

Communication and Humility: A Journey

H. Paul LeBlanc III

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Prologue

The Mountaintop

Awe motivates. Beauty inspires awe. Nature exudes beauty. We learn these relationships.

Driving toward the rising Chisos Mountains of the Big Bend elicited a profound awe in my heart and mind that cannot be erased. From the first time I visited the Big Bend, I have been drawn to return again and again. I began to learn the awe-inspiring beauty of nature from an early age. My first lesson in humility: I did not get there alone.

Instilled in me, the desire to see and experience came from my parents. These desires permeated all of my adventures, whether physical, mental, or social. Life started out as a journey, although I did not become aware of that fact until much later in life. Understanding life as a journey presaged the question, To where? The physical journey toward the Chisos elicited a desire to “see” from the top of the mountain. Would I ever get there?

I would not be the first, of course. Others had been there before me. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of going to the mountaintop (King, 1968, April 3). He was speaking metaphorically. What did he mean? Is the mountaintop the destination to seek? In many world religions, the metaphor of the mountaintop stretches to become universal theme of unity with the other. As Berry and Nichols (2019) noted, sacred places often demonstrate values of cultural significance. Popular and scholarly literature over the centuries point to many sacred mountains (Lane, 1995).

What was to be my path to the top of the mountain? Was this path my own, or was it to be shared with others? Do these concerns apply only to physical travel, or do they apply to mental, spiritual, or social journeys as well? These questions are neither new nor unique to me.

Like most journeys, there are many milestones and turning points and things to see along the way. Often the final destination is not clear until much travel has been completed. Hopefully, the destination will be clear in the final chapter.

This is a book about the communication journey. As a communication scholar, I have been interested in learning about the development and maintenance of personal and professional relationships. Such development is a type of journey, and the act of journeying is about the process, not the destination.

To fully describe the communication journey, new and ancient sources from both inside and outside the field of communication will be referenced. Literature from ancient scholars is replete with wisdom about the communication journey. Consider this from Epictetus (born ca. 50 ACE): “First learn the meaning of what you say, then speak” (1865, bk. III, ch. XXIII). The following chapters will tie together elements of the journey from the very beginning to our current location.

Each chapter covers a different aspect of the journey. The first chapter covers what we know about language, social, relational, and moral development. The following chapters cover self-awareness, listening, knowing, other-awareness, and teaching. The second-to-final chapter covers processes for converting our knowledge of the communication journey into actionable communication habits for our professional lives. The final chapter describes the qualities of the humble communicator.

Each of these chapters describes milestones and turning points along the way and presents examples of some of those from my personal experience. Milestones show us how far we have come since the beginning of the journey. The metaphor of the milestone has real practical application. For example, U.S. highway mile markers were first developed by Frank Turner while building of the Alaska Highway during World War II. Highway mile markers replicated the mileposts used in the U.S. Railway system (see Swift, 2012). These physical mileposts allow travelers to measure their progress. Our milestones do the same for us.

Turning points occur when we need to change direction. Sometimes the turning points are obvious, as they have been marked on a map. Often, these turning points come about gradually and show us that what we thought should be our destination is meant for someone else’s journey. I hope you will take this journey with me.

Chapter 1

The Journey

While the mountaintop might be our destination, it is not where our journey begins. In fact, where an individual's journey begins has been and continues to be debated among scholars, theologians, philosophers, and others interested in points along the way. Milestones help us to delineate traces along the path, and for most of us, the critical milestone for the beginning of our journey is birth.

Our journey involves communication with other people. As John Donne (born ca. 1571) once wrote, "No man is an island, entire of itself" (1624/2011, p. 108). We interact with others, and so our journey is a communicative one.

This chapter will cover the basic characteristics of our development from our first milestones to our current locations, including presenting language, social, relational, and moral development as transactional, communicative processes.

What is meant by "communication journey?" How would you describe your development from childhood as a journey? What are some milestones that define who you are?

Introduction

"We travel the same highways, read the same books, speak the same language, yet our experiences are different" (Keller, 1908/2009, p. 5).

We begin our communication journey early in life. Some models describe the start of the journey at birth, while other models consider development to begin in the womb during the early stages of communication organ development, such as that of the cochlea (elements of the ear). According to Freud (1916), "Important biological analogies have taught us that the psychic development of the individual is a short repetition of the course of the development of the race" (p. 60). Regardless of the fine arguments about the actual starting point, the journey begins.

Our experience starts with rich data. Human evolution over the eons has assisted in the development of multiple pathways for accessing that data through our many senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. As Kubler-Ross and Kessler (2000) noted, "We're put here on Earth to learn our own lessons. No one can tell you what your lessons are; it is part of your personal journey to discover them" (p. 4). We've developed

to interact with our environment through those same organs used to deal with incoming data. In fact, the process of communication requires simultaneous access to and manipulation of these multiple pathways.

But to begin our investigation of the communication journey, it will be helpful to take a systematic approach, breaking down the elements, the milestones, and the turning points we pass along the way. To this end, we will examine some of what we know about language, social, relational, and moral development. From a communication perspective, these pathways of development do not occur independently of one another, nor do they occur in a vacuum. Rather, these developments occur in transaction with others.

Language development

Before we can be social beings, we need the tools to interact. The tools we have at our disposal include nonverbal, preverbal, and verbal communication. According to Mehrabian (1971), the majority of the emotional meaning of a message is carried nonverbally. However, the verbal message conveys ideas. Developmentally, nonverbal communication precedes verbal communication. It is this developmental journey to communication that makes us human.

Scholarship in the development of language is extensive and has been approached in many disciplines, including psychology, anthropology, education, medicine, linguistics, and communication, with considerable consensus in the research literature. According to that research, most children speak in observable ways that demonstrate language developmental milestones by age, as listed below (adapted from Kennison, 2014; Brown, 1973; Mayo Clinic, n.d.; and Pro-Ed, 1999):

- Coos (2 months)
- Babbles (4 months)
- Makes preverbal vocalizations (6 months)
- Tries imitating sounds of others, utters first word, understands simple instructions (1 year)
- Utters multiple words, recognizes names of others, utilizes 10-word vocabulary (18 months)
- Uses simple 2-word phrases, recognizes intonation (2 years)
- Constructs complex sentences, identifies body parts, utilizes 400 plus-word vocabulary (3 years)

- Tells stories, utilizes 1,000 plus-word vocabulary (4 years)
- Uses past tense correctly, utilizes 1,500-word vocabulary (5 years)

Even prior to birth, the journey of language development begins. Moore and Linthicum (2007) described how the human auditory system develops from early embryonic stages through adolescence. According to these authors, during the embryonic period, the cochlea and cochlear nerve are developed, with the first two full turns of the cochlear duct having been developed by the eighth fetal week. The cochlear structure converts sound into electro-chemical impulses within the brain that allow for verbal communication among humans. This may be the first milestone, though self-awareness of this milestone is questionable.

We talk. We talk with purpose with another person. The purpose is to express thoughts that derive from our sense experience. According to Bowen (1998), language is a symbolization of thought that allows individuals to understand what is said and to express wants and needs. However, children vary considerably in rate at meeting speech and language milestones (Bowen, 1998). Iverson (2010) posited that during the first eighteen months of life, children develop motor skills as precursors to language acquisition, in which changes in children's experiences between themselves and objects allow children to understand symbolic representations necessary in language. Crawling, a form of movement, allows for the possibility of understanding the difference between here and there.

Among two-year-olds, the ability to process audiovisual input, the ability to articulate (oro-motor skills), and the ability to derive rules from verbal communication all correlate highly with the ability to correctly interpret phonemes (Dodd & McIntosh, 2010). Similarly, Dromi and Zaidman-Zait (2010) found that toddlers engaged in prelinguistic behaviors, particularly those that involved interaction with adults, in ways that were highly correlated with the outset of speech. Specifically, the authors found that beginning in the second year of life, referential gestures and conventional words emerge at the same time (Dromi & Zaidman-Zait, 2010). Storkel (2009) found that for children between the ages of sixteen months and thirty months, the effect of phonemes was constant across age; however, the effect of lexicon and semantics changed.

This journey toward language development is not traveled alone. Communication has a purpose that at its basic level requires a dyad. At the beginning of the journey, this dyad is typically developed between the child and an adult caregiver, most often a parent. Henderson and Sabbagh (2010) observed that when parents interacted with children between two and four years old, the parents provided pragmatic cues to assist

children learning about unknown objects, including cues such as upward intonation and pauses to address uncertainty that required negotiation for meaning.

The quantity and diversity of language use among mothers in child-directed speech positively influences children's language and cognitive growth (Song et al., 2014). Subsequently, children's use of more complex language influences mothers' adaptation of speech to accommodate their children's language growth (Song et al., 2014). The fact that mothers are influenced along with their children in this exchange demonstrates that the language development is a journey of at least two people. That is, communication is transactional (more on this below).

Rowe (2008) found that child-directed speech from adults to toddlers around the age of two and a half years strongly influences vocabulary skill among those children at three and a half years old. Although they are traveling together, adult caregivers have the wheel. For example, according to Majorano et al. (2012), parental lexical complexity strongly influences later child language development and is more important than the amount of child-directed speech. Adult caregivers' behavior toward the child influences how he or she sees the world during this journey. How adult caregivers respond to children and their level of responsiveness is positively related to a child's early comprehension skills (Paavola-Routsalainen et al., 2018).

Children see and hear what their caregivers do and begin to imitate these behaviors. Zamuner and Thiessen (2018) found that young children were more likely to imitate new words as they aged but were also more likely to imitate words that sounded similar to words they had already learned. According to Capone and McGregor (2004), young infants repeat behaviors that previously resulted in gaining adult attention, thus showing intentionality of communication, and this is one of the first forms of preverbal, nonverbal behaviors. An example of a prelinguistic gestural milestone may be pointing. Other prelinguistic gestures may include object manipulation such as grabbing and pulling. Capone and McGregor (2004) argued that gestures predict language milestones, facilitate language development, and complement spoken language functions.

Language development parallels other forms of development. As noted above, this development only occurs within the context of a relationship with another, most notably an adult caregiver. However, we meet people along the way who each have their unique way of communicating. These experiences build the person as we take in new words and actions.

Social development

Language development does not occur without interaction with others. As on the individual's journey, like a parallel road, language development progresses along with social development, which begins at an early stage.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists milestones for social and emotional development for children for the first five years of life. These social and emotional milestones between ages two months and five years include the following (adapted from CDC, 2020):

- Begins to smile at people and orients toward adult caregiver (2 months)
- Smiles spontaneously, likes to play with others, and imitates others' behaviors (4 months)
- Recognizes familiar faces and responds to others' emotions (6 months)
- Attaches to familiar adults, avoids unfamiliar adults, and has favorite toys (9 months)
- Cries when familiar adult leaves, shows fear, repeats behaviors for attention (1 year)
- Shows affection with familiar others, hands toys to others as play, points (18 months)
- Copies others, enjoys peer interaction, shows independence and defiance (2 years)
- Shows concern for a crying friend, separates from caregivers, takes turns (3 years)
- Prefers playing with peers, cooperates, enjoys make-believe (4 years)
- Wants to please friends, is aware of gender, is likely to agree with rules (5 years)

Infants have a bias towards social interaction and are observed to orient toward stimuli of facial expressions of others, including direct eye gaze and head angle (Beauchamp & Anderson, 2010). To be sure, infants' first interactions are likely with adult caregivers. However, Apolloni and Cooke (1975) suggested that infant and toddler peer interaction may help assist overall social and behavioral development.

The journey begins with the infant and adult caregiver dyad. According to Malik and Marwaha (2020), the social-emotional development of children begins with their attachment and bonding with adult caregivers. Fonagy et al. (2007) argued that the quality of the attachment between infant and caregiver positively influences the child's social and emotional development. However, from the very beginning, infants communicate their emotions to the most present and available listener. Three distinctly observable emotions, derived from facial expressions, exist from birth: anger, happiness, and fear (Malik & Marwaha, 2020). As the child grows, emotional

expressions develop and communicate a wider range of feelings. These expressions serve a communication function and also demonstrate developmental stages. Lewis and Granic (2010) argued that emotional development in children “swings like a pendulum between periods of greater resilience, stability, and self-reliance and periods of greater vulnerability, sensitivity, and dependence” (p. 180). These developmental stages are not universal but rather emerge from experience with the local environment (Ferrari & Vuletic, 2010). Like traveling through different locales, these differing experiences influence transitions through stages.

Lewis and Granic (2010) designated the short period of development between two and a half months and four and a half months as the period of interpersonal attention, as infants first gain a sense of other people, followed by a period of increasing autonomy. The authors argued that the “most profound developmental change” occurs between infancy and early childhood, around eighteen months, in which the child begins to negotiate social relationships with others. Between forty-two and forty-eight months, children begin to understand that others have their own thoughts and feelings (Lewis & Granic, 2010).

Further along the journey, the local environment changes, as do the functions and outcomes of social and emotional development. Durlak et al. (2010) noted that children and adolescents benefit in self-perception, positive social behaviors, and academic achievement when involved in after-school programs that emphasize sequenced, active, focused, and explicit skill training. According to Allen et al. (2014), adolescents (aged thirteen to fifteen years) who establish themselves as autonomous yet good peer companions have more stable adult relationships involving close friendship competence and positive relatedness in romantic relationships.

Each of these experiences influence who we become. However, these changes do not occur outside relationships with others, and these relationships are created through communication. As Beauchamp and Anderson (2010) stated, “Communication provides the basis by which we experience thought, intentions, and information and thus determines the quality of our social relationships” (p. 49).

Relational development

As with language and social development, relational development does not occur without interaction with others. Communication scholars have observed that communication is required to develop, maintain, and grow relationships. Communication scholars have approached relationship development as a process that involves at least

two people but, in most cases, involves a community of language sharers. The journey is not taken alone. It is a shared road trip.

Interpersonal communication scholarship has primarily focused on the development of adult romantic relationships (see Knapp, 1978; Duck, 1986) and adult friendships (Rawlins, 1992; Duck & Spencer, 1972; Duck, 1973). To be sure, individuals develop other types of relationships before adulthood, including relationships with adult caregivers (e.g., parents, grandparents), siblings, teachers, and peers.

Collins et al. (1997) argued that several developmental tasks associated with attachment serve as precursors to the development of romantic relationships. Attachment theory (see Bretherton, 1992; Bowlby, 1958; Ainsworth, 1969) posits that individuals pattern their relational development throughout their life span on the qualities of attachment with their primary caregivers from infancy. Attachment occurs in stages, beginning with the preattachment stage from birth to three months of age—when infants do not show preference for any particular caregiver—to when infants show indiscriminate preferences toward others, to when they discriminate toward one particular individual caregiver and have multiple attachments to primary and secondary caregivers. Individuals develop attachment styles (secure and insecure) based on their interactions with caregivers. Insecure attachment styles derive from anxious, avoidant, or fearful relational patterns (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2010). Yet, attachment itself does not necessarily fully predict adult romantic relational development. As Blum (2004) argued, separateness is a complement to attachment.

