley’s TI process plotted on the model
Morphing the Dragon

Sara came into the TI experience having been introduced to the notion of transformative learning in a previous course.

I know that transformative learning...has taken a hold of my thinking, and my emotional and social processes as I find myself inquiring, questioning, and investigating each and every day, while my prior experiences and knowledge fold back on themselves and evolve each time, lending itself to the cyclical nature of reflexivity. I am excited to see where this course takes me!

Sara’s inquiry was full of emotion. It began with questions about her practicum experience and a tension she felt around exploring her felt reactions to the fact that she and her mentor teacher had significantly different teaching styles. Sara was frustrated because she had the sense that in order to be professional she had to take on the attitude of “don’t make waves, don’t create drama, and don’t wake the sleeping dragon.” Her initial inquiry questions reflect this concern around the dynamics of mentor and student teacher relationships:

• What are the positives and negatives of a student-teacher mentorship?
• Do student teachers morph to fit into the already-established routines, teaching styles, management techniques of the mentor (whether similar or dissimilar)? How? Why?
• Is this morphing reciprocal?
• What if our ‘mentor’ teacher embodies everything you don’t want to become?
• If we are expected to morph and learn from our ‘mentor’ teacher, does that expectation include morphing into a terrible teacher?
• What happens if our philosophies/styles etc. are not aligned and we do not choose (whether consciously or subconsciously) to become a chameleon (in a negative sense) and how does that further effect our practicum evaluations, school impressions, staff interactions, and the classroom climate?

Early in the course, Sara had a randomly assigned thinking friend who was able to help her find new perspective:

Sara: Well I just had my thinking friend meeting so I’ve got tons happening in my mind right now with lots of questions that have come up, like what a brilliant concept the whole idea of thinking friend is... Because it really helped me kind of... think of it very differently... She has no idea what my experience was; she just knew that it was a kind of negative experience.

Mentor: Right.

Sara: And so she was able to ask questions that some of my friends might stay away from because they know it was more touchy... She was able to get more real about it. It was really cool. But I think more than anything just more questions came up... Which naturally happens... in thinking. But I think I was realizing that although I was clinging to the unbiased and I was clinging to take that emotional step back to be able to look at kind of what happened from a very factual standpoint instead of a hurt and wounded standpoint. I
wasn’t actually doing that as effectively as I thought I was.

Mentor: How could you [achieve that]?

Sara: Exactly. And so [she] said to me, “How do you make sure that you’re doing that? ...What are some of the steps you can take in order to make sure that you are taking that unemotional standpoint? Is it possible? ...That I’m looking at it factually and non-judgmentally and from both sides because obviously when you feel wounded or when you feel hurt you go, “Well, you did this to me,” you feel that way... What I am trying to get to is how did I also perpetuate the dynamic that was dysfunctional?

From this meeting, Sara promised herself that her inquiry would “serve as a ‘therapeutic’ release” and she gave herself time and space to explore some of the stress and trauma that emerged around her differences with her practicum teacher. It was important for her to do this exploration both in conversation with others, and alone through creative expression.

Sara: What I was able to identify is that talking about it really helps me; that hearing other experiences from other classmates who struggled during [their] practicum with mentor/teacher dynamics, that was helpful for me. And also some kind of artistic expression is very helpful for me... [My exploration] may turn out to be a collage. It may turn out to be a painting on canvas.

Mentor: Absolutely.

Sara: It might be a number of sketches.

Mentor: Wonderful.

Sara: I think it’s going to turn into that because this week there’s so much in [my head] and the only way that I’m going to be able to get any kind of clearing from that is to go whoosh, [let it all out] on a canvas.

Mentor: Great... And maybe keep the odd journal notes so that you have those little touchstones for the point in time in which you were creating that piece of art. And have you thought of...who you might approach to be your second thinking friend?

Later in this interview, Sara and her mentor discussed the nature of knowing and that it is not only intellectual; emotions can be a source of knowledge.

Sara: Yeah... I’m someone who asks a lot of questions, and [intellectual] knowledge makes me feel comfortable... That’s why I always ask questions because then if a question means I don’t know something therefore I’m seeking an answer to know it. And I do that in every part of my life, which can be very annoying at times. But knowledge makes me feel comfortable, it makes me feel secure. And this experience made me feel really uncomfortable and very insecure and so that’s why this is a very great starting point.

Mentor: Absolutely it is. Yeah.

Sara: [It’s a place] for me to ferret out and turn the emotion into fact so that I can understand it. Does that make sense? Making that transition between emotionally it’s going like this in my head and in my heart, and feeling heavy and just ugh all the time because if I can’t put words to the emotion I can’t understand what happened or how I felt or why I felt a certain way when I did. But by investigating these
certain questions about, you know, whatever; doing that will help me find and be able to put a more tangible understanding onto the emotional feeling of it... It’s making... that transition to have it be one understanding with an emotional response to a factual event; why, what happened, and how it’s meshing.

Mentor: This gives you a chance to process it. And those emotions are really important sources of knowing. We need time to process them and to translate them into language because we think with words or images. Images are very powerful too. I mean if you’re comfortable staying in the cyclical process and you’re okay with returning to it and going okay, here’s another cycle and now I’m going this way. That’s exactly what you should be doing.

Sara: Yeah. That’s what [another instructor] had said...at the very beginning of my practicum. “Are you comfortable in the chaos?” And I’ll always remember that. It makes sense. I am comfortable in the chaos and I know that’s transformative learning and I know that it’s the unbounded questions that help us process and help us understand...

Mentor: Absolutely.

Sara: Questions come from other questions and that is a process that is forever... But if I can get some kind of grasp on what happened [emotionally] for the last 10 weeks of my life I’d really like to know.

Through a series of creative paintings and conversations with others, Sara continued to explore her topic despite the feeling that it was somehow taboo. She wrestled with the emotion and how to give it attention as a way of knowing without it becoming too overwhelming, without feeling she was “perpetuating the dynamic that was dysfunctional.” She came to realize that an unemotional standpoint was not possible or even desirable. She was hanging out with the sleeping dragon, trying to understand it, and in the end, she began to morph how she saw herself as a teacher, a process of “closing the disconnect between [her] personal and professional self.” This led her to write:

I began this inquiry process by focusing on the dynamics and relationships of others (perhaps a subconscious way of remaining impartial and ignoring the ‘felt’ experience of my own professional relationship). I realized along the way, how backwards this approach was – I needed to look at myself first, which then led to self-awareness of my seemingly separate identities within my professional relationship with my mentor teacher. This further led into investigating myself within relationships with others; 1+2=3

Sara was willing to explore not only her practicum experience and the emotions that it provoked, but also to connect with how her intense emotional life was an integral part of who she is as an educator. She did not shy away from lingering with the discomfort of the sleeping dragon or her emotional vulnerability around that experience. In her Guided Inquiry Conversation she shared her heartfelt experiences with honesty and emotion, leading to a strong exchange with her peers around professional relationships. Sara left the course with evolving, significant and challenging questions:

• Can one separate the ‘teaching’ from the ‘teacher’ or the ‘person’?
• Is one’s professional identity inhibiting to one’s personal identity or vice versa? Which is the important one to maintain? Is there a hierarchy?
• Can identities actually be separated? When disconnects are observed, what is actually happening?

• Should there be some sort of ‘screening’ process of mentor teachers before they are deemed suitable to take a student teacher?
In Leanne’s grade-two practicum class, she noticed that kids fell into “silly” behavior and that this often spread throughout the class. This prompted her initial questions:

- Is behaviour contagious?
- Why are some students ALWAYS on task while others are never on task? Bored?
- Is it the class-climate created by the teacher? Is it due to a lack of respect or the home life situation?
- Can removing one student from the equation stop the silly behaviours of others?

In their first meeting, Leanne’s mentor listened carefully to understand the background story.

Mentor: Tell me a little more about your topic of contagious behaviour.

Leanne: Well we were doing this Roots of Empathy program... and the lady who runs it... told [the class], you know, behaviours are contagious. So if one of you is sitting on the carpet I see that lots of you are acting silly. And it was just something that I thought was an interesting thing to say... And then my mentor teacher kind of kept with that throughout my practicum. It was like, when one was silly, I was like okay, what did we say about silly behaviour – da da da da da. (in comic voice) It’s not helping anybody and...that kind of thing...

In their first meeting, Leanne’s mentor listened carefully to understand the background story.

Mentor: So you may want to take some time to write about that and maybe you draw/paint two pictures with your words or you could collage or do whatever you want. [Describe] what did that look like and feel like? What did the other one look like and feel like? Paint those pictures so that then you can look at them a little differently once they’re on your paper.

Leanne: I was going to ask you if that’s okay that I do that.

Mentor: Which?

Leanne: Talk about the little boy... I won’t use his name... But it’s okay if I look at that aspect of it?

Mentor: Of course.

Leanne: It’s not kind of like I’m blaming – I’m not trying to like blame it on him, kind of thing but -
Mentor: Oh no.

Leanne: But it’s just, it was interesting ‘cause we noticed it several times.

Mentor: What we’re doing here, it’s not a judgment thing, right? It’s trying to sort it out so you can be a better teacher and have things work better in your classroom. So yes, if you’re going to end up sharing that story with the class you need to be very careful with how you share that story. In terms of your own exploration of it, be as honest as you can be... look at those things that are niggling you – like – what’s going on there? Unpack that.

Leanne: Yeah ‘cause I wanted to check with you before I wrote about it ‘cause I didn’t know that was okay and I didn’t want to cross any boundaries and you’d be like, ooooh this is a little too...personal, kind of thing.

Mentor: ...Sometimes when I do this kind of work I’ll keep the name the same when I start writing, just because I kind of need to remember who that person really is... But then if I’m going to share it with anybody I just change the name, right? ...As teachers what we’re trying to do is really understand what’s happening. What happens of course is we turn things into gossip; patterns of labeling kids, and all that stuff is definitely something you want to be paying attention to.

Leanne: Yeah, yeah, and I don’t want to do that because he is a lovely boy and I have a lot of fun with him but it was, you know, five times a day [he would have a] blow-out when he was at school.

Mentor: Yeah and so you’re just trying to paint a picture of what you saw. And of course...it’s not necessarily how they would see it or how your mentor-teacher would have even seen it, or how the parents see it, right? So keep in mind it’s only one of those perspectives. But then you know, spell it out a little bit, see what it is, the picture of it, right? ...However it works for you.

Leanne: Cool.

They went on to talk about how Leanne could let her questions guide her in this inquiry journey, and the mentor again gave numerous ideas for ways of proceeding. By the second mentor meeting, Leanne had created a moveable mind map around her initial question, and had come to realize that she already knew that yes, behavior was contagious.

Leanne: When I was thinking about it in my experience, it is like when one starts talking, they all start talking; or if one’s silly they’re all silly; or if it seemed like certain days if we [said] if we get this job done quickly we can go outside for ten minutes and then they’d all [move] quickly so I just don’t know if it’s a good question anymore.

Leanne and her mentor went on to discuss how teachers set the tone of the classroom by their own actions and gradually, the conversation went back to the boy with autism.

Leanne: And it seems like as soon as you have a kid that you know is consistently behaving badly almost, it’s not like you’re picking on them, but it seems like any time they do anything, you’re on them. Where if it’s another kid maybe that’s always well behaved, you might just let it slide. And I think that’s kind of interesting too.

Mentor: What I used to try and figure out is how can I take the energy of that kid and how can I have a relationship with them? Because they set the tone in the class too... and how do you use that momentum for the
kind of tone that you really want and not the kind of tone that they’re trying to set?

Leanne: Yeah, exactly. And then there’s the question about the autistic boy... cause he’d come in...and [he would be] just a big explosion, he’s on the floor, rolling around, screaming, crying, and that’s first thing in the morning and that’s how the class starts for everybody else too. All the other kids go ohhhh, you know? But even though the teacher did an autism unit at the beginning of the year and we had to have a couple of talks with him a few times while I was there, we’d get the [aid] to take him for a walk just because [the other kids] weren’t being respectful, they’d put up their hands and [say disrespectful things]. And we’re like, is that helping right now, did you need to say that? Like he’s on his square, leave him alone, just ignore it kind of thing. So I don’t really know where I want to go with this guy and it’s bothering me cause I think the idea of it’s good and I just don’t know what to do with it.

Mentor: So I think you need to explore why you care about this. There’s some reason that you care and...it’s a fascinating question... It’s more of a question perhaps of what can I do about it or what do I want to do about it? ...One way you could proceed, is to sit down and write for 20 minutes just everything that comes into your mind about that autistic boy and the interactions other kids had and what the other kids said and what wasn’t said and how you felt about it as a teacher in that classroom. And from there you might start to see more of where you need to head now. Does that make sense?

Leanne: Yeah, ’cause I feel like I’m just all over the place, like I have all these little points but none of them are really going...like they’re going somewhere but they’re not going somewhere, if that helps?

Mentor: Yeah, you’re in the murky swamp.

Leanne: Yeah it’s like I know that it’s contagious; I just don’t know why I want to know – like I don’t know, it’s hard to explain.

Despite clear encouragement and numerous entry points, Leanne left this line of inquiry and did not go further down the intriguing path of the boy with autism. Leanne soon changed her topic to the tone of a classroom, asking:

- How much is the tone set by the teacher?
- How is a good teaching tone established and what does this look like?
- How do you harness disruptive energy to make sure the underlying tone of the classroom is not disrupted with it?

While these questions are potentially very useful, Leanne stayed in a somewhat superficial inquiry space:

I became uncomfortable talking about the student with autism. I feel that my lack of knowledge and experience in this area is partially what made me feel awkward about it, but also guilt played a role. I felt bad discussing him and his behavior issues. Although it would have made a great class discussion about labeled and unlabeled children it was something I did not want to bring up...I am simply not comfortable enough... because it is such a sensitive issue I know too little about.

Leanne’s guilt and lack of knowledge made her unable to fully explore a very important educational topic. When we analyzed this transcript, the TI research team noticed how often the mentor, like a person fishing, threw out line after line for Leanne to grab, but she took only a nibble. Leanne was like a fish, frozen to the same safe spot. Her GIC was an interesting...
conversation around classroom tone and energy flow, but her heart questions around autism were not attended to; her worries left her unwilling to take this risk.
Sebastian, a post-degree diploma student, was enrolled in the TI course one summer when it was offered as part of the Indigenous Education and Community Collaborations Institute. Although this was a different context than the regular teacher education program, many of the same processes occurred. In fact for Sebastian, the TI journey was enhanced by the extra time he spent learning on the land.

As a secondary visual arts pre-service teacher, Sebastian entered his TI journey as someone introverted, creative, and deeply connected to nature and place. He saw art as a tool for learning and was particularly interested in the indigenous perspective that embraces the functionality of art. At the beginning of his TI journey, he was very interested in the notion of generous listening and asked:

*What is being listened to?*

He wanted to make a visual archive of his experience within the institute and used art as a representation of what he was hearing. Sebastian’s progression was not linear and his journey swirled and surged with layers of questions that revolved around ceremony, wondering:

- What is the value of having ceremonies/rituals in the classroom?
- What about the idea of using ceremonies in the classroom to build community and learning?
- What role does art play in ceremonies?
- [What is the impact of a] loss of ceremony?

For his first **winter count**, Sebastian sent a short song on the topic of generous listening along with the following explanation:

*Generous listening...open, clear... confusion and other streams set in. The mind lets go in the end. The temporary and then the gone. Multiple voices...what are they saying?*

He also included an image of a wolf sketched on an old piece of plywood.
At their first meeting, Sebastian and his mentor talked together about the importance wolves held for him and eventually the mentor suggested he consider looking into the wolf as a type of animal guide. What could he learn from wolves that might inform who he was as an educator? What ways do wolves have that might shed light onto his questions around ceremony? How might he observe wolves more fully in order to learn from them? What wisdom does a wolf hold?

Later, as part of the institute, Sebastian spent three days learning on the land at nearby Todd Inlet. After that experience, he created a second winter count that showed the interconnectedness between all things:

To describe this image Sebastian wrote:

I made this image on the land. The land gives us all we need. I have learned so much being on the land and find it hard to return to the classroom. I feel connected to nature in a way I rarely experience. The more time I spend in nature the more I want to remain in nature.

Oral tradition > we remember what we are supposed to.

Stories > amazing and insightful.

Cedar bark > bathing, pre-ceremony. You can use cedar for everything.

Alongside, was this poem:

My mind is at rest.
No more tests
Just the land and I
No need to try
all is given
take what you need
Listen to Raven
and you’ll succeed.

In Sebastian’s third winter count he moved away from drawing and instead chose to cover a stick with velvet.
He wrote that this demonstrated:

*Nature is covered by colonial materials. The royal velvet is a symbol of the [loss] of Nature. The majority of the stick cannot be felt. You feel the soft lie.*

At this stage, Sebastian began to move into deeper realms of questioning and connected what he was learning from the land to the wolf and to the community.

*Nature is covered. It affects all of us. The global family. The wolf is loyal and has a strong family bond. We can learn from the wolf. What do you have covered? What aren't you revealing? What does it feel like? How can you adapt and how can you cure the problem?*

Notice that Sebastian began with a discussion of nature, transitioned to the community, the wolf, and finally expanded into a series of questions in the second person. Even as he questions the reader, one cannot help but wonder how much these questions might be posed inwards, towards himself.

Sebastian began to resist the required course readings and found a resonance with indigenous ways of knowing, experiential learning, and oral culture. His mentor honored his feelings and noted that, “We walk in 2 worlds in the institute.” Sebastian began to ponder ceremony as a way to build community. He also revealed parts of his own process by living within his questions, rather than looking for pat answers.

*By understanding the other you can better understand thy self [and] situations. What does it feel like to be outside the group? Experience it. Go outside the group.*

By doing this you will better your understanding of the other. You will build compassion, empathy especially.

For Sebastian it was very important to seek solitude. In his annotated bibliography entry, he struggled to expand his understanding of wolf as discussed in Medicine Cards (Sams & Carson, 1999):

*Wolf could also be telling you to seek out lonely places that will allow you to share your teacher within. In the aloneness of a power place, devoid of other humans, you may find the true you. The gift of wisdom comes to you when you have walked enough pathways and found enough dead ends to truly know the forest. In the rediscovery of every inch of ground comes the knowledge that nothing ever remains the same.*

In this way, Sebastian was engaging the complex terrain of teaching and learning. His journey was fluid and dynamic, much akin to the movement of water, that as it flows, cannot help but leave the terrain it touches transformed.

Sebastian’s final **winter count** was a painting that was full of his ruminations.

*The flames in the middle of the piece represent ascension. The flames/fire represents the things we need to release and let go of. This is a process and you can see the fire moving upwards and away.*

*The central house like structure in the middle is open and we can see inside. This structure flows within nature. I like the idea of our houses being more than a square box and that nature should and can be incorporated in it. In the top right you can kind of see a*
residential school. It is covered in red and you can see red throughout the piece. The red represents the blood and tears that has been shed because of residential schools. The bottom is Todd’s Inlet with the dock. The viewer’s vantage point is looking at the land from the ocean. Perhaps we are on a canoe.

Sebastian was very satisfied with his participation in the TI course. He valued the vulnerability of his peers and the new perspectives he was exposed to. He found that he changed not only what he learned, but also the way in which he engaged in his learning:

I have learned another way to learn, through experiential learning, a way of learning that is slowed down and harvested through saturating oneself in Nature and learning from the land. I am very thankful I had the opportunity to enjoy this summer program.

For his final guided inquiry conversation, Sebastian discussed with his peers:

- How can I use ritual and ceremony in the classroom?
- What ceremony and ritual do we engage in that we are not conscious of?
- How do we take a moment to connect to spirit, to something larger and deeper that what we initially see?
INTERACTIVE 2.5 Sebastian’s TI process plotted on the model

- Letting the Questions Guide You
- Risk Taking
- Connecting to Personal Passions
- Dwelling in Liminality
- Decolonizing Power
- Lens and Worldview
Jill and Heather both had challenging practicum placements. Heather worked in a small elementary school and she enjoyed her experience.

*I felt like I did follow my path with heart. I was shown the way by the amazing staff at the designated inner-city school. Some of the kids had the most difficult situations I have ever come across (ESL, culture shock, kids who have seen war, kids who are afraid of police, extreme cases of poverty, abusive relationships, anxiety issues, and learning disabilities to name a few.) Giving students a safe space to be kids, to be creative, to have ownership over before and after school, and making sure that community initiatives are there to support them is a very challenging role. The teachers were a source of inspiration every day.*

Jill’s practicum was in an elementary resource room in a rural northern BC First Nations community. Her experience was traumatic and frustrating.

*[In this setting] the faults and detriments of living with values of consumption and capitalism couldn’t have been more exemplified. I saw the effects of violence, poverty and greed perpetuated through a system without any ways out. I saw these affects through the tantrums, bullying, and behavioural struggles of the troubled, vulnerable and resilient children I taught everyday. And my role? Damage control. I became one more band-aid to a very neglected and damaged history.*

Fortunately for Jill, near the end of her practicum she was invited into other classrooms in the school and had some positive teaching and mentoring experiences. Nevertheless, Jill left her practicum thinking, “Maybe teaching isn’t my gig.”

In their first mentoring session, Jill was reassured that this uncertainty was not something she would have to hide.

*Mentor: Yeah, so know that I am familiar with and comfortable having conversations about maybe you don’t want to be a teacher, right? I’ve had those kinds of conversations with other people. Just because this is a teacher ed. program, doesn’t mean that everyone should leave it and be teachers... There’s something here that’s interesting for you, right? And so I’m happy to have that be part of this conversation if it’s appropriate, and it feels like what you want to do.*

While Heather and Jill began their inquiry process alone, they soon discovered their common concerns and questions.
• How do we educate at-risk students most effectively?
• Where are the gaps in the system and how do we fill them?
• What are tried and true methods for these kids?
• What is the history of inclusion/resource rooms and where is it headed?
• What qualities make a person a successful resource room teacher?

Both Jill and Heather wanted to continue working with learners who were academically or socially at risk of being unsuccessful in school. They wanted to boost their confidence and gather more practical information around all that they had experienced. Both were frustrated over what they saw as lacking educational situations for these kids. Together, they began to explore support networks, and adaptive programs, motivational practices. The mentor sessions became an extension of this work as the mentor bore witness to their wonderings and walked alongside as difficult topics arose.

Heather: It’s so hard... ‘Cause you don’t want to pre-judge a kid, right? ... I had a kid who was like this little red-headed boy and you know, almost looks Scottish and then you meet his brothers and they’ve got the same facial structure and they’re very clearly Arabic and the entire family was from like a [highly disrupted] part of the middle east – I can’t remember which part but this kid had seen war. You know, like jumped over dead bodies and I had no clue. Sometimes he... was just kind of like a jokester kid and [would] give everybody a hard time. But after finding that out I was – it didn’t really affect anything but –

Mentor: But it helps you understand what they might be seeing in the world? Or what lens they might be looking through?

Jill: Or what strategy they’re using to deal with that, right?

Mentor: And you know [with] something like that, hopefully it’s not that we shy away from questions, conversations about war or these big, difficult topics, but that we’re mindful of it.

For many pre-service teachers, practicum is a place where they get some of their first glimpses of the deep pain and suffering in the world. Jill and Heather took the time and space that the TI course offered in order to explore these difficult landscapes courageously and with humble honesty. They had seen much grief in their placements and needed to talk about it. They attended actively, and listened generously, to issues that others might have felt were taboo; hence the name that the research team gave to them, humblebees. Spending time discussing their concerns together, they were able to learn much from their different perspectives, and gradually, Heather and Jill began to ask new questions.

• What exactly are we teaching?
• What is the purpose of education?
• When/How does it vary?
• What is happiness?

Heather: I believe that the purpose of education is to give the students what it is they need to lead successful lives. And if that’s being able to have a strategy to deal with your anger issues then that’s what that child needs. Whereas other children might need extra challenging assignments in order to feel like they’re getting the full benefit out of their learning.
Jill: I think that I would just use... the idea of “successful” because the thing that keeps coming back is what does that mean? I would say [success means having] the tools to live happy lives, because so much of their lives are, you know, too much anyways, right? And then people have this idea that just with some hard work these kids can become like these miracle situations.

Heather: And I guess in even saying “happy,” like, you can’t give a child a happy life. So it really comes down to maybe being a functional member of society you know, and being able to have the skills to interact with another individual in order to get your basic needs met, or whatever...

Jill: I think for me, I don’t know what you’re thinking but for a starting point I want to make a picture of what happy - successful is. Like what the goal is, what is an ideal result for these students that have a tough time? What does that look like? ...Not necessarily the ideal student but what are we trying to give them, [what are our] goals?

Heather: Yeah.

Jill: Some sort of goals. Although that’s kind of funny because that’s sort of the tough thing again right?

Heather: You can make it circular too right? Cause it doesn’t have to be this ultimate goal and now you’re successful. It can be like, here are things that will help you get through and continue on and keep going.

Mentor: And so one of your goals might be to have them be able to be flexible in different situations or something like that? You’re sort of redefining the basics here, right? It’s not just that you want them to read and write and do their arithmetic. You want them to have certain life skills and I think [you might begin] drawing a picture of what those life skills are. ... If we don’t even imagine it, then how do we move towards it? So right now what these kids need is people really imagining what could be. And then, you know some creative thinking about how ideas could be enacted.

These concerns led Jill and Heather to interview teachers who do similar work, and to pay attention to their own beliefs, values and attitudes.

Heather: You were saying that a lot of these inquiries... often turn inward, you know? And I can see that. I can see that really clearly because if you don’t know... what the point is for yourself, what is your purpose and what
are you doing, right, how are you supposed to communicate that to kids? And I think that they pick that up, they just soak it up. And it’s a long year right?

Heather and Jill decided to continue this line of thinking in their GIC sharing with their peers.

We both had similar experiences with school, in that our school lives were easy (sometimes to the point of boredom) and we felt that recognizing that this is not the case for so many students was a valuable lesson for us. It is one thing to know that intellectually and another thing to see and experience this in the classroom...

- How do we effectively educate “at Risk Youth?”
- [What are] systems that work and systems that fail?
- What is beneficial for students in elementary school?
  In high school?
- How do we start changing the system?

After their GIC, Jill reflected on their activity:

Our Guided Inquiry Conversation has led our inquiry down new paths with entirely new (yet interconnected) aspects of teaching. We began the conversation with behavior management [using] a Behaviour Management Car as an analogy to take control of thoughts and actions; as well as a Control Matrix to assist a child in ‘self-regulating’ their attitudes, level of responsibility and sense of self worth. These analogies were well received by our colleagues, and we assumed our conversations would continue in a positive pattern.

Our next activity required teachers to work together to come up with solutions for scenarios. These situations were based on real situations [we] experienced [in our practica]. The amount of conversation wasn’t exactly what we had anticipated. It was almost as if people were nervous about discussing these troubling questions. The level of discomfort among our colleagues was clearly visible. People did not want to talk about these problems.

At the end of class, Heather brought up that this level of discomfort was apparent, and as long as people recognized that the issues exist [they think] that’s enough. But it’s not really enough. Yes, we must create recognition but the next step is to CARE ENOUGH to do something about it.

I have a bias that middle white class privilege shrouds our perception. It is hard work to help out someone when it might mean losing the stability you have for yourself. Not many people felt the need to be ‘self-sacrificing’ like that. I wonder if I have enough self-confidence, courage and balance in my life, to be one of the few.

Heather and Jill were practical and also thoughtful about these complex and relevant issues. They highlighted the apathy they saw around them, but had a quiet determination to make a difference. Some of their journey, including challenges and practical ideas, are demonstrated in these final summary images.

Jill concluded the course by writing about the importance of TI as a vehicle for her growth as a teacher.

My perception has been blown wide open! From my initial ‘path with heart’ to now, I feel my role as ‘teacher-researcher-learner’ is expanding to unfathomable destinations, and new discoveries. I am continually inspired to find out more, to understand, and to learn. With this new perception of Transformative Inquiry I intend to keep looking even
when it hurts to look. I will be daring and do what it takes to get down to the nitty-gritty... and hang out in the mess until it begins to make sense. It will be ok to be uncomfortable. I will find contentedness knowing this inquiry never ends, but takes on new shapes, ideas and ways of understanding. It is a powerful process. It means growing. It means living.
Gail followed a meandering path in her inquiry. She had spent two practicum sessions in a French Immersion program that she had also attended for many years as a student. Gail began her first mentoring session with a question around transferring students from French Immersion to the English program.

How can we make transitioning from French immersion to English more successful for more students?

Gail’s mentor teacher was one that she greatly admired, but she became very concerned by the apparent lack of thought that was put into making transition decisions about students.

Gail: So, [I’m interested in] basically just getting teachers to see that the student who is being transferred should come first instead of the butting of heads and the frustration and the extra time they have to put in, and the duh, duh, duh. Yes you have to put in extra time but you need to be able to welcome that student into your classroom and...

Mentor: Yes, and help them.

Gail: Sometimes it’s half way through the year right? So we need more of a sense of community too.

Mentor: That’s right and look for ways. Maybe the resources in the school could be focused on those children and help the teacher make the transition.

Gail: Yeah.

Mentor: I mean I know that gets tricky too because there’s just such a shortage of resources.

Gail: And communication between the two teachers. From what I’ve seen it’s like, okay... they may be struggling in language but they may be really strong in Math and Science. And really, the other teacher knows nothing about who they actually are, or what role they play in their community in the classroom. So I think there needs to be a lot more communication between the two teachers when kids transfer in. And it’s not like it’s from kids transferring [from out of the district], so it wouldn’t be hard to do that communication.