Relational development for children, adolescents, and adults follows a similar pattern as social and emotional development. The relational developmental milestones presuming secure attachment in most individuals include the following (adapted from Collins et al., 1997; State of Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, n.d.; and Rauer et al., 2013):

- Patterns emotional responses with primary adult caregiver (0 to 2 years)
- Participates actively and plays with peers (2 to 5 years)
- Begins forming deeper peer relationships and friendships (5 to 12 years)
- Increases importance of friendships, peer relationships, and dating (13 to 17 years)
- Varies frequency and duration of romantic relationships (18 to 25 years)

Rauer et al. (2013) argued that patterns of early relational development with parents and peers influence adult romantic relational outcomes. Given that developmentally, friendships occur before romantic relationships, friendship developmental patterns may anticipate later relational development. Rawlins (1992)

generated a model for developmental stages of friendships, including: (a) role-limited interaction, (b) friendly relations, (c) moves toward friendship, (d) nascent friendship, (e) stabilized friendship, and (f) waning friendship.

Prior work by communication scholars led to the creation of developmental models for romantic relationships, primarily through the works of Knapp (1978) and Duck (1986). Both Knapp and Duck examined relationship development and dissolution. Most familiar to students of communication are Knapp's (1978) stages of relationship development (initiating, experimenting, intensifying, integrating, and bonding) and dissolution (differentiating, circumscribing, stagnating, avoiding, termination). Duck (1986) added a posttermination "grave dressing" phase in which individuals overcome the grief of relationship loss and move on.

Each of these stages can be viewed as milestones in a relationship. Milestones come about in the journey of communication between members of a dyad. According to Rogers (2004), communication is "a formative process by which system members reciprocally define self in relation to other and simultaneously shape the ongoing nature of their relationship" (p. 160). Although Knapp's and Duck's stage models were premised on adult (romantic) relationships, the principle of relational development starts and continues over the life span of the individual. For example, McHugh et al. (2004) found a predictable pattern of increased accuracy in perspective-taking between individuals from five years old to adulthood. This finding suggests a correlation between social/emotional development and relational development over the life span.

In adulthood, these patterns are more apparent. Avtgis et al. (1998) tested Knapp's stages and found cognitive, affective, and behavioral components to each of the five stages of relational development (as well as the five stages of dissolution). In particular, they found similarities in what people say, feel, and do when initiating relationships between study subjects, as well as during the other stages. These findings support other research in the fields of psychology and social psychology on relational development.

According to Johnson et al. (2003), casual, close, and best friends all tend to relate turning points to spending time together on shared activities, and that amount of time spent together was related to their definitions of closeness. The authors also found that friends move between development and deterioration/dissolution in their relationships in patterns that are not necessarily linear, as predicted in serial development theories such as Knapp's model. In a follow-up study, Johnson et al. (2004) found that for friends who have terminated their relationships, turning points were associated with events leading to closeness and events leading to decreases in closeness.

Traveling together can lead to closeness or distance in the relationship. According to Fitzpatrick and Best (1979), couples who are in agreement about how they define the relationship are more likely to be more cohesive and in agreement about relational issues compared to other couples. If they agree on where to turn, they are more likely to want to continue to travel together. Baxter and Pittman (2001) described shared turning points in personal relationships as focused primarily on quality time, passion, get-to-know time, and stories that demonstrate relational exclusivity. They found a positive correlation between the proportion of agreed-upon relational turning points in couples' relationships and relational satisfaction.

When the journey does not go as planned for one or both members of a relationship, they may choose to go their separate ways or work to come back together. According to Patterson and O'Hair (1992), individuals use multiple strategies to reconcile relationships that have deteriorated or terminated, including persistent messaging, mutual interaction, and third-party mediation. These choices are required by both members, assuming they have similar goals.

Moral development

Moral development occurs in stages within the confines of relationships. According to Bergman (2002), the earliest work on the subject of moral development began with Jean Piaget. In Piaget's view, peer interaction among children "leads children to construct modes of thinking based on sympathy, mutuality, and recognition of reciprocal rights and duties" (Bergman, 2002, p. 105). However, Bergman argued that Piaget and later psychologists who built upon that theory—most notably, Kohlberg—did not resolve whether moral thinking drives action or action drives moral thinking. Regardless, in the twentieth century, much work has been done to create and revise a theory of moral development. The most widely known stages of moral development include the following (Kohlberg, 1976):

- Avoidance of punishment (preconventional—egocentrism)
- Indulgence of self-interests (preconventional—individualism)
- Desire to maintain rules for mutual benefit with related others (conventional—mutualism)
- Differentiation of social expectation from individual interests (conventional—social structures)

- Consideration of values and rights prior to social attachments (postconventional—social contracts)
- Belief in and commitment to universal ethical principles (postconventional—universal principles)

Generally, individuals develop through experiencing stages of morality relative to age and other aspects of development: language, social, and relational. However, such development does not necessarily follow a linear pattern, nor does it undoubtedly conclude with the highest stage for all individuals. Within the confines of a shared journey, individuals may make choices based upon their own sense of identity or in reference to relational goals. As part of that journey, individuals may consider how “issues of fairness, justice, and rights permeate social relationships and result in constant struggle, conflicts, social opposition, and moral resistance” (Turiel, 2008, p. 36).

In terms of individual moral development, Bergman (2002) distinguished between two schools of thought: (a) morality as a function of adherence to external principles, and (b) morality as a function of adherence to self-identity. Bergman concluded that moral development is based on the motivation of the individual. That motivation may change over time and due to contexts, including the relational contexts in which the individual lives.

Experimental results support the theory that moral development progresses linearly through stages and that exposure to reasoning that is one to two stages above an individual’s current stage of moral development tends to influence positive growth (Walker, 1982). However, Dawson (2002) demonstrated that the relationship between age and moral development follows an arc, with development decreasing as age increases, but that the relationship between education and moral development is linear: as individuals’ educational attainment increases, their ability to reason in a moral fashion also increases. Interestingly, Dawson (2002) also found that adults and children progress through stages of moral development in similar fashion but that higher stages of moral development occur in adulthood.

Schmidt et al. (2017) demonstrated that around the age of nine years, children begin to differentiate moral objective standards with cultural expectations. These findings were distinct from four- and six-year-olds, who were significantly more likely to hold objectivist notions of right and wrong. At later ages, the context changes with the development of new friendships. Hart and Carlo (2005) posited that moral development in adolescence is influenced by family and peer relationships as well as by biological

changes and that adolescents have more opportunities to be agents of change in their social roles and responsibilities.

Taking the journey with others is not the only influence for moral development. Blasi (1983) theorized that self-consistency is the primary factor that motivates the individual to move from moral reasoning to moral action. Individuals may develop from moral understanding to moral identity in a somewhat unconscious way, based on pursuing important individual goals that do not require rational thought about moral motivations (Colby, 2002). Indeed, Colby (2002) argued that moral self-identity influences moral understanding and that moral development “requires the development of both moral understanding and moral identity” (p. 134). However, Nucci (2002) suggested that self-consistency is insufficient to guide moral action and that self-reflection may vary considerably from individual to individual.

As Bergman (2002) argued, self-identity may be the strongest influence for moral development. Pohling et al. (2018) found that positive moral emotions influence the development of a moral self-identity. They also found that this relationship can create an upward spiral in moral development. This self-identity may in turn influence choices in relational development. For example, Jennings et al. (2015) argued that moral self-identity can be depleted and replenished with active self-regulation, which derives from subjective experiences of authenticity, consistency, and excitement. These subjective experiences happen within the context of shared relational journeys.

Communication as Transaction

Relationships are transactional. The earliest communication theories acknowledged the existence of two people at minimum in a communication interaction, albeit one serving as speaker and the other as audience (listener; see Ptah-hotep, born ca. 3,550 BCE, 1918, pp. 42-43). Yet communication is not unidirectional, as the speaker-listener dyad might imply. Indeed, the current Transactional Model of Communication (see Barnlund, 2008) ascribes simultaneous roles of speaker and listener to both members of a dyad.

The preceding sections described current models of development (language, social, relational, and moral) as occurring within the context of relationships, albeit the focus of those models has been on the development of the individual within those relationships from childhood to adulthood. These developmental models assume that the individual moves through a process of separation/individuation in order to achieve independence from an “other” (Duvall, 1967; Becvar & Becvar, 1993; cited in LeBlanc, 2001). As LeBlanc (2000) demonstrated, developmental influence is bidirectional—that

is, children can influence the development of their parents just as parents influence the development of their children. This observation holds true in other types of relationships too, including relationships between equals. To be sure, development is a journey for everyone.

One of the markers of transaction is the negotiation of boundaries. Boundaries define a system separate from other systems. Watzlawick et al. (1967) defined family, and by extension all human relationships, as an interactional system. The authors proposed their idea based upon Hall and Fagen's (1956) application of General Systems Theory (von Bertalanffy, 1950; cited in Watzlawick et al., 1967). Boundaries thus serve as mechanisms for determining membership in a relationship.

Boundaries are the set of symbolic rules or expectations "which specify the rights, obligations, possessions, and space of individuals" within a group (Vuchinich, 1984, p. 219). These boundaries are negotiated between individuals in a system. Negotiation is transactional. As the individual develops language and social, relational, and moral expectations, the need for boundary negotiation increases. Even in stable relationships, conflict often brings about the need to renegotiate boundaries.

In terms of milestones, significant changes in the permeability of boundaries may be viewed by one or more individuals within a transactional system. Other changes, including separation, such as when a child moves away to college, can be viewed by relational members as milestones. Conflicts may also bring about changes to the definition of the relationship by one or more members. These types of changes can be viewed as "turning points." These metaphors for relationship changes envisage a journey.

An Early Personal Milestone

One of my earliest memories involves traveling with my family to Guatemala when I was six years old. My father felt a strong need to do something meaningful with his life and began a conversation that would become both transformative and significant in his life and the life of his family. As the eldest of nine children, he followed in the footsteps of his father and worked as a dentist in the family business. Yet, he longed to do more.

As it so happened, my grandfather had moved his family to North Baton Rouge to open his dental practice among the Exxon Refinery workers when my father was still in middle school. The practice was catty-corner from St. Gerard Majella Catholic Church and School. The parish was staffed by the Redemptorist fathers

(Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, C.Ss.R.), and the schools, which included an elementary school named St. Gerard and Redemptorist Junior and Senior High Schools, were staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame (S.S.N.D.). The sisters and fathers were also patients at my grandfather's practice.

My father started working alongside his father in North Baton Rouge shortly before I was born (I was the fifth child of seven). At some point around 1970, my father started having conversations with the priests and sisters about wanting to do something meaningful when the topic of missionary work was broached (Hammack, 1971). The Diocese of Baton Rouge sponsored a mission in the Western Highlands of Guatemala among the K'iche' and Kaqchikel Maya, and there was some interest in providing health care to the people of the region around Tecpán. They asked if my father would be interested in starting a dental clinic in a small village in the mountains of Guatemala.

In February of 1971, my parents gathered their children to tell us that they would be traveling to Guatemala to survey the location around the Mission de Santa Apolonia. They left us seven children in the care of the school sisters for two weeks and began an odyssey that would soon involve us all. Upon returning, they decided that the work could be accomplished with children in tow beginning May of that year. We would leave a few weeks before the end of our school year and travel overland by van, following Fr. Eugene Engels in a second van. I distinctly remember the seven-day family trip through Louisiana, Texas, and Mexico and into Guatemala.

Many of these memories are enhanced by photographs and slides, newspaper clippings, and my father's daily diary of the trip (Abington, 1971). Recently, upon my father's passing (my mother passed away in 1994), us siblings got together and reminisced about my father and his legacy, including this trip to Santa Apolonia. We were fortunate in that he kept all of his notes and slides. My sisters, particularly my oldest sister Stephanie, who was thirteen at the time, have memories of their own that they shared about our trip during our time of grieving.

Yet despite my young age, I have memories of my own of our journey to Guatemala that could not have been directly influenced by my siblings or the notes from my father. I had two friends in Santa Apolonia, Shronnie and Coca-Cola. No one seems to know what Coca-Cola's real name was, but my siblings definitely remember the three of us playing together and exploring the village and surroundings.

I also remember Amanda and her assistant, Angelina, who worked for the mission and took care of us children when my mother and father went to run errands. One day, Angelina asked Shronnie, Coca-Cola, and me if we wanted to see where

she lived. We were excited to visit her house, and my mother and father were permissive. The four of us walked down the dirt street from the mission to see where Angelina and her five siblings and parents lived. Her house was a ten-foot circular grass hut with a dirt floor. I remember being amazed at the time, although I was perhaps too young to understand the meaning of poverty.

That particular memory has stuck with me my entire life. The meaning of that memory has taken a lifetime to understand. What was implanted in my mind a little earlier in life was the understanding that the memory was an important milestone in my journey. For certain, the meaning of the experience is strongly influenced by the outlook on life and its purpose presented to me by my parents and relationally important others.

This chapter has surveyed the developmental journey of individuals over one's life span, from birth to adulthood. The next chapter will focus more specifically on the discovery of self through self-awareness. While theories of human development are established by looking at milestones along the journey from the outside, self-awareness is an internal journey. That self-awareness makes the journey worthwhile.

Conclusion

Our journey of development begins before birth, with the development of organs for communicating, but continues for the rest of our lives. We are always growing.

In terms of milestones, development happens in language and in social and relational contexts. Our ability to communicate through language allows us to participate in the world around us. However, that environment also allows us to create new language specific to our relationships.

This chapter examined more closely the journey of language, social, relational, and moral development. The next chapter will focus more specifically on self-awareness through the development of self-concept and self-identity.

Chapter 2

Self-Awareness

Our journey begins with the earliest stages of development and continues through discovery of self. Yet this discovery of self is not a destination but a process of learning that continues and is unending. Human development may include language, social, relational, and moral roads. But these roads have little meaning without some goal of fulfillment. Self-awareness at first may seem like a goal in itself. Self-awareness is only part of the journey that runs parallel to our development.

This chapter describes the processes by which we develop self-awareness and the steps that can be taken to enhance self-awareness.

How do we become self-aware? How does self-awareness affect the development of identity? How does our identity influence where our journey leads?

Introduction

“The soul is undiscovered, though explored forever to a depth beyond report”
(Heraclitus, 2001, p. 45).

Even ancient philosophers (Heraclitus of Ephesus, born ca. 535, BCE) recognized that self-knowing or self-awareness was an unending journey of discovery. Some scholars believe that human beings are the only species that can view themselves in reference to their past, present, and future. Perhaps other species can do the same, but we have been unable to this date to find unassailable evidence to support this idea. Certainly, we do reference ourselves through the act of talking (or writing) about it.

In the previous chapter (chapter 1), we examined the multiple parallel paths of human development, which allow for and serve as foundations for preawareness of self and others. At the earliest stages, these paths move from having more passive engagement with the world around us to engaging in ways that are active, interactive, and transactive. The active level implies will to act, whereas the transactive level implies strategy in selecting a multitude of possible actions. Strategy for transaction requires developing knowledge of self and others. Our current journey takes us to the examination of the development of self-awareness and the consequences of that knowledge.