Mentor: Exactly. Try to build some bonds of understanding. It will be interesting to talk to some of the English teachers that have experienced that... I think communication is really key and it certainly would be interesting if you could talk to some people on both sides.

Gail: Yeah, I plan to.

Mentor: That’s great.

Gail came into her first mentor meeting clear on her topic and had many administrative questions around transfers such as can there be early screening for immersion readiness and the role of parents. Eventually, her mentor asked her how she had come to care about this matter.

Gail: Well, my [close] friend...was in my kindergarten and grade 1 [French Immersion] class, and then he was
transferred into grade 2 in English. And he struggled with school for the rest of his life. He’s never been strong at school. And I often wondered if he hadn’t been put into English right away or kept in French, the whole time, would he have had those same struggles.

Mentor: Well then he would be an excellent case study.

Gail: Yes. I’m going to ask him some questions too.

Mentor: Certainly.

Gail: And then... during my practicum... I somewhat witnessed the transfer of a student and what actually plays in and the politics involved in it. And it upset me that none of the adults in the situation were putting the kid first. Whether it was his parents, whether it was the teachers, the Board members, the Principal, it didn’t seem like anybody was going, “Okay, no, this is really about the kid and what does he need.” And then who has the right to make the decision if no one is looking at the kid? Then who makes that decision, right?

• What is the role of parents in these decisions?
• What is the balance between parents know best and the professionals’ judgment?

Gail left the mentor session and explored her topic by writing short vignettes about what she had observed of three different learners:

1. Her close childhood friend who later struggled in school
2. The child she saw being transferred while in practicum, who had physical disabilities that seemed to have influenced decisions that were made, and
3. Her own siblings, two who were in immersion and one who was not.

In her second mentor meeting, Gail described how working with these cases opened up a new and significant avenue of understanding for her. She began to look at the issue of elitism in the French Immersion program and its effect on the staff and students at the dual track school.

Gail: I really did a big self-study last weekend. Going into why this is bothering me and what I’ve kind of figured out is that I had this bubble around French Immersion. I would have defended it to the end to anybody because of the benefits of it and what it has given me in my life. And the people that I grew up with because you’re in the same class for 13 years... you’re more siblings with everybody in your class because you’re with them all the time. So you look at them and the success they’ve had and the success that I’ve had, and to me French Immersion was this perfect little bubble.

Mentor: Exactly.

Gail: And [during] this practicum, it exploded in my face, the issues that actually happened. Right down to the teachers... I felt that we had connections with our teachers that were huge... and then [as a pre-service teacher] the bubble gets popped and you’re like, what do you mean? ... It’s almost heartbreaking to see that when you see it from an adult view.

This popping of Gail’s bubble was a major stochastic event; an incident that was likely inevitable, yet unexpected. To look professionally at this situation, Gail had to become an observer and carefully reexamine her own experience. There
were many layers of complexity that needed attention, including questions regarding administration, lack of teacher communication, parental hopes, and the heartbreak she had personally experienced. Her mentor supported her while at the same time took a back seat in the process.

Mentor: So I just encourage you to just go and see how far this can go and then to keep going with it because I think it’s a really significant topic to pursue and very timely and very needed. And as a young teacher, it’s something that you can either...become so disillusioned with it, [and then] you’re entering into the 3Bs; burnt out, bitter, blaming. Or you stop and say no. There has to be a way through this and let’s look and see what we can find, and see if we can’t make it better.

Accordingly, Gail looked closely at the teachers she admired and openly questioned many of her firmly held beliefs about the teachers and the program. She was willing to be vulnerable, and to dwell in the complex mess of her popped bubble. She listened carefully to the people in her vignettes, and moved into a position of witnessing what had happened with a developing sense of mindful attention.

Gail resonated with this quote from the Chambers article:

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Listening with open ears and an open heart makes good relations between and among others possible -

~Cynthia Chambers

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[This] really made an impact for me. The way that I interpret the quote is that we need to not only listen but really hear, and by doing that we learn. We learn about our students, their families and the relationships that drive them. The more we learn, the better relationships we will form with our students and the people involved in their lives... Not only do I want to be a lifelong learner academically and set a good example for my students, I want to learn through life and the people surrounding me. Once I start learning and understanding myself, I will be better able to understand the things around me. Learning, to me, is about taking a blind step forward even if I risk making a mistake. When mistakes happen, I will take advantage of them and use them as a learning opportunity, not only for myself but also the students in my classroom. I have wanted to be a teacher for as long as I can remember and all I can say, after five years of school, is BRING IT. Bring all of it, the good, the bad and the ugly. And I will continue to learn.
INTERACTIVE 2.8 Popped Bubble’s TI process plotted on the model
Chelsea, a post-degree teacher education student, began her inquiry concerned with finding a topic that would impress her professor and her peers. She compiled a list in her notebook: brain-gym, brain-based learning, and minorities in the classroom. However, as she listened to her instructor on the first day of class, she began to realize that there might be other possible directions she could go. Phrases like, “What do you really care about? What keeps you up at night? What niggles at the back of your mind?” strummed through her mind. She added to her list, and was surprised by the anxiety that ignited in her as she wrote one final word at the bottom: “biracial.” After class, she returned home bursting with ideas and uncertainty, and began to write a poem that began:

Does a soul have a colour?
Unbound by the pulse of individuality,
The bones of family,
The muscles of culture?

Later, Chelsea wrote:

This is the first poem I wrote after our introduction to Transformative Inquiry. The rumblings of my fear around being a racialized person teaching in predominantly white spaces, were just beginning to percolate . . . It is revealing of the initial upheaval going on in my mind as I wrestle through questions about race that are not easily spoken.

Chelsea also articulated her process of arriving at her inquiry question in her first Winter Count.

This [image] depicts my trepidation as a visible minority entering classrooms dominated by Caucasian students, teachers and administration. My initial thought was to do an inquiry . . . centering on brain-based learning, brain gym, and the like. However, after further discussion in class I began to realize that was not the “path with heart” for me. As I began to turn my gaze inward to what moved me as an emerging teacher, my mind was inundated with thoughts around being a visible minority in predominantly white spaces.

Chelsea described entering her first mentoring session worried and uncertain; finding it difficult to voice questions about race and identity. She believed that poetry was a way for her to delve into the margins, but was uncertain if this was an acceptable way of proceeding. She also expressed feeling “a spasm of shame,” because she felt she had a limited understanding around what it meant to be a biracial person, despite it being her lived reality. Her inquiry journey to this point was awkward, as she asked important and difficult questions:

What does it mean to be a visual minority in a position of leadership? How will discrimination affect my practice? How does being biracial influence my relationships with students, colleagues, and administrators?
Chelsea’s mentor assured her that her topic was valid and appropriate for the context of TI; describing a resonance with the concept “we teach who we are” (Palmer, 1998). She also encouraged Chelsea to use her poetry as a vehicle for her journey and spoke to how poetry might help us touch the essence of our experiences. Through the mentor session, Chelsea’s gaze continued to shift, and a more authentic inquiry journey emerged. Eventually, she articulated her central question:

What does it mean to be a racialized teacher teaching in predominantly white spaces?

Later, Chelsea continued to unearth the complexity of her topic in this poem about the notion of hybridity:

**Diaspora Fruit**

I feel the strange skin of the Hybrid.
That some scientists made wearing gloves in Japan.

Plum shape, buttery smooth rippled with a sunset.
In whose image were you made?
With the kiss of a test tube or
The caress of the Other?

Is the flesh beneath colourless?
To which tree will you cling and know?

I leave the exotic child perplexed in a bin

overflowing with its siblings.

They are strange among the countries nestled snuggly in homogenous piles.

A man toys with a sign, hesitating with what to label the Diaspora fruit.

This poem was inspired after an article I read called “Mixed-Race Women and Epistemologies of Belonging” by Silvia Cristina Bettez. Bettez states that in many ways the questions raised by hybrid women deconstruct racial categories and challenge “epistemologies of belonging” (2010, p. 162). This poem explores the shaky identity of hybrid people operating in a world where race is a key factor in identity. I explore a question of identity, but do not answer it. I felt it would be untruthful to create an answer at the end of this poem, because at this stage of my inquiry I am living in the question of what hybridity means to my identity and what it will mean to be a “Eurasian” teaching a class full of Caucasian students. Primarily though, this poem explores what it means to be a hybrid person at all. The final stanza is of particular importance in regards to the label. Society is most comfortable with categories, but hybridity resists the stability labeling creates.

As the term progressed, Chelsea felt that she was in danger of solidifying an “us and them” mentality and started to reconceptualize her notions of prejudice. She consciously worked to shift and rupture her binary constructions of race. Through her poetry she began to tease apart the layers of prejudice that she believed were “embedded in almost every human heart” writing:
Its rocky edifice sits enshrined while a tide of rallies scream, “Change!” but can barely morph its stone prejudice.

I wave the flag, shout for change and beat my autumn fits on the status quo.
As I pound against the stone
I see my smirk there and know – I live in the tide and the stone.

In her final Winter Count, Chelsea slowly began to grapple with new way of thinking about prejudice and expressed a view that was mindful of larger contexts and comfortable with uncertainty around her topic:

My inquiry has led me to a place beyond the prejudice that once stifled me and into a realization about the human spirit. There will be intolerance and injustice slinking around in every place in the world, but that is not because of place, but because of mindsets. Prejudice and hate have never been exterminated because until we can eradicate those aspects from ourselves, the problems will persist . . . There is no clear answer or formula of how to make things right or better, but what is imbedded in this winter count is my conviction in compassion. To suffer with people, to not be afraid to enter into those dark places both with others and in myself. This is what I take into my teaching: the practice of compassion begins not in legislature or in ethical codes, but within.

At the end of the course, Chelsea summarized the movement she made in her journey:

I began on shaky ground, uncertain of where I stood in the mess of racialization as a biracial woman in a profession dominated by Caucasian females. This . . . was by no means a firm realization of where I stood, it was more of a meditation . . . of the state of the world and the state of my heart. [Now, my] desire . . . is a movement from guilt to conviction. Guilt keeps me focused on the “other” who has hurt me or the shame I feel inside. Conviction leads me forward in my teaching practice.

Chelsea’s need to find an impressive topic was eventually replaced by an increased ability to follow her own questions and trust more fully her path with heart as an educator. She became more willing to sit with uncertainly and attend to difficult topics that bordered on the taboo.

I was once told by a professor, that a good question should lead to yet a better question. This, in many ways, was the goal of my inquiry. I began with wondering about being a racialized teacher in white spaces and moved to questioning what it means to walk in the world as a hybrid person. This then turned into pondering the divide between the “us and them” mentality and if that boundary really exists or if I create it to feel safe from the reality of my own prejudice. [Finally, I moved towards a] need to enter into suffering, to engage with the problematic state of this world and to create change and be changed by whatever experiences lie therein.
INTERACTIVE 2.9 Popped Bubble's TI process plotted on the model
Reflexive Questions

1. Which, if any, of these vignettes resonate with you? In what way? What is it about that particular person(s)’ experience that connects with your own inquiry?

2. Apparent in many of these inquiries, is the struggle to persist and endure the vastness of unbounded questions and to ultimately follow a path with heart. What sense do you have of your own path with heart? What keeps you feeling stuck or moving forward?
Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.

- Freire, 1970, p. 34
Section 1

Moving Towards a New Paradigm

What is the purpose of education? This is a simple yet challenging question that needs to be considered in order to understand the foundations of TI. We acknowledge and advance that questioning the purpose of education underpins our thinking in profound ways and resides in the heart of what we do. We also humbly suggest that in order for you, as a be~coming teacher, to enter into the current educational climate and truly make a positive difference in the lives of children, you must also ask this question. And, at the very least, explore some of the answers that emerge. However, before attempting to address the purpose of education, it might be more appropriate to reframe the question to read, what is a purpose of education, because admittedly there are multiple ways of addressing this question, none of which are quantifiably right or wrong.

We do know that historically, education has closely identified with the structural model born out of the economic demands of Industrialization. This model is aligned with a positivist paradigm characterized by scientific objectivity and precision that seeks out definitions, clear answers and one truth. A school experience that resides in a positivist paradigm could be dominated by structured worksheets and desks organized in carefully ordered rows with little attention devoted to the needs of the individual student; certainly not the picture we paint of optimal classrooms today. We do however want to tread lightly to acknowledge that elements of this and any other paradigm can co-exist in a re-visioning of

HIGHLIGHTS

1. It is important for educators to question the purpose of education.
2. Historically, education is closely identified with positivism characterized by scientific objectivity.
3. In TI, purpose of education reflects a greater emphasis on the dispositional aspects of teaching; the beliefs, values and attitudes we hold.
4. The TI process asks you to consider your role in education.
education. What differs is that positivism does not drive our vision for a purpose of education.

Sir Ken Robinson addresses the need for a paradigm shift in his call for change. In the popular video from RSA Animate (Interactive 3.1), *Changing Education Paradigms*, Sir Robinson astutely points out that the current system of education was designed and conceived for a different time and place where students were judged as either academic or non-academic. Under this system, the vast majority of students fit into the latter category and they are therefore underserved by our current system of education. Further, he explains that schools continue to be organized on factory lines; we batch students by age not ability or interest, we isolate subjects from one another and use tests as a major determinant of what students can do and arguably who they are (RSA, 2010). Teacher education programs have been somewhat complicit in this technocratic approach with its emphasis on prescribed learning outcomes, lesson planning, content knowledge and the technical/practical aspects of teaching which have eclipsed more “humanistic and nuanced concerns” (Goldstein, 2003, p. 35) in the preparation of *be~coming* teachers.

Teacher preparation programs are designed to deliver a predetermined curriculum that fulfills credential requirements in a short period of time. They use a system of competitive grading that reassures others on campus that teacher education is academically respectable. Thus, prospective teachers are encouraged to obey authority and to work alone and independently. When school experiences consistently call for obedience and competition, even the most obvious possibilities for acting in a rational and caring way go unrecognized. (Arnstine, 1990 p.36)

Our purpose of education reflects a greater emphasis on the dispositional aspects of teaching; the beliefs, values and attitudes we hold. The TI process requires you to dive deep into what really matters to you, not just as a teacher but as a human *be~coming*. Freire (1998) describes dispositional qualities that he believes to be indispensable for teachers: humility, love, courage, tolerance, decisiveness, security, the
joy of living. These strike us as qualities also suited to learners! In our experience, one of the shortcomings of teacher education is the lack of attention devoted to these arguably essential qualities. Perhaps such reluctance is because these are characteristics difficult to describe, let alone to measure and assess, within a given teacher’s dispositional practice (Tanaka, 2009).

We understand why teacher educators gravitate towards a positivist focus on skill and knowledge acquisition because it is much easier to construct and evaluate a high quality lesson plan than it is to delve into the complexities that arise from the multifaceted process of learning to think, know, feel, and act, like a teacher (Feiman-Nemser, 2008). Britzman (1990/2003) points out that the structure of learning to teach is flawed in that it bases readiness to teach on simplistic notions of whether a pre-service teacher is “prepared” or “ill-prepared,” and suggests that it would be more useful to develop deep reflection skills in pre-service teachers. Cole and Knowles (1993) state that “most pre-service programs concentrate almost entirely on teaching pre-service teachers to teach; little attention is placed on helping them to become teachers” (p. 469). They report that new teachers often leave the profession or “merely survive” in it unless they can do the hard work of clarifying and upholding their beliefs. Clark (1988) suggests that teacher education can be improved by acknowledging the “dilemmas and uncertainty” of teacher practice.

Our intentions with TI are to engage individuals in a deeper interrogation of the spirit and soul of what it means to be a teacher. By connecting with that, we believe that caring, engaged, humble, and joyful teachers can emerge.

As we ask you to consider your role in education, we present a metaphoric fork in the road. Do you~we continue to be complicit to a model of education that is arguably faltering and at the very least, underserving the needs of students? Is this possible even when we find ourselves in disempowered positions such as being a student teacher where others at least partially decide your fate? Or is there another path we can choose? When we enter into classrooms, we frequently see students who are just plain bored and unchallenged. Obviously the wording of our questions are intended to lead you down the path of TI, not kicking and screaming but instead, seeing its potential for making the experience of education and schooling a more caring endeavour. Like curriculum scholar, Nel Noddings (1995), we believe that education has a great deal to do with “caring for self, for intimate others, for strangers and global others, for the human-made world, and for ideas” (p. 675). Such efforts towards this as a purpose of education, promote passion and engagement that frankly, we all may benefit from.

We close this section with the powerful words of Maxine Greene (1995) with the hope that her words inspire you as much as they inspire us:
All we can do is speak with others as passionately and eloquently as we can; all we can do is to look into each other’s eyes and urge each other on to new beginnings. Our classrooms ought to be nurturing and thoughtful and just all at once; they ought to pulsate with multiple conceptions of what it is to be human and alive. They ought to resound with the voices of articulate young people in dialogues always incomplete because there is always more to be discovered and more to be said. We must want our students to achieve friendship as each one stirs to wide-awakeness, to imaginative action, and to renewed consciousness of possibility. (p.43)
HIGHLIGHTS

1. Cajete’s questions on the purpose of education.
2. TI approach resonates with an indigenous *worldview* in many ways and provides a way for you to move into deeper connectivity with Earth, community, and your own inner direction as a learner.
3. Anyone reading this iBook can consider adopting an Indigenist approach.

SECTION 2

**Embodying an Indigenist Approach**

Our intention with TI resonates with two important thinkers in the educational arena. First is environmental educator David Orr (1994/2004), who poses the simple question, “What is education for?” (p. 7).

The plain fact is that the planet does not need more "successful" people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every shape and form. It needs people who live well in their places. It needs people of moral courage willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane. And these needs have little to do with success as our culture has defined it. (Orr, 1994/2004, p. 4)

Building on this important query around the purpose of education, indigenous science educator Gregory Cajete (2009) suggests three important questions teachers need ask:

- How do we solve the environmental issues on the planet?
- How do we learn to get along with each other?
- How do we care for our own souls?

The TI process seeks to find a viability of place, community and self by using these questions as navigational stars from which we orient ourselves as educators. This is a conscious
decolonizing process that disrupts the common industrialized and consumerist models of education. Instead, we are seeking sustainable ways that nurture and promote holistic health and wellness.

The TI approach resonates with an indigenous worldview in many ways and provides a way for you to move into deeper connectivity with Earth, community, and your own inner direction as a learner. For example, the TI journey asks you to place a relational accountability at the centre of your teaching practice. You will animate your own learning spirit, and you will be asked to attend to the needs of Earth at a deeper and more nuanced level than you might be used to. Ways of addressing Cajete’s questions are woven throughout this iBook. We take on a cyclical, indigenous pedagogy as they return repeatedly in different forms. Hence, TI leads many to take on what Shawn Wilson (2007) calls, an indigenist approach. Just like a man can be a feminist, anyone reading these words could become indigenist.

An indigenist approach roots TI with an intentional purpose for education that asks us to live well and care for others, the planet, and ourselves. Hence, any form of education requires commitment to engaging with the places, people and inner lives that nourish and support us. The ecological communities in which we live can be considered to be a teacher. We need to learn to be more respectful, limit damage and celebrate our communal sense of place.
Reflexive Questions

1. Many pre-service teachers were successful in navigating the highly positivist paradigm that shapes most education. How true is that for you? How does that influence your desire or lack of desire to re-imagine schooling?

2. At this point, what do you think is the spirit and soul of what is means to be a teacher? How does this influence what you believe to be a purpose of education?

3. Freire’s (1998) list of desirable dispositions for teachers include: humility, love, courage, tolerance, decisiveness, security, the joy of living, and the tension between patience and impatience. As you consider these elements, do you agree or disagree with this list? If you agree, describe why and which of these qualities seem most pertinent for teachers today. If you disagree, describe why and discuss which qualities you would add or subtract from the list.

4. This chapter is full of powerful quotes, select one that triggered a strong response in you and describe what emerges for you as you consider it on a deeper level.

5. Relational accountability is a central tenant of TI and integral to an indigenous worldview, if you adopt this into your own ways of being, how would your practice be transformed?
Chapter 4

Attending to Emotions

When one shares we all benefit.

- Michael Stone

Click here for the Transformative Inquiry Research Website
Classrooms are never devoid of emotions. They are inhabited by students whose capacities to learn are not exclusively dependent on their cognitive aptitude, but are also reliant on their emotional and spiritual dispositions. Through the industrial model of education, teacher education programs have evolved to emphasize the rational, objective stance. This stance often does a disservice to inquirers. Whether educators acknowledge it or not, “emotional feelings in the classroom . . . over determines the conditions where learning can occur” (hooks, 2003, p.133). Using TI, we seek to dissolve the hierarchical binary forged between the rational and emotional. Indeed, “our thinking body is not separated from our feeling mind. Our mind is our body. Our body is our mind” (Meyer, 2008, p.223). If the purpose of education is to engage in a caring way with the earth, each other and our own souls, then we cannot expect newly minted teachers to teach what they have not experienced within an educational context. Hence, understanding and negotiating emotional terrain is an imperative aspect of the teacher education process for pre-service teachers to flourish in classrooms that are calling to be cared for.

The central question posed in the process of TI, “What do you really care about?” serves as an invitation to enter into our humanness as teachers. It reminds inquirers why they chose the teaching profession: not to become curriculum transmitters but, for most, to become positive change agents in their students’ lives. TI asks learners to follow and explore the visceral aspects of their inquiry question, into areas that...
can be knotted with complexity and deeply personal. It is crucial for inquirers to honor their own emotions and whatever spiritual beliefs they may or may not have, if they are to engage meaningfully with their students.

**Emotional engagement** is fostered in various settings and levels, and is contingent on an individual’s disposition and willingness to engage in the process. Mentors try to shift the learners’ perception of their inquiry from being a strictly academic pursuit. If learning is a relational activity, then the affective is inextricably tied to what inquirers truly care about. Through one-on-one conversations mentors seek to validate inquirers’ passions and spur them forward in a significant inquiry journey that is both personal and professional.

Learners are encouraged to walk alongside each other with familiar and unfamiliar **inquiry partners**. These relationships can act as a catalyst for progressing into deeper **relationality** and connectivity as learners collectively move beyond the perils of a purely objective way of knowing. Indeed, objectivism can often be hazardous as it functions as a worldview that positions learners in an adversarial relationship to each other and the world (Palmer, 1993). TI intentionally facilitates activities that assist inquirers’ movement beyond a purely objective way of knowing towards a way that is based in authentic and interdependent learning communities.

Additionally, inquirers can use inquiry journals as an uncensored space that can serve as a dumping site for difficult emotions, tarnished memories, taboo questions, and a place to kindle the sparks of innovation.

While many learners embrace the opportunity to explore, as one past student notes, “the life behind emotions”, some prefer not to engage in emotional terrain for a variety of reasons. It is important to note that we do not coerce learners into **emotional engagement**; the intent is to offer a space where the **learning spirit** can develop in its fullness. Indeed, “there is no learning without emotion and challenge” (Paul Ylvisaker, 1992, as cited in Sergiovanni, 1994). We believe that teaching and learning are not strictly cerebral activities, but ones that are married to the matters of the heart.

**Touchstone Stories**

*A touchstone is the name given to a smooth dark stone that, when rubbed against gold and silver, was once used to verify the quality of alloys. Figuratively, it has come to signify ‘that which serves to test or try the genuineness of anything’ (Oxford English Dictionary) . . . Such familiar markers are then used to judge the worth of other stories and experiences.* (Strong-Wilson, 2008, p.95).

As you delve more deeply into the roots of your inquiry, you may find yourself asking: *why do I care about this?* Personal memories or stories can emerge as a crucial place to find emotional, spiritual and intuitive resonance, thus connecting
in a different way to an inquiry topic. Touchstone stories may relate to a particular student, a learning experience, a life experience or a teaching situation.

Logos invites the researcher to dwell with the stories . . . to tease out the significance of the story for herself, and then for others who might read it (Chambers, 2004, p.12).

We align ourselves with Teresa Strong-Wilson’s notion of touchstone stories. However, we shift from Strong-Wilson’s focus on childhood literary touchstones into the fabric of inquirers’ lived narratives. For the purposes of TI the discourse we provide on touchstone stories is one in which a touchstone story is a past experience that brings meaning to an inquiry question. Dirx suggests that transformation is supported through paying attention to shadowy unconscious and interior thoughts (Dirx, Mezirow, & Cronton, 2006). These could help identify touchstone stories that contribute to our overall understanding of our inquiry topics. For example, one of Ashley’s touchstones (Anger collage from Chapter 2) was when her classroom teacher said her activity was for tree-huggers. And Gail (Popped Bubble from Chapter 2) had a touchstone story around a kindergarten friend.

We encourage inquirers to reach deeply into these stories and find personal significance, to dwell (Chambers, 2004) within these tender and emotional spaces.
As you work with your TI topic you may find it useful to hone your skills of communication, both with others and yourself. Marshall Rosenberg’s Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a technique for communication that is grounded in compassion and listening (click here to learn more). Underlying its practice is the belief that all humans are born compassionate and that verbally and physically violent strategies are learned behaviour. Part of this technique for communication states that all humans share the same basic human needs. NVC suggests an approach to communication that is based in the following practices:

- observation
- feelings assessment
- needs inventory
- request for adaptation

Consider your teaching style for a moment. How often do you practice these four processes? And if you do practice these, how are they framed in your consciousness? Below, we describe each of these practices and give an example within a TI setting. Following those explanations are lists of needs and feelings (tables 4.1-4.3). Since learning about NVC many of us now keep the lists on our classroom and office walls (as well as on our fridges at home!) Consider how this practice of NVC could be useful within your own teaching, and for your students to practice as well.
Observation

Rather than watching or judging, observation here means stating what is simply happening in as simple a way as possible. For some of you, the TI process and inquiry topic might be exactly this - an observation of something:

Observation: I saw a teacher yelling at his male students.

Observations should be without stating your feelings or judgment (since they are coming up). You are naming the thing that is stimulating you. Remember that it is very challenging (if not impossible) to remove one’s own lens and judgment from observation. In using NVC, you are asked to be conscious of what and how you are observing, and to consider how you might be biased in that experience. Are you making a judgment, analysis, interpretation, label, or projection rather than a simple observation?

Feelings

Stating our feelings helps us understand how we are reacting to a situation. Feelings are not typically taught beyond Kindergarten in many curricula in North America. So we want to take a moment to highlight a few. Feelings are derived from Needs (next section). So when certain needs are being met, we have certain feelings, and when certain needs are not being met, we have other feelings. Consider that our feelings can be more complicated than the regular sad, mad, glad, and scared. How would the inquirer continue from their observation stated earlier?

Feelings: ...I felt uncomfortable and frustrated with that teacher...

Uncomfortableness and Frustration land in the categories of disquiet and annoyed, which could be reasonable reactions to his/her observation. From here the inquirer could move to finding ways to resolve through the statement of their own needs.

Needs

Needs are necessarily complex and include much more than simply the base of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (food, water, shelter, sleep etc). They include needs, wants, desires, values, longings, and dreams. They make up the sphere of expectations that we consciously or otherwise have about future situations. For instance, what would our inquirer’s expectations and needs be for his/her topic?

Needs: ...because I expect teachers to help foster safe and caring environments...

Much of the trauma and pain that we realize as humans comes from expectations not being met. Yet, we often are not conscious of what these expectations are going into an experience. Think about your first year in the Teacher Education program, did it meet your expectations? Probably not! It was likely something different than what you were expecting! This is not to say that we need to do away with expectations. Quite the opposite is true. We need to be conscious of our own expectations, and consider what it might feel like to have them met and not have them met in any
circumstance. There is no need to judge expectations, but as you become conscious of them, you start understanding how to manage them within the reality of your own life.

**Request**

First of all, be ready to hear ‘NO.’ To practice NVC, we must acknowledge that there are other needs and desires in the world. So we are in no position to make demands in relations to others. However, speaking our own truth within any given situation suggests that we can make respectful requests of others around us.

*Request (teacher):* ...and I would ask the teacher: “would you be willing to explore other ways of disciplining your students in a way that upholds a safe environment?”

Again, as relational humans we should not make demands, rather requests for change. For if we are practicing NVC well, we are also modeling the ability to be compassionate and relational.

Over the next few pages you will find needs and feelings inventories. These are derived directly from The Center for Non-violent Communication, which has many free resources that help you understand NVC. Click here to explore the NVC website.
Table 4.1 Needs Assessment. These are NVC’s basic needs.