To this end, we will examine the development of self-awareness and self-identity more systematically and examine the effects of self-awareness on our interactions with others. Finally, we will examine practices for enhancing self-awareness.

Development of Self-awareness

Humans, like many other animals, are gifted with the ability to sense the world around them through multiple streams of input. For most, we experience the world through sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. These senses serve as the means by which we develop our knowledge of the world (Hume, 1739/2017). Use of these senses begins as soon as they are formed. However, newborns may not yet possess the capability to make sense of the data they collect through their senses. The journey has just begun, but the structures are in place to start making sense of it. According to Whitebread and Neale (2020), “Implicit, nonconscious metacognitive processes begin to emerge in young children” (p. 10). Once individuals receive sense data (see chapter 4), they “preconsciously” embed ideas and feelings into the data. The embedded content influences cognitive processes involved in self-awareness (Sridharan, 2016).

Young children are guided in the development of sense-making. Parent and peer socialization have the greatest impact on critical consciousness (Heberle et al., 2020). That early socialization may occur using all the senses. However, affective touch serves a fundamental role in infants’ development of self-awareness (Della Longa et al., 2020). According to Southgate (2020), infants spend the majority of their time in the first few months of life observing others, which may compete with the development of self-awareness. Similarly, Rochat (2021) found that infants first demonstrate self-awareness through the act of deliberate conformity with others around fourteen months of age and continue demonstrating self-awareness through a strong aversion to inequity around the age of five.

According to Lewis (2003), at around eighteen months, children develop a precursor to self-consciousness called the “idea of me.” This developing idea of “me” provides the foundation for developing social and emotional connections with others. Researchers have observed that toddlers between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four months are sensitive and respond to the evaluative observation of others with impression management behaviors (Botto & Rochat, 2018). The active attempts at impression management imply some level of self-awareness. Kärtner et al. (2020) found that awareness of self and others develops universally in young children across cultures. The sense of self in children arrives in concert with social, relational, and moral

development (see chapter 1). According to Mata-McMahon et al. (2020), children develop a spiritual self through building connections, practicing virtue, and making meaning, which can be derived from self-awareness and mindfulness of their inner feelings.

As children age, the journey of exploration and discovery of self continues as knowledge of the world around them grows. For adolescents in particular, “the relationship between cognitive ability and self-awareness strengthen[s] with development” (Demetriou et al., 2020, p. 9). That development may take different routes according to the environment. According to Anderson and Haney (2020), adolescents who have strong, positive self-beliefs in creative ability are more likely to act upon those beliefs, and these positive self-beliefs are highly influenced by modeling and encouragement, especially from teachers. The authors suggest that intentionality among educators to foster creative thinking has an overall positive impact on adolescents’ self-belief and ability.

However, development can take a detour in less-than-optimal environments. In less supportive environments, children and adolescents may choose strategies that are not beneficial to long-term development. For example, adolescents may react strongly to requests for behavioral changes and demonstrate maladaptive biopsychosocial development (Moreira et al., 2021). Nurture has a strong effect. On the other hand, in optimal environments, adolescents may develop in more positive ways. According to Salavera and Usán (2020), among adolescents, emotional intelligence is related to living a full life with purpose. As such, emotional intelligence requires awareness of self and others and has a direct impact on personal self-development.

Supportive environments are found to be beneficial for the entire human life cycle. For example, cognitive coaching and reflection support development of self-awareness in adults (Brinkmann et al., 2021). Continued self-discovery through the process of self-awareness is what allows for the fulfillment of goals.

Self-awareness may be a goal in itself for our life journey. “Self-awareness consists of a range of components, which can be developed through focus, evaluation and feedback, and provides an individual with an awareness of their internal state (emotions, cognitions, physiological responses), that drives their behaviors (beliefs, values and motivations) and an awareness of how this impacts and influences others” (Carden et al., 2022, p. 25). Self-awareness involves mirror self-recognition and theory of mind (right brain) and self-description and inner speech (left brain) processes (Morin, 2011). According to Rasheed et al. (2020), self-awareness involves at least four aspects: (a) personal awareness (or ability to examine personal thoughts and feelings), (b) professional awareness (or ability to understand self in reference to professional

obligations), (c) contextual awareness (or ability to understand self within context of others), and (d) conscientious awareness (or ability to understand right from wrong).

Self-awareness involves a process of thinking about the factors that make up the person. That particular thinking process involves self-reflection. Self-reflection on one's thoughts follows the same processes as reflecting on the thoughts of others (Happé, 2003). Self-reflection is a mindful, intentional activity. According to Sperry (2018), the three components of mindfulness are awareness (both single-focus and open awareness), present experience, and acceptance of reality (both internal and external). Choices related to exposure in differing environments thus can influence self-awareness. Specifically, immersion in the culture of others increases self- and other awareness (James & Al-Kofahy, 2020). According to Onosu (2021), individuals who immerse themselves in other cultures become aware of the need to re-evaluate their own perspectives, including their views of themselves.

Self-awareness effects other aspects of individual development. For example, self-awareness is positively related to self-worth and self-compassion (Bosacki et al., 2020). As well, self-awareness may be one of the components of spirituality (Makkar & Singh, 2021). Other changes to our environment may also have significant effects on our self-awareness. As individuals present themselves on social media, feedback from others increases, providing more input for self-awareness. According to Zlotnik and Vansintjan (2020), increases in the storage of information outside the human brain has led to significant change in human development and consequently individual self-awareness.

Self-concept and Self-identity

Self-awareness assists us in developing an “idea of me,” or a self-concept. According to Baumeister (2019), self-concept is a mental representation of the self. “Owning” the self is the process by which individuals respond to situations in reference to thoughtful consideration of their own morality and autonomy (Baumeister, 2019). A self-concept is developed during adolescence around physical, mental, moral, emotional, spiritual, sexual, and social dimensions (Amrutha & Vijayalaxmi, 2019). Relatedly, adolescents develop self-esteem within the context of family and social dynamics and gender (Zhubanazarova et al., 2020). For adults, self-concept more fully develops with achieved levels of education (Atta Ch et al., 2011). A well-developed self-concept is significantly and positively correlated with happiness (Amrutha & Vijayalaxmi, 2019).

Self-concept and self-identity are distinct but related constructs. Where self-concept is based on how others see us, identity is defined by how we choose to act towards others (Zhou, 2015). Our identity is infused with all that composes who we are, although we may choose to only show parts of our identity depending on the audience. Self-identity is a social-cognitive structure that meets the individual needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Bushman & Huesmann, 2020). According to Drummond (2021), the construct of self-identity is based upon intentional self-awareness. Individuals develop a sense of self through observation of the consequences of their own actions (Campbell et al., 2002). Definitions of the self can be derived from both subjective experience and the objective observation of others (Debiec & LeDoux, 2003). The process of developing self-identity involves negotiating the space of meaning shared with others (Crowell, 2021). According to Thibault (2018), self-communication, or hearing one's own voice while talking, allows the individual to define self within the relational context of others.

Ruesch and Bateson (1951) first described the individual as developing within the context of cultural and social groups and interpersonal relationships, as well as intrapersonal (psychological) processes. Later authors described this as narrative identity processing (see Pals, 2006; McAdams & McLean, 2013). According to Pals (2006), narrative identity processing of difficult life experiences strongly influences one's development of self and movement toward happiness and satisfaction in later life: "Identity in adulthood takes the shape of a coherent narrative or life story that integrates interpretations of the past with the present self and provides life with meaning and purpose" (Pals, 2006, p. 1080). Put another way, "We are the sum of many stories" (Cunningham & Mills, 2020, p. 305).

We define our identity as "self." The self is composed of a plurality of factors, including episodic memories, summary representations, knowledge about facts of experience, experience of the continuity of time, personal agency and ownership, self-reflection, and the physical and emotional self (Klein, 2012). Personal identity is achieved through active self-awareness (Jacobs, 2021). Developing personal identity is part of the learning process, which includes motivation and sense making (Ligorio, 2010; see also, Lu, 2021).

A sense of sameness of self over time is a function of nonanalytical, prereflective feelings (Klein, 2014). However, according to Rubianes et al. (2021), brain imaging demonstrates a coherent continuity of self-identity over the life span of postadolescent individuals. We may feel like the same person, but we change over time. We make sense of our identity through self-reflection. Critical self-reflection reveals change in our meaning of self over time (Klein, 2014). According to Lim et al. (2008), the relationship

between culture and consistency in self-concept and identity may be a function of worldview. We may experience these changes as milestones or turning points.

Individuals internalize an evolving life story that is influenced by broad cultural contexts in which the individual is situated (McAdams & McLean, 2013). The life story becomes the basis for constructed self-identities. A specific self-identity is constructed within the context of cultural factors, including place and relationships (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Cultural identity highly influences individuals' self-perceptions in relation to others who are not from the same culture (Winchester, 2009). However, "self" can only be understood by taking both first- and third-person perspectives (Facco et al., 2019). According to Maslova et al. (2021), self-identity is not a single thing developed by an individual, but a constructed and changeable, multi-faceted thing influenced by social pressures.

Self-identity is a perception not just of who we are but also of what we do. The self is a combination of private, individual, and social person, as well as both knowledge and action of that person (Wu, 2017). The self is defined through a conglomeration of self-attributes derived from idiosyncratic experiences (Strawinska, 2013), and self-identity accrues from our own embodied agency (Marratto, 2021). According to McAdams (2013), the self develops over time through three superimposed layers, from actor (traits and roles) to agent (goals and values) to author (of life narratives). The individual thus defines self in the end through stories he or she tells about him or herself. Modern identity development now occurs in the digital space with "master versus alternative narratives" (Granic et al., 2020, p. 215).

Self-construal is a process by which an individual defines self through interaction between self-agency and affordances given by others and their social and cultural memberships (Voyer & Franks, 2014). According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), individuals may define self as either independent of others (a more Western cultural perspective) or interdependent with others (a more Eastern cultural perspective). According to the authors, "For the interdependent self, others are included *within* the boundaries of the self because relations with others in specific contexts are the defining features of the self" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, pp. 245-246). The notion of self as an individual seeking to satisfy or maintain desires is a Western notion, whereas in Eastern traditions, the goal of the individual is to achieve a nonself state, or the state of selflessness (Shiah, 2016).

Regardless of these multifaceted views of self-concept and self-identity, individuals do take an active role in their development. Self-reflection and self-monitoring allow the individual to assess responses to others by attending to and integrating both internal and external data (Drigas & Mitsea, 2020). Pride in

accomplishments can assist us in making inferences about our self-concept or identity and progress toward our goals (Salerno et al., 2015). Self-awareness of our actions within the context of our identity can elicit effects on our well-being.

Effects of Self-awareness

According to Wang et al. (2021), individuals develop a life purpose through three distinct but complementary pathways: (a) active self-exploration, (b) life transitions or milestones, and (c) reactions to others and the social or cultural environment. This life purpose gives individuals meaning. Self-reflection on one's daily actions in reference to that life purpose can affect mental states. More specifically, mental health is influenced by self-knowledge (Ghorbani et al., 2010). The negative consequences of lack of self-knowledge include low emotional well-being (Wilson, 2009). Wilson (2009) recommends three pathways for gaining self-knowledge: (a) observing our own behavior, (b) seeking the perspective of others, and (c) learning about findings of social science related to ourselves.

Self-awareness and considering the other (see chapter 5) are important factors in developing empathy and unconditional positive regard (Brooks et al., 2022). According to Madden (2020), self-awareness enables us to examine our "own beliefs and perspectives in context and be comfortable with the uncertainty of a changing and growing identity" (p. 127). Self-awareness is a key personal and professional skill for teachers (Madden, 2020) and other leaders to have (Corriveau, 2020). According to Crook et al. (2020), self-awareness allows leaders to be change agents, as it models openness and trust.

Self-awareness is also a key factor in emotional intelligence. According to Perry et al. (2020), emotional intelligence includes competency in empathy, emotional regulation, reflective ability, self-awareness, and psychological flexibility, which in turn enhances resilience. Empathy requires incorporating a worldview beyond oneself and one's own responses to interaction cues (Hatala & Caal, 2020).

Interpersonal communication is also positively influenced by self-awareness. Communication competence is the knowledge of and ability to use appropriate communication patterns in various contexts (Cooley & Roach, 1984). Awareness of one's own communication behaviors and patterns is an important factor in developing communication competence. According to Arroyo and Segrin (2011), self-perceptions of communication competence influence relational commitment and satisfaction among friends.

An individual's perception of his or her own communication competence may also influence his or her reactions to others. For example, an individual's confidence in how he or she presents self to others is negatively related to communication apprehension (Watson et al., 1987). As well, individuals tend to respond more assertively when their identity is publicly attacked through criticism of their competence (Miller, 1986). Additionally, one's level of relational development does not increase accuracy in communication (Kopecky & Powers, 2002). It is likely that accuracy is only increased when individuals are self-reflective, critical, and aware of self and others.

Practicing Self-awareness

Knowledge of oneself does not necessarily translate into action. To continue the journey toward growth and self-fulfillment requires intentional and strategic behavior. Professional growth is enhanced through self-awareness (Ivaniuk et al., 2020). Self-reflection and mindfulness (see Langer, 1989) directly influence self-awareness (Lu, 2021). According to Moon (2004), in order to uncover, identify, and confront existing perceptions, the individual should utilize reflection to increase self-awareness.

Self-reflection is an ancient technique utilized in both Eastern and Western cultures. According to Liu and Liu (2021), Confucian self-cultivation theory, as described by Zeng (1872/2015), proposes that the individual's "real" self is developed through intentional and systematic self-reflection, self-blame, self-discipline, and self-encouragement.

These techniques require intentional choice. To a large degree, courage is necessary for increasing self-awareness and professional development (Wood & Lomas, 2021). However, peer support can facilitate self-awareness (Landstad et al., 2020).

The use of reflective exercises and activities in an educational setting increases students' self-awareness, particularly when these activities link learning with real-life scenarios (Ayers et al., 2020). Additionally, Ayers et al. (2020) found that collective reflection increased students' empathy and comfort toward others' perspectives. Self-reflection can take meditative, written, or oral form. According to Kartal and Demir (2021), observing and writing narrative reflections about what was observed contributes significantly to developing self-awareness and critical thinking.

Quiet meditation involving self-reflection also can have beneficial effects. According to Paoletti and Ben-Soussan (2020), intentional silence, both internal and external, can enhance development of a stronger sense of self and agency, including

enhancing empathy. For individuals seeking to enhance their self-awareness, “practicing verbal silence reduces a significant number of the distractions that often accompany verbal expression,” allowing for “an increasingly undisturbed reflective mind [to] become more sensitive, discerning, thoughtful, and reasonable in its assessments and conclusions” (Valle, 2019, p. 247). Meditative silence allows for the development of greater self-awareness and increased health and well-being (Venditti et al., 2020).