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<td>touch</td>
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Table 4.2: NVC’s Feelings inventory of when our needs are being met

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<td>INSPIRED</td>
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PEACEFUL
- calm
- clear headed
- comfortable
- centered
- content
- equanimous
- fulfilled
- mellow
- quiet
- relaxed
- relieved
- satisfied
- serene
- still
- tranquil
- trusting

REFRESHED
- enlivened
- rejuvenated
- renewed
- rested
- restored
- revived
Table 4.3: NVC’s Feelings inventory of when our needs are not being met

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFRAID</th>
<th>ANGRY</th>
<th>CONFUSED</th>
<th>DISQUIET</th>
<th>FATIGUE</th>
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| EMBARRASSED       |                       |                |                |               |                |
| ashamed           |               |                |                |               |                |
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| flustered         |               |                |                |               |                |
| guilty            |               |                |                |               |                |
| mortified         |               |                |                |               |                |
| self-conscious    |               |                |                |               |                |
Shame

Sometimes there is a theme of shame threading through the questions, writings, ponderings, and images that emerge as learners engage on their TI journey. The literature indicates shame to be an “intense, enduring experience that affects the whole self” (Hartling, Rosen, Walker, & Jordan, 2000, p. 2). Jordan (1997) describes shame as, “a felt sense of unworthiness to be in connection, a deep sense of unlovability, with the ongoing awareness of how very much one wants to connect with others” (p. 147). Shame often inhibits inquirers from becoming the educators they yearn to be. Or rather, hinders them from asking and acting on these questions fundamental to TI: Who are we becoming as teachers? What or how do you need to learn to become a better teacher? Shame has been referred to as the “master emotion” (Morrison, 1989, as cited in Martens, 2005), which inflames many of the perceived inadequacies, fears, and doubts inquirers confront in the TI process. Inquirers must wrestle with complex topics such as practica, poor performance reviews, and the struggle of connecting with a diverse body of students. Especially as the TI process seeks to introduce inquirers into the benefits of reflexive practice and an indigenist worldview, shame is often evoked “When, for the first time, people begin to see and understand that the world looks very different from the point of view of others not afforded the same privileges” (Halevy, 2007, p.19).

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Attending to shame can be an entry point into a more useful teaching practice.
2. Vulnerability can be a key component to transformation.
3. There is often a negative association that is connected with vulnerability.
4. There is no such thing as a perfect teacher.
5. Try out the shame and vulnerability activity in chapter nine.
When activity meets shame and disapproval, it diminishes our sense of power; we begin to lose trust in our abilities. (TI student)

When left unattended, shame can stifle the passions and learning spirit that drives powerful teaching and learning. According to Brown (2012), three factors allow shame to thrive: judgment, silence, and secrecy. These can then be compounded with Jordan’s (2008) work in which she suggests that the principal cause of suffering is isolation. TI cannot atone for the adversity that laces human experience, but does infuse hope for what could be. TI creates conditions to assist inquirers’ movement out of isolation and into deeper connectivity with their community, the earth and their own souls in order to become mindful and reflexive educators. This resonates with Jordan’s notion of “development as movement toward more integration, more responsiveness, more flexibility, more connection, and becoming a part of something larger” (p. 216).

Within the course, some inquirers arrive at the question: do I really want to be a teacher? Harboring this question can also incite feelings of shame. TI does not ask learners to wallow in this space, this “swampland of the soul” (Brown, 2012) but to move into places where empathy and courage reside, both of which have been referred to as paths to transforming shame (Brown, 2012; Hartling et al., 2000). Mentors recognize these difficult places and encourage the learner to attend gently to these complexities, and dwell (Chambers, 2004) mindfully in the swamp of teaching. When most people hear the word dwell, they might interpret it as a stagnant or negative state. However, we are in line with Chambers who sees the act of dwelling as “to be still with, to remain for a time with, to reside with.” (p. 11).

Vulnerability

The relationship between vulnerability and resiliency makes transformation possible. In order to engage in a rich and meaningful inquiry journey, inquirers sometimes move into the uncomfortable and even dangerous landscape of vulnerability. This openness does not need to be ostentatious or brazen, inquirers do not need to reveal anything to their peers and mentors that they feel they should not. However, we encourage inquirers to allow themselves to be truly seen. Our work confirms that the learners who glean the many from their inquiry journey enter into genuine

Shame shadows each of us, and everyone encounters the alienating effect in some form, at some time. Entering that experience long enough to endure it, deliberately, and consciously in order to transform it, is a challenge which knows no bound. Yet only by facing that challenge can we ever hope to re-create who we are. (Kaufman and Raphael, 1996, as cited in hooks, 2003, p. 102-103)
honesty and humility, both of which are linked to vulnerability.

While TI honors vulnerability as a beautiful and inevitable aspect of the human experience, it cannot be emphasized enough the negative association most learners attach to it. Most view vulnerability as a passive and weak state, one that should be persistently avoided; one they deem a liability (Dale & Frye, 2009). In TI we contest the “construction that suggests desire for connection and need of others is the territory of weak and emotionally immature women,” (Jordan, 2008, p. 212). While there can be an adverse association, we wish to emphasize that vulnerability is an inevitable aspect of learning and teaching that can be both beautiful and useful. Brown (2010) asserts that in our quest to continually numb vulnerability we do three things: live with fixed certainty, perfect, and pretend. These are particularly pertinent in TI, as they align with three of the major issues that instructors work with learners to address.

First, the TI process invites us to enter into the complexity of education, and embrace the awkwardness and uncertainty inherent in learning and teaching. Second, the TI journey seeks to fragment the myth of the Master Teacher. Inquirers are often plagued with anxiety as they strive to reach perfection, despite the fact that there are many ways to be an effective educator. Finally, many inquirers pretend that they do not have doubts and that they are not entangled with this struggle of be~coming a teacher. They try to avoid the questions and conversations that might open them up to vulnerability.

Our work indicates that learners are more likely to enter into the vulnerable aspects of their inquiry when their instructors model openness. When we progress “toward a shared vulnerability – by being open about our fears, doubts, questions, and struggles – we invite our students to share their vulnerabilities too,” (Oyler & Becker, 1997, p. 464). There are countless examples in our research that demonstrate that instructors who share personal experiences of doubt and struggle create entry points for their students. In this way we demonstrate that “to teach is to be vulnerable” (Bullough, 2005, as cited in Kelchtermans, 2005, p. 999).

A teacher can never have total control over her environment or the consequences of her actions (Kelchtermans, 2005); therefore, vulnerability is an undeniable facet of teaching. In TI we do not ignore this inevitable and terrifying element of learning and teaching that emerges in the journey of be~coming a teacher. When we labor to be strong and hence invulnerable and certain, we become more closed, less able to listen responsively to our students, and less flexible (Jordan, 2008). When learners vehemently guard themselves against being open, they deny the power of vulnerability as “the birthplace of joy, of creativity, of belonging, of love,” (Brown, 2010). It is our belief that schools do not need more strong, omniscient educators, but deeply human ones who are open to new possibilities for both themselves and their students.
**Section 4**

**Edge of Counselling Resources**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

1. Counselling can support the TI process.
2. Resources for inquirers engaging in TI and looking for counselling support.
3. Trust that you are doing all that you can in this moment.
4. This section was shaped in collaboration with Indrus Piché, registered clinical counsellor of transpersonal psychology.

*Transformative Inquiry* can engage you in ways that you may not have experienced before in other classroom settings. The process offers time and space for you to explore personal *worldviews*, reflect on past touchstone experiences, and delve into affective aspects of your inquiry pursuits. The depths of these explorations are left up to each individual, and sometimes, your choices can lead to complex and challenging emotional landscapes. We call this the edge of counseling because it is unfamiliar terrain for many educators.

As you are *be-coming* a teacher within our program, you may find that your comfortable patterns of beliefs, values and attitudes are disrupted, your personal dispositions might be put into question, you may be asked to think outside your familiar box, and you may begin to see the world from a new perspective that you had not imagined before. There is room within the TI course to hold much of this important process, but some inquirers have found they need more support. The process of TI can be therapeutic, but it is not therapy and does not replace formal counselling. While we have had some exposure to the process, the instructors in this course are not certified counsellors. Hence, formal counselling can be very useful, supportive and congruous with the process of *be-coming* a teacher.

This section outlines information and services for students at UVic who would like to pursue counselling or further support. Understanding the resources that are available to you can engage you as a more mindful teacher.
UVic Counselling
UVic provides confidential free professional counselling to all UVic students who are enrolled in a degree program. There are a number of individual counselling appointments including:

- Regular appointments
- Urgent (30 minute sessions)
- Check-ins (15-20 minute quick sessions)
- Walk-in sessions
- Emergency appointments

Your Health Plan
As a UVic student, if you haven’t opted out of the UVic Student Society’s Health Coverage, you will be able to claim basic rates for registered psychologist sessions outside of the campus-based ones. Look at the website: www.ihaveaplan.ca for more information.

The Plan covers 80% of the cost of a psychologist, up to a maximum of $500 per calendar year. Please note that you need a referral by a medical doctor to be covered for visits to a psychologist.

Vancouver Island Crisis Line
Crisis phone lines with trained counsellors are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The mission of the Vancouver Island Crisis Line is as follows:

The Vancouver Island Crisis Society is committed to providing an accessible, 24-hour, telephone crisis and suicide prevention, intervention service, including postvention programs. We endeavour to provide emotional support during times of crisis, information about community resources, education intended to promote community wellness, and reduce the incidence of suicide. We value the principles of confidentiality, non-judgmental acceptance, respect for diversity, personal empowerment, and cooperation.

Three phone options are available from the Mission of Vancouver Island Crisis Line:

Vancouver Island Crisis Line: 1-888-494-3888
Vancouver Island Suicide Line: 1-800-784-2433
Crisis Society: 250-310-6789

Link to UVic’s counselling: http://www.coun.uvic.ca
Phone number for booking appointments: 250-721-8341
Other BC crisis lines

_Vancouver, Sea to Sky, and Sunshine Coast_

http://www.crisiscentre.bc.ca/ • 604.872.3311

_Interior and Kootenays British Columbia_

1 888 353-CARE (2273)

_Northern BC Crisis line_

http://www.northernbccrisissuicide.ca

1-888-562-1214 (adult) • 1-888-564-8336 (youth)

Various other crisis lines in BC are updated at the Crisis Line association of British Columbia:

http://www.crisislines.bc.ca

Common counselling matters that you can talk about might include, but are not limited to:

- Anxiety and Stress
- Relationship difficulties
- Depression
- Health and Wellness
- Loss and Grief
- Family
- Self-esteem
- Loneliness
- Compulsive behavior
- Panic attacks
- Learning difficulties
- Drug or alcohol problems
- Suicidal thoughts
- Career direction
- Self-awareness and values
- Academic performance
- Procrastination
- Time management
- Transition and adjustment

Choosing a counsellor or therapist

Therapy has a social stigma that can cloud its value. Often people entering counseling or therapy for the first time can feel alienated or uncomfortable. Sometimes this can be the result of tension or lack of connection with a therapist. Some things to consider when choosing a counsellor or therapist:

- Does the counsellor’s general philosophy or approach to her/his work make sense or feel good to you?
- Does the counsellor provide expectations of what he/she can and cannot accomplish or practice?
- Does your counsellor ensure confidentiality excepting life-threatening or legal limitations?
- How does it feel to work (or even sit) with the counsellor?
The answer to these questions should give you a sense of understanding your connection to a particular counsellor. Know that relationships are co-built and that connecting immediately might not be possible. The connection with a particular counsellor can be fruitful over time.

**Guidelines for a safe-enough space**

This course is designed to support students who choose to be vulnerable, explore delicate subjects, and be open about their intentions and ideas. With this in mind, this course also helps you to witness each other in with compassion and mindfulness - which can sometimes trigger emotions. In Interactive 4.1, we explore some basic guidelines for helping create a classroom that feels **safe-enough**. The idea is that there is never truly a “safe” space, but that there are places that can be safe enough to share deep or vulnerable thoughts.

Combined with these guidelines comes a few classroom principles that we ask everyone to follow in order to strive for ongoing safety and wellbeing:

1. If you feel the need to leave, skip, or not engage in class, please communicate this to your mentor by email or in person.

2. Expect follow up emails from your mentor if you are distressed, quiet, or un-engaged in class.

3. Before sharing personal stories, vulnerabilities, or deep thoughts please consider the following questions:
   3.1. What is your intent in sharing this story?
   3.2. What would telling this story mean to you?
   3.3. How do you believe it is valuable for the group?
   3.4. How can your story impact how the group learns to be better teachers?

**Supporting you and each other beyond the course**

When you leave the program, you will be teaching in situations that can be highly emotional. You need to think
about what you can realistically offer and what your self-care should look like. Do not offer what you cannot deliver. What systems are there to support you? What resources are available for your students? Is there a printed list of phone numbers and tips in the school? What is the procedure for students feeling anxiety, depression or being “off”? What should be in place for students in need?

This is true of the TI course as well. It is your responsibility to set up a structure for staying in touch with your colleagues. Think about how you can build methods for communication so that they work for you. Some pieces that could be offered as support beyond this course are the following:

- Facebook/self created groups
- Keeping in touch with your instructor
- Continue to develop self care practices where compassion for self is central
- Return to the iBook to read sections about emotion and support
1. Have you ever considered shame and vulnerability as important aspects of your process of be~coming? In what ways are shame and vulnerability surfacing in your inquiry?

2. Non-violent communication serves as a powerful way to interpret our needs and emotional responses, as well as providing a way to move forward. Keeping your teaching practice in mind, look through the needs chart. What shows up for you as a need that is being met or unmet? With those needs in mind, look to the emotion chart. What emotions are continuously threading through your experience? What patterns do you notice?

3. What is one thing that scares you about being a teacher? Why?
We acquire cultural ways without even knowing that we are doing so; they are like the air we breathe. Not knowing that our behavior is governed by these cultural ways, we often do not see the need for change - even when such ways become dysfunctional and threaten the survival of our organization.

- Parish & Aquila, 1996, p. 299
Section 1

Inherited and Possible Beliefs

Schools are embedded with culture. Just like fish that might not realize they are swimming in water (see Interactive 7.1), we as teachers, often don’t pay attention to the culture that surrounds us, the culture we breathe in and that we hold in our very bones. In their book on teaching global perspectives, two secondary social studies teachers, Merryfield and Wilson (2005) discuss the importance of distinguishing between surface culture and internal culture. They use the image of an iceberg as a metaphor. The ice we see above the water represents surface culture, how people behave in public; the way we dress, the food we eat, the art and architecture we create, and so on. Under the iceberg we can explore internal culture, our ways of being; the beliefs, values, attitudes, interpretations, and assumptions we hold (Interactive 5.1).

Interactives 5.1 Icebergs and Worldviews

This can be used in the class as well
Our internal culture is often “hidden” in that we are unconsciously engaging in it as we move through our day. Like fish in water, our habits and patterns, our ways of being in the world are influenced by culture all the time.

Many of our patterns of beliefs are inherited; we come into possession of particular qualities or characteristics as they are passed down or inculcated from our parents, aunts, grandfathers and the like. For example, you might have a tendency towards reading because your parents read to you, or you might enjoy debate because your family gatherings always included discussions of current events and politics. You may want to be a teacher because of all the stories you heard about your great grandmother’s one room schoolhouse, or you could have a strong interest in environmental education from the many camping trips your grandfather took you on. While some inherited beliefs might be genetic, in TI we are more concerned with inherited beliefs that are of a sociological nature.

Historically, western education is rooted in the European philosophical enlightenment traditions, in which secular rather than religious beliefs were supported and spread. Scholars of that day, such as physicist Issac Newton or philosopher Voltaire, cultivated and privileged the use of reason, objectivity, and abstractions. They trusted in empirical methods as the best means for arriving at “knowledge,” believing that value-free discourse was not only possible, but was also most desirable. This train of thought continued into the so-called age of modernity, in which there was intensification of rational thought as the best way to find truth, and pursue the rise of capitalism. Copernicus re-centred the universe with the sun instead of earth, Darwin established the notion of natural selection, and Descartes described how scientific knowledge could be built up in small steps.

Over time, post-modernism began to develop as a response to modernist ways of being. This is a philosophical stance in which people began to reject the notion that there is one global cultural narrative or universal truth. Within post-modernism, artists and philosophers explore how history and culture shape individuals. With a heightened understanding that pure objectivity in impossible, the role of expert becomes problematic. Philosophers such as Heidegger embraced the paradox of subjectivity and objectivity in order to move towards “dasein” or openness to being-in-the-world. Foucault explored the relationships among meaning, knowledge, power, and social behavior suggesting that social constructs foster cultural hegemony, violence and exclusion.

I thought scientists were going to find out exactly how everything worked, and then make it work better. I fully expected that by the time I was twenty-one, some scientist, maybe my brother, would have taken a color photograph of God Almighty—and sold it to Popular Mechanics magazine. Scientific truth was going to make us so happy and comfortable. What actually happened when I was twenty-one was that we dropped scientific
Inherited beliefs continue to play out in various ways within educational institutions. We highlight four possible paradigms, or worldviews, that educators can choose to work from: Where might you see resonance with your own philosophical stance? Remember that you are not asked to choose one paradigm exclusively, and also that some people carry parts of many paradigms as their worldview. What is important is to locate where you are in relation to these or other paradigms. If we teach who we are (Palmer, 1998), we need to know on what ground we stand. What paradigm feeds your soul and translates into the work you do? What paradigm sets the tone of learning—teaching—researching in your classroom? What is the nature of the water you swim in?

**Positivist Paradigm**

Public education in Canada is founded on the “values and belief systems of the dominant cultural and linguistic class” (Goddard & Hart, 2007, p. 16), which draws heavily on an ideological foundation originating in the United States and United Kingdom. In this system teachers play the role of a cog in the machine that limits space for students to explore learning and ways of knowing that fit in an essentially Eurocentric model of education. Under positivism, schools often operate as a hegemonic force, to “promote a common homogeneous culture (i.e. the White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, rural culture of the 1800s)” (Villa and Thousand, 1995 as cited in Walker & Quong, 1998, p. 86), thus privileging certain students over others. Yet if you simply walk into a classroom, you can observe that schools are a dynamic, complex, and diverse space (Murakami-Ramalho, 2008). The literature confirms that Canadian society faces many pressures given the quickly changing terrain of demographics and schools are tasked with responding effectively (Anisef & Kilbride, 2004, p. 10).

**Characteristics:**

- Truth is objective, external (subjectivity is problematic, effort to predict and explain to improve control)
- Knowledge can be separated into pieces (reductionist)
- Learner is like an empty vessel to be filled
- Teacher’s role is to transmit knowledge (upholds expert/novice hierarchy)
- Learning is highly TRANSMISSIVE

**Progressive Paradigm**

The progressive tradition is embedded in the constructivist notion that knowledge and meaning are derived from individual experience (Piaget, 1969). Moving away from a view of the learner as a relatively inert vessel to be filled, individuals are seen instead as being able to engage personal prior knowledge and beliefs towards actively constructing meaning of their world. This constructivist view has significant implications for teaching students of diverse cultures in that it acknowledges each individual as bringing
their own contextual understanding, experience, and positioning to the learning environment (Villegas, 2008). Here, the learner’s **worldview** stems from the learner’s experience. Educators in the progressive tradition place diversity in a positive light, seeing the gifts that each child brings to the classroom. There are continued efforts to reduce the contextual influences that inhibit the individual as well as to step away from a deficit view of culturally diverse learners.

**Characteristics:**
- Truth is subjective, internal
- Knowledge is based in personal understanding
- Learners are like flowers in a garden
- Teacher’s role is to facilitate individual learning
- Learning is **INDIVIDUAL** and **CONSTRUCTIVIST**

**Social Justice Paradigm**

The term “social justice” can be difficult to define (Grant & Agosta, 2008), as different people use it in a variety of ways (Goodlad, 2008). The social justice paradigm is one based on principals of solidarity and equity and can be defined as both a collaborative process and a goal that includes a vision of society where “members are physically and psychologically safe and secure” (Bell, 1997, p. 3). Multicultural education is one way that social justice is enacted in schools and has been described by Sleeter (cited in Chávez & O’Donnell, 1998) as “a process of constructing engagement across boundaries of difference and power, for the purpose of constructing a social world that supports and confirms all of us” (p. xii). Teachers who work from a social justice paradigm hope to include their K-12 students in actively making schools better places to be. Moodley (2001) states that multiculturalism in Canada “values the cultural mosaic” (p. 802) and that the two main approaches in this country are the “socio-pathological perspective” (the deficit view) and the “relativist model” that “stresses that all cultures warrant equal respect and values” (p. 807).

**Characteristics:**
- Truth is socially and culturally defined
- Knowledge is co-created
- Learners are unique flowers within a variety of gardens
- Teacher’s role is to create a culture of equity within diversity
- Learning is **SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONIST**

**Indigenous Paradigm**

Indigenous ways of knowing are based in ancient wisdom and traditions that embrace a **holistic** eco/social/spiritual awareness and perspective (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Hampton, 1995; Schaefer, 2006; Weenie, 1998). While each indigenous group has its own unique **ontology** (experience) and **epistemology** (knowledge), there is general agreement among indigenous scholars that Indigenous ways of learning and teaching have basic commonalities (Cajete, 1994; Fixico, 2003). Some of the salient concepts of an indigenous **worldview** include: time as cyclical and rhythmic rather than as linear and ‘progress’-oriented; the interrelated
sacredness of time and place; nature as a site of indwelling spirits; a richly defined and enacted sense of relationships; and the use of oral transmission of knowledge (Brown, 1976). Cajete’s questions echo a focus on sustainability that is at the root of an Indigenous worldview. Within the context of modern Eurocentric educational settings, Indigenous ways have long been marginalized or ignored. It is important to recognize indigenous knowledge “as a distinct knowledge system, with its own concepts of epistemology and scientific and logical validity, within contemporary education systems” (Battiste, 2008, p. 85). Non-Aboriginal teachers can take on an indigenist stance.

**Characteristics:**

- Knowledge (epistemology) is inseparable from experience (ontology) and is intimately connected to place and ecology
- Learners are seen as holistic
- Based in an interconnectedness of people and planet, the teacher’s role is to foster connections with the ecological systems in which he/she lives
- Learning is RELATIONAL IN COMPLEXITY (see orb of complexity, Interactive 5.2)

**Inherited and possible beliefs**

The process of TI asks us to reflexively identify the stuff of our iceberg that hangs out beneath the water. What are your inherited beliefs? On what philosophical ground do you stand as an educator? Do any of these paradigms ring true for your own viewpoint? If not, how would you describe your worldview? Do you feel that your views might be unsettled by some of these existing paradigms? As you develop self-awareness in this way, you can also ask, what might be true for others?

A relational (e)pistemology is a humble approach to knowing. We remind ourselves and our students that we need to first attempt to generously understand various perspectives before moving to critiquing them, but critique is important because some ideas are worth rejecting. ...Our theories of knowledge are qualified by as much evidence as we can socially muster so that it is not the case that we must accept anything as good, and yet, at the same time, we cannot accept anything as certain, fixed, and final. (Thayer-Bacon, 2003, p. 255).

Important issues of pedagogy, equity, and truth, are messy and complex. Teachers dedicated to exploring Cajete’s questions through TI engage in a paradoxical process of knowing while not knowing (Kumashiro, 2008).

[Educators] need certain knowledge, but also need to know the limits of their knowledge. They need certain skills, but also need the skill of troubling whatever they do. They need certain dispositions, but also need to be
Kumashiro goes on to say that within teacher education programs, time and space are rarely made available for this type of uncomfortable but essential process, and that “teachers need to come to view discomfort as a part of learning that is not only unavoidable, but also potentially productive” (p. 240). One response to seeing difference on an epistemological-ontological level can be to hunker down and avoid change. But dwelling in discomfort, at least for a while, can be very beneficial to teachers.

What do we—educators and students—stand to gain by engaging in the discomforting process of questioning cherished beliefs and assumptions? I begin by defining a pedagogy of discomfort as both an invitation to inquiry as well as a call to action. As inquiry, a pedagogy of discomfort emphasizes “collective witnessing” as opposed to individualized self-reflection. I distinguish witnessing from spectating as one entrée into a collectivized engagement in learning to see differently... A pedagogy of discomfort begins by inviting educators and students to engage in critical inquiry regarding values and cherished beliefs and to examine constructed self-images in relation to how one has learned to perceive others. Within this culture of inquiry and flexibility, a central focus is to recognize how emotions define how and what one chooses to see, and conversely, not to see. This inquiry is a collective, not an individualized, process. (Boler p. 176-177)

Boler’s notion of witnessing is a key sensibility to TI pod work. How do we listen with attention and generosity to our colleagues, students, parents, and other community members? What might reside under their icebergs? What might we be choosing not to see? And through all this, what do we hold in common? Where do Cajete’s questions enter in?

Environmental educator David Orr discusses six inherited beliefs in his book, Earth in Mind (2004/1994 or see this link to them with more detail). He calls them myths, and we believe they lurk under our collective North American cultural iceberg. In brief they are:

- Ignorance is a solvable problem
- With enough knowledge and technology we can manage planet earth
- Knowledge is increasing and by implication human goodness
- We can adequately restore that which we have dismantled
- The purpose of education is that of giving you the means for upward mobility and success
- Our [Western] culture represents the pinnacle of human achievement
Which of these beliefs might you have inherited? Do they ring true to your **worldview**? If not, what possible beliefs might you resonate with? Orr suggests:

- All education is environmental education
- The goal of education is not mastery of subject matter, but of one’s person
- Knowledge carries with it the responsibility to see that it is well used in the world
- We cannot say that we know something until we understand the effects of this knowledge on real people and their communities
- The importance of "minute particulars" and the power of examples over words
- The way learning occurs is as important as the content of particular courses

How do these possible beliefs feel to you? Where do you find agreement or dispute? What possible beliefs would you like to hold? The process of TI includes locating yourself in your beliefs, listening carefully to the beliefs of others and also visioning what might be possible together.
Disrupting Binaries

You may have noticed in the last section, a somewhat dichotomous relationship between western scientific thought situated in positivism and a relational epistemology situated in an indigenist paradigm. While there can be a strong tendency to reduce understanding to an either/or dichotomy, the reality, much like classrooms, is significantly more complex and nuanced. Of importance is not simply identifying with one camp or the other, but connecting with the idea that philosophical traditions both inform and deform our thinking (Minnich, 2005). We must commit to doing the difficult work of becoming aware of formative, implicitly-held assumptions (Thayer-Bacon, 2003) so that we can disrupt the hold of the traditions that are no longer useful.

A useful image that helps is move away from binary thinking is offered in Interactive 5.2, the orb of complexity. Our culture, our identities, our interests can be envisioned as having multiple and moving layers. Binary thinking often leads us to hierarchical models (think pyramid or ladder), when in reality situations are typically much more complex. As you manipulate the orb imagine that your topic lies at it’s centre, and to fully understand it you need to travel through each layer. As you weave and bob, the layers shift, and new relationships are discovered. Keep in mind that in many ways, culture, identity and your topic are more about the relationships, rather than the thing itself.

One important approach in this work is paying attention to binary thinking. French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1983) used the term deconstruction as a deliberate, careful
way to interpret what we read and write. To deconstruct means to look carefully at an issue to understand any apparently conflicting or ambiguous elements. Often this means looking at binaries. Here are some typical binary labels you might notice in a classroom:

- individual/group
- whole language/phonetic
- good/bad
- normal/special needs
- black/white
- female/male

The process of TI gives us time and space to thoughtfully explore the binary thinking that dominates educational settings. Binaries are one of the many ways we make sense of the world, yet these binaries can sometimes limit our thinking around complex topics and can be important sites for transformation. For example we know that a child labeled as the “bad” kid, actually has good qualities, even if these might be less obvious. We know that someone who identifies as male might later identify as female, or neither. We know that race is not biologically real, but is real in its consequences. According to Kalmbach Phillips & Carr (2006) when we see binaries, we tend to take sides:

Many individuals feel the need to be on one side or the other of such binaries. For example, in teaching, they must either be a friend or an authority; their lessons are either fun or boring; they must have control or risk chaos. With each of these, there is a sense that one of the sides is right and the other side is wrong. The side must then be defended; each side is isolated from the other. The result is a stagnant, single-view argument that is difficult to grow or expand.

To deconstruct these binaries, we might instead make a list of what is dangerous and useful about each perspective. Consider the assumptions we are making about each term: what values, beliefs, and cultural influences frame our interpretations? The goal of examining our assumptions in this way is to tease something out of the text (and our own thinking) that...
we may not have noticed before. Such deconstruction allows us to start all over again and to consider the dilemma from another point of view. (p. 10)

In TI we move from either/or ways of thinking to both~and ways of thinking. Developing a habit for disrupting **binary thinking** can take practice. What are the perceived **paradoxes** in your inquiry? How might you deconstruct them in order to see what is dangerous and useful there? How might your **worldview** create or disrupt binaries? One of the benefits of the pod relationships discussed in Chapter Seven is that through layered and generous listening, we can help each other identify and disrupt **binary thinking** and see the complexity of situations.
Images of the Teacher

Our inherited beliefs often include formulaic images of what it means to be a teacher. Close your eyes for a moment and consider what a typical teacher looks like for you. What particular qualities does this teacher possess? What objects are attached to this teacher? Is there a blackboard nearby? Or perhaps a red apple involved? Kalmbach, Phillips & Carr (2006) suggest be-coming teachers go online and search for teacher images to find patterns in the way teachers are portrayed.

Is the teacher pictured male or female? What is the teacher’s ethnicity? Is the teacher in the center of the picture, placed in a prominent position? Is the teacher in a nontraditional setting? Are there pictures of students teaching students? (p. 17)

It is important to pay attention to the images that surround us and that may influence us on subtle and sometimes unconscious levels. If you look carefully you will see that teachers often inherit traits that are socially normed from a time that is no longer relevant to today’s classrooms. Another question you might have as a be-coming a teacher is: how is my identity as a person different from my identity as a teacher? In TI, we wonder how this binary might be disrupted? Are these really two different things? In what ways might my out of school identity overlap or inform the identity I bring to my teaching?
In section 5.1 we suggested roles that a teacher might take on, given their particular paradigm: the **positivist** as knowledge transmitter, the progressive as facilitator, the social justice teacher as equalizer, and the indigenous teacher as relational connector. You may have noticed that these categories feel a bit artificial, the descriptions stereotypical, of something that is in reality very complex. Using such categories in certain ways, could lead to a restrictive understanding of who we are as teachers and might even cause psychological harm. That being said, categorizing images can also be useful in that they may point to something that already exists, giving us a place from which to have conversations. These types of labels might also help us think about new possibilities around our roles as teachers.