Sharing with others one’s own critical self-reflections have been found to have enhanced individual self-knowledge as well as increase relational effectiveness and satisfaction. For example, according to Wong and Vinsky (2021), mindfulness and critical self-reflection can reduce implicit bias. Critical self-reflection can also help the individual achieve a level of authenticity. According to Ladkin (2021), “Achieving authenticity is an ongoing process determined by aligning one’s actions with who one ‘wants to be,’ rather than ‘who one is’” (p. 4).

Social interactions help individuals develop wisdom (Igarashi et al., 2018). As wisdom is analogous to the highest stage in moral development, interactions with others, and in particular mentors, can help the individual achieve higher states of self-fulfillment. Effective mentors develop self-awareness by embracing uncertainty and building trusting relationships with peers (Kraft & Culver, 2021). Additionally, coaching students about how to critically self reflect improves their self-awareness and ability to self-regulate emotions and cognitions, according to Wang and Lu (2020).

In terms of milestones, stages of self-awareness may be likened to stages of moral development (see chapter 1). The individual first becomes aware of others’ physicality and behaviors (but not their thinking), then slowly becomes aware of self, then self in reference to others, the thinking of self (metacognition), then the thinking of others. In these later stages of self-awareness, the individual becomes freer to choose beneficial actions toward life goals.

A Vocational Turning Point

I am a child of my parents. They were my first teachers. Throughout my childhood I observed my mother and father wanting to help others. My mother was always helpful towards my siblings and me, and she worked with my father at his dental clinic after the passing of my grandfather. My father had a desire to be helpful towards others, and that drive continued after we returned from Guatemala.

They also desired to do something meaningful together. When I was still young, they went on a marriage retreat through a church-sponsored program called

“Marriage Encounter.” The retreat was a turning point for them, so much so that they became an executive couple for Marriage Encounter and traveled all over the country giving talks, mostly about the importance of dialogue in marital relationships, using their own experience as a case study.

My siblings and I observed this transformation in our parents, and it affected us in different ways. When I was a senior in high school, military recruiters presented students with the opportunity to take the ASVAB aptitude test. When the results came in, I discovered I had a talent for math and electrical circuits. It just so happened that my hobby was listening to music and assessing audio equipment. I had a direction: I would go to college to get a degree in electrical engineering. But then I had to figure out how to pay for it.

In a family of nine, funds are not generally available to pay for “extras” like a college education. I sought out options, and in my youth and with the help of an Army recruiter, I determined I would enlist and let the government help me pay for my college degree. This particular path was not out of the ordinary for our family. My father served in the Medical Corps of the U.S. Navy as a way to pay for his dental school. At the end of my senior year, I traveled with the recruiter to the U.S. Military Entrance Processing Station in New Orleans early on a Monday morning.

During processing, a lieutenant came to speak to the group of new recruits about the process. The lieutenant gave instructions and a set of obstacles that would prevent a recruit from signing up and climbing aboard the bus. One of the obstacles the lieutenant mentioned involved unresolved traffic tickets. I raised my hand to inquire about that particular rule and was told that recruits cannot cross state boundaries with outstanding tickets and that to sign up knowing that a ticket was unresolved amounted to “fraudulent enlistment.” After the lieutenant left the room, I informed the sergeant that I got a traffic ticket the previous Friday afternoon and had not had time to resolve it. The recruiter was not happy with me and did not speak with me for the entire one-and-a-half-hour drive back to Baton Rouge.

The incident gave me time to reflect and conclude that perhaps the roadblock was a sign to change my path. I used the next year between high school and college as a gap year to work at a local grocery store (Winn-Dixie, on Plank Road in North Baton Rouge) to save money for school. The following year, I applied and was accepted into Louisiana State University, and I continued to work at the Winn-Dixie.

The summer after my first year at LSU I was in my room listening to music and studying calculus when I felt a strong urge to reconsider my path towards becoming an electrical engineer. The message was clear: “What am I doing to help other

people?" I contacted Fr. Mark Scheffler, a Redemptorist priest who was stationed at St. Gerard and had worked with my parents in Marriage Encounter, and asked if I could speak with him about my path. In a few days, I had decided to join the Redemptorist Formation House (seminary) in San Antonio, Texas, a significant turning point in my life (see LeBlanc, 1995).

Over the course of the next three years, I lived the seminarian life and studied philosophy at St. Mary's University. Seminary life consisted of sharing a renovated convent with nine other young men and three priests. We had daily Mass and prayers in the chapel three times a day. Our morning ritual involved waking up at 5 a.m. for morning prayer, getting dressed and ready for school, attending Mass, sharing breakfast, then taking the van to the university. When we returned from school, we had afternoon prayer, then supper together, and evening prayer, and then we were off to study.

When I completed my undergraduate degree, the path of the seminarian typically was to go off to Novitiate, which comprised a Vatican-required canonical year in retreat with other members of the order, at the end of which a seminarian would presumably take vows to become a novice in the order. Going to Novitiate is not a guarantee at this stage and is decided by the Formation director in consultation with the other priests at the Formation house and the vice provincial (an order priest in charge of the order within a set region of the order, in this case the New Orleans Vice Province). I was informed early that summer that I was to report to the Redemptorist Novitiate House for the Province of St. Louis in Ferguson, Missouri, on the first of July.

Novitiate was much like Formation except the year was spent almost entirely in the Novitiate House in training regarding the charism of the order. The Redemptorists were founded by a priest, Alphonsus Maria Liguori of Marianella, Italy, in 1732. His calling was to preach to the most abandoned (Redemptorists-Denver Province, n.d.-a). One hundred years later, the Redemptorists sent six members of the order to the United States. Shortly thereafter, John Neumann became a Redemptorist priest and later started the first Catholic school system in the United States (Redemptorists-Denver Province, n.d.-b).

Eight months into Novitiate, I was called to New Orleans to discuss my vocation with the vice provincial. In consultation with the Novitiate director, it had been decided for me that I needed a year of self-reflection away from the order. I was to return to Ferguson, pack my belongings, and be out of the house in two days. Another

roadblock had been placed in the path I had chosen. I began to question whether I had a vocation.

I returned to Baton Rouge and had a heart-to-heart discussion with my parents. In my early twenties, with a degree in philosophy and no immediate prospects for employment, I had few options and moved back in with them. After leaving the seminary, I applied to attend graduate school. I was late in the application process, but I received the letter of acceptance during the summer with a request asking whether I wanted a teaching assistantship to help pay for my education. I accepted that opportunity as well.

A first-year teaching assistantship (TA I) involves assisting the instructor of record for a course, in this case public speaking. I was one of four TA Is who would take a breakout group from a large lecture class to assess and evaluate speeches presented by undergraduate students. During that first year of graduate school, I was lost in my journey, wondering if I could rejoin the seminary after my year of “self-discovery.” It would not be until my second year in graduate school that I came to understand my calling.

During my second year of graduate school, I (along with my colleagues) was “promoted” to the role of Teaching Assistant II. TA IIs serve as the instructor of record for a course, albeit with supervision from a course director. TA IIs utilized department-approved syllabi and course materials. However, our role changed in relation to “our” students. Students in our classes were now “our” students.

As it turned out, I did not lose my vocation. I learned through self-reflection that my vocation was still in teaching but in a different context. This represented a significant turning point in my identity relating to my vocational calling for helping others. This change helped define my relationship to others as a teacher and has served as a central theme in my identity as a person for my life up to this point.

This chapter examined more closely the journey of self-awareness and its consequences for a more fulfilling life. The next chapter will focus on how listening enhances understanding of self and others.

Conclusion

Our journey to self-awareness is part of the developmental process that focuses on self-knowledge and self-identity. That identity happens in the context of our relationships

with other people. It is the reflection of self from others that allows for the construction of concepts about the self that builds our identity.

In terms of milestones, self-awareness begins with sense experience and turns that sense experience toward our own actions and consequences. Observations help build notions of boundaries around self and around those we interact with and relate to most regularly.

This chapter examined more closely the journey of self-discovery. The next chapter will focus on listening generally and on types of listening that can advance our understanding of self, others, and the world around us.

Chapter 3

Listening

Sight is the most important sense utilized when traveling by wheeled conveyance, particularly when you are the one driving. On our communication journey, hearing is the most important sense. Not that our other senses do not play a role, especially when it comes to perceiving nonverbal communication. However, paying attention to what we hear through listening allows us to travel to new destinations.

This chapter describes different types of listening, from passive to active and empathic listening, and explores the benefits of silence and deep listening.

How do we listen to others? How do we listen to self? What effect does nonlistening have on our ability to learn and communicate?

Introduction

“Be fond of hearing rather than of talking” (Cleobulus of Lindos, born ca. 630 BCE, quoted by Laërtius, 1915/2018, p. 42).

Listening is a communicative activity with profound effects on both the listener and the speaker. Listening happens in many contexts and for various purposes. Effective listening can build and maintain relationships, whereas, ineffective listening frustrates the speaker (Fedesco, 2015) and can have harmful effects on a relationship.

Listening has been studied from communicative, psychological, sociological, educational, and biological perspectives. For example, Sharon and John (2019) found that storytelling, in the form of podcasts, brings about a type of open-minded listening. Additionally, Perrin and Blagden (2014) found that undertaking the role of listener in prison settings produces profound and positive change in a prisoner’s self-identity.

Brain imaging studies over the last several decades have brought about profound changes in our understanding of the processes of listening. For example, according to Friederici et al. (2000), fMRI studies confirm that the processing of normal speech activates brain patterns that differ from nonnormal speech patterns, such as violations of language-based syntax rules. Harris et al. (2011) found that highly variable but nonrandom patterns of brain activity are fired during the process of hearing and are transformed according to context. In a synthesis of studies going back to 1992, Price (2012) reviewed how the body of brain imaging research over a twenty-year span has

demonstrated specific areas of brain activity for language processing. New and exciting research is being conducted that expands our understanding of listening and its effects on our world.

In the previous chapter (chapter 2), we examined self-awareness and self-identity. Understanding of self comes from listening to self, not only in our own thoughts, but during the act of communicating with others. Self-awareness may improve the quality of listening. Listening is a process in the journey of self- and other-discovery.

As Bodie (2011b) noted, listening should be a core concern of interpersonal communication scholarship. Indeed, Goodman (2017) recommends that society begin to listen to unfamiliar ideas to preserve our way of life. In this chapter we will examine, different types of listening and their effects including passive listening, active and empathic listening, and deep listening. We will also encounter a description of and have a discussion regarding the effects of silence.

Passive Listening

The process of listening begins with attending to sound waves. These sound waves can occur naturally and without intention, such as when you hear accidental sounds like the snapping of a twig stepped on while walking in the woods. During this sojourn, we may also hear the sounds of the wind rustling through the leaves or the sounds of birds and insects. We presume the sounds of the wind are unintentional, but we also assume the sounds of birds and insects are intentional although their meaning is unknown to us.

Sounds representative of human speech or activities, such as music, are presumed to be intentional whether directed at us or not. Whether so directed or not, intentional or not, simply attending to the sound is a passive activity on our part. Considerable research into attending to sound passively has been conducted over the years. For example, experimental studies demonstrate that the auditory cortex is actively involved in implicit learning of complex auditory patterns (Kang et al., 2021). According to Napoli et al. (2021), the auditory cortex supports the ability to selectively listen to or discriminate auditory information from noise.

Listening, passively or actively, is not contingent upon space or culture. For the Blackfeet people, for example, listening is a practice that involves knowing the world in which we dwell and having a range of feelings about that world and is a way of being in relation to place (Carbaugh, 1999). When individuals hear sound, explicit knowledge about the sound structure by itself is not sufficient to influence response as passive attention operates in parallel with active or selective attention (Brace & Sussman, 2021).

Passive listening is inherent in humans and many other species of animals from their earliest development (see chapter 1), excluding biological conditions of malformation of hearing sense organs. Environmental conditions may also affect one's ability to passively listen, such as with background noise. According to Benítez-Barrera et al. (2021), latency in response to speech decreases in children with the increase in background noise, similar to what is found in adults. However, in a previous study, Picou et al. (2017) found that increases in background noise increased listening effort and increased response time for adults but decreased response time for children. Regardless, background noise may affect ability or motivation to attend to intentionally directed speech from others.

Speech is not the only human activity to which individuals may passively listen. Music is a universal human activity that produces sounds to which we may be motivated to attend. Studies related to music listening (passively or otherwise) take multiple methodological approaches. In one such study, researchers found that passive listening to different music genres evokes differing levels of activity in the auditory-motor network of the brain, with music containing the highest pulse clarity eliciting the strongest response (Martin-Fernández et al., 2021).

Individuals may be motivated to listen to music due to its emotional effects. According to Bakas et al. (2021), pleasure from listening to music is derived through a combined cognitive evaluation in the prefrontal cortex and induced emotions. Listening to love-related stimuli induces strong, positive emotional reactions, whereas listening to non-love-related stimuli has the opposite effect (Aghedu et al., 2021). In another study, Galal et al. (2021) found that both passive music listening and active music playing reduces test anxiety.

Regardless of the source of sound, intentional human speech and activity, or the unintentional sounds of nature, passive listening occurs as a first step. Some signal pattern within the sound wave coaxes attentiveness, and once it's done this, it may further coax more active participation in the processing of the sound from mere perception to applying meaning. It is this applying meaning to the sound that becomes an active process.

Active Listening

Active listening involves the expansion and replication of received information (Mortari, 2011). As humans, we apply meaning to information provided to us as a means to develop and maintain relationships (see chapter 1). Active listening influences reasoning and collective articulation among members of the groups to whom we belong (Mortari, 2011).

According to Bodie (2011a), active and empathic listening are composed of both conversational sensitivity and empathic responsiveness. Conversational sensitivity includes the listener's attitude (see Rogers & Farson, 2007) toward attentiveness, perceptiveness, and responsiveness (Bodie, 2011a). Empathic responsiveness is composed of the ability to demonstrate congruent emotional responses. The ability to be empathic (next section) begins with active communication engagement. This active engagement influences the reactions and responses of communication participants. For example, verbal active listening behaviors are most important for the emotional improvement of speakers (Bodie et al., 2015).

According to Fryer and Boot (2017), the ability to listen is enhanced by self-awareness (see chapter 2). The authors argue that self-awareness influences perspective-taking through other-awareness (see chapter 5; Fryer & Boot, 2017). Relational awareness of the other involving interpersonal, intrapersonal, and contextual cues allows the listener to be more empathic towards the other (Younas, 2020). Individuals feel more understood when a partner uses active listening as opposed to giving advice or acknowledging verbally or nonverbally (Weger et al., 2014).

Active-empathic listening is moderately to strongly related to social skills such as emotional sensitivity and social-expression sensitivity and control (Gearhart & Bodie, 2011). However, active listening by itself, without empathy, may have limited relational effects. According to Weger et al. (2010), paraphrasing as a technique in active listening increases attraction toward the listener due to perceptions of there being a greater sense of immediacy but does not increase feelings of being understood.