**Ayurvedic Typologies**

There are numerous ways to explore human typologies (a way of classifying human characteristics) such as Meyers-Briggs and Enneagram. We have chosen to work with **Ayurvedic Typologies** because it supports a **wholistic** approach to classification and because it presents only five categories. In our work with psychologist, Indrus Piché (March 2013) around the edge of counseling and in combination with notes from Dr. Claudia Welch, we would like to present to you a system of typologies that we find useful in discovering meaning in who we are as teachers. It is a way for us to look at ourselves that is less binary and also less static than many common approaches in current cultures. We draw from Ayurveda, a medical and philosophical system that can be translated as “the science of life.” It is a practice that originated in India some ten thousand years ago, and includes a comprehensive study of anatomy, physiology, pathology, diagnostic systems and treatment strategies. In India, it is practiced alone or together with western (allopathic) medicine in hospitals, clinics, private practices, cities and villages. As it relates to education and working in classrooms, there are two features of Ayurveda that can be useful. They are the concepts of Prakruti and Vikruti: an individual’s unique constitution and current imbalance.

**Prakruti: Your Inborn Constitution**

Prakruti is an individual’s baseline constitution and according to Ayurveda, is determined at the moment of conception and relates to inherited or permanent physical and emotional characteristics and tendencies. These would include qualities such as height, natural eye and hair color and innate personality traits. That is not to say that traits cannot change over time - showing up as different behaviour in different situations and times over life. We caution you to avoid reading these descriptions as concrete assessments of your personality. Rather, use the language and descriptions as a way to understand disposition through a different worldview.

Ayurveda teaches that the Universe, and her components, are all made from five basic, archetypal “elements”. These are not synonymous with the elements of our periodic table of elements. They are earth, water, fire, air and ether. Read about the characteristics of each of the elements on the
following pages. Each element yields certain qualities that manifest in the universe and in each human being, as his or her individual constitution. There are as many different constitutions as there are human beings. There is far more complexity to how these elements interact and associate themselves and this can be further explored at Dr. Claudia Welch’s website.

Vikruti: Your Current Imbalance

Another step towards understanding health and wellbeing (remember this is physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental health) according to Ayurvedic principles is to understand if and how we have strayed from our natural, healthy constitution. Vikruti is a Sanskrit word loosely translated as a "changed condition of body, mind and consciousness." In Ayurveda, it is most often used to describe your current state of health (or ill-health) in relation to your Prakruti, or "natural state." This can show up as under-expressed or over-expressed elements (e.g. too much Earth, or not enough Water). Given the season and context of life certain elements may be dominant or recessive in our personalities. When all four elements are in proportional harmony theorists such as Jung have called this “wholeness” and Maslow deemed it “self-actualization.”

Your calling or vocation will often call on you to enhance your least developed element (or Vikruti). You may be drawn to people and partners who have a strong presence of the element that is not expressed in your personality; this may be an unconscious way to move towards wholeness. This worldview, though very different from some western-world understandings of disposition, can help us to understand ourselves and the role of our disposition in how we relate to others.
Earth (Jung: Sensation)

- Objective
- Grounded, represent the practical, realistic material side of our nature
- Doers; they can actualize things
- Care for their bodies and care about how they are working
- Stable, secure, structured environment into which we can function
- Patient and reliable, seeks the practical and most logical answer to a problem
- Can be a stabilizing force in a relationship contributing structure and organization to achieve balance and harmony
- Fosters growth

Air (Jung: Thinking)

- Objective
- Realm of the intellect and our spiritual nature. It is through the process of thinking that we develop ideas
- Ability to communicate well, inventiveness (along with the vision of fire)
- Ability to be unattached
- Will often give originality and versatility to the personality
- Different perspective, rise above – helps us see the big picture
- Our spiritual self- transcend the mundane – lifts us out of the everydayness of life
- Soaring- transports us
- Disciplined
Fire (Jung: Intuition)

- Subjective
- Opposite of earth
- Hardest element to totally master
- Extremely energetic; can damage quickly if out of control
- Creative and spontaneous
- Vision into future
- Expects the best, expectancy, vitality
- Sees life as play; takes risks
- Performers, light up a room
- Leadership – hard to be a true leader without some fire

Over or under expressions

Water (Jung: Feeling)

- Subjective
- Personal relationships are primary
- Compassionate and empathetic
- Expects change and does not expect lasting structure
- Ability to be vulnerable and emotional
- Does not try to reason out; feels it out
- Sentimental
- Guided by feeling

Over or under expressions

- Wishy-washy
- Cannot make up mind; vagueness
- If it cannot be felt it is insignificant
Ether (Jung: mixture)

**Ether**

- Comfortable with the mystery of all life; Curious about life
- Prime element latent in all things, providing space and balance for all elements to unfold
- Essential to our sense of connectedness with spirit and wellbeing
- Promotes our sense of joy and union

**Over or under expressions**

- Feelings of grief and separateness

The element I most align with right now...
SECTION 4

Reflexive Questions

1. Consider David Orr’s inherited beliefs. Where do you find agreement or dispute? What possible beliefs would you like to hold?

2. In what ways do you see inherited beliefs emerging in schools? How might Orr’s belief’s inform your teaching practice?

3. Think about how teachers are represented in the media that surround you. How closely do you embody the dominant images of a teacher? What have you been able to take for granted or not take for granted?

4. After examining the Ayurvedic typologies, what is showing up for you? What does this reveal to you about how you are relating to others?
We teach who we are.

– Parker Palmer

Click here for the Transformative Inquiry Research Website
Caring for your soul

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Caring for soul requires consideration of self and passions.

2. Develop curiosity (and subsequent inquiry) by engaging mindfulness, introspection, touchstone stories, and un-explained events.

3. Inquiry is hard work as it requires an inward focus and willingness to let things emerge in their own time.

4. Mentors can help navigate and facilitate but are not in control of the inquiry process.

One of the three questions Gregory Cajete suggests as being important for educators to attend to is: how do we care for our own souls? The concept of soul can be considered a philosophical quandary and has been interpreted logically, spiritually, emotionally, and even physically over the course of human history. Indeed, ever-evolving descriptions of soul have been posited by Greek, Socratic, Indigenous, and existential theorists, and some common descriptors emerge as being resonate with the TI approach:

- Soul is the actualized and embodied form of spirit
- Soul can be interpreted as a synonym of the mind
- Soul represents the mixture of beliefs, values and attitudes that create each person’s disposition, a unique expression of self in the world

If souls are ubiquitous in all humans then the tending of souls must be implicit in the practice of education. Typically, teachers engage in helping students understand themselves in relation to others. This work often goes beyond what is written in the curricular outcomes of learning. How do we engage in soul-work as teachers? And, what is it that teachers do when they care for their own souls? Likely it means something more than the necessary tending of our basic needs (e.g. food, sleep, water, and shelter). Dr. Martin Seligman, a positive psychologist, suggests that nurturing our strengths, happiness, and gaining fulfillment in our lives is paramount to
understanding ourselves as psychological beings. Seligman suggests that there are three differing components that make up a ‘happy life’: pleasure, meaning, and engagement. Watch the TED Talk by Martin where he explains these three components. How do you gain pleasure, meaning, and engagement? And how do they relate to caring for your own soul or learning spirit?

Identifying important relationships, activities, or spiritual practices can help inquirers describe the components and connections in their lives from which they derive pleasure, meaning, and engagement. By focusing on our soul and trying to understand ourselves better, we engage in a noticing that transcends self-obsession and narcissism. This chapter looks at reflexivity, mindfulness, and curiosity. These are the kernels of inquiry and are the central acts of being and be~coming a learner~teacher~researcher. The TI process is aided by careful consideration of deep self knowledge and relationships to others.

Developing Curiosity

In the high and far-off times the elephant, o best beloved, had no trunk. He had only a blackish, bulgy nose, as big as a boot, that he could wriggle about from side to side; but he couldn't pick up things with it. But there was one elephant--a new elephant--an elephant's child--who was full of 'satiable curiosity, and that means he asked ever so many questions. - Rudyard Kipling, The Elephant's Child

http://bit.ly/18HJgU2
As the elephant’s child discovered, following burning questions can be both dangerous and useful. They often require us to gather our courage and venture out on our own, carrying supplies and adapting to the unexpected. As we discuss later in section 7.4, our explorations can be hindered or aided by the perspective of others, be they relatives or thinking friends such as the bi-coloured python rock snake. Curiosity inevitably leads to change, and the elephant child’s ability to adapt gave him vantages in the realms of eating, shlopping mud, and the then-common pachyderm practice of spanking.

As he brought back new ways of being to his community, the elephant’s child began to influence others and eventually set larger changes in motion. His beloved family sought their own stretched and useful noses. In fact, when long noses more readily fulfilled the food and mud needs of the community, a peace and lack of spanking ensued overall.

Being curious about life can be an act of introspection, reflexiveness, and mindfulness. Hypothesized as the neologism biophilia by ecologist, E.O. Wilson, he suggests that humans all have an “innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes” (1984, p. 1). The concept of biophilia could be nuanced further with concepts of cultural, social, psychological curiosity that many teachers experience throughout their careers. In fact, curiosity inevitably leads to a complex web of relationships. Our TI data show that nourishing and dwelling in curiosity as a learner–teacher–researcher can lead to a distinct form of inquiry that can transform us in meaningful ways.

The complex nature of teaching makes the profession an especially ripe context for cultivating an inquiry question. Teaching requires teachers to make sense of the interaction between the following five elements simultaneously: the child, the context, the content, the acts of teaching, and the teacher’s own beliefs or dispositions. So how do teachers think about the five elements of teacher work? In any teaching event, teachers consider the context where they teach. For instance, they may ponder: ‘What resources are available?’, ‘What are the state [or provincial] standards or system objectives?’, ‘What support is provided for this innovation?’, or ‘How will the broader community react?’ In conjunction with thinking about context, teachers also make sure they understand the key content knowledge that must be constructed. Teachers ask, ‘What misinformation or misunderstandings often occur as children construct knowledge in this area?’ and ‘What are the multiple perspectives that must be shared in order to capture the complexity of the content?’ (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009; p. 21)
Taking charge of your own learning

In some instances, inquiry topics arise for some people through curiosity about our own past such as touchstone stories, past traumas, unexplained phenomena, or even shame. These topics or memories are inherently personal and can sometimes be uncomfortable to explore. This discomfort arises for two reasons:

1. Looking directly at what and how we are as individuals in any situation can be hard work.

2. Inquirers are asked to take charge of their own learning—something unusual in a schooling system that is so focused on transmissive and even passive techniques.

Finding your own path in learning requires trust on many levels. Whether it is the mentor-inquirer relationship or the administrators-mentor relationship, the learner-teacher relationship, or the relationship between peers, trust is a fundamental characteristic for empowered learning scenarios. Inquiry topics cannot be allocated as a rote or prescribed menu, nor should they be steered by anyone other than the inquirer. This gives a sense of responsibility to the learner and also a chance to engage in a self-knowing of one’s own learning spirit. The elephant’s child asked his own questions and went on his own journey to follow them.

Marie Battiste (2009) tells us that each person has a learning spirit; a special gift that is each individual’s to unfold. We believe teachers can facilitate that spirit, but only if they have a personal sense of the process, therefore all TI instructors also engage as TI inquirers. The TI course provides a place where each inquirer can explore his or her own learning spirit. This may feel different than learning environments you have previously known. In TI we focus predominantly on the process of learning rather than on any particular end product. This is in line with the new BC Education Plan with its emphasis on personalized learning for every student, quality teaching and learning, and flexibility and choice.

The process of following your inquiry on your own impetus and terms can at times be exhilarating, daunting, frightening and enlightening. Within the course, mentors can act as supportive thinking friends who will provide tips for facilitating and navigating the process through introducing questions and models, empathy, and intuitive wisdom. But the overarching goal is that gradually the mentor fades into the background of the process.

As Paulo Freire put it: “Only the student can name the moment of the death of the professor.” That is, a teacher can be intent on a dialogue with an adult learner, but if the learner sees the teacher as “the professor” with whom there is no possibility of disagreement, no questioning, no challenge, the dialogue is dead in the water. (Vella, 2002; p. 20)
Honouring your own **learning spirit** requires caring for yourself, finding meaning, pleasure, and engagement in your practice, and leading your own learning.

I would describe my learning spirit as...
Beyond Reflection

Historically, reflection as a teaching practice can be found in the work of educational scholars John Dewey (1933) and Donald Schön (1983). Both promoted reflection as a “critical underpinning of growth and learning” (Ryan, 2005, p. 1). Reflection involves looking back on experiences as a means of constructing knowledge about one’s self and about the world. Consider reflection as a process akin to looking in the mirror. You might check to see if your hair looks just right, if it doesn’t then you make adjustments.

In the context of teaching, simple reflection may not yield all the information needed for the type of growth and learning originally advocated by Dewey and Schön. Teaching is as much rooted in intuition as it is in intention; often our ‘gut feelings’ profoundly guide the decisions we make. This is not to say that our actions are without consideration; teachers frequently consider the events that take place in their classrooms. In fact, most teachers reflect relentlessly on a daily basis (Dana and Yendol-Hoppey, 2009). Reflection occurs in the staff room at lunch, while walking down the hallways chatting with colleagues, on the drive home from work and even invades sleep in the form of annoying teacher dreams!

One way of expanding a reflective practice is to move towards a practice of reflexivity. Engaging in reflexivity requires critical thought and careful consideration followed by action rooted in understanding. Engaging in mindfulness and introspection with careful and open consideration to the complexity of situations and events that present themselves

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**HIGHLIGHTS**

1. All teachers have prejudice and biases; the process of TI creates a safe enough space to attend to these.

2. **Reflexivity** is a movement from awareness to connectedness.

3. Being reflexive means that you do not simply look back and contemplate but you consider your contribution to the construction of meanings.
frequently generates reflexive practice. Where reflection is often individual, reflexivity is decidedly relational. Jun (1994) suggests that reflexive practice is guided by three key questions:

- Who am I and what kind of person do I want to be?
- How do I relate to others and to the world around me?
- How can I practice self-conscious and ethical actions based on a critical questioning of past actions and of future possibilities?

By adding deeper attention to reflection, reflexivity becomes an increasingly useful tool for growth as we increase our self-awareness within the larger social, community, and ecological contexts.

Educator, Parker Palmer (1998) says that as teachers, “we teach who we are” (p.2) and that “good teaching can’t be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher” (p.10). The TI process asks us to pay attention to who we are and to have integrity with our inner world because whether we are aware of it or not, we share our values, beliefs and attitudes with our students. For this reason, reflexivity becomes paramount as a process that goes beyond reflecting on the more mechanical aspects of practice to include deep attention to individual positioning within social contexts (Dressman, 1998).

Reflexivity is an act of self-conscious consideration that can lead people to a deepened understanding of themselves and others, not in the abstract, but in relation to specific social environments . . . [and] foster a more profound awareness . . . of “how social contexts influence who people are and how they behave . . . . It involves a person’s active analysis of past situations, events, and products, with the inherent goals of critique and revision for the explicit purpose of achieving an understanding that can lead to change in thought or behavior. (Danielewicz, J., 2001, pp. 155-156).

Within TI, meaningful learning~teaching occurs when we are able to recognize and respond to personal beliefs and assumptions that inform our teaching practice. We take particular care to attend to the paradigms we use to make sense of our world so that we can bring to consciousness our unconscious dispositions. When these knots are unearthed, they become sites for examination, questioning and possible transformation. All teachers have prejudice and biases; the process of TI creates a safe-enough space to attend to these so that “a path with heart” can be followed (Chambers, 2004, p. 5) through the messy swamp of learning~teaching~researching.

Reflexivity is a movement from awareness to connectedness. It invites us to not only develop a stronger sense of attentiveness to who we are and who we are becoming, but
provides an opportunity to explore other worldviews. As we ask and follow our deeper questions, we realize that our individual experiences are integral to the unique way we perceive the world and our connection to it. It is a process that includes attention to beliefs about ontology (the study of what it means to exist) and epistemology (the study of what it means to know). Reflexivity requires attention to an object, while at the same time attending to one’s role in how that object is being constructed or constituted (Davies, et. al, 2004).

This means that I need to understand my own subjective influences (my beliefs, values and attitudes) on that which I am attending to (my topic). For example, if I see the glass as being half empty, what beliefs are at play for me? What about when I see it as half full? To be reflexive requires analysis of that which founded my beliefs and actions (Bray, Lee, Smith, & Yorks, 2000) and requires a degree of action based on those findings. In addition, Brookfield (2003) suggests that individuals must be willing to “identify assumptions they hold dear that are actually destroying their sense of well-being and serving the interests of others, that is, hegemonic assumptions” (Brookfield, 2003; p.127).

The practice of reflexivity can help us in developing a more complete teacher awareness, or what Sakamoto (2011) calls kizuki, a heightening of cognitive, emotional and collegial awareness in order to transform beliefs and assumptions about learning~teaching.

Being reflexive means that you do not simply look back and contemplate but you consider your contributions to the construction of meanings and the reinterpretation of your actions in light of newly constructed meaning (Willig, 2001). Moreover, you are able to amend misinterpretations in what you believe and how you act.

Reflection has long been a key part of teacher education, but as past students in the program have said, they can at times feel “reflected to death.” This contention sometimes shows up as reluctance for inquirers who prefer not to reflect, especially when deeper processes of reflexivity on their own power and privilege are involved. Gore and Zeichner (1991) identify reasons for a lack of reflection amongst pre-service teachers to include biographical, situational and cultural issues that are complex and interconnected. In her study on beginning teachers, Labosky (1994) identifies her participants as being either “commonsense thinkers,” who often ask how, when and to what standard, or “reflective thinkers,” who tend to ask the deeper “why” questions. Reflexivity expands to consider the
Anna Freud (1979) famously argued that teachers should not just reflect on their actions and re-actions. They actually have a duty to understand these elements of teaching situations in order to avoid the possible negative consequences on their students of a failure or a refusal to do so. Britzman and Pitt (1996) summarize:

“...teachers’ encounters with students may return them involuntarily and still unconsciously to scenes from their individual biographies. Such an exploration requires that teachers consider how they understand students through their own subjective conflicts. ... The heart of the matter, for Anna Freud, is the ethical obligation teachers have to learn about their own conflicts and to control the re-enactment of old conflicts that appear in the guise of new pedagogical encounters. (p. 118)”

As a research team, we can see the important role reflection and reflexivity can play for teachers. Yet, in scholarly discourse, reflexivity plays a certain role – focusing on thought, cognitive connections, and philosophical quandaries implicit in learning. It can be a challenging concept to understand because it:

- is a dense concept, with scholarly complexity and controversies
- focuses on the brain and cognition, and treats intuition, bodily knowing, relatedness to other (and other-than-human) as secondary elements.
- engages in logic and reason, and if practiced poorly reinforces hegemonic principles (e.g. consider reflexivity as it relates to one’s own continued paradigm - does this fit in my own paradigm? If not, how can I fix it?

Over time, reflexivity has begun to feel too narrow, given our needs in TI. The next section considers the role of mindfulness and interbeing as a more useful approach to engaging an ongoing consideration of self and other.
SECTION 3

Mindfulness and Interbeing

HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Mindfulness** is a practice of attention that stems from many different **worldviews** and religions including Hinduism, Christianity, and Buddhism. It was partially popularized within Western culture through the ubiquity of Yoga practice (a pre-meditation activity that engages individuals in a body-mind practice). **Mindfulness** is not a form of obsessive attention to detail, but rather a gentle acknowledgement of your presence ‘here - in this moment.’ It engages a form of ethics that acknowledges the value of all living organisms. The practice of mindfulness contributes to bringing your mind back into your body and your attention to that which is. Listen to how Richard Burnett describes mindfulness and it’s importance in schools. Can you imagine ways of adapting his .b approach to your own teaching situation?

2. It is a way of bringing your mind back into your body.

3. **Interbeing** is an acknowledgement that all components in life are interconnected and related.

**INTERACTIVE 6.4** Mindfulness in Schools: Richard Burnett at TEDxWhitechapel (19.21)
Peace activist, poet, and Zen master, Thích Nhất Hạnh, practices mindfulness everyday to engage in an awakened approach to living: “Mindfulness is the capacity to be aware of what is going on, of what is there. The object of your mindfulness can be anything.” In this same way, mindfulness can be practiced by anyone, regardless of whether or not they hold religious beliefs.

Everyone is capable of being mindful. Everyone is mindful to a certain extent. The question is how to be more mindful. Many people are lost in worries about the future and regrets about the past. They are caught up in their projects and their fantasies, and their minds are not connected to their bodies. If the body is not united with the mind, we are not really alive. Mindful walking and mindful breathing help bring the mind back to the body, so we can be truly present in the here and now... Mindfulness increases concentration and allows us to see things more deeply and stop being victims of wrong perception... We cannot force people to practice mindfulness, but if we practice and become happy, we can inspire others to practice. (Nhật Hạnh, 2009)

Mindful or contemplative practices are embraced by several religions groups (e.g. Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, etc.) yet practicing mindfulness does not make one Buddhist anymore than doing yoga makes one a Hindu! Sometimes when a practice is dominantly associated with one religion (e.g. Buddhism/mindfulness, Hinduism/yoga) the lines get blurred between practices and religious rituals (e.g. communion or bar mitzvah) that are certainly reserved for members of a particular association.

TI doesn’t seek to convert students to Buddhism or any other religion that practices mindfully. We respect each inquirer’s right to believe or not believe, religiously or otherwise. As Nhất Hạnh states, we are interested in helping people practice mindfulness in order to see things more deeply, especially where inquiry is concerned. For more perspectives on how mindful learning “tunes up our instrument of inquiry through developing presence, compassion, discernment and clarity” listen to Tobin Hart discuss the importance of a contemplative approach in education.

The kernel of what Nhất Hạnh is talking about is paying attention, having intention, and recognizing attunement to your self, each other, and nature. Adding richness to his principles, his focus suggests that a new word be added to the dictionary, interbeing, which derived from the Vietnamese: Tiếp Hiện. Nhất Hạnh translates Tiếp Hiện as continued realizing. If we are continually realizing that in every moment there is change, and that change is relational to all other interacting components, we can quickly recognize the inter-relation of all components. Sounds like physics doesn’t it?! Click on Interactive 6.5 to read his description of interbeing.
**Mindfulness** is part of this intention to atune and attend to the inter-relationship of all things. How am I relating to this moment, to this classroom, to this curriculum? Is this the relationship I am wanting or intending in this moment? What does it feel like to be a student in this experience? What is truth for these students?

**Interbeing** is highlighted in a number of places within the TI course. Embracing interbeing becomes a way to connect and relate to our souls. Interbeing connects soul, community and Earth (the three intentions of this course).

**Mindlessness**

Of equal importance in understanding the role of **mindfulness** is appreciating its counterpart, mindlessness. Capel (2012) describes mindless behaviour as that which follows the rules without deference to the context.

> Whether intending to learn an academic subject, a new sport, or how to play a musical instrument, we often call upon mind-sets that hamper rather than help us to learn. For example, many of us believe that we should learn the basics of a task so well that they become second nature to us. Having mindlessly accepted this information, it rarely occurs to us to question who determined what the basics are. (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000, p. 3)

Education is a context where mindlessness frequently occurs. Think back to your last time in a classroom. What mindlessness things did you see occur? What makes you call them mindless? How might the people involved had acted with more mindfulness?
1. Soul is often neglected in teaching practice. How might you care for your own soul and those of your students?

2. Pre-service teachers often feel “reflected to death.” How do you understand reflexivity and mindfulness? Do they seem to support your current use of reflection? Why or why not?

3. How could you see education or your own practice changing if there was heightened attention to the interrelationship between all things? Where do you see mindfulness and interbeing showing up in the TI course?

4. How could you make your own learning and teaching more mindful and less mindless?
The more we study the major problems of our time, the more we come to realise that they cannot be understood in isolation. They are systemic problems, which means that they are interconnected and interdependent.

- Fritjof Capra
The nature of schools is that they are inherently relational. As a teacher, you will function because you are inextricably linked to your students. Rarely, if at all, do teachers act in isolation.

Working on learning in the classroom involves concerted action by at least two people, the teacher and a student. Although student learning can be accomplished without actions taken by teachers, simply by a relationship between the student and that which is to be learned, the work we attend to here—teaching in school—necessarily involves intellectual and social collaboration. (Lampert, 2010, p. 22)

Gregory Cajete asks educators to consider how do we learn to get along? We extend his question to our practice of TI, wondering: as teachers, what is the nature of the intellectual and social collaborations in which we engage? What interactive tone do we set in our teaching? How might we include or avoid emotional and spiritual connectivity? What power issues, seen or unseen, might be at play in our classroom? How do we listen to our students? How do we develop learning communities that thrive and sustain?

Engaging meaningfully within community is a key aspect to the TI process. This includes relationships with students, colleagues, mentors, the environment, and our relationship
with self in order to keep TI in motion and open up to new ideas. In order to engage meaningfully in community, we must develop our sense of **relationality**, engage in careful and generous listening, and interact with each other in a spirit of **accountability**. This applies to our relationships with students and also to our relationships with other people, animals, and all things.

While Chapter Six spoke of **interbeing**, here we will spend time understanding **relationality**. These concepts are clearly related (no pun intended!). In the context of TI, interbeing is used to describe connectivity on a personal, soul or even cellular level. Relationality has its roots in interbeing and moves us out towards relationships with other sentient beings. The words are in many ways interchangeable; when questions of interbeing are followed carefully, one eventually will arrive at relatedness, and vice versa! We enter **relationality** with an attitude of **mindfulness**. Through this lens, we are able to see subtle nuances of relationships that might have gone unnoticed without such careful attention.

**Relationality**, the state or condition of being relational, is often used in reference to how people and/or things connect. In TI the concept of **relationality** is founded on the notion that we do not simply have relationships with each other or are related to each other. Instead, the focus is on understanding that it is the relationships themselves that actually make us who we are. We use the term in alignment with Shawn Wilson (2008), who writes, "rather than viewing ourselves as being in relationship with other people or things, we are the relationships that we hold and are a part of" (p. 80). In this sense, **relationality** is not simply being aware of how we might connect to each other in an A+B=C type of equation. Rather, our view expands to include a more layered, web-like understanding of relations, where we attend carefully to respecting and use our relationships to build new and stronger ones together.

TI is based in a view of **relationality** that resonates with an indigenous educational paradigm (Archibald, 2008; Cajete, 1994; Ermine, 1995; Fixico, 2003; Hampton, 1995). From an indigenous pedagogy based in the belief that we are all related, **relationality** is central to our education systems and to being better teachers. When we are aware of this deep relatedness, a positivist approach that isolates knowledge as discrete facts becomes troublesome. As Wilson writes, in an indigenous paradigm, “the concepts or ideas are not as important as the relationships that went into forming them” (p. 74). When we are trained to look only at the bits, we lose sight of not only the whole picture or our wholeness, but also of the interrelatedness, the movement between, and the vibrancy of who we really are.

In Chapter One we spoke of **unbounded questions** that highlight the complexity of teaching (Henderson, 1992). **Unbounded questions** thrive in an environment of **relationality**. A bounded question holds a strong element of directedness. For example, consider these questions: when will I be able to schedule time to take my students outside?
Or, if I move the desks into small groups, how will the students’ interactions be changed? These **bounded questions** have a narrow, specific and constrained focus. **Bounded Questions** can play an important role in improving learning in a classroom. At the same time, **unbounded questions** are also important as they highlight complexity and **relationality**. For example, you might ask, how can I teach in a system that I don't believe in? Or, what are the factors affecting the learning of kids in poverty? By framing these questions in an unbounded way, we are more able to remain in the complexity of **relationality**.

Hanging out in unbounded questions can open us to think beyond our own sense of self and worldview. The following video (Interactive 7.1) was created based on a commencement speech delivered by writer David Foster Wallace to Kenyon College class of 2005. He describes how we consciously choose what we think about others. He also discusses the importance of developing empathy for others who are different than ourselves. In TI, we sometimes try to leave aside our view of the world for a while asking: What might be true of another?

**INTERACTIVE 7.1 David Foster Wallace: This is Water (9:22)**

http://dotsub.com/view/6b8cc93f-3b53-486b-a1ce-025ffe6c9c52

The “water” in which I swim...
In our experience, the more teaching is embedded in a relational awareness, the more teaching is carried out with relational accountability. Walking the path of TI leads to an increased understanding of the profound responsibility we hold to each other, to the four-legged, slithering, crawling, swimming and flying creatures, and to the plants and organisms on planet Earth.

Relational accountability is enacted through practicing the for Rs: respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). These concepts are vital to a meaningful TI process: we strive to be respectful of where information comes from and the views of others; we attend to how our actions are meaningful and significant within community; we look for what we can give back to others; and we acknowledge and take ownership of our accountability towards changing schools for the better.

Within the TI course, you are invited to delve into ideas and questions that are deeply personal and connected to your inner passions and beliefs. You are invited to look at your inquiry through a new lens, a lens in which relationality becomes a key to setting your inquires in motion. Reciprocity and respect are useful in the conversations we need to engage in if we truly want to change our practice for the betterment of schools. Context and developing good relations are essential to the process of gathering information.