Active listening is important to the development and maintenance of relationships, whether they are personal or professional. As a professional, attendance to certain active listening skills should be considered part of the job. For example, active listening is an important skill of health care providers, according to patients (Walder & Molineux, 2020). In a series of studies, LeBlanc (2003, 2004a, 2004b) demonstrated that active engagement in interaction through listening and confirmation improved relational satisfaction in health care encounters for physicians, nurses, and patients.

Development of active listening skills occurs over the life span. Recognizing when active listening is important in a context is teachable (Spataro & Bloch, 2018). According to Levitt (2002), early training in active listening assists in the development of other skills needed in the helping professions. Multi-dimensional and non-linear reflective practices can assist in developing active listening skills (Moreno et al., 2020). Self-reflection assists in the development of another listening skill: empathic listening.

Empathic Listening

Empathy is a level of understanding another at an emotional level. According to Tousignant et al. (2017), beginning development of empathy occurs in infancy before the emergence of verbal abilities. Empathy allows us to connect to others in ways that the simple sharing of information through communication does not achieve. Empathic listening is “one of the most potent forces for change” (Rogers, 1979, p. 99).

Brain imaging studies have located parts of the brain activated through listening, including active and empathic listening. For example, emotional prosody perception is processed bilaterally in the frontal lobes of the brain (Witteman et al., 2012). Emotional cues are processed in conjunction with language in “theory of mind” regions of the brain (Hervé et al., 2012). Frühholz and Grandjean (2013) confirmed those findings with additional brain scans, which demonstrated the importance of both left and right frontal cortex lobes in attending to and processing emotional cues from speech.

Additionally, Ashar et al. (2017) demonstrated through brain imaging studies that empathic care for others was differentiated in the brain from empathic stress when listening to stories of human suffering. Sachs et al. (2018) found that particular areas of the brain are associated with empathic listening and the perception of emotions.

Empathy can be observed in the way we respond when listening to others. According to Sljivic et al. (2021), empathy may be increased through the tone of voice and the content of a story being similar between conversants. Empathic accuracy was highest with verbal and paralinguistic cues (without visual cues) compared to visual cues only (Jospe et al., 2020). According to Elmi et al. (2019), empathic listening significantly increases the memory of information provided by the speaker. Supportive listening is related to greater empathic accuracy and perceived understanding between parents and adolescent children (McLaren & Sillars, 2020).

Active-empathic listening can have considerable positive effects on the person who is being heard. In five different experiments, Itzhakov et al. (2018) demonstrated that active-empathic listening reduced a speaker’s social anxiety and increased

reflective self-awareness. Neves et al. (2018) suggested that emotional decoding is enhanced when conversational partners are empathic toward one another, including when they share laughter.

According to Geiman and Greene (2019), engaged and active-empathic listening is highly associated with opportunities for interpersonal collaboration and feelings of extreme connectedness with the other, known as interpersonal transcendence. Humans can get better at active-empathic listening. Doing so is part of our developmental process and can be motivated by a desire to improve relationships with others. Studies show that adults tend to be better at empathic understanding due to maturation beyond the egocentrism of adolescents (Pascuzzi et al., 2017). According to Van Lissa et al. (2017), cognitive empathy leads to de-escalation of conflict and promotion of other-oriented listening in parent-adolescent interaction.

These outcomes from empathic listening can occur in professional relationships as well. For example, employees who rated their supervisors higher on an active-empathic listening scale also rated their work-related quality of life higher and their stress levels lower (Kristinsson et al., 2019). The practice of active-empathic listening techniques results in students becoming more self-aware of problematic listening and communication behaviors (Tietz et al., 2021). Individuals can become better at the techniques of empathic listening through practice and training but also through attending to and self-reflecting on the effects or outcomes of active-empathic listening. For example, rest after emotional disclosure has been shown to enhance listeners' abilities to offer support (Collier & Meyer, 2020).

Other techniques of listening, while well intended, may counteract the positive outcomes of active-empathic listening. According to Berkovich and Eyal (2018b), reframing messages undermines the positive social-support effect of empathic listening. As well, tendencies to underutilize conversation preparation techniques such as imagined interactions are related to a reduced propensity toward utilizing active-empathic listening (Vickery et al., 2015).

Emotional support can be demonstrated through empathic listening (Berkovich & Eyal, 2018a). In teachers' evaluations of emotional support that they received from principals, empathic listening had the highest predictive behavior compared to other communication strategies (Berkovich & Eyal, 2018a). These effects can be found in many different professions. According to von Unwerth (2020), open attunement to the needs of patients is an important skill for helping professions. Relatedly, Gillespie et al. (2018), found that engagement is demonstrated when physicians listen empathically to their patients, which shows caring (see LeBlanc, 2003, 2004b) most effectively (Hall et

al., 2021). According to Lion et al. (2019), a hospital chaplain's empathic listening promotes family well-being.

Specific training in active-empathic listening techniques for developing professionals has been shown to be beneficial. According to Reich et al. (2021), formal training in empathic listening is more effective than internship training for students in programs preparing for helping professions. Sustained training in emotion-recognition accuracy is associated with empathic accuracy for listening in helping professions such as psychologists, nurses, and social workers (Flykt et al., 2021). Training in relational communication skills such as emotion-recognition and empathic listening is important for health care providers to establish trust and rapport in their relationships with patients (Franceschi, 2018).

The benefits of empathic listening are not limited to the helping professions. Empathic connections are critical for ongoing collaboration, as collaboration sought with others is perceived to be "open, generous and understanding" (Myers & White, 2012). As a civic exercise, empathic listening can address inequities in society (Andolina & Conklin, 2021). For example, active-empathic listening assists individuals seeking donations from others through increased connectedness, trust, and genuineness (Drollinger, 2018). Active-empathic listening requires not only attentiveness and skill but also providing the space for another to talk, which will be described in the next section.

Silence

Silence requires intention in communicative encounters. The listener's choice to be silent may be due to a desire to listen or by lack of space given by the speaker. Silence occurs in conversation naturally through turn-taking, though its perceptibility may be difficult in highly interactive conversations. Silence can be intentional for purposes of meditation, or silence can be used to transmit meaning, although such meaning is difficult to interpret (Schwartz, 1999). Silence is perceivable but unknowable (Palmquist, 2006).

According to Muldoon (1996), there are three functional characteristics of silence: (a) silence is perceptible, (b) silence produces opportunity for the listener, and (c) silence is evocative. How silence is interpreted in a conversational event may differ due to cultural expectations. According to Kawabata and Gastaldo (2015), silence serves distinctive purposes in collectivistic cultures compared to individualistic ones. The purpose of silence may evolve over time. For example, silence as practiced in nineteenth-century education did not serve necessarily the purpose of denoting

submission but was taught as a disciplined mechanism for beginning speech, such as an intentional pause (Hoegaerts, 2017).

Silence can oppress, but it can also open connections to others (Spiller et al., 2021). According to Black and Wiederhold (2014), deferential silence is a discursive strategy that may indicate listening or approval or a conscious choice not to engage during public dialogue. Silence may be a strategy to oppose the status quo but would be more compelling if the motivation for silence was made known (Edmondson Bell et al., 2003). Johannesen (1974) identified at least twenty potential meanings that could be assigned to silence in conversation. “Silence communicates because listeners and observers will attach meaning to the silence whether the sender wishes so or not” (Johannesen, 1974, p. 29).

According to van Elferen and Raeymaekers (2015), silence by negation, or by choice not to speak, should be more formally referred to as quietness. Such quietness carries with it only imaginary meaning. The choice of silence belongs to the chooser and is not open for interpretation (Huby, 1997). Interpreting silence demands a turning away from language (Scott, 2020). However, silence allows for receptivity to the other, which can increase connection (Chiaia, 2020).

Yet silence can have beneficial effects on relationships, particularly on professional helping relationships. For example, according to Sharpley (2007), instances of counselor silence in counselor-client interactions are highly related to clients’ perceptions of counselor-client rapport. In these cases, the counselor chooses to remain silent to allow the client the space to talk through concerns. This choice of silence by the counselor is intentional and requires the ability to suppress reactions or replies to the messages of the client. Inner silence is that which allows listeners to quiet their own questions and thoughts, but innermost silence happens when the individual chooses to be receptive to the other (Waks, 2008).

Deep Listening

Innermost silence may also provide the individual with the opportunity to attune more deeply to the rich stream of sound. This deep attunement is referred to as deep listening. Deep listening involves hearing “the sounds of daily life, of nature and of one’s own thoughts” by “listening in every possible way to everything possible” (Oliveros, 1995, p. 19).

Deep listening involves “not only sustained attention, receptivity, and concentration” but also “awakened conduct” (Bidwell, 2015, p. 6). Deep listening

requires an active choice to be silent (Little, 2015). Deep listening is a universal form of hearing the environment that avoids culturally-set rules for judgment (Braasch, 2019). It involves two aspects: focal and global listening. Focal listening requires focusing on specific details of the sonic event. Global listening requires attending to the whole sonic environment. Such deep listening may be analogous to perceiving the woodwinds within the context of the entire orchestra.

The concept of deep listening was first described by musician and composer Pauline Oliveros (Juett, 2010): “Listening becomes deep when one can simultaneously target sounds and perceive the whole of the sound environment” (p. 2). Deep listening involves critical reflexivity, which requires humility about how we perceive and think about the world (Koch, 2020). Deep listening requires us to silence our thinking: “Preoccupied with our own stuff, trying to listen while at the same time assessing and framing a reply, are barriers to deep listening” (Reilly & Wright, 2005, p. 60).

Deep listening can be compared to the process of interacting with others to produce a dance or a musical piece. According to Rowan (2017), when there exists room for freedom within a semi-structured environment, as in jazz improvisation, the learning environment is less stressful, more engaging, and more motivating. Joint improvisation involves attunement through deep listening to the other in the moment to achieve reciprocity in the creation of meaning (Hadar & Amir, 2021).

Music and music listening provide strong examples of the effects of deep listening. According to Forcucci (2018), visual imagery of environmental space for deep listeners can be predicted from different types of music, which shows a link between the intention of the composer and the perception of the listener. Er et al. (2021) demonstrated the ability to observe human emotional responses to music listening in brain scans that placed these responses in certain locations. These observed responses matched the self-reported emotions of the listeners.

According to Mirón et al. (2015), “Deep engagement with the present moment,” such as a call-and-response practiced in jazz improvisation, can bring about a more democratic form of learning in everyday life (p. 191). Relistening to familiar music to discover new aspects is a form of deep listening (Conrad et al., 2019). Similar outcomes occur in human speech. Deng and Tan (2020) argued that because human speech precedes written language, speech should be experienced as a natural occurrence within the context of the environment as an ethical choice. According to Gleim et al. (2020), the co-creation of meaning between adult and child is enhanced when the child is viewed as capable of deep listening and critical thinking.

Deep listening allows for the type of critical self-reflection which enhances active-empathic listening. According to Friston et al. (2020), in order to reduce uncertainty of

understanding in a communicative event, two individuals will converge their assumptions through an updating process (like in jazz improvisation), even when their prior assumptions were different. Taking a relational approach to dialogue, which considers the lifeworld of the other through deep listening, can be transformative for both persons (Wiesner, 2021).

Deep listening is intentional: “Deep listening is a practice of listening with a disciplined, embodied and compassionate attention that attends to the present moment, the narrative arc of speech, and to the speaker’s humanity” (Miller, 2015, p. 20). Sound is around us but is understood within us: “The real-world nature of sound is constructed entirely within the mind of the listener” (Hill, 2017, p. 18). As such, deep listening is self-reflective (Barsness, 2021).

The effects of deep listening can be profound and transformative. According to Wang et al. (2020), contemplative practices including self-reflection, meditation, and deep listening can produce an open learning environment, reduce stress, and increase self- and other awareness. Deep listening in therapeutic relationships involves attunement to embodied communication, or the totality of communication involving both verbal and nonverbal components (Kalita, 2020). According to Parameshwaran (2015), a chaplain’s deep listening skills, including mindfulness of the other and interpersonal empathy, leads to a patient’s abilities to self-heal.

Deep listening requires active and empathic processing of the information being received within the context of the environment and culture of the other, a task that also requires silence, like walking alone in the woods. Deep listening thus requires a choice of rewilding. According to Pinto (2017), rewilding our listening requires attuning to the environment and toward the natural, nonhuman world. Rewilding would enhance deep listening, which in turn can enhance or relationship with others.

Travel and Transformation

Growing up, music was always in the house. My parents loved to listen to music, as did my four older sisters. My parents were fairly permissive and allowed my sisters to choose their music tastes. One of my earliest memories relating to music occurred on our trip to Guatemala. My sisters liked listening to Three Dog Night and had brought a cassette tape and a portable player for the ride. We liked to sing along, especially to “*Joy to the World*,” and I was sure we knew a bullfrog named Jeremiah.

Another early memory was the first time I heard Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon*. Although my sisters shared some music tastes, my second-oldest sister,

Leslie, seemed to be the first to branch off from the others in charting her own musical interest path. I did not understand what Pink Floyd was about at the time; only in my teenage years did I come back to them. I did soon have an opportunity to chart my own path.

My next-door neighbor had a grandson named John who was a few years older than me and was a fan of Elton John. He let me borrow his album, *Elton John's Greatest Hits*, which I listened to for a few weeks. Sometime after that, I convinced my mom to buy me my first record album, *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*. I was twelve years old. With that album, my musical journey changed direction. I was no longer a passive listener, nor was I limited to the musical choices of others. Throughout middle school, I would go to my room and put on my music and listen for hours. I had become a music lover.

I developed friendships in high school based on shared music interests, and we influenced one another with those music choices. My friend Matt introduced me to progressive rock, bringing me back to Pink Floyd, and my friend Chris introduced me to jazz. We would have shared music-listening sessions. Chris went on to change high schools and went to a magnet school that specialized in music. He took up the drums, and I would spend hours watching him practice. He would test me with a piece and ask, "What song is this from?"

My younger brother, J.C., was similarly influenced down a musical path, but he took up playing bass and joined a band. I would ask to sit in band practices and often went to see his band play. On occasion, I would attempt to learn an instrument, but I would soon turn back to just listening as my interest in other activities increased. One of those other interests was motorcycles.

When I was much older, I discovered that my experience with music was not unique. Others experienced the transformation of their identities, from being passive to becoming deep listeners, and from listening for pleasure to listening for catharsis (LeBlanc, 2014). Often in my darkest moments, I would turn to music listening to escape my troubles. I also discovered that music listening could serve many cathartic purposes and began to find interest in many different genres. I did not seem satisfied to stick to exploring only rock or jazz but began expanding into folk, classical, and blues.

Although I did not realize it at the time, exploring different musical paths was not unlike exploring the geography around me. Our trip to Guatemala was not the only time my parents put all of us kids in a van and went for a drive. We took short and long vacations together, oftentimes listening to music or singing on the road. I cannot

pinpoint an event in which a transformation occurred, yet listening to my surroundings was instilled early on, and I learned to love it.