Let’s return for a moment, to unbounded questions. Sometimes, unbounded questions unsettle us. They can
lead us down rather circuitous and unexpected paths, altering our sense of what we thought might be true and who we think we are as educators. Occasionally, people who carefully follow their TI journey even wonder aloud if are well suited to be teachers. We think this may be because unbounded questions foster relational accountability. For example, children who live in poverty have overlapping and interconnected issues they deal with (e.g. housing, nutrition, and stigma). As teachers, our beliefs around nutrition and stigma affect our students, perhaps obviously, but sometimes only on a more hidden level. If we let our questions guide us, we gradually are led to developing relational accountability. How do my actions affect this child? How do my deeply held (often hidden) beliefs, values and attitudes influence the situation? In this way, TI often reveals that in order to be relationally accountable, we must be the ones who change. In this realization our beliefs around what it means to teach can be challenged and we may take time to consider other career choices.

TI is an indigenist approach that resonates with relationality and is carried out with relational accountability. Indigenous epistemology and ontology can feel foreign to those of us who were educated in the mainstream and this type of formidable relational accountability can sometimes bring up resistance. Often becoming more relationally accountable requires us to confront the norms with which we have lived. As Carr & Kemmis (1986) state, "...in order to think relationally, we must leave behind old habits and ways of being in our international community, local communities, and schools."

We also have relational accountability to the knowledge we co-create together. Manulani Aluli Meyer (2008) says that the actual nature of knowledge is that which is sustainable.

Knowledge that endures is spirit driven. It is a life force connected to all other life forces. It is more an extension than it is a thing to accumulate. (p. 218)

So when we talk about knowledge, the stuff that much of schooling is based upon, we need to consider that knowledge might be that which withstands time and situations. We are called to be sustainable within all our relations, to consider generations beyond our own.
As pointed out in “this is Water” (Interactive 7.1), we have choice in the way we think about each other. We can choose responsibility for our relationships, or we can choose to ignore what might be true of another.

Our data indicate that the way we listen is of critical importance. In her book, *Listening: a framework for teaching across difference*, Katherine Schultz (2003) describes the pedagogical usefulness of teachers incorporating a listening stance. “Rather than teaching prospective and experienced teachers how to follow prescriptions or blueprints,” she suggests “that teachers learn how to attend and to respond with deep understanding to the students they teach” (p. 2). Schultz lays out a framework that locates listening at the centre of teaching and suggests that teachers must listen to the layers of experience in their classroom to know how to proceed. This includes being able to listen to the rhythm and balance of specific classrooms; to the social, cultural and community contexts of students’ lives; and to silence and acts of silencing.

Barbara Thayer-Bacon (2003) describes the act of generous listening, as being important when our aim is to understand another and where they are coming from. Here, the intent in a conversation is not simply for our own view to be heard, but to listen to the other in a way that is relationally accountable. For example, I might believe that students should be physically active and aware of nutrition in a particular pragmatic way that will improve their health and wellness. If I deduce by the student’s behaviours that they didn’t
understand my lesson, I might decide to repeat the chapter on nutrition. My student however, despite having an intellectual understanding, might also have emotional issues around eating that give them a markedly different perspective.

Rather than drive my factual knowledge into this student’s experience, another approach might hold more tact and usefulness. What could happen if I drop my assumptions and listen to what might be true for them? To listen generously is to give of oneself to another, to let go of assumptions conceived outside of this particular evolving relationship. It means to be aware of different worldviews and meet another in a safe-enough space where true listening occurs. Generous listening allows us to move away from the positivist tendency towards criticism and into a space where we allow other's questions to help guide our own journeys. What is this student wondering? How do I begin from there to assist their learning process? Listening is an integral aspect of teaching because all quality teaching is built upon meaningful relationships.

We listen “generously” when our primary intent is to truly understand another person. Generous listening shows that we are committed to employing caring reasoning. Caring reasoning is what we use to recognize and select what interests us about our qualitative experiences and helps us to also understand the other by attending to the other in a generous manner. Caring reasoning acknowledges that thought and emotion co-exist in a whole relation. “The first step in understanding another is noticing the other. All interest is selected interest – we have to choose what to attend to. …Reason is not in opposition to emotion. Our emotions stir us and move us to act; they are expressions of doubt, concern, love, hate, fear, surprise, etc.” (Thayer-Bacon, 2003, p. 120). Generous listening asks that we listen carefully and permit the necessary time it takes to understand another person before we consider offering critique.

Unfortunately, much of our past experiences, including educational experiences have taught us to focus on being heard rather than listening for understanding. We have also
learned to believe that emotions somehow interfere with thinking, rather than always being part of what helps us to think. Caring reasoning and generous listening reflect a relational theory of knowledge.

A relational (e)pistemology is a humble approach to knowing. We remind ourselves and our students that we need to first attempt to generously understand various perspectives before moving to critiquing them, but critique is important because some ideas are worth rejecting. ...Our theories of knowledge are qualified by as much evidence as we can socially muster so that it is not the case that we must accept anything as good, and yet, at the same time, we cannot accept anything as certain, fixed, and final. (Thayer-Bacon, 2003, p. 255).

Too often, school culture is dominated by teacher-centered practices and prescribed curriculum with little attention placed on the unique and varied needs of students. How do we create a humanizing pedagogy (Bartolomé, 1994) where we recognize, honour and attend to the learning spirit of each child? If, as a teacher, you are be~coming a positive change agent in the lives of your students you must practice intentional and generous listening. What can you learn from students’ body language? What is not being said? How do home and community environments affect what happens in your classroom? How does your own body language influence each learner? Are you anxiously waiting for your turn to talk or to return to your own agenda? How are you paying attention to the rhythm and balance of your classroom? What do your hunches tell you about a given situation? How do you respond to the stories that interrupt your day? Listen to educator Rita Pierson talk about the importance of meeting a child where they are, the value of developing relationships, and ways of championing even the least successful kids in a class.

The process of TI is built on attentive, open listening where you recognize yet suspend your beliefs, while at the same time you try to hear what might be true of another. We build meaningful relationships when we take the time to honour the stories of our students. Be sure to use intentional and generous listening when you do your classroom observations for your practicum!

Generous listening is a way to remain relationally accountable to those we interact with. This means attending to the subtlety of our interactions. Often we focus on what the person is saying and how we are going to respond when they are done. Generous listening has us focus on our listening. What does it mean to be fully present when someone speaks without thoughts of response? Much is gained when we can simply be present as we listen. By listening generously to another, we are acknowledging and respecting the knowledge of this person.

As teachers, we are often in the habit of being the one who talks. Watch your talk to listening ratio and experiment with
silence! Generous listening is important during the TI process, and imperative as a teacher when responding to inquirers. As Karen Meyer (2010) says, "My role as a teacher is to create an environment that nurtures students' capacities to explore the world as it is and to reimagine the world otherwise." This approach may require letting go of old patterns around the role of learners and teachers.

Listening generously across difference is a nuanced and complex process that takes time to embody and so in the TI course we practice our listening skills.

When listening to another person, don’t just listen with your mind, listen with your whole body. Feel the energy field of your inner body as you listen. That takes attention away from thinking and creates a still space that enables you to truly listen without the mind interfering. You are giving the other person space – space to be. It is the most precious gift you can give. Most people don’t know how to listen because the major part of their attention is taken up by thinking. They pay more attention to that than to what the other person is saying, and none at all to what really matters: the Being of the other person underneath the words and the mind (Tolle, 1999, p. 105).

How do you listen? What are you listening for? How might your listening practice be expanding within a framework of relational accountability? Cajete says that we, as teachers, must ask ourselves how to take care of our souls, each other, and the earth, and in TI our questions of inquiry are rooted in these three areas. Participants are encouraged to know where they stand in relation to these questions and to look to movement towards responsibility in all areas.
Pods: a different type of community

1. In pods you can openly and honestly discuss what really matters to you.
2. In pods you will paradoxically be autonomous and relationally accountable.
3. Pod activities require trust on the part of the instructor.

In TI you will experience what we call pods, a different type of learning community based in layered and generous listening. Typically in groups of 2-4, pods are communities in which competition is suspended and prejudice is dismantled. You will have opportunities to honestly and openly discuss what really matters to you, what fuels your anxiety, and questions you have about what it means to be an effective educator. This model of community disrupts the rugged individualism rampant in classrooms, where teachers feel they should be self-sufficient, and hence often alienate themselves from the support of their peers. In TI we believe that there are always uncertainties in teaching, and learning is enhanced when we work with the support of others.

Within the pod discussions, you will paradoxically enact learner autonomy where you will be entrusted with taking ownership for your own learning, and at the same time you will enact relational accountability where you will support the learning of others. We each have our own ways of being and ideas to offer, and at the same time, we are in this boat of education together. To re-imagine a future that is better for all children, we must know where we stand and also have difficult and complicated conversations together. Another aspect of the pod community is Guided Inquiry Conversations, where you bring your personal wonderings to the larger group, in order to expand the circle of understanding even further.
Pod activities require trust on the part of the instructor. Students in the course need to go off and talk on their own. They need time and space to locate and nourish their **learning spirit**, their drive for lifelong learning, and their connectivity to others in the course.
Section 5

Mentoring

Alongside of the pod meetings, each student meets individually with the instructor in mentoring sessions. Much of the role of a mentor in the TI process is to support movement, insight, and **reflexivity** through effective facilitation of discussion with the inquirer. Enacted through at least two **mentor meetings** over the course, these discussions act as check-ins, debriefs, and reflexive discourses all at the same time. The mentor activities are echoed in the pod activities as the modeling of TI radiates outwards into other discussions in the course.

There are many forms of facilitation that a mentor might employ within these one-on-one meetings. We have categorized them in two broad groups of facilitation navigation and facilitation techniques. Within each of these two categories, we noticed two major forms occurring, **in situ** and **ex situ**. **In situ** refers to an act of facilitation that occurs within the mentor meeting. For instance, the mentor might offer a clarifying question or a contextualization of the process of inquiry. An **ex situ** facilitation would be a suggestion to the inquirer to try an activity after the mentor meeting, such as an artistic exploration of their inquiry, an author to look up, or a person to connect with.

We see these two facilitation practices as being represented by a simple dendritic tree (Interactive 7.2). Notice that **in situ** facilitation techniques are surrounded by “**the edge of counselling**.” In the research on TI, we have noticed that the **mentor meetings** can exist on a certain uncomfortable edge. That is, students that embrace the inquiry as a highly

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**HIGHLIGHTS**

1. Facilitating Inquiry can be categorized as facilitation navigation and facilitation techniques.
2. Each category can be sub-categorized as being practices **in situ** or **ex situ**.
3. The mentor is not a counsellor but provides avenues for support where appropriate.
personal exploration may find themselves discussing deeply profound challenges.

One-on-one mentor sessions create time and space for personalizing the TI process and are key to developing a TI approach, especially in the early stages. In these meetings, the mentor acts as a guide and co-investigator. They can occur during class-time or be arranged as meetings outside of class time. Depending on the level of support a learner might need and the time available, they can last from 5 minutes to 30 minutes. Below are some ways to help guide your conversation. These are not prescriptive as each situation requires responses rooted in generous listening, relational accountability, etc. When unsure, sometimes sitting for a minute or two in silence shows the way!

Keep in mind as you read the rest of this section that it is geared towards mentors of the TI process - a role we hope you might eventually take up with your peers in TI or even with future students! (see the section on Transformance).

In Situ Facilitation Technique Statements:
- Tell me more about that...(After a vague, unclear, or unfinished statement)
- What is it about (your questions, topic, inquiry) that really gets you fired up?
- Why do you care about within your particular path of inquiry?
- How might you describe your inquiry to your grandmother?

Ex Situ Facilitation Technique Statements:
- Your inquiry connects well with X and Y authors, perhaps looking into their work will help you explore it further?
- Who in your community or family might provide good insights into your inquiry topic? How might they engage in being an inquiry partner with you?
- Your inquiry connects with X another student in the course. It might be useful to seek them out as an inquiry partner during the pod meetings.

In Situ Facilitation Navigation:
- Draw for me where you think you are in your inquiry process (or share something from your inquiry journal).
- Consider the panarchy loop. Can you tell me where you might be on this loop? What might be significant for you about this location?
- I hear that you are struggling with an inquiry to pursue. Know that this struggle is okay and normal, and that we often need to stay in a murky swamp before finding a path.
**Ex Situ** Facilitation Navigation:

- Look closely at your ongoing journal and Season Count images and draw a meta-version that shows your inquiry process as it changes over time.
- Build a collage to represent how you are feeling right now. This might be especially useful if you are feeling “stuck” or unable to keep the inquiry in motion.
Facilitating Inquiry

Facilitation Technique
- ex situ technique
- in situ technique

Facilitation Navigation
- ex situ navigation
- in situ navigation

Navigation
- cognitive
  - cognitive techniques
- emotional
  - emotional techniques
- intuitive
  - intuitive techniques

edge of counselling
Section 6

Reflexive Questions

1. Contemplate the statement “relationality is founded on the notion that we do not simply have relationships with each other or are related to each other. Instead, the focus is on understanding that it is the relationships themselves that actually make us who we are” (see the relationality section). Draw or write what this means to you with regard to your inquiry at this point.

2. If it is true that “in order to be relationally accountable, we must be the ones who change” (see the relational accountability section), how would you consider your vocation as a teacher differently?

3. Teachers are frequently heard imploring their students to “Listen!” However, in TI we turn this imperative on you as an educator. What aspects of generous listening resonated with you the most? How might you bring this forward?

4. Why do you think generous listening so difficult in schools today?
There was a child went forth every day;
And the first object he look’d upon,
that object he became;
And that object became part of him for the day,
or a certain part of the day,
or for many years, or stretching cycles of years.

- Walt Whitman, 1900
Cajete suggests a sense of urgency, when he asks how do we solve the pressing environmental issues that threaten ecological systems? Yet, it is rare to find school systems engaging in environmental education, education for sustainable development, or nature-based education that goes beyond recycling programs, superficial climate science, and Amazonian rainforest conservation. This is not to say that these three curricular items are unimportant, but they sit in a sea of segregated learning experiences, like the floating plastic islands made from human-made discards, in the Northern section of the Pacific Ocean! Additionally, what binds all learning experiences together is a matrix of relationships and transdisciplinarity, suggesting that environmental education is also a perfect vehicle for larger curricular change.

First, all education is environmental education. By what is included or excluded we teach students that they are part of or apart from the natural world. To teach economics, for example, without reference to the laws of thermodynamics or those of ecology is to teach a fundamentally important ecological lesson: that physics and ecology have nothing to do with the economy. That just happens to be dead wrong. The same is true throughout all of the curriculum. (Orr, 2004, p. 12)
What and how we teach tempers the way that students engage in living on Earth. To add further complexity to this, much of the relationship to ecological systems has been one of exploitation where humans manage the Earth for our own needs and will. In our view, it is important to talk about the concept of caring with the Earth rather than managing it - that we are not better than or more than nature, nor even nature’s caretakers. The opposite is more likely true. When we care for the Earth, we are caring for ourselves and each other (including other than humans) in a way that has the least impact possible. To do this, we need to enter through love of the Earth, as Stephen J. Gould quotes the Senegalese poet:

_In the end we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught._

- Baba Dioum

_For we will not fight to save what we do not love._

- Stephen J. Gould

Unfortunately, some teachers have developed crippling anxiety about how to teach with and in nature, citing issues of ’not knowing plants or animals’ or ’being worried about students being distracted.’ How do we come to love nature? This seems to come through experiential learning that extends from a myriad of outdoor and nature-based activities. But most of all, it is a sense of wonder and engagement from learning with the environment.

One way to help with the anxieties mentioned above is to explore and teach the world through systems thinking. Systems thinking supports a more considered approach to understanding relationships beyond human to human interaction. It helps humans interact with the complexity of everyday situations. Donnella Meadows (2002) suggests that instead of just thinking about systems, we need to dance with them. By dancing, she means that we need to understand the systems we interact with in intimate and interactive ways. For instance, the school system isn’t simply a social endeavour, it affects ecological systems too, such as water systems, plant ecosystems, and even weather systems. Consider all the input and outputs that go into building and running schools, they are more than the physical structures.

So how do you dance with a system? You pay attention to it with all of your senses - and the very first concept of dancing with systems is to get the beat! The next section suggests a theory that might support you getting the beat called Panarchy. This theory provides language for describing transformation in systems and will ultimately help you care for the Earth by engaging you in systems thinking.
Systems thinking and Panarchy

HIGHLIGHTS

1. The four stages of Panarchy Theory’s adaptive cycle can be considered to be various aspects of change
2. Panarchy reflects TI through its five interrelated components: holarchical, scalar, temporal, cyclical, and cross-scalar dependency.

Seeing nature as a series of interactions through complexity theory like panarchy may sound intimidating, but can provide insights for teachers who experience the anxieties mentioned above and for those who wish to think deeply about curricular change. Have you ever experienced teachers, hippies, or wise elders telling you that ‘everything is connected?’ Well, panarchy theory is a way to understand the systems (from ecological to social) within which we are all inter-dependent.

Panarchy theory is a systems-thinking adaptation of ecological and complexity theories that is used to explain “the evolving nature of complex adaptive systems” (Holling, 2001, p. 392). That sounds like teaching doesn’t it? Curriculum theorists have considered complexity theory to be an excellent way to describe learning systems (Davis & Sumara, 2008). Education systems are complex adaptive systems - think about how your classes rarely go the way we expect them to! Rejecting the notion that there is a simple equilibrium for systems, panarchy acknowledges the complexity of dynamic states of equilibria for ecological, societal, and economic systems (Gunderson & Holling, 2002). We are interested in the implications of panarchy theory as a way to describe how humans move and adapt through multiple equilibria of thought and expression (Varey, 2011). This is particularly useful when analyzing transformation over space and time through an Indigenist approach (Wilson, 2009), which also celebrates complexity and interconnectedness.
Acknowledgement of the complexity of overlapping and adaptive systems can frame the beginning of a new approach to understanding how change can occur at the individual, societal, and ecological levels. Many years of environmental psychology research suggests that time, space, scale, and relationships affect the ongoing influencers of thought (Ackerson, 2000). **Panarchy** describes this understanding through its five interrelated components: holarchical, scalar, temporal, cyclical, and cross-scalar dependency (Gunderson & Holling, 2002). Although the description of these components warrants much more space for the purposes of this course, we give a succinct description of them in Table 8.1 below.

**Table 8.1: Five components of panarchy and their explanations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>holarchical</td>
<td>All systems are a nested complexity of other systems. Each component of a system has functional inter- and intra-relations to each other and to other systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scalar</td>
<td>Systems are scale dependent with all sizes existing concurrently (small to big - microscopic to cosmological)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporal</td>
<td>The scale and interrelations of all systems exist in discrete and diverse time sequences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyclical</td>
<td>There are four stages of adaptation in all systems: growth, conservation, release, and reorganization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A concept to keep in mind when reading this section is that **panarchy** helps you (and your students) understand ecological processes occurring around you. At the same time, **panarchy** can also describe the very nature of your classroom (both at individual levels and as a group).

Of particular interest to teachers who take a TI approach is the role of the adaptive cycle. Typically, student growth is measured in a linear fashion, for example we might say they have climbed a ladder to success. The adaptive cycle gives a more holistic and dynamic model for growth. That is, all students’ expressions within the classroom can be described using the four non-linear stages of the cycle. Interactive 8.1 and Interactive 8.2 show four stages of adaptation within the cycle: conservation, release, reorganization, and growth (Gunderson & Holling, 2002). These stages exist within the three dimensional space constructed by the interaction among...
x-axis: connectedness, y-axis: eco-socio-spiritual capacity, and z-axis: resilience. As a student learns and moves clockwise through this model from growth to conservation, he or she makes more connections (increasing complexity of their knowledge). Approaching conservation, however, the resilience of this student’s knowledge in whatever has been learned is decreased; that is, he or she is more susceptible to change and adaptation through the attempted maintenance of one view. Moving from release to re-organization (after a paradigm shift, an aha! moment), the student decreases connectedness and capacity amongst his or her understandings and resilience and adaptability increase again, suggesting new potential and possibility for adaptation. Despite the language of ‘stages’ these do not necessarily occur in linear format. Panarchy theory suggests that the only required linearity seems to occur between release and re-organization. Otherwise, all systems could be considered to jump among and between the phases of the adaptive cycle. For instance, a student desperately trying to hold on to status-quo might stay in conservation through denying or ignoring releases as they occur.

**Beyond the Loop**

A system that acknowledges the complexity of holarchy, scale, time, and cross-scalar dependency then continues to cycle, with potential to spin into other loops ‘above’ and ‘below’ this one through events called remembering and revolt. See interactive 8.3.

Three dimensional panarchy model showing the relationship among potential, connectedness, and resilience within an adaptive cycle (Holling, 2001).
Revolt occurs when a series of rapid stochastic (random) events lead to the escalation of the adaptive cycle to a much larger and slower cycle. This typically occurs during the release phase but can also occur during re-organization and growth, where many change events adapts the system into a much larger and more complex system:

An ecological version of this situation occurs when conditions in a forest allow a local ignition to create a small ground fire that spreads first to the crown of a tree, then to a patch in the forest, and then to a whole stand of trees. Each step in that cascade moves the transformation to a larger and slower level. (Holling, 2001: 398)

Similarly, remembering is triggered by a cross-scalar event (or multiple scales and systems interacting), pertaining to the use of legacy items such as seed banks after a stand-replacing forest fire in an ecological system.

In terms of teaching and learning, an example of revolt would be a series of events that help develop a new paradigm. When a classroom moves quickly from basic mathematics to complex concepts of math that are grounded in problem-solving. Remembering might be the major re-organization of thought based on previous learning methods like using a circle for shared group reflection.

The conundrum of the conservation stage
We have noticed that despite the rule that “release always leads to some re-organization,” many people seem to return a form of conservation that pre-existed the release. We believe that this is a process of mimicking the pre-release conservation stage as a way to provide comfort. However, in a true release event (ex. an epiphany, breakdown, or insight), re-organization will always occur, and will likely lead the person to another state of growth and conservation unlike the original. A previous Transformative Inquiry student helps provide insight into this phenomenon:

I think one thing that the [ibook] does not touch on is the idea of choice. We can choose to be receptive to these stochastic events, or to remain closed off to any new information that might cause us to rearrange our mentalities. I think that the ‘break through’ I had this term came when I chose to let go, or release, my convictions and just stay open to whatever came my way. The result was far more influential than I could have guessed. I am now in the reorganization stage where I am trying to put words to ideas that have come up. In fact, one of my main points in my inquiry is the concept of developing a neutral vocabulary that educators can use to discuss difficult issues. This is the
first step, and I am counting on my colleagues help during my GIC to aid me in this goal.

A note on Time

As the adaptive cycle is traversed within the context of TI, time becomes an important factor. As one past student wrote towards the end of the course, “I feel there is still so much to explore, so many questions to answer, but... [TI] was a chance to have time – to reflect, to breathe, to get lost in thought.” Time and space helps inquirers find their own way around the adaptive cycle. As one student said, it “allowed me to learn how I needed to learn, gain personal insight, ...and work at my own pace.”

The TI process requires a different perspective on time than what students typically encounter in university classrooms, where students share that they often have a feeling of being forced to sit and learn or write when they were not ready or in the proper mindset.

TI requires a different perspective on time than what students typically encounter in the university classroom. “Once I had let go of the worry of producing a result... I was able to take the time to let thoughts roll around in my head for a couple of days... this allowed the process of my inquiry to be much more honest” (past TI student). Our data show that it is when students enter into these spaces of honest contemplation that important and sustainable transformation occurs.

Time and space to traverse the cycle based in endogenous impulses opens up honesty and possibility. “Once I had let go of the worry of producing a result... I was able to take the time to let thoughts roll around in my head for a couple of days... this allowed the process of my inquiry to be much more honest” (past TI student). This perceived transformation of time itself within TI was welcomed with a sigh of relief: “the TI stance allowed me to learn how I needed to learn, gain personal insight, ...and work at my own pace. I loved doing this project...” (past TI student).

Consider the Vignettes

To clarify these concepts, lets revisit the vignettes from Chapter 2. Note the details on the adaptive cycle that explain our interpretation of their movement through the phases of adaptation (Interactive 8.4):
Panarchy and Winter Counts

We have written about panarchy and its role in understanding transformation in education in a paper entitled: Winter Counts as Transformative Inquiry: The Role of Creative Imagery as an Expression of Adaptive Change (Stanger, Tanaka, Tse & Starr, 2013). Check out the paper on our website.

In this paper we identify three types of students through the language of panarchy and understanding transformation through winter counts, a Plains First Nation tradition of recording events from a given time-period. These image-based expressions demonstrate the emotional, mental, spiritual and physical movement students have made within their inquiry. See Interactive 8.5:

The interpretations of winter counts have shown three distinct expressions of transformation: (in)form, (re)form, and (trans)form. With form as the root of these descriptions, we are playing with the prefixes in, re, and trans as an acknowledgement that our view of these individuals are limited, and that each of these expressions are not fixed in time, but are part of the systems of change. That is, each of the three prefixes nest within each other such that the student’s experience is likely much more complex than we can interpret from only four winter counts. This might mean that their forming is occurring through other events in their life. (Stanger et. al. 2013, p.32)
Interactive 8.5 (in), (re), and (trans)formation through wintercounts and interpreted panarchy placements (look at the images rather than trying to read the text)

Do4 - Indigenous education taught by non-Indigenous educators
SECTION 3

Transformance

HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Transformance** is a hybridization between *transformation* and performance.

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*Transformance* is a nonce word created in deference to Lewis Caroll's use of nonsense words that make sense in the context of the text and that are used for one occasion. The point of making up words isn't to confuse you - rather we hope to be playful in our approach.

*Transformance* hybridizes the words 'transformation' and 'performance' in order to acknowledge the connection between personal development and teaching style and skills. The concept of *transformation* suggests that inquiry is a dynamic process that maintains motion, in which inquirers are called on to nurture momentum within their own practices.

What follows are examples from past TI students who brought the process of TI into their own teaching practice.

---

_Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe._

*Jabberwocky - Lewis Caroll*
Meaghan's Transformance Vignette

I started the student inquiry project with my Grade 8 English students in January. We talked briefly about the project before the winter break so they could have a chance to think about what it is they wanted to research and have the chance to discuss it with their families. The project was a "Me to We" inquiry where they had to connect a personal passion to a global issue or worldview. What seemed to really help when getting this project started was for me to share my personal inquiry journey and why it has helped me as a learner/teacher.

As the teacher, throughout the project I had many points of pure elation as well as many frustrations. It did not go smoothly all the time, but I know that in the end it was worth it. The final presentations were some of the best learning I had seen from the class all year. The thing that struck me the most in this middle school classroom, was the amount of respect it fostered as students listed to what each person was passionate about. The students enjoyed having the freedom for their project and many of them liked taking on the global lens. Students’ responses to the project were that it was "a chance to look into something I am passionate about," "an effective learning experience," and "it really emphasized the importance of [thinking globally]."

There are many things I would change when doing this project again. To start with, I would give them a little more guidance about what the project will look like long term before they choose their topics. I also had multiple students suggest in their final write-ups that the inquiry interviews we had started in January should have continued throughout the year. The most important part of the inquiry project was to just get started. A lot of the activities and conversations flowed naturally from the work they were doing, it took a bit of courage on my part to just jump into the unknown but I am so happy that I took that step.

Meaghan’s Activities And Assignments:

- Simple Research Outline (initial questions, etc.)
- Generous Listening discussion (full class)
- Partner Listening exercise (one person talks, other listens only - no talking/questioning)
- Inquiry Interviews (we used an "Interview Clock" to vary groups each time)
- Visual Representation of their thinking
- Connecting with a professional in the field (finding someone, creating questions, and then conducting an interview)
- Global Connections (working with a partner to find how their topics relate to the world around them)
- Final Project had four components:
  - Self: Answer questions about how your thinking has changed
  - Community: Create a Venn Diagram or chart with a thinking partner that shows how your thoughts are similar or different on your inquiry topic
  - Global: Use a visual representation (or a map) to show how your personal inquiry connects to a global perspective
  - Share: Present your inquiry topic to your peers in whichever format you choose
Vanessa’s Transformance Vignette

After teaching in grade one this past year, I am still amazed by the creative, inquisitive, and exuberant learning spirits I found nestled within my students. The children bound fearlessly into exploring art, poetry, music, and dance. They were uninhibited in their creative spirit and were unendingly curious, particularly with regard to the natural world. Within this complex terrain, I invited my students to take a journey of Transformative Inquiry.

Our first meeting began with Cajete’s questions which I placed on a piece of chart paper depicted here, and we recursively returned to these themes throughout our journey. As a large group we discussed these questions. Interestingly, the first one proved the most baffling, as their concept of a heart was purely physical. For example, they made suggestions to take care of their hearts by exercising and eating well. I tried to help them move their understanding of a heart beyond the physical realm to the locus of feeling and passion.

After we discussed Cajete’s questions, I invited them to select an inquiry topic. We then decorated hand-made books where their only prerequisite was to write down their inquiry area; for example, “Matthew’s Inquiry on Turtles.” The children did not hesitate and I encountered only one student who was puzzled about what topic to select. When confronted with this, I asked him, “What do you care about? What do you like to do after school?” To this he replied that he enjoyed playing video games. I gave him permission to pursue this as an avenue of inquiry and he was pleased to be validated in this way. There was a wide range of inquiries, many centered upon animals, such as sharks, koala bears, dogs, and owls. Several inquiries sprawled out into social, historical and personal terrain, where topics emerged on friends, mummies and Lego. In this way, I felt their inquiries connected to their learning spirit.