As a child, I also developed a love for maps. Whenever we went somewhere, I wanted to see it on a map. My parents encouraged reading, and I gravitated towards reading about places and examining related maps. I dreamed about visiting places in Louisiana and beyond. I learned about Driskill Mountain, the highest point of elevation in my home state, and vowed one day to climb it. Yet I was tied to my parents' wants and abilities to visit places until I could find a way there on my own.

As with choosing my own musical path, I would one day choose my own method of conveyance. This choice was not without influence. My first experience with motorcycles came when I was seven years old. My uncle Rodley had a yard bike with a Briggs and Stratton lawnmower engine that he let me and my cousins ride around in the yard at their house in Morganza. My cousin Butch had a Yamaha 650 street motorcycle. He would come over to our house and give us rides in the neighborhood.

Then there came the bicycles in my early teens. When I was in high school, I used to ride my bike all over Baton Rouge. I was still limited to a certain radius from my house, but the desire to explore further was burning inside. In the spring of my junior year, my friend Chris got a Suzuki RM 125 dirt bike. My first opportunity to ride it came when we travelled across to the other side of the Mississippi River on the Old Huey P. Long – O.K. Allen Bridge to ride behind the levee. Then in August of 1982, I went shopping for my own motorcycle. I had a job and could pay the note, the insurance, and the gas and maintenance on my own. The only obstacle was convincing my parents to cosign the loan. I learned later that they had discussed it and concluded I would figure out how to do it on my own without their help, so they agreed.

I learned how to ride and started riding in the countryside every day after school and before my work shift. My first long-distance ride came late that summer when my father wanted to take the family (which consisted of my two brothers, my mother, and me: my sisters had gotten married and moved out by then) to Pensacola, Florida. He had a dental convention to attend. Unfortunately, my parents owned a Volkswagen Beetle convertible, which was too small for us three boys. I suggested that I follow them on my new 1982 Kawasaki GPz 550: problem solved.

My motorcycles served similar purposes to music listening: exploration and catharsis. When I was younger, my mother often talked about wanting to visit Glacier National Park. Early in 1994, my mother was diagnosed with leukemia and by April

she had been admitted to Ochsner Medical Center in New Orleans for treatment. As I was going to school in Carbondale, Illinois at the time, my earliest opportunity to visit her in the hospital came at the end of the semester in May. It was very difficult to see her in that condition, but after she was released from the hospital and sent home, I decided I needed to go visit Glacier National Park for her, and for myself. I called my uncle Robin, met up with him north of Dallas, and we rode together as far as Yellowstone National Park, where he returned home to Midland, Texas. I went on to Glacier. I took pictures. My mother passed away a few weeks later.

Grief took a long time to process. Much of that processing was done while riding all over the country on my motorcycle or listening to music when I was not riding. Grief is a solo adventure, although many may be dealing with grief of the same loss. Five years had passed when I said to my father, "Let's go climb Driskill Mountain." I met him at his residence, and the two of us travelled to North Louisiana, found the trailhead, and climbed the dizzying height of the mountain (535 feet above sea level). There I listened to his grief, and he listened to mine. Much of the ride home was in silence, like we were in prayer. That prayer turned into writing the book *The Spirit of Travel*.

Grief for the loss of my father in 2022 has also been a long process. Like when I lost my mother, grieving my father's loss has found me seeking solace on the motorcycle, visiting a place we talked about years before, the Valle Vidal in northern New Mexico. In the fall after his passing, I travelled the dirt roads and camped under the stars of the high country. I listened to the sounds of nature that he would have enjoyed.

Since then, I have learned the value of silence. Silence allows me to quiet my mind and listen deeply to the sounds around me, like they're a musical piece. When I combine listening to the melody of the wind and the rhythms of the engine while exploring the beauty of the country on my motorcycle, the experience is transformative.

Conclusion

Our journey includes communicating with others, but such communication often requires stopping our own processes and attending to the lifeworld of others through listening. Deep and active-empathic listening provides openness to experience the sharing of profound emotions such as awe and wonder (Silvia et al., 2015).

Transformation in learning can occur if the instructor takes on the role of learner and

listens and reflects (Sockman & Sharma, 2008). In order to transform the learning experience, teachers should practice emotional engagement, generous listening, relational accountability, reflexivity, and accessing other ways of knowing (Tanaka, 2015). To cultivate a desire to learn, teachers should be aware of how their interactional behaviors influence, positively or negatively, the motivations of students (Porath, 2014).

In terms of milestones, the possibility of listening begins with our development (see chapter 1) and continues through self-awareness (chapter 2). Listening can be passive, active, empathic, or deep. In these forms of listening lies the degree to which our relationships develop and grow. Effective listening allows for growth in understanding others.

This chapter examined more closely the journey of communication through listening. The next chapter will focus on the development of knowledge in general, whether about others or the universe around us. Understanding how we come to understand provides the basis for deep listening and for other-awareness.

Chapter 4

Knowing

David Hume wrote, “The sweetest and most inoffensive path of life leads through the avenues of science and learning; and whoever can either remove any obstructions in this way, or open up any new prospect, ought so far to be esteemed a benefactor to mankind” (Hume, 1748/2007, p. 7). Sensing is but the first step on the path to knowing.

This chapter will explore the history of the philosophy of knowing and the modern understanding of how we come to know, including alternate ways of knowing through embodiment.

How do we come to know? How do we learn about the world around us? What is the nature of knowing?

Introduction

“Knowledge is the food of the soul” (Plato, born ca. 427 BCE; 1875/2013, p. 15).

Aristotle (born ca. 384 BCE; 1999) proposed that there are five intellectual virtues needed for the soul to arrive at truth: *sophia* (wisdom), *episteme* (scientific knowledge), *nous* (rational intuition), *phronesis* (prudence), and *techne* (skill). These internal mental processes demonstrate themselves through action; action that can be communicative.

In the previous chapter (chapter 3), we examined the different types of listening and their influences on self- and other knowing. Listening increases knowing. However, listening serves as only one sense in the process of coming to know. The process of knowing involves sense perception as well as mental processes that occur within the context of our environment.

According to Margolis (2015), “persons are culturally emergent” in that they reflect upon the environment in which they live and act in deliberate and intentional ways in reference to that environment (p. 616). Knowing, thus, entails at minimum Aristotle’s five intellectual virtues. This chapter will seek to uncover both historical and current notions of knowing that we both develop and use on our journey.

Historical Theories of Knowing

Understanding the history of the development of epistemology can assist in understanding how we know through modern “detailed studies of human learning, of language acquisition, of human socialization, and so on” (Stroud, 2011, p. 498). To understand this history requires us to start at the beginning of what is known about this branch of inquiry from extant fragments of the earliest writings of (Western) philosophers to present investigations. The earliest such known fragments came from Democritus and his contemporaries.

Pre-Socratic Greek teachers, known as the Sophists (including the most well-known Gorgias, born ca. 483 BCE), contended that “knowledge was only accessible through discourse” (Bizzell & Herzberg, 1990, p. 22). Democritus (born ca. 460 BCE) and his contemporaries (Leucippus, Epicurus, and Lucretius) held that the universe was composed of “atoms” (see Jones, 1969a). The theory of atoms was developed to account for observed changes in things, such as how things grow. This theory was developed to counter the arguments of other pre-Socratic Greek philosophers regarding the nature of being and knowledge about being.

Democritus wrote, “By convention sweet and by convention bitter, by convention hot, by convention cold, by convention colour, but in reality atoms and void” (Democritus, cited in Taylor, 1999, p. 9). From this atomistic view, Democritus developed a theory of perception in which thin layers of atoms fall off an object and are perceived through the senses (see Taylor, 1999; Baldes, 1975).

Plato devoted much thinking and writing about the nature of knowledge, “more than had any philosopher before him” (Jones, 1969a, p. 121). Plato countered the thinking of the Sophists such as Gorgias, who held that knowledge is only provisionally attained through shared language, which may be deceptive (Bizzell & Herzberg, 1990). Plato held that probabilistic knowledge was only an appearance of truth (Bizzell & Herzberg, 1990). Plato divided the universe into two realms, the “real” and the “ideal.” The ideal are objects of thought, or the essence (idea or form) of the physical things that are perceived. For Plato, all knowing is conditioned by the assumptions with which we start (Jones, 1969a).

Aristotle claimed that we know about the universe through its matter and form (Jones, 1969a), matter being that of which things are made, and form being the shape or other characteristics that provide the appearance of the thing. Form occurs due to the function the object performs. The real is “knowable” because it has matter and form, although it is not absolutely or completely knowable because things change. Aristotle

proposed that thought occurs as a succession of sense experiences. Stoics, such as Zeno of Citium (born ca. 334 BCE), held that knowledge came only from sense experience (Jones, 1969a). However, Neoplatonists, such as Plotinus (born ca. 204 CE), held that “reality was unknowable by rational means” (Jones 1969b, p. 11). This Neoplatonism dominated Western thought until the time of Thomas Aquinas (b. 1225).

Following the rediscovery of Aristotle’s writings beginning in the middle of the twelfth century, Thomas Aquinas taught that the world around us could be known through sense experience (Jones, 1969b). Thomas Aquinas held that knowledge is derived from four powers: (a) sensation, (b) estimation, (c) memory, and (d) imagination. He further believed that rational faculty, or the ability to reason, held humans apart from other animals. Near contemporaries of Aquinas were Roger Bacon (born 1214) and William Occam (born 1287). R. Bacon and Occam furthered the principal understanding that knowledge was developed through the senses, at least for the material world, but began the process of separating knowing about the world through scientific endeavors and knowing about God through theology. Occam is best known for the theory of parsimony (also called Occam’s Razor), which posits that the simplest explanation is usually the best one (see Schaffer, 2015).

The work of R. Bacon and Occam presaged the coming scientific revolution fomented by Nicolaus Copernicus (born 1473), who disputed the Earth-centric view of the universe; Francis Bacon (born 1561), who developed inductive methods for knowing; Johann Kepler (born 1571), who followed up on the work of Copernicus and mapped the solar system while creating the basis for the new scientific method of framing a hypothesis and confirming or disconfirming through mathematical calculation; and Galileo Galilei (born 1564), who confirmed Kepler’s approach through direct observation. Galileo stated plainly that objective knowledge of the properties of things is more valuable than subjective responses to appearances of things (Jones, 1969c).

These developments of inquiry about knowing influenced thinkers to follow. René Descartes (born 1596) began his journey of inquiry from a position of openness and skepticism to find what was true without the influence of belief. This approach led him to a kernel of truth about knowledge: the fact that he can think about his existence proves his existence, summed in the formula “cogito, ergo sum,” I think, therefore, I am. Descartes proposed that understanding is a function of sensing and thinking (Jones, 1969c). From that notion, John Locke (born 1632) proposed that all ideas derive from sense experience. Subsequently, George Berkeley (born 1685) proposed that perception of things is relative to the observer.

Within this historical context in the development of epistemology arose the propositions about human understanding by David Hume (born 1711). Hume critiqued

Locke's and Berkeley's propositions and concluded that, "Beauty is no quality in things themselves: It exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty" (Hume, 2014, p. 2, original work published in 1757). Hume proposed that "complex ideas originate in our minds as a result of the three principles": (a) resemblance, (b) contiguity, and (c) cause and effect (Jones, 1969c, p. 302). Thus, complex ideas arise from simpler ones. "All simple ideas, [Hume] maintained, are memory copies of simple impressions; complex ideas are combinations of simple ones" (Jones, 1969c, p. 303).

Immanuel Kant (born 1724) disputed the idea that human minds are passive contemplators in which ideas are derived solely from sense experience (Jones, 1975a). Kant proposed that minds are actively engaged in the creation of "constructs." Kant distinguished between the "noumena", or the thing-in-itself, and the "phenomena", or the perception of the thing. Thinking about thinking was highly influenced by the work of Kant for the next two centuries.

However, in the early 1920's, a group of mathematicians, physicists, sociologists and economists began meeting and discussing the nature of scientific inquiry and its production of knowledge (Jones, 1975b). This group became known as the logical positivists. Their position held that only through the sciences and scientific methods could reliable and verifiable knowledge about the world be obtained. This "objectivist" position was countered by philosophers such as Edmund Husserl (born 1859), who held that experience is processed in the subjective mind of the individual.

Bernard Lonergan (born 1904) undertook an investigation and theorized about human understanding based on the history of the development of epistemology as well as modern (at the time of his first publication of *Insight* in 1957) scientific inquiry into human development and cognition. Lonergan (2013a) concluded that "an account of knowing cannot disregard it's content," a content that "is incomplete and subject to future additions, inadequate and subject to repeated future revisions" (2013a, p. 12). In the collected transcripts of Lonergan's lectures, he proposed that the pursuit of knowledge is an "intelligent, rational, deliberate, and methodical pursuit" of the unknown (2013b, p. 13). Within this historical accounting of thinking about knowing comes the basis for epistemology (the study of how we come to know). In the next section, we will review modern research and conceptions of knowing.

Modern Epistemology

Through the ages, epistemology has existed almost exclusively in the domain of philosophy. However, in the twentieth century, new academic disciplines began to approach the topic of how we know more directly. The fields of biology, anthropology, psychology, and sociology, for example, began looking at the basis for knowing. According to Hooker (1994), humans' capacity for knowing has evolved as an adaptive and self-regulatory system linked with our biological and social development.

Knowing may not be an individual function. Knowing occurs within the context of our relationships with others. The existence of knowledge is a consequence of our interactions with others in coming to conclusions about the world around us (Fuller, 2012). Complete truth is unreachable; however, truth is accessible in that we can make progress towards seeking truth as a human value (Hooker, 2013).

The notion of schema, first introduced by Kant (Jones, 1975a), was described as the categorization of sense impressions in the mind. The idea was taken up by psychologists, most importantly Jean Piaget (born 1896), to describe cognitive structures. According to Seising (2014), schema, which are structures in the brain to which concepts are mapped, are imprecise representations of how we come to know. Therefore, epistemologists should consider that any theory of knowledge will need to consider this impreciseness when modeling the theory.

Such schema models derive their import from the drive to understand how humans come to know. Scholars understand knowledge as some kind of connection between human beings and that which allows us to live in the world. Knowledge is "a state of cognitive contact with reality" that comes from practicing intellectual virtues, including "open-mindedness, [the] ability to appraise evidence, intellectual humility and thoroughness, etc." (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 270). However, individuals must interpret available information to construct knowledge, and such interpretation requires that new ideas fit with what is already known (Berland et al., 2016). The opposite of knowledge is ignorance. Ignorance is a lack of knowledge or true belief and either a lack of the virtues of open-mindedness and curiosity or an abundance of the vices of closed-mindedness and arrogance (El Kassar, 2018).

Adult intellect is composed of "process intelligence, historical crystallized intelligence, and the current depth and breadth of domain knowledge" (Ackerman, 2014, p. 250). Depth and breadth of knowledge and skills are more easily acquired during adolescence and early adulthood (Ackerman, 2014). The elements of a "systems" understanding of how we come to know includes intentional perspective-taking, shifting

over time of those perspectives, attempts to consider relationships between interpretations of events, and synthesis and generalization of different perspectives (Houghton, 2009).

However, these ideas imply that how we come to know is an individual project. Personal epistemologies are active, intentional, and derived from experiences that are unique to the individual within his or her social environment and life history (Billett, 2009). Yet, according to Holma and Hyytinen (2015), personal epistemology must consider the concept that knowledge is fallible.

How we come to know, in modern terms, occurs through inferences about what we sense. Inference is an informal process that is not the same as deduction. A mathematical method such as deduction, should not be applied to informal logic, which is the basis for epistemology (Woods, 2013). Inference is derived in one of two ways: either by beliefs that are rationally derived from prior beliefs or when a mistake in rationality (fallacy) ties a new belief to prior beliefs (Koziolek, 2021). Inference is a subjective act that connects those beliefs to sense experience. According to Berghofer (2019), Husserl (born 1859) argued that subjective acts “can justify believing objective states of affairs” (p. 127). In cases of knowledge, the truth value of belief cannot be simply a matter of luck but must also be a function of cognitive ability (Bolos & Collin, 2018). The connection between beliefs and knowledge of facts is a different process than the embodiment of cognition (Aizawa, 2012).

Knowing can apply to processes individuals use to extend their cognitive abilities, such as the use of a smartphone to look up or process information (Pritchard, 2018). Any advancement in understanding how we know has to consider the possibility of this extended cognition. According to Miracchi (2020), an integrative epistemology begins from the acceptance of the possibility of objective facts that are knowable but allows for understanding about the context for sharing perspectives on the knowable and holding one another accountable for what is known and why it is known. Miracchi (2020) contends, “There is no value-neutral standpoint from which to do epistemology” (p. 18). Moral concerns are a subset of the overall epistemological project and not a distinct way of knowing (Ravish, 2019). Choices or norms regarding the sharing of knowledge are value-laden and can be used to oppress or liberate (Grasswick, 2011).

Shared knowledge is developed through interaction. Judgments made through the democratic process are provisional and open to revision when new information is available (Farrelly, 2012). According to Vähämaa (2013), shared knowledge is a consequence of shared language and shared signs for a group that may distinguish itself from other groups. Such a social epistemology should transcend disciplinary boundaries to arrive at universal constructs about human knowing (Kasavin, 2012).

Regardless, scholars from different fields have developed different “epistemologies” to explain ways of knowing specific to their fields. For example, current trends in fields of management reject the notion of a single “positivist” approach to epistemology (Nodoushani, 1999). Additionally, science and technology studies are moving away from consideration of epistemology in order to avoid “different” perspectives (Woolgar & Lezaun, 2013). However, Righetto and Karpinski (2021) argued that interdisciplinary epistemology demands the inclusion of multiple perspectives and an orientation towards inclusivity. Despite those trends, Stewart (2007) argued that there is no good justification for dividing epistemology into topical domains, especially without a clear framework for disciplinary boundaries that may include understanding processes of belief formation.

There may be reasons to presume that the epistemological project has underlying commonalities across cultures. According to Turri (2017), current evidence of the relationship between cognitive ability and knowledge, as well as the tendency to equate knowledge with positive facts as opposed to negation or absence of facts, seems to occur in both American and Indian cultures. Regardless, there exists notable differences between the two cultures which, has led to theories about alternative ways of knowing.

Alternate Ways of Knowing

A defining characteristic that distinguishes cultures is their belief systems. Most of the prior description is based on Western notions of how we come to know. However, according to Reiter (2020), non-Western epistemologies tend to describe the knowable as nonexclusive and nondiscrete, thus providing a fuzzy (or fractional) perception of reality. Confucian notions of human intelligence include self- (see chapter 3) and other-awareness (see chapter 5), the ability to adapt one’s thinking, and the ability to solve problems in a healthy fashion (Pang et al., 2017).

How we come to know may impact the development of belief systems. The corollary may also be true: our belief systems may impact our thinking on how we come to know. Volpe (2021) concluded, “The capacity of our perceptual experience to provide justification for our ordinary empirical beliefs just depends on our accepting” that there is a knowable material world that our senses provide reliable information about (p. 2).

According to Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2010), knowledge is embodied in a temporal fashion that allows for relationships between what actions humans perform and their consequences. Although knowledge is situated and embodied in the individual

knower, understanding the relationships between the knower and knowable may be accessible to others (Karuvelil, 2016). According to Brister (2009), an individual knows about oneself and one's position because the individual "has met the relevant standards of the particular context one is in" (p. 685). "Identity, social location and context of the knower make a difference" in what is and can be known (Hird, 2012, p. 458).

Identity (see chapter 3) may be neither static nor monolithic. We may hold multiple identities. According to Moradi and Grzanka (2017), the concept of intersectionality, which challenges the notion that individuals have a single identity, should be used to systemically critique social inequalities. Yet, we live in the same world and therefore need to be responsible and attentive to the vulnerable (Scheman, 2012).

Mystery

Human knowledge is not unlimited. Knowledge occurs within a specific space and time. Although we continue to advance knowledge through our shared communication over time, the space-time-boundedness of our existence presents the possibility of losing knowledge from the past. This limited quality of human knowledge allows for the possibility of the unknowable or mystery. Human knowledge, as John Henry Newman (born 1801) taught, is limited, and that mystery exists for truths that are "too deep" for human reason (see Ekeh, 2015).

According to Barnard (2017), we live in two realms simultaneously: one of problems and one of mystery. Our language often uses the term *mystery* to refer to problems, as in a crime to be solved. Problems can be resolved through action, but mystery can only be experienced (Barnard, 2017). Examples of mystery include how we deal with dementia and dying, what we perceive as beauty, or even consciousness itself.

Wonder, as an experience of beauty, can be a source of meaning that life is a mystery (Schinkel, 2019). Mystery involves the incomprehensible or unknowable and defies reason regarding the limits to the "finite" human mind (Boyer, 2007). According to Fitzgerald (2015), Augustine of Hippo (born ca. 354), widely regarded as one of the most important thinkers in the development of Western Christianity, acknowledged the limitations of his own knowledge. For Augustine, questioning was a way of making progress toward knowing. Yet, Augustine accepted the existence of mystery as encompassing the unknowable. "Mystery shows itself as the unexplainable when a shift in a person's worldview leads to the familiar being unfamiliar and new questions and discoveries emerge" (Bunkers, 2019, p. 175).

Plato used the notion of mystery to point to how it appeals to emotions and to distinguish between body and soul (Dinkelaar, 2020). Feeling moves beyond comprehension into the realm of mystery (Scott, 2012). According to Cummings (2006), in the philosophical arguments of both Anselm of Canterbury (born 1033) and Georg Hegel (born 1770) lie the conclusion that emotions are intelligible, but whereas Anselm argued that emotions point to a source of mystery outside of the self, Hegel argued that such mystery of emotions exists only because they have not yet been rationally figured out.

Mystery has intrigued scholars and writers alike over the centuries. According to Stefanovici (2013), mystery authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries such as Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne were particularly interested in the mystery of evil. More specifically, Poe's interest in mystery came from the loss of parental love which kept him searching for answers to the unknowable (Lewis, 2019).

Mystery is an idea that provides meaning to human suffering (du Rand, 2016). According to Hernandez (2018), Gabriel Marcel's (born 1889) notion of mystery in the realm of daily experience (see Barnard, 2017) presents a method for assigning meaning to the mystery of evil: by metareflection or by reflecting on how we think about our daily experiences as both subject and object that illuminates the self (see chapter 3). Yet resolving evil takes engagement with a community of others (Hernandez, 2018). Our appreciation of mystery is practiced through how we engage with the world (Cooper, 2018).

According to Klein and Colombo (2018), philosophers have labeled free will, intentionality, and personality as unexplainable mysteries. However, Klein and Colombo (2018) offer a further distinction between unexplainable mysteries that are symmetrical and those that are asymmetrical. For these authors, asymmetrical mysteries include the relationship between neural properties and consciousness, as current research fails to provide insight into these connections. However, for van Woudenberg (2020), freedom and free will are not mysteries. Free will is a base condition of humanity that provides the opportunity to choose how to interact in the world.

Genuine differences in how we think about knowledge and mystery exist between the domains of science and religion, which allow for different approaches to the unknown (Liquin et al., 2020). For science, the need for explanation approaches the unknown as a problem to be solved. For religion, explanations about the unknown are less necessary, and appeals to mystery are more acceptable.

Mystery, or rather the perception of mystery, may be measurable using scientific methods. According to Herzog and Kropscott (2004), mystery is not preferred when danger is perceived to be present. However, when visual access is high, mystery is

preferred (see also Herzog & Bryce, 2007). Similar to the findings of Herzog and Bryce (2007) and Herzog and Kropscott (2004), Nasar and Cubukcu (2011) found a positive relationship between mystery and interest and visual appeal as a preference. However, individual preference for mystery is positively related to visual access (Herzog & Bryce, 2007). Relatedly, moment-by-moment processing of small mysteries introduced into a narrative, such as a name that's presented with no other characteristics, negatively effects memory (Love et al., 2010).

For individuals who search for answers by delving deeper into the environment in which a mystery exists, Stamps (2007a) found a relationship between subjective impressions of mystery and an objective measure of promise of more information. Similar to Herzog and Bryce (2007), Stamps (2007b) found that visual distance affected the degree of mystery presumed by an individual. Images judged as high in mystery were associated with greater recognition memory than images judged as being low in mystery (Szolosi et al., 2014).

Openness to mystery or the unknown may be unique to the individual. According to Kurakin (2019), mystery serves as a "complex emotional attractor" that occurs in the relationship between an experienced triggering event and the narrative used to explain it. Kidd (2015) argued that having a sense of mystery about the nature around us can transform us in ways that cause us to experience that nature in a virtuous manner.

The resolution of mystery may be attempted through the process of abstraction (Efran, 1994). However, abstraction can also create a trap that prevents individuals from seeing things as they are and contributes to them repeating a journey. Such a trap invites confusion in understanding and may lead to need for guidance from others. That guidance may come in the form of counseling or therapy. For Lantz (1994), "The therapist's primary task is to facilitate the emergence of mystery" (p. 53), to escape that trap.

Transformation of the Mind

The academy is interested in advancing knowledge that is either self-serving or that is a benefit to others. Academicians may struggle with that ethical dilemma until they reach such a point where they are able to find a path to join those two seemingly dichotomous destinations. My road to merging those paths started with a conflict between myself and my oldest sister Stephanie.

Stephanie was working on her master's in pastoral ministry at Loyola University when I was just beginning my undergraduate studies. She had come

across a conflict between what she was being taught and her own experience and was seeing the impact of that conflict on her journey as a female in the Catholic Church. She asked my opinion regarding what she was being taught. I responded to the effect that it would not be taught at the university if it was not true. I immediately saw the pain in her face as a reaction to my response, but it took me years to understand my arrogance.

I had not intended at that time of my life to join the academy. To get there, I had to be a student first. That student path really began after I changed my major from electrical engineering to philosophy. My first step as a student on a road to redemption from my arrogance began in a history of philosophy class when Sr. Bernadette O'Connor told us that "truth is the agreement of the mind with reality." This was a turning point for me.

I continued my studies and had my first exposure to Lonergan epistemology with Dr. John Moder. Dr. Moder was careful to show the connections between what we were learning in this class and the thread of thought that underlay all of the courses in philosophy at the university. I went on to take more classes from him, including on existentialism and the philosophy of religion. We explored thought and different ways of knowing from Eastern and Western religious traditions. He became my first academic mentor and exposed me to others who became my heroes. We read Pirsig's *Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance* in our existentialism class.

When I continued my graduate studies in communication at LSU and later at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, the foundation laid in my journey with Dr. Moder guided me when navigating the new ways of thinking to which I would be exposed. I discovered that communication had its own traditions and history spanning the millennia that paralleled the history of philosophy and that they had paths that crossed on occasion. I learned about how the discipline, known as "rhetoric" during the Classical Age of ancient Greece and the European Middle Ages, had been relegated first under philosophy due to concerns about its misuse by early theologians, then later under the study of languages during the Renaissance and the development of the Western university models. I learned how the discipline finally broke free in the United States in 1914, when teachers of speech in English departments had had enough of feeling like second-class academic citizens and began their own departments and a professional organization that would become the National Communication Association (n.d.).

I also learned about oppression of thought within the history of the academy, through the Enlightenment and within the discipline of communication. Threads of

thought or paths to follow for inquiry were closed by individuals who had positions of power in the academy. I felt disillusioned by this new-to-me knowledge of the suppression of thought. Then I learned that the traditions that had laid the foundation for my path to knowing were in disfavor with the political elite in the department in which I was studying for my doctoral degree. When I spoke out, my voice was actively suppressed. The experience provided insight into the pained expression on my sister's face all those years ago.

Stephanie went on to earn a second master's degree in social work. I have learned from her how to allow mystery to be, and to be comfortable with mystery. Not all paths have to be taken, and it has taken me years to begin to understand my own intellectual path. It is okay to choose a path to be true to oneself.

Conclusion

Knowing is in the mind, but it is shared with others. The subject's knowledge is always necessarily incomplete. Therein lies the crux of the mysterious and the knowable. Willingness to accept the possibility of mystery influences the journey to knowing. Yet teaching mystery fosters a deep motivation to learn (Peleg et al., 2015). The student on a journey of discovery about self, others, and the world learns through continual engagement and reflection. The process of epistemic understanding should be self-reflexive (see Tubbs, 2016).

Reflective student inquiry and reference to historical developments in science is necessary for developing understanding about the nature of science (Allchin, 2011). According to Lee et al. (2021), what we know about how we do science is positively related to the outcome of science education. A core goal of teaching critical thinking is to enable students to distinguish between what they know and what they believe or doubt (Barzilai & Chinn, 2018).

In terms of milestones, each new element of knowledge we obtain adds to the schema we have developed, but at some point, we may experience a transformation in what we know. That transformation often comes from some challenge put before us, a new perspective from some other person of whom we had not previously been aware. What are those milestones?

This chapter examined more closely the journey of coming to know about the world around us in general terms. The next chapter will focus more specifically on how we come to know others.

Chapter 5

Other Awareness

The ability to know allows us the possibility to know others. Yet, knowing others is always limited by the distinction between the perception and the perceived. Knowing others is a journey in itself.

This chapter explores the processes by which we develop other-awareness and the steps that can be taken to enhance relationships with others.

How do we learn about others? Is it possible to know others completely? How do we account for differences?

Introduction

“You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view.”
(Lee, 1960/1982, p. 30)

Awareness of the self-identity of others, or how they view themselves in relation to others and the world around them is an important milestone in our journey. However, relationships consist of people who have individual perceptions, metaperceptions, and co-orientation toward relational partners (LeBlanc, 2018). Metaperceptions comprise perceptions about perceptions, and co-orientation is the degree of agreement of perceptions and metaperceptions between relational partners. Relationships with others can thus be influenced by the degree of effectiveness in communication of perceptions and metaperceptions. According to Bredlau (2019), perception is a collaborative endeavor with trusted others.