I tried to facilitate a space where the children would be able to envision their topics in relation to others. Within their books they wrote a small piece about why they cared about their subject(s). Later, we did a colour-web where they created a web, in one colour, about everything they knew about their subject. Next, a partner would select a different colour to write everything they knew about their classmate’s topic. These activities had varying degrees of success, due to the limitations of grade one writing and reading abilities. While I was challenged by my students’ restrictions with regard to reading and writing to
deepen their thinking, I also found that it facilitated a further disruption of my own understanding about the way learning occurs. I still wonder if part of the reason my students were so engaged by their inquiries was because of the emphasis on learning as a relational activity that privileged the collective knowledge shared between them and their peers.

Additionally, I tried to move TI into a cross-curricular space with regard to music and art. We learned mindfulness songs, such as “Take a Breath” by Betsy Rose (which has implications for TI and fostering pro-social behavior).

The most successful element of our TI journey was an Inquiry Quilt that we created. My students were each given a section of a quilt-square to illustrate their inquiry topic (see interactive 8.5 slide 5). Each quilt piece had two arcs running across it that comprised a quarter of a circle. These acted as a guide that some children chose to use and others did not, but when fused together, each set of four formed a complete circle that served as a visual image of the connections between their inquiries. When all the pieces were joined together, an intricate quilt was created and I led them in a discussion about how their inquiries were interconnected and the relatedness of all living things. They were fascinated with the final product and very proud of their work.

As the year dwindled to a close, I wanted my students to remain grounded within the attitude of TI. I accentuated in my report cards, in the “Goals and Ways to Support Learning” section that parents continue to encourage their children to inquire into the things about which they are most passionate. Finally, I ended the unit reminding my students to always explore what they care about and reinforced the importance of valuing their personal passions.

[Interactive](http://youtu.be/9iF7J2zlvtI)

I can enact transormance in my teaching by...
SECTION 4

Reflexive Questions

1. How deep is your connection to the natural world? Does teaching with nature something that provokes excitement, anxiety or something in-between for you?

2. Panarchy can be a complex concept when encountering it for the first time. Draw a panarchy loop and try to map your inquiry experience thus far. What does panarchy illuminate for you about your inquiry journey?

3. How could you imagine using TI in your future practice?
Chapter 9

Practicing TI

This chapter outlines resources and activities for practicing TI within the structure of the course and out in your professional world.
SECTION 1

Introduction

In this section we provide some practical activities for you to take into your professional practice as a teacher (your transformance) and for practicing TI in a class itself. You might visit this part of the iBook when you are feeling stuck in the process or need of other inspiration as you continue along your inquiry journey. Use the activities outlined below in alphabetical order as a way to map and follow your inquiry journey. Have fun!

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Introduction to the Practicing TI section
SECTION 2

Acknowledging Bias
(15 Mins)

Each of us interprets phenomena through a subjective lens with which we make sense of the world. Even events that seem simple to account for are intricately complex. For example: imagine you are at a four way stop and witness a car accident. You and three other witnesses report the accident. Each of you reports slightly different occurrences at the scene of the accident.

- Why might each of you have slightly different accounts?
- Do these different accounts lessen the weight of your testimony?

The way multiple people observe different occurrences at the scene of an accident can be applied to the way we listen. One person in your pod may relate a story and each person listening may take away a different point that he or she thought was the most important or interesting. This is not a negative, but a reality of the necessarily subjective nature of listening. In order to listen more deeply and be present to the other in a different way, we must acknowledge our own biases that help us interpret what we hear, observe and intuit.

Individually in your journals consider:

- What things are you particularly sensitive too?
- What bothers you about teaching? What gets you excited?
- How might you listen differently if you were particularly passionate about social justice? Feminism? Environmentalism?
- How might you listen differently if you had a more similar lens to the speaker?

The answers to these questions might help guide you into a way of being more present to the other.
Explooring Your Own Elements
As you explore your own personality, keep in mind there is no hierarchy of elements (see more info on Ayurvedic Elements here). Using blank pieces of paper or journal pages, sketch, model, and/or describe your answers to the questions below (in the order that they appear):

1. How do you relate to the different elements? What is showing up for you right now?
2. Is there an element that is most pronounced when you are teaching?
3. How would you describe the school system in the language of the 5 Elements?

Five Elements In The Classroom (teacher - Student Pairs)
This exercise provides a means for imagining the different dynamics that occur in every classroom. Given that in every class we most likely have all typologies present we can begin to see how the teacher’s awareness of the different personality types could be an important part of how she/he creates an environment for different learning styles.

Each person should pick up a piece of paper that has one of the typologies written on it. Get into pairs, and before looking at your paper choose which person will be the student and which one will be a teacher. Share what you have on your paper with your partner and discuss the following questions:

1. What dynamics might be seen in this relationship?
2. How might the teacher support this student?
Earth

Air

Water

Fire

Ether
Section 4

Child Honouring
(30 mins)

The children’s songwriter, performer, author and ecology advocate known as Raffi has articulated a philosophy, or way of life that puts children and their needs as the central focus. His concerns resonate with many goals that teachers have.

Download Raffi’s child honouring covenant and principles:


There are many ways of working with the principles, such as reviewing each to see how they relate or influence your topic. The following activity involves a large group:

Put each principle on a sign and post them around a large room.

- Read the principles (this can be done as a group)
- In silence and on your own, think carefully about your inquiry topic and decide which principle you feel most in line with (there can be more than one, but choose the strongest resonance for now)
- Stand at that principle and see who joins you.
- Discuss your topics together looking for connections and divergences.
- Share in the whole group.
Collage Explorations
(1-2 hours alone, 20 min x 3 group)

This activity supplements our typical reliance on intellectual ways of knowing by tapping into our embodied knowledge through the use of collage images. Begin by creating a collage that shows what you care about as a learner~teacher~researcher.

Through the images on your collage, se can access knowledge from emotional, experiential and even spiritual levels. As we look more closely at these images and engage in conversations based in honesty and generous listening, we can bring these other ways of knowing into the intellectual realm and begin to articulate them and use them to inform our teaching practice.

After creating your collage, create a sharing pod to discuss your collage images with. The following activities are primarily designed to do in together, although individual activities are interspersed to give you solitary thinking time as well.

Path With Heart
Individually:

Think about your notes and discussion of the Chambers article. In you inquiry journal, complete the prompt: In my collage, my path with heart...

In pods:

Discuss as needed.

Stories We Cast
In pods:

Chambers suggests that we pay attention to the stories that are cast around us as well as those we project. What stories does your collage tell in terms of broader worldviews and paradigms? Revisit your writing on the inquiry prompt around your resonance with the various paradigms. What does your collage tell you about your location in the positivist, progressive, social justice, and/or indigenist milieu?

Binaries
It is common to use binary thinking in Eurowestern culture. For example:

- Teacher: friend/authority
- Learning: fun/boring
- Curriculum: textbook/experiential
- Pedagogy: direct instruction/participatory
- Classroom environment: control/chaos

In pods:

Look for apparently “oppositional” or “contradictory” terms or ideas within your collage and RESIST the tendency to think about them in either/or terms. This is separating logic. Instead, think in terms of connecting logic (e.g. using both~and). Try to find 2 or 3 examples where you used
separating logic and consider where you could replace it with connecting logic.

Favourite And Missing Images
Individually:

Take time (5 minutes) to ponder~write~doodle about any favourite image(s) in your collage. Also consider any images that make you feel uncomfortable. Describe why. What images might be missing and why?

In pods:

Discuss as needed.

Illuminating Roles
In what ways does your collage illuminate your role as researcher? As teacher? As learner? Do your images suggest that you embody one role more than the others, or are they all represented equally? How are they intertwined or separated? Write about this as appropriate.

Hidden Inquiry Topics
Working together, identify any potential inquiry topics hidden (or not) in each collage. Discuss.

If you could add an image to your collage, what would it be and why? If you could add one image to the other collages in your group what would it be and why?

Different Perspectives
Individually: Look at your collage upside down, with eyes squinted or from another perspective – what do you see now? Write: When I look at my collage this way, I feel... I see... I wonder...

We Teach Who We Are
Share 1 or 2 pivotal images that strike you as being central to who you are, and what matters to you as an educator. Where is your passion in this collage?

Change roles and repeat.

Add An Image
Section 6

Connective Map
(45-60 mins)

In your TI journal:

Jot down five keywords that represent your inquiry journey

In pods:

- Using a piece of chart paper, have each group member rotate around adding ONE keyword at a time to your paper. When everyone has had a turn, discuss connections between the concepts and draw lines between the words in any way that seems appropriate
- Repeat the previous step, but this time add a second keyword from their list, and draw connections between any and all words already on the chart paper. If you have the same word as someone else, underline it
- Continue this process until all five of your keywords have been written on the large sheet and you have had a chance to discuss all the keywords and their interrelatedness. Notice which keywords seem to have the most connections. What might be occurring there? Attend to which keywords have less connecting lines to them. Discuss what makes those keywords standout

In your TI journal:

Consider this activity and how it interacts with your inquiry thus far – what intrigued you about this process? Discuss any new thoughts that were evoked or if any of your ideas were solidified through it. Did any connections surprise you? Confuse you?

(Adapted with thanks to Diana Nicholson)
Contemplating Listening
(30 Mins)

Listening has come to be marginalized as a secondary facet in dialogue (Gordon 2011), where speaking is the privileged element (Remedios, Clarke, & Hawthorne 2012). Through Gordon’s analysis of the work of philosopher Martin Buber, Gordon asserts that, “deep listening, in Buber’s account, is not really a skill that can be displayed or modeled but rather a mode of existence toward others,” (p. 218). Thus, deep listening becomes a way of being (who we are) rather than a state of being (something we turn on and off). This is not to suggest that there are not skills embedded within deep listening, but rather, in TI we emphasize that, “listening is much more about being present to the other than about displaying some proficiency or following a set of techniques,” (Gordon, p. 218). This spurs the question: what allows someone to be a good listener?

Contemplate in silence OR respond in writing to each of these prompts:

- What do you see as the role of listening in learning?
- What do you see as the role of listening in teaching?
- What is the relationship between listening and knowing?
- What is your relationship with listening? Where might you find areas of growth?
As you explore your topic you will be exposed to and likely be using terms that are specific to your inquiry. Pay attention to the words that you use repeatedly. It is important to clarify what you mean by these terms. For instance, the descriptor good teacher might mean different things to different people. It is important to know what you mean by a term, so take time to think about your meaning. You might do this through journalling; talk to people about it; look it up in different dictionaries, literature, and other sources for locations of its meanings.

Example terms might be:

- learning
- transformation
- engagement
- respect
- mindfulness
Digital Beliefs
(60 mins)

Metaphors can help deconstruct previously unexamined ideologies about teaching and learning. In this activity you can take digital photographs of images that you see as metaphors for your beliefs about teaching.

Using a digital camera, take three to five photos that you will use as a visual representation of yourself as teacher. There are various ways you can take the pictures – if working in a group, each person could be responsible for one photo, or you could talk as a group and decide together what pictures to take. The photos are to be metaphorical images that represent your philosophies/beliefs about teaching. Think of your photos as addressing the following:

• Why do we teach?
• Why should people learn?
• How might I explain this importance to students?
• What memories do I have of learning in my life or education?
• What do I think my role as a teacher should be?
• What aspects of teaching seem the most/least difficult?

Save the pictures in a word file or print and paste them into your TI journal. Write text about what the pictures mean. The text can be in any genre: prose, poetry, fiction, drama, or a combination thereof (your choice). Explain or “unpack” each photo and be sure to include your original metaphorical thinking and the ways things relate to each other. Be creative; but above all write text that accurately describes the meanings of the picture(s) and that “pulls” the photos together into some sort of coherent whole.
Dilemmas
(20 mins)

Considering Dilemmas

In a pod group or your Inquiry Journal take time to consider how decisions are made around dilemmas.

What Is A Dilemma? (10 Mins)

A dilemma is a situation in which competing values are at play. In this kind of situation, no decision can provide a perfect solution that is comfortable for everyone. All educators encounter dilemmas as they try to balance competing demands within their roles and responsibilities. For example, early learning educators often talk about the dilemma of trying to incorporate more time for children’s play while continuing to respond to perceived performance pressures from families and school authorities, especially around early reading. Whatever decisions are made, they involve compromises, and the individual must be prepared to justify his or her position to others with differing views.

- What dilemmas have you come across in education?
- How have dilemmas been approached within your work experiences?

Personal Dilemmas Within Your Inquiry (10 Mins)

Identify an issue or dilemma that you are experiencing as you consider your inquiry. Think about your dilemma in terms of these questions:

- What is my dilemma? Why is it a dilemma for me?
- What are the value conflicts that this dilemma presents for me?
- What pressures am I experiencing with respect to this dilemma? Where do the pressures come from?
- What are my core beliefs and assumptions with respect to this dilemma?
- What compromises am I making with respect to the different perspectives and values involved?
- Where do I stand now? Am I content to stand here? If not, what would I like to change?
- What risks are involved in making a change? If I chose to change, how would I sustain my courage in the face of challenges from others?
- Where would I turn for support?

Adapted from: Pat Holborn, Considering Dilemmas in Implementing Play-based Learning
Doubt and Confidence
(30-45 mins)

In a large group setting, discuss with students the tension between doubt and confidence in their emerging teaching practice. The following thoughts may provide talking points:

Doubt can be productive, in that it reminds us to be humble, but humility does not need to be in opposition to confidence. As Nicholas Burbules (2000) points out, “the condition of doubt itself contains educational potential” (p. 183). We encourage, with Maturana and Varela (1987) the vigilance against certainty, but we also hope that students will come to dwell confidently in the liminality of their knowing and not-knowing.

In TI we encourage both-and logic. Doubt can be crippling if it leads to paralysis of action, but it is a site of deep exploration when we consider new ways of being and knowing, and how we might continually teach and learn in more meaningful ways. In a sense, doubt can enhance confidence if through questioning we come to reify that which we are most passionate about. In this activity, we want to set aside these doubts for a moment and celebrate what students already bring forward in their being and becoming.

Have students arrange themselves in a circle, and on slips of paper each student will anonymously complete the following sentence stem: I am a good educator because I am/can . . .

Each of these slips in placed in a bag, and the instructor reads them aloud one by one. This is followed by a “rolling handshake”. We see ourselves and gather strength in one another’s words.

(Adapted with thanks to Diana NicholsonNicholson)
The “five aggregates” come from Buddhist philosophy. They include form (bodily form, materiality), sensations/feelings, consciousness, perceptions (recognition of sensation), and intentionality/actions/reactions (mental formations). The five aggregates combine body and mind, and the day-to-day interplay of the aggregates composes the self or identity.

After teaching a lesson, reflect on the experience through the five aggregates as a guide:

- **Form**: Describe the classroom context in which you taught and your own physical presence as a teacher. What was the room like? How many students were present? How old were they? What did they look like? What were you wearing, and how did you feel standing/sitting in front of the class?

- **Sensations/feelings**: What do you remember hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, or smelling during and after the teaching? How did you feel about any of these sensations? Did anything make you angry? Happy? Sad? Confused?

- **Consciousness**: During the teaching experience, were you ever conscious of any of these sensations or feelings? Did you ever notice them in addition to experiencing them? If not, try to take note of them now. Instead of allowing yourself to be lost in a feeling or sensation, take a step back and reflect on how it felt. For example, if you became angry as a result of a student comment, step outside the anger and consider why the comment was infuriating. Be curious about the anger.

- **Perceptions**: Try to connect feelings or sensations to forms. In other words, reflect on what was going on in the room when the student comment made you angry. Where were you standing/sitting? What was the student doing? What exactly did he or she say? Perception is an important component of consciousness.

- **Intentionality/actions**: What did you say during the teaching? (Be as specific as possible). How did you move about the room? Did you modify anything during your lesson, based on the situation? How did you respond/react to student questions, comments, or action? What did you do directly after the lesson ended?

Adapted from Alsup (2006)
Consider the Four Spheres of Influence and how they are informing your inquiry journey up to this point.

In your TI journal:

- Draw out the four circles in the overlapping form they appear in Interactive 1.1. Do not copy out everything within each sphere; you only need to label each with Inquiry Partners, Classroom Observations, Self Study and Academic Literature.
- Write or draw what elements of your inquiry are appearing in each sphere.
- Stand back from the four spheres and consider what has been most influential or impactful for you at this point. This is an opportunity for you to do a meta-analysis of how you have been exploring your inquiry. Where has your energy been most heavily dedicated? Which sphere has the most/least content?
- Contemplate why that might be. Why are you more drawn to exploring one sphere than another? What avenues might be left unexplored? Where might you go from here?
- In your journal consider future directions of exploration – try to think of two or three ways that you could develop one of your less explored spheres.
- Share with a thinking partner to get another perspective on your inquiry journey.
Generous Listening
(30 min)

Within the process of TI we often emphasize listening over speaking or questioning. As we listen carefully to another, we become more fully present and can change habitual patterns of conversation. Listening carefully can gradually influence how we respond and the questions we ask. This activity builds on the spirit of the quote:

_Speak to be revealed; Listen to be changed._ (Altman, 2012)

Write in your TI journal using the prompt: for me, generous listening...

In groups of 3, each person has 5 minutes to talk while the other two just listen – no notes, no comments or questions. If the person sharing runs out of things to say, sit quietly and wait in case something emerges. (Use a timer with a bell to indicate when it’s time to move on.)

Prompt for speaker: With my inquiry, vulnerability...

The only thing that the listener can say is: Speak to be revealed...

After each speaker, take 2-5 minutes to write. Listeners write questions or comments that will promote deeper exploration for this person’s inquiry. Speaker writes about how the experience felt for them, what emotions came up, what was revealed to them around their inquiry, etc. The speaker will take these notes away to ponder at a different time.

After all have a chance to share, write to the journal prompt: For me, listening...

At a later time, in pods: Discuss the role of generous listening within the context of your inquiry. Where have you experienced it? Were you the listener or the one being listened to? What gets in the way of generous listening for you? For others? What are your thoughts about the role of emotion in listening?
This section highlights some of the key resources and topics that inform our understanding of TI. If you find you reach a place where you are not sure what your next steps are, these resources can be illuminating and catalyzing. They are loosely organized using Cajete’s questions of Earth, Soul, and Community. Remember, these three questions should not be interpreted as discreet; rather they are overlapping categories that are deeply related.

**Guiding Stars**

**Earth**


Brown, B. (2010). *The gifts of imperfection: Let go of who you think you’re supposed to be and embrace who you are*. Center City, MN: Hazelden.


Community


In pods of six:

- Write a question you are exploring on a piece of paper (could be a question you recently shared with your instructor)
- Pass it to the person on your right
- When you receive someone else’s question, think about what’s there and look for different ways of interpreting the question. What beliefs and values underpin the question? How might the question be expanded to reveal more complexity?
- Write your comment or question on the paper and then pass it again
- Keep reading, contemplating and passing papers until everyone receives their original paper back with new ideas and questions graffiti-ed onto it
- In your TI journal, if possible paste this inside, comment on what you got out of the activity.

(Adapted with thanks to Diana Nicholson)
If your location allows you, sift through old school records, reports, homework, and journals from when you were a student between kindergarten and grade 12. In your TI journal write down any key phrases or ideas that emerge. Engage any or all of the following questions:

- Does anything surprise you? Shock you? How do your memories (or lack thereof) intersect with what you found?
- What was your relationship like with your teachers?
  With your peers?
- How does who you are/were as a student effect who you are becoming as an educator?
- What type of teacher do you think you needed as a child/youth? Did you have an experience with that sort of teacher? If so, describe.
- Draw a picture or write a description of who you were as a student in elementary, middle, or high school.
- Discuss your findings with a thinking friend - perhaps a parent, caregiver or sibling. What does their perspective offer you?
In your TI journal:

Take one possible topic and place it in the centre of your page. This could be a touchstone story, your inquiry topic or any potential curiosity related to your TI journey. Around this central axis, create a web of questions that emerge for you. Allow your web to get messy, see how questions relate, overlap or beget new questions. When the question ring is complete, add a final strand of connections and ideas that are linked to your questions. These are not meant to be answers, but a place for your thoughts to tumble out. When your web is complete survey the many paths your inquiry can take you on. As you overview what has spilled onto your page, consider what areas you are excited to pursue, what puzzles you the most, and what might even frighten, make you nervous or uncomfortable to know.

In pods:

Discuss what you found in your web. How is your inquiry complex? What areas hold the most interest for you to explore? Imagine all your webs together and see where they overlap, bump up, inform each other, conflict, etc...

Share your questions with each other. Listen carefully and generously. In what ways are your questions bounded or unbounded? How might binary thinking influence your questions? Can they be re-written to reflect the complexity of your inquiry?

Individually in TI Journal:

What effect, if any, does your conversation have on your inquiry focus? Might it change? If so, how? You can begin to map out any such movement in your TI journal.

Note: It might be useful to bring your web into your mentoring meeting as a guide into the complexity of your inquiry.
SECTION 19

Interconnected Dynamism
(15 mins)

This is an activity that asks students to experience how emergent learning happens naturally through the movement and interplay of dynamic relationships.

The universe is inherently connected, relational, and dynamically changing...” (Crowell & Reid-Marr, 2013, p. 17).

Groups of three stand together in close proximity. One member of the group is selected to be the ‘starter’. That person begins to slowly create an original story.

For example: “Once upon a time there was a BIG tiger and one day the tiger went down to the river to drink and guess what he saw...” As the story teller of the group speaks very slowly, the others in the group mimic the same words at the same time.

When the teacher says, “Change” the person to the starter’s left continues creating the story in the same manner as the other members of the group mimic her. The change of storytellers continues intermittently until the teacher says, “Change and finish”. That person brings the story to a close. The activity is usually filled with laughter, playfulness and a rather ridiculous story.

But several conceptual ideas are illustrated. The story was told by everyone and no one. In other words the particular story that was created would not have been the same without the input of each individual in the group. The timing of the directive “change” actually contributed to the outcome. The initial conditions and the person who started the story made a big difference as did the one who finished the story.

Another lesson that participants notice is that there are certain skills that become really important for the activity to work. One skill is deep and intense listening. Because each group member is mimicking the words at the same time, being present and fully engaged is a necessity.

A willingness to give up control is something that many struggle with. Some want the story to go in a particular direction but they have to relinquish their version of the outcome when the next member takes the lead. Each member can influence the outcome but could not control it.

Those who experience this activity also observe that they are able to be creative and spontaneous when the need presents itself. So the activity becomes an experiential metaphor for emergence, beginning with the ideas of connectivity, relationship and dynamic change.

Republished with permission from Crowell & Reid-Marr (2013, pp. 17-18)

How do you see interconnected dynamism in your inquiry journey? Where does connectivity create change?
When you have a question you care about, it is often helpful to ask others about it in order to expand your thinking. This can be done through conversations that are specific to your topic with people you feel would be particularly useful. In the context of the course, these interviews or surveys are relatively informal. However, like more formal research, it is very important to consider how you will go about asking questions, which includes the setting, style of question, and length of time. Would it be better to conduct your survey in person or online? Remember that entire courses are devoted to interview and survey methods. Below are just a few pointers to help you out.

Consider that the person or people sharing their ideas with you have taken the time to do so. Therefore it is imperative that you use your time wisely and make it something that is also valuable for them.

Before an interview, always ensure that the person you are speaking with is as comfortable as possible. Consider where you are and change sites if it needs to be more comfortable (e.g. in a classroom or office). Also, think about where you sit and how you sit. Be open to them through body language, rather than sitting cross-legged or facing away. Also, if you want to record them in any way (written, video, sound), ask them if it's okay with them. Also, tell them why you want to do so and where the recordings will be stored, shared, etc. Make it clear that they can stop the conversation at any time and ask you to discard the recordings at any time (even after you are finished).

Often it is most useful to have your questions be unbounded while at the same time focussed. Review the three sections of this book that describe unbounded questions in Chapter 1, Chapter 7.1, Chapter 7.2. You will want to avoid questions that have yes/no answers and look towards questions that help the interviewee provide dialogue and insight into your topic. Using question that start with why and how might result in more dialogue. Also, ask the person about their judgment in relation to your topic area:

How might you address institutionalized racism within a school system?

instead of

Do you think there is institutionalized racism in BC schools?

Also, don’t be afraid to ask them clarifying questions. People will usually want to expand on certain topics:

You mentioned that you are worried that the BC curriculum isn't serving under-privileged students well. Can you tell me more about that?
With surveys, seemingly simple questions can misconstrue meaning due to misreading, double meanings, or poor grammar.

Before deciding on a survey format for your conversation, rule out all other forms of information gathering. Could you interview, read, or gather your data through other sources? This might be easier than creating a survey.

If surveys are necessary, be careful to create a simple, easily understood series of questions. These should be qualitative in quality (think unbounded questions) rather than quantitative (think likert scales). Unless working with a large sample size, quantitative data can be cumbersome to use and likely not indicative of the answer to your question.

Similar to the interview questions, write open-ended but focused questions that encourage people to respond to you with honesty. You can even suggest example answers within your question. Be careful with this, however, as you do not want to lead them in their responses.

An example of a survey question might be:

\[
\text{In bullet form, describe how you might address institutionalized racism within a school system?}
\]

More ideas around asking questions can be found in a variety of listening and questioning activities throughout this chapter.
Section 21

Journey Map

Take a few minutes in a small group to explore the TI model (see Interactive 1.8 or use cardboard models). After familiarizing yourself with the possibilities, take time individually to map out your TI journey by highlighting the places you have been. This may be done on a piece of paper that your instructor will ask you to hand in or in your TI journal.

Back in your pod, discuss your map and the relationships between each place you have gone. What might be next for you now?
Living Portrait (Tree)
In your Inquiry Journal begin thinking about yourself as a human be-coming, both being and becoming simultaneously. As teachers we must examine our own ecology as humans and the way our experiences continue to nourish and hinder us.

1. Begin by drawing/scultping/doodling your roots. Where were you born? What is your family composition? What socio-economic status did you inherit? What types of relationships have influenced you most? What are some of your earliest memories and feelings around school? What religious background did you grow up with (or not)? What gender expectations influence you?

2. Consider your trunk. Who are you now? What is shaping your present identity? How would you characterize yourself? How would others describe you? Are you a people pleaser? What excites you? What makes you anxious? What passions do you bring to your teaching practice?

3. Begin exploring your branches and leaves. Where are you going? Who are you be-coming? What type of influence do you hope to have? What key ideals do you hope to impart? What is your ideal classroom? How do you want your students to see you? You may want to take time to revisit this later, as your state of being is always in flux!

Visiting Each Other’s Living Portraits
In randomly selected groups, choose from one of the following and discuss:

1. Re-visit your living portrait tree on your own for five minutes. Discuss in your group questions from TI Activity 2 or the following:
   a. Consider your roots. In what ways do they overlap with or diverge from other group members?
   b. Consider if you were born with the roots of another in the group. How might this affect your worldview?
   c. How do your roots nourish or hinder your trunk growth at this point?
   d. Where are your branches growing?

2. Take five minutes alone to review your observation notes and choose 3-5 highlights to share. Discuss in your group: What excited or concerned you? What questions were left unanswered? What do you still want to know more about? How might these notes help you in your next practicum?

3. Take five minutes alone to review your journal. In the group discuss: something you can share about how you are
feeling around be~coming a teacher. Is there an image that captures this?

Remember to use intentional and generous listening in this activity.

**Gallery 9.1 Examples of Living Portrait Trees**
The German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, eloquently speaks to cultivating patience when sitting with deep questions.

...I would like to beg you dear [One], as well as I can, to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

~Rainer Maria Rilke, 1903 in Letters to a Young Poet

TI Journal prompt: Some unresolved issues in my heart are . . .

In pods:

- How can I resist searching for the answers and instead, live the questions?
- Why would Rilke advocate not searching for answers?
- Do you feel patient or impatient to find answers to your questions? Why?
 SECTION 24

Messy Swamp
(30 mins)

TI Journal prompts (5-10 mins):

- Something about education that really interests, bothers, confuses, worries, excites me...
- Topics I may want to explore are...
- For my upcoming practicum (or teaching assignment) I want to know...

After taking time with the above writing, take turns sharing in the large group. Have one person record on the board the topics that arise (e.g. building community, math skills, parent relationships, etc).

This is the messy swamp of teaching and learning! TI helps us to navigate within this complexity. Look at the words you have written and pay attention to what connections might be made. Discuss.

In your TI Journal:

Draw out how the swamp appears to you in your mind.

OR

If the metaphor of the swamp is not resonating with you, what is an alternative metaphor that speaks to you about your process thus far?
Mindfulness (ongoing)

The practice of mindfulness is very useful in a down-to-earth way, as it can quickly increase a sense of calm and focus. What a great thing to bring into any learning environment! For this reason, and to help you get an embodied sense of mindfulness, your instructor in the TI course might bring a practice of mindfulness right into your class, perhaps through inviting a bell (see Interactive 9.3). Keep in mind that objects other than bells can be used, for example a chime, xylophone or drum. Choose something that sounds pleasant to those who are participating.

You may also have the optional assignment to try daily, one of the following mindfulness options.

Commit to these practices over a two-week period. For the practices that require a timer, there are nice bell indicators on some phone apps. The timer helps take your mind off when the activity will be ending so you can concentrate more fully.

As you practice, you might write down observations or questions in your journal. After the two-week period, you may be asked to write and hand in a 1-2 page reflective essay on your experience.

Sitting Mindfully
Each day, find a quiet place to sit by yourself. If possible, go outside, rain or shine. Set a timer for 10 minutes. As you breathe, repeat the poem below. Stay on each line until you feel ready to go to the next. If one line catches your attention you can stay with it until the bell.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{In... out...} \\
\text{Deep... slow...} \\
\text{I am aware of my body... I relax my body...} \\
\text{I am calm... I am at ease...} \\
\text{I am happy... I am content...} \\
\text{I am aware of any pain, discomfort... I release any pain, discomfort...} \\
\text{I feel calm... I feel peace...}
\end{align*}
\]

When the bell sounds, return to your normal activities.

Walking Mindfully
Each day, find a place where you can walk by yourself. If possible, go outside, rain or shine. Set a timer for 10 minutes. Repeat the poem below, as you walk. Let the rhythm of your breath guide your pace. You may find that you slow down or speed up from your normal habits.

As you walk, you can focus on your breath. OR you can focus on your surroundings. OR you can focus on smiling with your liver (or some other internal organ!). OR you might repeat one of the following poems. Choose one thing to focus on and see if you can stick with it for the two weeks.

In... The mind can go in a thousand directions
Out... But on this lovely path, I walk in peace

OR

In... I have arrived, I am home
Out... In the here and in the now

When the bell sounds, return to your normal activities.

Inviting The Bell
As you may have experienced in class – a bell can remind us to stop for a moment and breathe.

- You can set the bell on the pillow, hold it in the palm of your hand, or rest it on the tips of your fingers
- Imagine your heart being connected to the bell
- Don’t strike or hit the bell, invite the sound with an upwards, circular motion

- Be a generous bell master – give yourself enough time to enjoy!

1. Take two full breaths, then give a warning ½ bell
2. Take one full breath: in... out... then invite a full bell
3. When you hear the bell:

   Breathe in (bring your attention below your ears, into your body!)

   Breathe out (imagine your breath lengthening)

4. Continue for 8 full breathes (you can count without thinking so much by placing your thumb on the tip of a different finger each time)

   In... breathing deep
   Out... Breathing slow
   In... deep
   Out... slow

5. Invite the bell to close

Repeat this exercise twice a day for two weeks. If you don’t have a bell, you can use other reminders, such as another musical instrument or two sticks.

In addition to inviting the bell twice a day, also install and use the free app called “Lotus Bud” – it sounds a chime randomly
over a set period of time. This way you will have a reminder to be mindful throughout your day as well.

Contemplative Creative Journal
Find a journal and writing, drawing, painting implements that you like. Each day, find a quiet place to sit by yourself. If possible, go outside, rain or shine. Set a timer for 10 minutes.

1. Focus on your breathing in... breathing out...

2. Follow your breath as you draw, sketch, doodle, write, scribble, etc.

3. Let go of your thinking and let the breath move your hand.

4. If you lose attention to your breath, put down your pencil and breath three times before returning to your creating.

When you hear the bell, return to your normal activities.

Mindful Eating
Choose one meal a day to practice mindful eating.

1. Before you eat, look at your empty plate and take a full breath. Notice what it feels like to be hungry.

2. Fill your plate and look at it while taking another full breath. Imagine where this food came from.
   
   - Was it from a store?
   - What garden did it grow in?
   - How did it travel?

   - Who helped it to grow?
   - What else nurtured it?
   - Can you imagine the elements that this food is made of?
   - Can you see how there is a cloud in your peas?

1. As you eat, chew slowly (20-30 times!) and taste each bite.

2. Put your fork down between each bite.

3. When you are done, notice your empty plate and breathe. What does your full belly feel like?

Or check out these websites for other mindful eating practices:

- [http://zenhabits.net/mindful-eating/](http://zenhabits.net/mindful-eating/)

Mindful Anything
Engage in mindful “anything” such as doing dishes, brushing teeth, riding the bus, etc. What things do you do on autopilot and maybe even feel resentful about? How can you take time to be in the present with the feelings and senses of these activities?

1. Before beginning each activity take a few deep breaths and acknowledge that you will be doing the dishes or sitting on the bus.
2. As you engage in the activity, notice the sensations you are experiencing. How warm is the dishwater? How hot are your feet after running for the bus?

3. Expand your awareness to notice your surroundings. What do you smell, hear, taste and feel? What do you notice about the air? What are the sounds around you?

4. Expand your awareness so that you remain aware of the sensation of the activity you are doing and the external environment, while you also become aware of your internal experiences, such as your thoughts and emotions. What thoughts cross your mind? What emotion or emotions are there right now? Are they intense, or mild? Are these internal experiences pulling you in or can you observe them with a little bit of distance? No need to judge these internal experiences as good or bad, practice just noticing them for what they are.

5. If at any point you notice your mind wandering to the past or the future, or being pulled away from the activity, just gently acknowledge that your mind has wandered and bring yourself back to the present moment and the activity. Remember that being pulled away and coming back is the key to mindfulness practice -- no one has perfect focus.

---

Eight Mindfulness Movements
Each morning, if possible, go outside, rain or shine. Begin your day with the following movements:

Or download this PDF:

http://www.parallax.org/pdf/10MindfulMovements.pdf

When you are done, take time for a full breath in... and out...

Mindful Relationships Journal
Each day, find a quiet place to be by yourself. If possible, go outside, rain or shine. Set a timer for 10 minutes. Think about the idea that we teach who we are. Imagine that part of who
you are is transferred to you through your ancestors (whether consciously or not). To be mindful of what you bring forward from your parents and grandparents, use a journal and writing implements that you like to do the following:

1. Take a breath in... out...

2. Write using the following prompts:
   - The salient qualities of my parents...
   - The salient qualities of my grandparents?

Whenever you feel yourself being too much above the ears (in your mind), put down your writing tool and take a breath in... out...

If this brings up discomfort of any kind, you may want to do the sitting mindfully activity (below) before you return to your daily activities.

**Breathing Corner**
When things get too hectic for you (or the children in your life), try a breathing corner instead of spinning out of control (or giving a time out, or a trip to the principals office!) Dedicate a particular space in your home or classroom that is intended for supporting relaxation and breathing. What objects would encourage this goal? A book of poetry? A picture of a meadow or mountainside? Particular music? A small ball to squeeze? A stationary bike? Crayons and paint? Pillows? Flowing curtains? Make it like a sanctuary – a safe place for catching up with, or grounding, yourself – everything else gets left outside. Throughout the two weeks, use the breathing corner (or encourage others to use it) whenever you feel unfocused, agitated or in need.

Modelling Change
(ongoing)

Locating On The Adaptive Cycle (20 Mins)
Return to Interactive 8.2 and Interactive 8.3 to refresh yourself about the adaptive cycle presented in panarchy

In pods:

In terms of your inquiry, where do you locate yourself on the panarchy loop? Where did you enter at the beginning of the class? How have you moved?

If the loop doesn’t seem to be a good model for your growth, what model would you use?

Draw where you are on the loop, and any thoughts you have around this.

For more info see adaptive change article at: www.uvic/inquiry

Panarchy Model Mapping (larger Version Of The Activity Above) (30 Mins)
Embodying panarchy models through physical interaction can be a powerful entry into the discussion of complexity theory as it relates to transformation.

This activity invites the class to review the panarchy model together as a group and then place themselves on the adaptive cycle loop based on where they each see themselves in their individual TI journey.

1. Use masking tape to draw a large adaptive cycle ∞ on the ground (approx. 5 meters across)

2. Remind your learners of the 3-axes of the cycle (connections, potential, and resilience)

3. Give examples of what the four stages of the adaptive cycle might represent

4. Ask for up to four students to stand on the adaptive cycle and share where they are and why they are there

5. Ask everyone to draw this cycle within their own inquiry journal. Invite them to draw or represent another model if the adaptive cycle doesn’t work for them

6. Invite each person to share their cycle, alternative model, location and any relevant insight within a pod meeting

Adaptations:

- Give the whole group masking tape and ask them to change and alter the adaptive cycle as they see fit;
- Split into pods to build many panarchy loops or other relevant models of growth; and
- Discuss other adaptive loops that they can see in their lives, or in their educational setting as they relate to the adaptive cycle and ask the students to represent those

Questions:
Use the adaptive cycle (∞) as a diagram for plotting change over time within the mentor meetings. The following questions could be used to frame a discussion:

- Where are you on this adaptive cycle?
- Where were you at the beginning of the class? Or the beginning of your inquiry journey?
- Why do you think you are where you are now? What, if any, significance do you find exists in your positioning?

What to look for:

- Use of models or metaphors to describe their process
- Systems thinking or complexity language (connections, loops, mental maps)

Where Is Change? (40 Mins)

In addition to adapting the larger panarchy modeling exercise for the entire class to smaller inquiry pod groups, panarchy and adaptive cycle activities can be completed as a form of inquiry and a viewpoint into change as part of education. This next activity is best done in pods of three to five.

1. Think about various examples of change including:
   - paradigmatic change, administrative and governance change, developmental change, cognitive change, spiritual change, etc. (instructor may lead this conversation)

2. In pods, spend 10 minutes drawing and writing about the statement: “Describe and draw change within your education career”

3. Ask the inquirers to share this evidence of change in their pods. (25 minutes)

4. The inquiry pods should try to interpret the stories as different stages of change on a flipchart (growth, conservation, release, reorganization?)

Adaptations:

Do this activity as it relates to educational settings where your inquirers have been the teachers. Where have you seen change in learners that you have worked with?

Individual Model:

Ask your inquirers to work on an individual model that might extend the depth of the panarchy model or adapt it to be more suitable to their individual TI experience. This could be incorporated into the WINTER COUNT activity or silent journaling activities.
Moveable Mind Maps
(45 mins)

Often in TI we find that our inquiries begin to splay out in multiple directions in ways that are both complex and entwined. One useful way to help organize your thinking is to employ a moveable mind map. To do this activity you will need post-it notes, a pen, and a blank space (such as a wall or chart paper).

- On individual sticky notes, write down key ideas that are emerging for you at this point in your inquiry. These might be short phrases or concepts you want to explore, threads of through that run through your TI journal, niggling aspects that keep haunting you, things you have read, TED talk ideas, or even hunches that feel like they are connected to your topic, even if you don’t know why or how.

- At first, just throw all of the stickies onto your blank space so that you get the whole messy swamp of your topic out (for now). This can take a few minutes or a few days. Try not to rush this part of the process, as important information can be brought out here.

- Once you feel that all of your thoughts, feelings and observations are on the stickies, begin to move them around and organize them on your blank space. What seems to belong together? What is similar or different? Where are there connections? Think of it like a constellation that can be arranged in multiple ways; don’t be afraid to change things, to add images, thoughts or new questions. Some people like to code by size, shape or colour (e.g. all the things on blue stickies deal with emotional engagement, or all the triangular ones have to do with issues that take place outside of school)

- Gradually you will find that this emerging map of your topic gets to a resting point. Let it rest. For now, this is the map of what you are dealing with. It can be very useful in terms of clarifying your own understanding, having conversations with others, and imagining next steps.

- As you interpret your map, pay particular attention to the relationships between the stickies. Are they clumping into four groups? Why is this? Is a linear organization making sense or do they need to be in a circle for some reason. Why is the sticky at the heart of the circle or at the top of the list – what relationship does it have to the others.

- You may find that you return to your moveable mind map throughout your journey, and continue to add new stickies and rearrange your notes into new configurations, given new incoming information. You may want to take photos to document how it is changing over time. As you revisit, look for new connections and how your thinking is morphing.
Some people like to transfer various phases of their movable mind maps into their TI journals so that they can keep a record, or transport them easily for pod conversations.
Read Cynthia Chamber’s article, *Research that matters: Finding a path with heart*. Use the following prompts for journaling or discussion.

- What caught your attention in the article and why?
- What emotions came up for you?
- How might Chambers’ ideas relate to your experience as a classroom teacher? Do you see resonance? Incongruence? In what ways are there gaps or spaces?
- What, if anything, bothers you about this article? Describe why.
- What does this article tell you about a Transformative Inquiry approach?
- In what ways (if any) does the article (or this journaling or discussion) inform your inquiry topic and questions?
- How do you see a path with heart in the inquiry stories in the vignettes in Chapter two? How about the inquiries of people around you?
Pods represent a group of individuals (in or out of the class) that participants engage with for a number of reasons. First, small group discussions can help students’ movement within an inquiry process. Other members in a pod might suggest readings, ideas, or simply reflect what they have heard back to a sharing member. This, in turn, provides a moment of release for the student who is sharing.

Pods should be organic in their creation. Sometimes, a teacher might assign the group, while at other times, the group could be created by itself. The intention of the pod is to create a peer-mentoring environment where students support and encourage each other in their inquiry journey. Pods are appropriate for any age. You will notice that many of the activities in Chapter 9 include pods experiences. Here we offer an overview and a few other possibilities.

Individuals in pods should be encouraged to suspend preconceived ideas of what they think they know about people in the group. Listen generously to their inquiry. Make sure everyone in the group has time to share and to be listened to.

The following are the kinds of conversations you might want to pursue within your pod:

Fear Of Becoming Robots (20 Mins)
Some course participants have articulated a “fear of becoming robots.” How does the current system cultivate a climate where well-meaning teachers become mechanical? What are possible underlying causes or issues? How can teachers maintain their personal passions while negotiating the culture of schools?

Emotions At The Door (30 Mins)
Professionals are often perceived as individuals who leave their emotions at the door. While it is sometimes necessary to compartmentalize personal issues to focus on student learning, this can evoke a climate where emotions are not acknowledged or explored. What role do you allow your emotions to play in your practice? How do you react to your students’ emotions?

Popcorn Questions (10 Mins)
In Pods, start with one person and have them pose a burning question they have to the group. Instead of responding to the question each group member must respond with another question. Allow the questions to take the conversation where it needs to go.

Sharing An Image (30 Mins)
Choose one image that you have drawn, collaged, or collected in your TI journal or autumn count. Discuss the following with your pod:
• In what way does your image(s) express your inquiry?
• What might be missing? What might your next image include?
• What, if anything, surprised, confused, worried, invigorated you about using images? What was difficult?
• What do you notice in terms of worldview? Relatedness?
• How might you use such an activity in your own classroom?

Change roles and repeat.

Creating Questions For Inquiry (40 Mins)

There is an art to questioning and listening. This means that good questions will offer opportunities for deep listening. Therefore, questions become critical to the process of learning. This activity is designed to support you in developing four questions that help your inquiry process.

In your pod think through 3-4 questions each that you would like to ask someone around your topic. These will be handed in.
Possible Beliefs (20 mins)

Environmental educator David Orr (1994/2004), discusses six inherited beliefs that have taken on mythic status in North American culture:

- Myth 1: Ignorance is a solvable problem
- Myth 2: with enough knowledge and technology we can manage planet earth
- Myth 3: knowledge, and by implication human goodness, is increasing
- Myth 4: we can adequately restore what we have dismantled
- Myth 5: the purpose of education is to give students the means for upward mobility and success
- Myth 6: our culture represents the pinnacle of human achievement

Orr also offers 6 principles that could become our possible beliefs as we rethink education:

- Principle 1: all education is environmental education
- Principle 2: Paideia: the goal of education is not mastery of subject matter but mastery of one’s person
- Principle 3: knowledge carries with it the responsibility to see that it is well used in the world
- Principle 4: We cannot say that we know something until we understand the effects of this knowledge on real people and their communities
- Principle 5: we desperately need (a) faculty and administrators who provide role models of integrity, care, and thoughtfulness and (b) institutions capable of embodying ideals wholly and completely in all their operations
- Principle 6: the way in which learning occurs is as important as the content of particular courses

TI journal prompt (5-8 mins):

Three beliefs I hold around learning~teaching...

Continue to write about how these beliefs might be inherited or not. Either way, where did they come from? Do you want to bring them forward into your teaching? What might you change, let go of, strengthen, transform, etc.? (If you need a starting point, check out your collage or journal entries – what inherited beliefs are reflected in these?)

Share with you pod:

- How do you feel about the items on these lists? Your own beliefs?
- What concrete steps might you take to move towards reinforcing desirable beliefs (be they inherent or possible)?
• How do your inherited beliefs and possible beliefs affect your values and attitudes in the classroom? How do they play out for you?

OR

In pods:

Choose 1 myth to discuss in depth:

• Do you believe this is a myth of modern education?
• What evidence do you see of this, or how has it changed?
• Can you describe a particular example of this myth being played out in a classroom?
• What was, or could be, your response or action?
• How do you feel about this myth?
• If you could alter it, would you, and to what?
• How does this myth relate to your own teaching practice?

Choose 1 principle of learning to discuss:

• What stands out to you about this principle?
• Is it one in which you believe? Why or why not?
• Describe where you have seen this principle in action. How did you feel?
• What principle would you remove from the list? Why?
• What might you add? Why?

Note: this can also be done as a written activity to hand into your instructor.
PUBLIC IMAGE OF TEACHER

(30 mins)

Using search engine, look up images of the following:

- Elementary teacher
- Secondary teacher
- Teacher gifts
- Clothing
- Teachers according to Hollywood

Respond in your journal. If possible, print out an image that particularly strikes you and paste it in your journal. Feel free to write on it, around it, or modify it. What cultural messages are present, both visible and hidden. How do the images compare/contrast to your image of yourself as teacher?

Discuss in pods.
Psyche Conversations
(20 mins)

Forcefield Analysis
Do you remember the scene in *Lord of the Rings* where Sméagol (Gollum) speaks to his own conscience? Sméagol is exhibiting the act of a discussion with his inner self. Of course in this scene, the more villainous side ends up dominating the conversation - which this activity hopefully won’t illicit in you!

1. In your Inquiry Journal, draw a line down the center of a blank page (your force-field). Above that line in the centre write a statement that is a belief you hold that illicits complex or conflicting notions for you. (e.g. All students have the potential to be great)

2. At the top of one side of the blank line, write “Support”, and on the other side “Question.”

3. These represent your beliefs that support the argument and your beliefs that question the argument.

4. For the questioning side, pay attention to anything that bothers you; it doesn’t matter how banal it might be.

5. What barriers or bridges exist between the two columns? How might the forcefield be removed for some of the two? Draw lines that connect them.

---

**All Students have the potential to be great**

**Support**

- Helping students identify personal passions can excite them in learning
- Every person has a role to play and skills to contribute

**Question**

- little to no opportunity to engage in personal passions
- socio-economic limitations and home life can restrict
In your pods:

Have each person describe what his or her inquiry is at this point. Before discussing further, each pod member must write/construct one question that will promote deeper exploration for this person’s inquiry. Each pod member will take a turn asking the speaker one question. Attend carefully to how you listen to the speaker’s responses. How can listening be a way of being rather than a state of being? Rotate through so each person has a turn to speak and pose questions.
Question Sculpting
(20-60 mins)

Referring to the guidelines above, create pairs of questions. In each set there will be a question that is blunt and a second that is framed using some of what you now know about effective questioning. An example of such a pairing might be:

- How is your inquiry going?
- How is your inquiry journey challenging your thinking?

After you create two sets of pairs you will ask different classmates each question. As each person answers, do not engage in dialogue/discussion about what you hear. Instead, listen generously to what each person has to say and save your comments for later.

- Round One: Ask each person in your group to respond to the question, “How is your inquiry going?”
- Round Two: This time ask each person, “How is your inquiry journey challenging your thinking?”

Before discussing, write in your journal:

- What do you notice?
- How were responses to the two questions similar and different?
- What feelings did the different questions evoke in you as they were being asked?
- What was intriguing about the way questions were answered?

Discuss as needed with group.

(Adapted with thanks from Diana Nicholson)

Note: More ideas around asking questions can be found in Interviews and Surveys.
Relatedness meditation
(30 mins)

The oft-heard indigenous phrase “we are all related” can be difficult to understand when our mindset has been shaped by the positivist paradigm that likes to put things in boxes. Find a comfortable spot, relax, and listen to the following excerpt from Shawn Wilson’s book Research is Ceremony (this can be read to a group by someone). You might want to doodle in your TI journal as you listen, or just soak in the words.

Imagine that you are a single point of light. Not like a light bulb, or even a star, but an infinitely small, intense point of light in an area of otherwise total darkness or void. Now in the darkness of this void, another point of light becomes visible somewhere off in the distance—it is impossible to tell how far off, because you and the other point are so infinitely small. You form a relationship with that other point of light, and it is as though there is an infinitely thin thread now running between you and the other. All that exists are these two points of light, one of which is you, and something that is connecting the two of you together.

Now another point of light is visible off in another direction, and again you develop a relationship, and another thin thread evolves. You are now connected with two other points. A fourth light appears, and another relationship and thread are formed. A fifth light. Then a sixth; slowly, slowly more lights appear. You build more and more connections.

Now the lights are starting to appear all around you and are coming faster as you get accustomed to bringing them into your forming web of relationships. The lights are coming into being as fast as you can imagine them now, and as you build your web of relationships, slowly these infinitely small threads of relationship are building up into something resembling a form around you.

As the lights and the relationships come faster and faster, the form starts to take its shape as your physical body. While you notice this, your consciousness expands outwards, and you notice that another point of light—perhaps the first other one that you noticed has also started to take on a shape as it makes its own web of relationships and builds up its threads of being. Now other lights are taking on their physical form, as their webs of relationships grow and coalesce. As more and more of these points of light take on their physical form, the world around you starts to take shape.

Now as you open your eyes, you can see all of the things that are around you. What you see is their physical form, but you realize that this form is really just the web of relationships that have taken on a familiar shape. Every individual thing that you see around you is really just a huge knot—a point where thousands and millions of relationships come together. These relationships come to you from the past, from the present and from your future. This is what surrounds us, and what forms us, our world, our cosmos and our reality. We could not be without being in relationship with everything that surrounds us and is within us. Our reality, our ontology is the relationships. (Wilson, 2009, pp. 75-76)
In your TI journal:

- create images that arose during the meditation
- write your thoughts and feelings
- to me, relatedness...

In pods:

- Discuss our relatedness and what it might mean for you as a teacher
- Talk about what it might mean to be relationally accountable.
- How can we become more relationally accountable to ourselves, each other, and Earth?
SECTION 36

Relevant Resource Summary
(2 hours)

Complete a summary for key resources that have proven meaningful to your inquiry. The purpose of the summary is to deepen your understanding of your inquiry topic, to clarify how the resource(s) have informed your inquiry, and to continue the conversation with your thinking friends.

1. Identify and engage (read, listen, etc.) with your chosen resources (books, periodicals, videos, interviews)

2. Record citations (please use APA formatting) to resources.

3. Write a 1-2 page description of the article, video or interview that includes how it relates to your inquiry and informs your future practice. Include commentary on the following:

   a. Issue/focus – what is the key problem/issue identified by the author(s)? What is the purpose of the resource?

   b. Reasoning – What do the author(s) offer to explain how they address the issue/topic?

   c. Relevance - How does the information in the article contribute to, inform or advance your inquiry?

   d. Significant information - Key information that the article offers that is worth noting, particularly in an educational context

   e. Personal Comments – How do you see yourself and your peers using the information?
There can be great difficulty in stepping outside of our areas of comfort and this can cause much resistance and complexity for TI participants. If you find yourself in this situation, we suggest the following possible actions:

- Take extra time to pay attention (don’t rush to find the answer)
- Hold the situation gently (without judgment or expectations)
- Go outside and walk mindfully
- Journal your thoughts
- Talk with a good thinking friend
- Sit and breathe
Round Robin Sharing
(60 mins)

In the whole group, take time to listen to where others are in their inquiry journey. This is a great chance to scan the group, make connections around ideas, identify people you might want to talk with at a later time. Using a talking stick or similar item, will insure that each person has a turn.

The person speaking will share the following:

• My general topic...
• In relation to Cajete’s questions I am...
• My process...
• My living portrait...

As you listen to others share, suspend preconceived notions of what you think you know about people in the group. Listen generously and carefully.

• Who might you want to have a further pod conversation with?
• Who might be a good connection for sharing time or going next to during the GIC?

Note: These can be limited to short answers and brief phrases if need be due to time constraints.
Here, you are invited to participate in an emergent learning activity. Your instructor might lead you in this or you might choose to take it up individually.

Often educators find themselves focused on the outcomes, meeting goals and end products. In other words, the system pushes teachers and learners to prioritize producing certain types of conclusions as a measure of success. Emergent learning disrupts this sort of thinking and strives for teachers-learners to consider the process as the purpose.

- Begin by watching the video at the website Transformative Places and then go out on a mindfulness walk
- Go out into a natural setting that is easy for you to access. Find a location where you feel a strong connection
- Build some kind of structure using the materials that you find there. This is the first stage of your assignment
- Over the course visit your site at least once every week and document any changes
- Sit there, observe and document what you see, feel, hear etc. You can document the changes with photographs, journaling, drawings or other means. You are not to manipulate the piece you created or the surroundings in any way, even if your sculpture is destroyed
- In the final week of the course, you will submit the documentation you have collected/recorded for this assignment. Remember to include your reactions to the experience
- In your TI journal consider how your sculpture intertwines with your inquiry; are there any significant similarities or differences? How did the change undergone by your sculpture mirror your own experience of change in the course?

Adapted from Crowell & Reid-Marr (2013, pp. 27-28)
Self-Reflection
(40 mins)

Critical Self Reflection Analysis (20 Mins)
1. Using Interactive 9.5, consider the questions presented in each of the areas of self reflection. There are many questions embedded in this interactive, choose a few to get you started.

2. Reflect on your findings in your Inquiry Journal.

Assumptions And Reflexivity (20 Mins)
MacDonald & Shirley (2009) suggested that attending to questions of personal worldviews can help frame our role as teachers. They suggest a few questions to prompt you in this process:

Take time in your TI journal to reflect on the following questions:

- What factors should I be aware of when I interact with students of a different race, class, culture, home language, or gender?
- What assumptions or stereotypes do I hold that are embedded from broader culture?
- How can I teach against stereotypes and generalizations while being accountable to the prescribed learning outcomes?
- What should I do when my beliefs conflict with school policies?
- How can I preserve my sense of inner dignity and self-respect?
- What possibilities do I have to change the climate in a positive manner by not lashing back reactively but by modeling professional ethics in my own classroom and in my interactions with colleagues?

Safe-Enough Space (ongoing)

TI asks us to know who we are, be honest with ourselves and sometimes to change, which requires risk and vulnerability. Every learning community requires a safe-enough space that supports the needs of its evolving members.

TI Journal prompt (choose one):

- For me, safe space...
- Safe-enough space...

Either with your whole group, or in pods of 3 or 4, read and discuss each safe space principle. Review Guidelines for Safe Enough Space in section 4.4. Change any wording that doesn’t fit for you. Throw out a principle if needed, or create a new one. If working in small groups, return to whole group and share, adapting the principles as needed. Write the new and revised principles on a sheet of paper to post in your meeting space. Refer to as needed. It can be useful to review these periodically, especially before sharing activities begin.

INTERACTIVE 9.9 Guidelines for a safe-enough space

Be the change we want to see by acting towards each other in a manner that reflects our vision of a peaceful and just world.

Click the image above to scroll through the guidelines. Adapted from Lost Lyrics 5-year Anniversary Conference: Roots of the Rose, Ryerson College, Toronto, ON, June 2, 2012
SECTION 42

Shame and Vulnerability
(40 mins)

1. Watch the TED talk with Brene Brown (Interactive 9.7) (21 mins)

2. Use the following questions as prompts for a discussion with your pod or journal on your own (20 mins)

   - What stands out to you about the reading and video?
   - What, if anything is surprising, confusing, worrying, invigorating?
   - How do you see the role of emotion in your own inquiry?
   - Are there any sticking points?
   - What specific comments do you have around shame or vulnerability?
   - Have you noticed vulnerability or shame in the classroom? What did it look like? How might it have affected learning?
   - How might shame or vulnerability be a part of your TI topic or journey?

You might also want to watch this later talk where Brown’s discusses the importance of confronting shame head-on.
Talking sticks are a good way to be sure that everyone has a turn and they also give us a chance to really practice listening. They don’t have to be a stick – many objects can be used. We suggest the following protocol:

- Use an item that you know the story of (e.g. if you choose a rock, describe where the rock was found, if you have a carved stick, know the carver, what kind of tree it comes from, where it grows, etc.)
- The person with the stick is the only one who talks
- Everyone else listens – not just waiting for their turn to talk, or how to help this person, but try to be present and really hear what the person is saying holistically.
- The stick can go around the circle so that everyone gets a turn
- Or the stick can be placed mid circle and those who want to speak can go and get the stick and return it when they are done.
Facilitating personal inquiry through reflexive experiences can enhance transformative learning environments. A transformative tool that is particularly powerful is transformative inquiry journalling (TI journal), which helps inquirers connect with personal passions and going beyond simple passion-identification to a place of deeper introspective and contextual understanding. That is, TI journaling experiences and peer-based discussions help learners identify and deepen their relationship with their unique and impassioned skills. The goals of the TI journal are:

- To enhance, support, and contribute to the overall TI experience
- To establish a culture of reflexivity and empower you as an inquirer both individually and within a community
- To develop skills in TI journaling for systems thinking, problem solving, and fun

These goals will be facilitated through solitary and small group experiences and be focused around interacting with the journal (blank unlined book). TI Journals require a short introductory orientation to engage inquirers in the process. Your journal can become a personalized “text-book” of experience, providing a place to take notes and also delve deeper into thought processes, idea creation, reflexivity, and solace.

TI journalling is a highly engaging process that encourages learners to explore their own expression as it relates to understanding social, ecological, political, and other systems. It could be called the “power-tool” of transformative inquiry, building on tenants of observation but also moving through to active planning, mind-mapping, and other artistic and TI forms. TI journaling is not a “Dear Diary” but it exists as a highly professional and sacred tool that can help leaders throughout their career. Using multiple implements for drawing, writing, pasting, painting, and impressions will support you in creating a rich resource.

This journal is a space for you to ponder many of the complex issues that emerge in the process of becoming a teacher. There is no “correct” way to use the journal. Students in the past have dedicated sections to interesting quotes they hear, others have allowed their pen to guide them, and later reflected on their doodles. Some bring their journal into every class to make personal notes (we encourage you to do this to make deeper connections and take ownership of your learning). The most important aspect of this journal is that it is a place for you to be deeply honest. You are encouraged to use creative forms to explore questions that arise for you throughout your coursework, pursue those questions, and trace their evolution. This differs from the traditional model of searching for “answers” with which you might be accustomed. Your
observations can be done directly in your journal, just copy the prompt before you go. Before you begin you may be asked to read the Hammond article and do the following.

Hammond Article (15 Mins)
Discuss your conversation notes from reading (Hammond, 2002). What caught your attention? How might a journal support your inquiry?

• How might Hammond’s ideas relate to your experience as a classroom teacher? Do you see resonance? Incongruence? In what ways are there gaps or spaces?

• What, if anything, bothers you about this article? Describe why.

• Take a few minutes to add to your conversation notes any new information you have gained.

Below are a few example activities for which you can use your TI Journal:

First Steps With The Inquiry Journal (20 Mins)
In TI this journal is essential to your inquiry journey. This notebook is only for you and for those you choose to share it with. It is a place where you can write~draw~doodle~sketch your wonderings around your inquiry path. Possible guiding questions include:

• What am I wondering about learning~teaching at this point?
• Why am I becoming a teacher?
• Why is this important to me?
• What am I learning about teaching that brings me joy and satisfaction?
• How are my wonderings genuine or compelling?
• How might my questions benefit students?
• What challenges am I having? How am I approaching these?
• How is my passion engaged?
• What (if anything) is uncomfortable?

Morning Pages (10 Mins)
Another piece we suggest doing would be “Morning Pages” or “Evening Pages” that ask the learners to engage in free-flow writing for 10 minutes. This unloading of thought can be incredible for many people as a way to de-clutter and also start seeing connections among the activities they are engaged in.

As the title suggests, find a specific time of day to set aside for this activity. Making it routine creates a rhythm that you might find useful and scheduling it in will help it from getting lost in your busy day. Many people like to do this activity right before sleeping or when waking up.

Expanded Boundedness (10 Mins)
You likely will have developed some questions that relate directly to your inquiry process by now (if not check out this
pod activity). Are your questions bounded or unbounded? Continue to work with your questions until they become more unbounded, raw or represent your question more fully in your journal.

Paradigm Resonance (10 Mins)
In TI journal write: In terms of paradigms (positivist, progressive, social justice, indigenist), I feel a resonance...

My mentor teacher (or other educator I have been affected by) seems to resonate...

Inquiry Possibilities (20 Mins)
Take time and space to write~draw~doodle in your TI journal. Keep in mind your previous journaling, the messy swamp of teaching and past and upcoming practica experiences. Write about any questions that are most burning for you. Think~write~doodle carefully about WHY you are drawn to these questions. What meaning does your inquiry have for you in practice? What do you see as the usefulness of exploring it? What are specific questions you have?

Outdoor TI Journaling (20 Mins)
Go outside ON YOUR OWN and write, doodle, etc. around your inquiry.

Possible prompts:
- When I sit on the earth, I feel...
- When I listen...

- Being connected to the land affects my inquiry...
- When I think of Cajete’s question around how do we care for the earth, I...
- Something I love about our planet...
- Something that makes me anxious...

If you are not sure what to put in your journal just sit in silence and see what “bubbles” up or “filters” down...

What Are My Next Steps (40 Mins)
Take time to think about the next steps you want to take with your inquiry journey. Will it be most useful to do a moveable mind map, explore a touchstone story, talk with someone else who might know about your topic, do some reading, or? Once you have a sense of where you want to go, move right into that. This can be a useful activity to do before you meet with your mentor or pods.

Brilliant Ideas Section (ongoing)
Choose a location in your Inquiry Journal like the bonding page, last page, or the first page as a brainstorm list for those ideas that come to you in the middle of the night, while cooking, or otherwise occupied.

Bicycle Rack/parking Lot For Questions (ongoing)
Similar to the brilliant ideas section, this list is to keep questions that might distract you from your main inquiry but you want to keep.
Tobin Hart Interview
(1 hour)

This activity can be done as a large group or individually. Students will need to view the Garrison Institute’s interview with Tobin Hart, founder of the ChildSpirit Institute.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4OJsdaVle4

Use the following to aid your discussion:

- Hart says we don’t really have a cohesive vision for education in North America. What is your vision for education in the 21st century? What do you think we need?
- Hart suggests that while it is important to train people for the market place but that we also need to train for the inner life. What does this mean to you? How do you see this happening in education?
- He says he wants the good, true and beautiful for his own daughter. What does this mean to you? What role might the good, true and beautiful have in education?
- Hart says that mindful or contemplative learning tunes up our instrument of inquiry through developing presence, compassion, discernment and clarity. Do these seem to be useful attributes for you as a teacher? Why or why not?
- The interviewer says that a contemplative approach can help us see beyond our biases and Hart continues by talking about how teachers need a depth of understanding to be good teachers. What are your thoughts on this? Where are your “brick walls” with this?
- Hart says, “Education by definition is preparation to walk into a future that isn’t yet determined.” How does this statement affect you as a teacher? What needs do you see developing?
- What do you think of the notion of developing a “radical flexibility” both for yourself and your students?
- T.S. Elliott writes about the importance of “finding a stillpoint in a turning world”. How do you find your own stillpoint? What might that feel like for you? What gets in the way?
- Hart says that kids are naturally contemplative in that they have a large capacity for wonder and awe (e.g. excitement for first trip to ocean). What does it mean to you to see with “fresh eyes”? How might this be useful for you as an educator?
- What image do you have of learners (e.g. are they blank slates, containers to be filled, or ____________? 
- Education is going to take some radical shifts – given your own experience as a learner, what do you think the nature of these shifts should be?
Touchstone stories
(45 mins)

Remember to refer to the table of needs and emotions (Tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3).

Create for yourself a quiet, private space perhaps by sitting or walking mindfully for a few minutes.

As you settle in, begin to think about an experience you had as either a learner or a teacher that really stands out for some reason. Perhaps it was upsetting, confusing, frustrating or worrisome. Maybe this incident made you feel great, and you wonder why things like that don’t happen more often. Maybe it was something that felt like it punched you in the gut, or brought you to tears. Perhaps you witnessed or were a part of a great misunderstanding, an abusive situation, or a situation where you intuitively knew something was wrong, but couldn’t quite put your finger on it.

Once you have identified an important situation from your lived experience, take time to describe it on paper. What exactly took place? Who was there? Who was not there? Be sure to describe the context as vividly as you can. What smells were there? What time of day was it? What feelings went through you at the time? Include any doodled images that come up for you.

After you are done remembering and describing the situation write for a bit about why you have carried this story with you? What is important about this for you? Why does it matter? What feelings does the memory evoke in you?

Now think about yourself as a teacher. What information might your story hold for you in terms of being a better teacher? What questions are arising from your story? How might this experience have affected your beliefs about teaching and the qualities of a good teacher? Write down all the questions you have for now.

Return to the large group to share in a talking circle. Remember to share only what you are comfortable sharing professionally. Passing on your sharing is a valid option.

Note: this activity might be useful to you during the TI process when new touchtones arise. Take time to “paint” a picture of what happened (this can be literally with paint, or written as above, or with poetry, dance, etc.) Once you have developed a vignette it can be a kind of “case” that you can study from various perspectives and possibly share with others.
Guided Inquiry Conversation (GIC)

Guided Inquiry Conversations (GIC) occur at the end of the TI class, and are an opportunity for you to share an aspect of your TI journey. The scope and scale of your inquiry will be impossible to capture in a brief moment, but we have found that a lot of key thinking crystallizes through the process of explaining to your peers why this inquiry matters to you personally and professionally. In this way your personal knowledge can become accessible to the community, and enhance the learning of the collective group. Consider how you will bring your inquiry into your practice and why your inquiry might matter to others. Think of this as a chance to engage in one big inquiry partner session, some students in that past have called this “Pod Fest.” A key phrase at the heart of this experience is, “Speak to be revealed; listen to be changed” (Altman, 2012). This is an opportunity for you to take a risk and share your passion! You might be amazed by what can happen when you step out and become vulnerable.

Your instructor will discuss what the time parameters are for your GIC, but the range of possibilities is endless. Some students have pulled up a stool and shared their journey and key questions and understandings that have emerged. Others have taken us outside, danced their inquiries, or gave us a map of what their inquiry looked like. Some students have engaged us in activities specific to their process, shared poetry, discussed a big question, and so on. Discuss any new ideas you might have with your instructor.

Open Space Technology (OST)

Open Space Technology is a tool to engage students or participants in a process of developing content for further exploration. The content represents the intelligence of the group since it is derived from the passions and interests of the group as they relate to a larger theme. Consider practicing OST as a tool to explore major topics such as environmental questions, social justice questions, or curricular topic areas.

Listen to the beginning of the originator of OST, Harrison Owen, explaining the underlying goal of the technique as you review the following slides.
In your TI journal:

Draw an image or write a phrase to represent an aspect of your inquiry. Next, create a web of questions around that central image or phrase. Write any ideas that arise from those questions in a third outer ring. When these webs are complete use different colours to circle items that have particular emotional significance. What emotions are most significantly represented for you? Write a list of these emotions.

Write about a high point and a low point in a past practicum or other classroom experience. Do these moments intersect with your inquiry questions? If so, how? What kinds of emotions are tied to those experiences?

Using the individually constructed webs, write one of the emotions from your list on parchment paper, rotating around the pod until each member has written one word on the parchment. Discuss any connections or overlaps. Repeat this activity with each person adding another word from his or her list. Discuss.


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and the TI team. University of Victoria, B.C., Canada
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Animal Guide

Any animal you may be drawn to for whatever reason. Take time to understand how this animal moves through, interacts with, and sees the world. What might you learn about yourself from your observations?

Related Glossary Terms

Drag related terms here

Index

Chapter 2 - Wolf Ceremony
Chapter 2 - Wolf Ceremony
Chapter 2 - Wolf Ceremony
Chapter 8 - Systems thinking and Panarchy
Autopoetic

Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela coined the term to describe the way living cells produce themselves; the self-maintenance of an organized entity through its own internal processes; (in extended use) self-organization, self-regulation. Also: self-creation (nonce-use). - Oxford English Dictionary.

Related Glossary Terms
Panarchy

Index

Chapter 1 - What is Transformative Inquiry?
Ayurvedic Typologies

Ayurveda can be translated as “the science of life.” It is a philosophical and medical system that originated in India. Typologies, simply put, are ways of classifying human characteristics. Ayurvedic Typologies allows us to examine ourselves through a wholistic approach to classification, and draws upon five basic, archetypal elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether. Through these elements and understanding their interactions, we can better know our own constitution and how we are relating.

See Prakruti and Vikruti for more information.

Related Glossary Terms

Worldview

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Chapter 5 - Images of the Teacher
Chapter 5 - Images of the Teacher
Chapter 5 - Images of the Teacher
Be~coming

Pre-service teachers are simultaneously being teachers and becoming teachers. In order to represent the fluidity and mutual reciprocity of these concepts we use the tilde to draw attention to this state of flux.

Related Glossary Terms
Learners~teachers~researchers
Binary thinking

Binary thinking is the view that the world, decisions, dispositions can be defined by either/or statements. This shows up as statements that describe the flip side of the coin; e.g. male vs. female or teacher vs. learner. Binary thinking often forces us to take sides.

Related Glossary Terms

Worldview

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Chapter 4 - Emotional Engagement and Touchstones
Bounded Questions

A line of questioning or questions that have clear parameters of understanding. Bounded questions are often complicated, but are not complex. Answers to bounded questions are definable and resolvable.

Related Glossary Terms

Unbounded questions
Consciousness

Internal knowledge or conviction; the state or fact of being mentally conscious or aware of something. (Oxford English Dictionary)

Related Glossary Terms
Interbeing

Index
Find Term
Chapter 4 - Non-violent communication
Decolonization

The act of adapting a previously colonized area, subject, concept to one of independence and self-regulation. This could include land, culture, religion, spirit, governance, and social practices.

Related Glossary Terms
Industrialization, Worldview
Dwell

The notion of dwelling can have a connotation of stagnation. However, we use the term with Chambers (2004) who envisions dwelling as “to be still with, to remain for a time with, to reside with.” (p.11). By dwelling in deep attention we can discover new and important possibilities.

Related Glossary Terms
Mindfulness

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Chapter 4 - Shame and Vulnerability
Chapter 6 - Caring for your soul
Emotional engagement

Emotional engagement is fostered in various settings and levels in the TI process. It is contingent on the individual’s disposition and willingness to engage, and can serve as a rich site for growth. By cultivating emotional engagement it is not our intent for inquirers to take this up as a therapeutic process (although there may be therapeutic aspects), but to attend to their emotions in a different way. To move beyond a strictly objective way of knowing, and consider the emotional landscape of their own lived experiences and how it informs both their inquiry and practice as educators.

Related Glossary Terms
Empathy, Intuitive wisdom, Shame

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Chapter 4 - Emotional Engagement and Touchstones
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Chapter 8 - Systems thinking and Panarchy
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Empathy

The capacity to recognize the emotional experiences of others and the ability to engage in compassionate listening that is carefully discerning rather than judgmental.

Related Glossary Terms
Emotional engagement

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Chapter 4 - Shame and Vulnerability
Chapter 6 - Caring for your soul
Epistemology

The study of knowledge, what constitutes knowledge, and what it means to know.

Related Glossary Terms

Ontology

Index

Chapter 5 - Inherited and Possible Beliefs
Ex situ

Events or actions occurring outside the TI mentoring space.

Related Glossary Terms

In situ

Index

Chapter 7 - Mentoring
Chapter 7 - Mentoring
Glossary

Here is the glossary for the iBook. Check out the other terms by clicking on them in the index.

Related Glossary Terms
Drag related terms here

Index
Chapter 1 - How to use this book
In situ

In its original place, position. In the case of TI, this refers to the mentoring experience. Discussions occurring during the mentor meeting are considered in situ.

Related Glossary Terms

Ex situ

Index
Industrialization

The conversion of an organization into an industry that adapts the very nature of the process to something that is designed for mass production or mass consumption.

Related Glossary Terms
Decolonization
Inquiry

Inquiry is actively seeking out and investigating a myriad of interlocking questions, a way of attending to knowledge and experience.

Related Glossary Terms

Inquiry Partners, Mentor meetings
Inquiry Partners

Those who come alongside us in our inquiry journeys and think with us; these relationships constitute a different type of learning community grounded in generous listening.

Related Glossary Terms

Inquiry, Learning spirit, Pods, Thinking Friends

Index

Chapter 4 - Emotional Engagement and Touchstones
Interbeing

The acknowledgement that all components in life are interconnected and related. Derived from the Vietnamese: Tiếp Hiện by Thích Nhất Hạnh. Tiếp Hiện translates as continued realizing.

Related Glossary Terms
Consciousness, Mindfulness, Panarchy, Worldview

Index
Chapter 6 - Mindfulness and Interbeing
Intuitive wisdom

Involves integrity, epistemic humility (wise people know they don’t know), epistemic accuracy (resonance with lived understanding), and wisdom an action. Draws from innate understanding of experience, relevant stories and anecdotes that relate to the inquirer’s journey. For instance as Parker Palmer says “we teach who we are.

Related Glossary Terms

Emotional engagement

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Chapter 5 - Inherited and Possible Beliefs
Chapter 6 - Caring for your soul
Learners~teachers~researchers

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Related Glossary Terms
Be~coming, Master Teacher

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Chapter 1 - What is Transformative Inquiry?
Chapter 1 - Negotiating the Swamp as you are Be~coming
Learning spirit

Marie Battiste’s (2009) name for the innate instincts towards learning that all learners (including teachers) possess. The learning spirit is personal in nature and plays out in myriad and individual ways.
Liminal Space

Liminal space is typified as the place between knowing. Often best understood as a site of ambiguity and unknowing; it is the fluid space between what we know and what is possible for us to know.

Related Glossary Terms

Safe-Enough Space
Master Teacher

One who is assumed to know and implement practices that optimize the learning of all students at all times. The construct of the Master Teacher creates an illusion that there is an ideal status to be reached. This construct often fuels perfectionist tendencies and perpetuates a sense of shame if one is not within range of Master Teacher status.

Related Glossary Terms
Learners~teachers~researchers
Mentor meetings

One-on-one meetings between an individual student and instructor, who acts as a guide and co-investigator through actions such as check-ins, debriefs, and reflexive discourses.

Related Glossary Terms

Inquiry

Index

Chapter 7 - Mentoring
Chapter 7 - Mentoring
Mindfulness

Mindfulness has to do with being present with what is happening in the here and now, rather than the past or future. Inquirers practice attending to their journey through every cell of their body - an awakening. Mindfulness also has ethical ramifications. One who acts mindfully, also respects the value of life and its interconnections and seeks to uphold the relationships that support life and non-suffering.

Related Glossary Terms

Dwell, Interbeing

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Chapter 1 - What is Transformative Inquiry?
Chapter 2 - Popped Bubble
Chapter 4 - Edge of Counselling
Chapter 6 - Caring for your soul
Chapter 6 - Caring for your soul
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Chapter 6 - Mindfulness and Interbeing
Chapter 6 - Mindfulness and Interbeing
Chapter 6 - Mindfulness and Interbeing
Chapter 6 - Mindfulness and Interbeing
Chapter 6 - Mindfulness and Interbeing
Chapter 7 - Caring for each other
Ontology

The study of what constitutes the nature of reality and what it means to exist

Related Glossary Terms

Epistemology

Index

Chapter 5 - Inherited and Possible Beliefs
Chapter 7 - Relational Accountability
Panarchy

Originally conceived to describe connections among chaos theory, complexity theory and ecological system management, ‘panarchy’ is a term that explains the evolving nature of complex adaptive systems. Panarchy theorists argue that humans need to move beyond interpreting systems using simplistic equilibrium models and acknowledge the more complex and dynamic set of equilibria that describes the states of ecological, societal, and economic systems.

Related Glossary Terms
Autopoetic, Interbeing, Resistance

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- Chapter 1 - Negotiating the Swamp as you are Be~coming
- Chapter 8 - Caring for Earth
- Chapter 8 - Systems thinking and Panarchy
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Paradox

A statement that appears to be a contradiction, however under closer inspection might prove to be true. Paradoxes often move us out of binary thinking to consider more complex interactions.
Perfectionism

Perfectionism is a tendency or desire to strive to perform or embody a perceived level of excellence, and/or a desire to produce work that is alleged to be faultless.

Related Glossary Terms

Worldview
Pods

Those who come alongside us in our inquiry journeys and think with us; these relationships constitute a different type of learning community grounded in generous listening.

There is value in diversity and fluidity in the forming of these groups so that we can gently disrupt our thinking. Consider podding up with different people throughout the course.

Related Glossary Terms

Inquiry Partners, Thinking Friends

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Chapter 7 - Pods: a different type of community
Chapter 7 - Pods: a different type of community
Chapter 7 - Pods: a different type of community
Chapter 7 - Pods: a different type of community
Positivist Paradigm

A paradigm closely related to industrialism, where knowledge is understood to be an entity that can be isolated into discrete facts and the teacher acts a transmitter of these facts, hence learning is a transmissive activity. Positivism is focused on objective, external truth, and is typified by scientific precision and objectivity.

Related Glossary Terms

Worldview

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Chapter 2 - Anger Collage
Chapter 3 - Moving Towards a New Paradigm
Chapter 5 - Images of the Teacher
Chapter 7 - Layered and Generous Listening
Chapter 9 - Relatedness meditation
Reciprocity

Being in relation by returning, answering, responding to another.
Reflection

Reflection as a teaching practice can be found in the work of educational philosopher John Dewey (1933), and reflective scholar Donald Schön (1983). Both individuals promoted reflection as a “critical underpinning of growth and learning” (Ryan, 2005, p. 1). With Dewey and Schön, reflection involves looking back on experiences as a means of constructing knowledge about one’s self and about the world. Thinking carefully about a particular subject involves considering one’s past life experiences.

Related Glossary Terms

Reflexivity

Index

Chapter 3 - Moving Towards a New Paradigm
Chapter 6 - Beyond Reflection
Reflexivity

Moving beyond reflection, inquirers attend self-consciously to their own mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual locations. Being reflexive means that you do not simply look back and contemplate but you consider your contribution to the construction of meanings. Reflexivity is something that can occur in the moment and not simply after the fact; it is reflection on action in action.

Related Glossary Terms

Reflection

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Chapter 4 - Shame and Vulnerability
Chapter 6 - Caring for your soul
Chapter 6 - Beyond Reflection
Chapter 6 - Beyond Reflection
Chapter 9 - TI Journal
Relational accountability

A reciprocal connection to all living things, including, but not limited to, family, friends, plants, animals, earth, learning communities, larger communities, global communities, etc. Relational accountability is a way of practicing relationality by implementing the four R’s: respect, relevance reciprocity, and responsibility (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

Related Glossary Terms

Relationality

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Chapter 1 - TI Model
Chapter 3 - Embodying an Indigenist Approach
Chapter 7 - Caring for each other
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Chapter 7 - Relational Accountability
Chapter 7 - Layered and Generous Listening
Chapter 7 - Pods: a different type of community
Relationality

The concept of relationality is founded on the notion that we do not simply have relationships with each other or to each other but more importantly, relationships make us who we are.

Related Glossary Terms
Relational accountability

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Chapter 7 - Relational Accountability
Chapter 7 - Relational Accountability
Remembering

A series of releases or system shifts that enacts a major systems return to a previous state based on the wisdom of the previous system.
Resilience

The ability of an organism or object to withstand trauma or change, and still maintain its function in a system.
Resistance

The refusal or struggle to accept or participate in the TI process. Resistance can occur in many forms, such as flight (skimming the surface, apathy, pleasing the instructor, etc.), fight (perfectionism, seeing TI as airy-fairy, etc.) and freeze (fear of failure, worry about what others think, etc.). Other indicators include ignorance, shame and the overarching culture of anxiety in which we all live.

Related Glossary Terms

Panarchy
Revolt

Events that cause a critical change in one cycle to cascade up to a vulnerable stage in a larger and slower one.
Safe-Enough Space

A community we strive to create that allows a different type of learning community to flourish. No space is ever devoid of potential harm, but we try to establish one that is “safe-enough” for inquirers to be vulnerable, listen generously and share deep questions and thoughts with one another.

Related Glossary Terms

Liminal Space

Index

Chapter 1 - TI Model
Chapter 4 - Edge of Counselling
Chapter 7 - Layered and Generous Listening
Sage on the Stage

A model of teaching, learning, and researching that depicts a disseminator of knowledge.

Related Glossary Terms

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Chapter 1 - What is Transformative Inquiry?
Chapter 1 - The TI Team
Shame

Shame is an abiding feeling of disconnection. Judith V. Jordan (1997) articulates shame to be, “a felt sense of unworthiness to be in connection, a deep sense of unlovability, with the ongoing awareness of how very much one wants to connect with others” (p. 147).

Related Glossary Terms
Emotional engagement, Vulnerability
Soul

The soul has been thought of logically, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Various scholars, philosophers and existential theorists have suggested a constellation of definitions of a soul. For the purposes of TI, we use the term soul to represent the mixture of beliefs, values and attitudes that create each person’s disposition, a unique expression of self in the world; as well as to describe the embodied and actualized form of spirit.

Related Glossary Terms

Spirit

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Chapter 3 - Moving Towards a New Paradigm
Chapter 4 - Emotional Engagement and Touchstones
Chapter 4 - Shame and Vulnerability
Chapter 6 - Caring for your soul
Chapter 7 - Layered and Generous Listening
Spirit

The enlivening or vital aspect of an entity; that which animates material elements; sometimes understood as the breath of life (Oxford English Dictionary).

Related Glossary Terms

Soul

Index

Chapter 1 - What is Transformative Inquiry?
Chapter 3 - Moving Towards a New Paradigm
Chapter 6 - Caring for your soul
Chapter 7 - Caring for each other
Stochastic event

An incident that was likely inevitable, yet is perceived as random or unexpected.

Related Glossary Terms

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Thinking Friends

Those who come alongside us in our inquiry journeys and think with us; these relationships constitute a different type of learning community grounded in generous listening.

Related Glossary Terms
Inquiry Partners, Pods

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Chapter 2 - Anger Collage
Touchstone Story

Historically, a touchstone was a dark stone that was used to verify the authenticity of precious metals, such as gold or silver (Oxford English Dictionary). In TI we think of touchstone stories as a past experience that brings meaning to an inquiry question. It may be related to a life experience, a teaching situation, a particular student, or a learning experience. Touchstone stories are often those that we continually strike against other lived-experiences to assess the authenticity of the beliefs carried within them.

Related Glossary Terms

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Chapter 2 - Anger Collage
Chapter 2 - Frozen Fish
Chapter 4 - Emotional Engagement and Touchstones
Transformance

Transformance hybridizes the words 'transformation' and 'performance' in order to acknowledge the connection between personal development and teaching style and skills. The concept of transformance suggests that inquiry is a dynamic process that maintains motion, where inquirers are called on to nurture momentum within their own practices.

Related Glossary Terms

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Chapter 1 - Negotiating the Swamp as you are Becoming
Chapter 8 - Transformance
Chapter 8 - Transformance
Transformation

A shift in consciousness that permanently and dramatically changes our way of being in the world. Kegan (2000) articulates that through transformative learning we do not simply alter or add to what we know, but change how we come to know. Cranton (2006) suggests that transformation entails deep, structural changes in basic premises of actions, feelings, and thought.

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Chapter 5 - Disrupting Binaries
Chapter 8 - Caring for Earth
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Transformative Inquiry

Transformative Inquiry (TI) is a unique research approach designed to help educators negotiate the complex terrain of learning-teaching. TI is a way of taking time and space to draw on personal passions and put that energy to use within a relational framework in order to address burning pedagogical issues.

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Chapter 9 - TI Journal
Transformative Inquiry Journaling is a highly engaging process that encourages learners to explore their own expression as it relates to understanding social, ecological, political, and other systems. It could be called the “power-tool” of transformative inquiry, building on tenants of observation but also moving through to active planning, mind-mapping, and other artistic and TI forms. TI journaling is not a “Dear Diary” that you might have to capture day to day events, but it exists as a highly professional and sacred tool that can help leaders through their ongoing career. Using multiple implements for drawing, writing, pasting, painting, and rubbing.

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Chapter 4 - Emotional Engagement and Touchstones
Chapter 7 - Mentoring
Chapter 9 - Living Portrait Tree
Chapter 9 - TI Journal
Unbounded questions

Perplexing questions that resist traditional boundaries of understanding. Unbounded questions are complex, and as Henderson (1992) describes, they are often irresolvable.

Related Glossary Terms
Bounded Questions

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Chapter 1 - Negotiating the Swamp as you are Becoming
Chapter 7 - Caring for each other
Chapter 7 - Relational Accountability
Chapter 9 - Interviews and Surveys
Vulnerability

Vulnerability is a state of being where a person is unguarded, open, humble, and honest.

Related Glossary Terms
Shame
Wholistic/holstic

The doctrine or belief that wholes must be studied as such, and that the parts can only be understood in relation to the wholes to which they belong; the doctrine that evolutionary forces tend towards the forming of new and more complex wholes (OED, 2013)

Related Glossary Terms

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Chapter 3 - Embodying an Indigenist Approach
Chapter 5 - Inherited and Possible Beliefs
Chapter 5 - Images of the Teacher
Winter count (seasonal count)

Referred to as waniyetu wówapi, winter counts are a land and place-based knowledge and practice that acts as a calendrical record of memorable, important events, that depict natural and social phenomenon of several of the Plains First Nations, including Sioux, Lakota, Blackfoot and Blackfeet, Kiowa, and Mandan Nations (Therrell & Trotter, 2011).

In the context of the TI course, each student was asked to submit four winter count drawings at set intervals throughout the inquiry process. Instructors asked them to draw expressions of “where they saw themselves” in either their process or in relation to their topic. We call each student’s set of four winter counts a ‘winter count collection.’

Related Glossary Terms

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Chapter 2 - Wolf Ceremony
Chapter 2 - Wolf Ceremony
Worldview

A way of describing the universe and life within it, both in terms of what is and what ought to be. A given worldview is a set of beliefs that includes limiting statements and assumptions regarding what exists and what does not (either in actuality, or in principle), what objects or experiences are good or bad, and what objectives, behaviors, and relationships are desirable or undesirable.

Related Glossary Terms
Ayurvedic Typologies, Binary thinking, Decolonization, Interbeing, Perfectionism, Positivist Paradigm