Human agency includes metacognition (or metaperceptions; see LeBlanc, 2018), or the ability to represent the thoughts of others (Baumeister et al., 2018). This ability presupposes intent and desire to understand the other. Baumeister et al. (2018) conclude that evidence suggests that individuals work to redefine their understanding of others but only to a point that does not detract from group harmony or consensus.

In the previous chapter (chapter 4), we examined ideas about how we come to know in general as part of our communication journey. We come to know through various senses and processes, but so do other people around us. What they come to know may not match what we know, as their experiences and their surroundings could be considerably different.

In this chapter, we will examine the processes through which we come to know others and to become other-aware through communication competence, and how we can enhance relationships with others.

Developing Other Awareness

Attending to and awareness of others involves multiple parallel internal processes using different sensory cues (Pourtois et al., 2013). In this way, other-awareness is a type of knowing (see chapter 4). Grossberg (2013) argued that the most sound explanation of how individuals learn about the world is described by adaptive resonance theory (see Carpenter & Grossberg, 2003), which posits that learning occurs through an interaction between what is known a priori and incoming sensory information. This view is similar to Kantian epistemology. However, as was seen in chapter 4, this view is not without criticism.

Alternative views regarding how we come to know are most expressed when considering knowing others, or rather knowing what is in others' minds. Recent scholarship in fields such as sociology, psychology, and communication point to the importance of interacting with others to come to know what is in their minds. Such interaction involves verbal language use as well as nonverbal expression to communicate ideas. However, continuing interaction in the context of some level of relationship with the other requires being able to make sense of the verbal (and nonverbal) information being presented. Individuals use prediction to process language use by others, and that prediction for comprehension is part of the same process for producing responses (Pickering & Garrod, 2013).

Comprehension and verbal response presume consciousness and intentionality. According to Prinz (2017), consciousness is developed by "importing" information from others to self. An alternative explanation regarding the perception of others' mental states is theory of mind. Theory of mind is the psychological concept that describes an individual's ability to imagine and ascribe the mental states of others. According to Butterfill and Apperly (2013), minimally, theory of mind requires encountering the other and registering the other as a goal-oriented agent. In this way, we can build metaperceptions about the other's perceptions: "Our awareness of others as minded human beings can be perceptual and does not always necessitate post-perceptual inferences" (Varga, 2017, p. 803).

This getting to know others presents interesting challenges, as their mental states are neither external nor obvious. We experience life in the first person

(subjectively) while simultaneously perceiving the outcomes of our thinking about the world around us objectively in the third person (Stoll, 2019). This first-person/third-person conundrum illustrates difficulties in explaining how we can know the (internal) thoughts of others.

For example, Gangopadhyay and Miyahara (2015) argued against the notion that individuals can “directly” access the mental state of others through some “mirror” neurons that are coupled with embodied engagement (see Gallagher, 2008).

Gangopadhyay and Miyahara (2015) posited that perception of the other must consist “of the presentation and co-presentation of actual and possible behaviors” (p. 704).

Horn (2012) argues that the causal theory of perception (for all subjects and objects, if the subject perceives an object, then the subject is bound to that object) is sound in that the ability to measure discrete instances of perception is not required to show that perception has occurred; only the end effect is required. Yet according to Carruthers (2015), the mental states of others can be interpreted through their action and our concepts of the relationship between similar actions and our own experience.

Recent brain-imaging studies have shown that individuals utilize their connections with others when developing meaning about selves in context of relationship. Functional MRI studies revealed that individuals who share experiences store and organize information about that event in similar locations and using similar patterns in the brain (Chen et al., 2017). In this sense, perception builds upon earlier sense experiences, such that “perception is a facet of sense-making rather than a distinct ‘input’ phase” (McGann & De Jaegher, 2009, p. 423). For these authors, the self is core to the process of perception in that the self observes his or her own action in relation to meaning (McGann & De Jaegher, 2009).

Some research has found differences in other perception and awareness based upon gender. According to Winquist et al. (1998), females tend to ascribe more positive traits to others compared to males. Similarly, females have greater activation in the left cortex regions of the brain when dealing with negative emotions compared to men (Stevens & Hamann, 2012). In another study, Turnage et al. (2012) found that females report higher levels of emotional empathy compared to males. However, Pavlova (2009) found no differences between males and females regarding both behaviors and physical perception processes engaged in visual social perception. As well, Schminke et al. (2003) demonstrated that males and females have similar perceptions of the ethics of others of their own and other genders.

This understanding of each other may be a function of social cognition, which is composed of two broad categories of behaviors: agency and communion (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014). Agency can be described as willingness to act to pursue one’s own

goals, whereas communion represents the need to gain social connections with others. According to Abele and Wojciszke (2014), communion is of greater importance in social cognition than agency. The meaning of both agency and communion meaning are derived from observed interpersonal behavior (Leising & Bleidorn, 2011). This behavior is highly communicative in nature. For example, listening to the speech of another activates perceptual centers in the posterior temporal lobe that correspond to representations of meaning (Mesgarani & Chang, 2012).

Conversations involve two people, minimally, and as such the individual can hear himself or herself talking with the other person. Although the individual is processing the information he or she is trying to convey, the individual speaks in a way that is likely contextually relevant within the conversation. These parallel processes (speaking and listening) happen simultaneously to some degree of effectiveness for both conversants. During the conversation, individuals could be engaged in other-perception at the same time as self-perception.

According to Kenny and West (2010), the process of other-perception is similar to the process of self-perception on two dimensions: agreement and similarity. An individual may assume similarity with another barring information from visual cues (Kenny & West, 2010). The authors also found that familiarity tends to lead to less agreement about perceptions between self and other (Kenny & West, 2010). Perception of others requires observation of the others' actions in contexts that mirror self-perceptions of the connections between our own thoughts and actions (Knoblich & Sebanz, 2006).

Conversation notwithstanding, individuals make attributions about others' mental states based upon perceptual experience regardless of whether the others' behaviors may be directly observed (Westfall, 2020). An individual's ability to accurately perceive others is a function of personality trait characteristics (Wood et al., 2010). Individuals fairly accurately infer another's self-identity and personality traits and sometimes distinguish between their own perceptions of others and others' self-perceptions (Solomon & Vazire, 2016). However, individuals' perceptions are more strongly influenced by their own abilities to respond to the environment than by their perceptions of others' abilities to respond to that environment (Witt et al., 2014).

Identity of self is derived dialogically through self-perception and social interaction (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). This dialogic approach gives rise to the possibility of multiple self-identities (see chapter 2) but also provides for the understanding of others as having multiple identities, or rather as participating in multiple social contexts. This broader understanding of self, and consequently others, as having multiple identities (known as intersectionality) allows for the possibility of

empathy (see chapter 3). According to Findley and Ojanen (2013), empathy, self-esteem, and affirmative perceptions of others are positively associated with communal goals, whereas empathy was negatively associated with agentic goals.

A focus on communal goals, or goals associated with the betterment of a relationship, will allow for enhancement of other-awareness. The next section will describe such enhancement.

Enhancing Other Awareness

Enhancing other-awareness begins with being open to interacting with and learning from others. Individuals adapt their expectations about the language use of others in order to increase efficiency in understanding, even within the same language group, when individual differences in life experiences may otherwise create differences in language use (Fine et al., 2013). Individuals may even adapt how they interact with others. For example, according to Bosker (2017), individuals may reduce their speech rate based on their perceptions of another's speech rate. This phenomenon is one aspect of the larger phenomena of convergence. Individuals in relationships tend to converge in their communication behaviors.

To increase effectiveness in understanding others, individuals will exert energy to selectively attend and listen to one another (see chapter 3), even when the context is not ideal. For example, Ding and Simon (2012) demonstrated experimentally that individuals can distinguish and attend to a particular speaker in an environment with multiple speakers. The intention to understand the other calls one to attend to all aspects of the information being provided in an interaction, verbal and nonverbal. Attention to emotions of the other requires special attention to their nonverbal cues.

According to Spaulding (2015), individuals have basic perceptual beliefs about the perceptions of others based on observations of the others' emotional expressions. Perceptions of emotion are typically informed by contextual cues (Barrett et al., 2011). In a follow-up study, Barrett et al. (2019) also found that the meaning of facial expressions is contextually and culturally dependent, and they are not reliable as indicators of emotion. Both verbal and nonverbal information is important.

LeDoux and Brown (2017) argued that emotions can never be unconscious. Rather, they concluded that emotions are conscious experiences derived from situational awareness. However, individuals are able to differentiate socially relevant behavior, such as facial expressions denoting an emotion, from mimicry (Schilbach et al., 2013). Individuals may mimic the emotional facial expressions of others depending

on the contexts of those relationships (Hess & Fischer, 2013). This mimicry acts as a regulator of the relationship and may build accommodation and relational convergence.

Yet, mimicry alone cannot progress the development of relationships. In order to differentiate authentic emotional expression from mimicry, language users must possess a certain level of communication competence. According to Canale and Swain (1980), communication competence is comprised of these minimal elements: (a) grammatical competence, (b) sociolinguistic competence, and (c) strategic competence. Grammatical competence involves knowledge of lexical terms and the rules of syntax, semantics, morphology, and phonology—in other words, knowledge of language. Sociolinguistic competence involves knowledge of sociocultural rules and rules of discourse. Strategic competence involves the application of verbal and nonverbal strategies related to the intended impact of a message on the listener.

Communication competence allows conversants to make sense of complex emotional expressions. Compound emotions comprised of two or more simple emotions are displayed facially with a combination of muscles used in display of each of the simple emotions (Du et al., 2014). Perception of the other's mental state can be directly inferred from observed behavior of the other, such as through actions or nonverbal expressions—that is, facial expressions of emotion (Gallagher, 2008). This inference is more accurately achieved through shared experience and can occur because perception is an “active, skillful, embodied engagement with the world” (Gallagher, 2008, pp. 541-542).

When assessing another, “information about a person's emotional reactions to an event can be used to draw conclusions about the person's personality” (Hareli & Hess, 2010, p. 137). Often we compare the other's emotional reaction to our own to make sense of the mind of the other. The ability to see and understand self “is the experience of being able to affect one's social environment through one's embodied feelings, and the recognition that one is causally on par with other members of that environment” (Seemann, 2008, p. 258).

The social environment, or more directly the relational environment, can influence emotional reactions. According to Dizén and Berenbaum (2011), perceptions of the self or other as having a highly unstable self-concept and self-esteem predict a wide variability of emotions. Individuals are more likely to make choices about how to resolve social or relational dilemmas ad hoc using situational cues as opposed to using trait-like, generalized expectations (Rau, Thielmann, et al., 2020).

Individuals are also more likely to make choices about how to respond to another based on perceptions about the other's personality traits. According to Rosopa et al. (2013), others who are perceived as altruistic are more likely to also be perceived as

having positive personality characteristics. Accuracy in judging the self-esteem of another is higher among individuals who are acquainted with one another compared to strangers (Kilianski, 2008). However, even for acquaintances, individuals likely first use evaluations of their own self-esteem to make assessments of others' self-esteem, barring information about the other. In one study, Bosacki (2013) found that preadolescent children who are more able to understand that others have a mind of their own tended to view themselves more negatively.

Prejudgments may influence other-awareness. For example, according to Oltmanns et al. (2005), individuals believe that others perceive their personality characteristics similarly and that there is agreement between themselves and others regarding their self-perceptions. When individuals associate only with others within their own social or cultural groups, these individuals may be influenced to hold on to prejudgments. In such environments, people tend to assign majority ideas to their own thinking as opposed to minority ideas (Gardikiotis, 2017). Interestingly, Chou and Edge (2012) found that using social media platforms, like Facebook, influences people's perceptions of others, and heavy use of social media tends to more greatly distort these perceptions. Eason et al. (2019) demonstrated experimentally that biased perceptions of others' attitudes about race arise more frequently in low diversity social contexts than in high diversity social contexts.

Between known others, other-perception is based more strongly on actual similarity than tendency to project self-identity on the other (Paunonen & Hong, 2013). Individuals tend to incorporate into their own self-concepts perceived attributes of another individual when that other individual is believed to have freely chosen actions that are similar to one's own identity (Goldstein & Cialdini, 2007). We tend to associate with others that we perceive to be similar to us, even when we lack information about them. These tendencies to group with others of perceived similarity tend to bolster our sense of self-identity. However, these tendencies can have detrimental effects. Identity fusion, or the tendency to view one's identity as equivalent to the identity of the group, occurs when boundaries between self- and group identity are relatively porous (Swann et al., 2012).

The tendency to stay within one's own group may also be influenced by esteem. For example, according to Strohming and Nichols (2014), moral traits are the most essential elements of identity. An individual may view the group they're most associated with as having higher moral qualities than other potential groups. Conversely, individuals may be motivated to remain within one group due to there being some positive effects for doing so. Often strong and positive social connections are related to positive emotions and physical health (Kok et al., 2013).

However, this method of association is not the only way to achieve positive emotions and physical health. Positivity could result from a feedback loop. Having a positive view of others may be influenced by an individual's own psychological well-being (Rau, Nestler, et al., 2020). Such positivity could influence the development of relationships with others outside the group. These experiences then lead to further learning of others and other-awareness. According to Meagher et al. (2015), an individual with intellectual humility is open to the ideas of others.

Given these findings, enhancing other-awareness demands an openness to getting to know others within their own contexts, as well as an openness to learning about others who may not be from familiar social environments. Expanding beyond one's social environment requires trust.

Trust

According to Hinde (1976), "A relationship involves a series of interactions in time between two individuals known to each other" (p. 5). Understanding the relationship "requires an understanding not only of the component interactions, but of how those interactions are patterned in time" (Hinde, 1976, p. 7). Over time, trust can be developed between individuals based on their knowledge of one another.

Trust occurs when individuals experience the ability to share with others their self-concepts (see chapter 2) with others without fear of being hurt. According to Halbesleben and Wheeler (2015), trust is a belief that investing in a relationship will result in reciprocation from the other. Their study found that having trust in a coworker will result in an individual investing more interpersonal citizenship behavior, such as listening, to gain coworker support. However, Koopman et al. (2016) found that such supportive behavior (communal goals) can have negative consequences for individuals in an organizational setting in that putting too much emphasis on helping others can prevent advancement in personal (agentic) goals such as promotion. Interestingly, research has shown that indiscriminately friendly children tend to have more globally positive self-concepts and trust toward others (Vervoort et al., 2014).

Individuals tend to trust others they perceive as having both ability and integrity, as well as emotional intelligence (Christie et al., 2015). As described in the previous section, individuals may associate with a group based on the perception of similarity. Shared group membership influences both the perception of risk and risk-taking behavior, but that risk-taking may occur due to misplaced trust in the social group (Cruwys et al., 2021). Perception of similarity also influences outcomes in romantic

couples. According to Furler et al. (2014), among romantic couples, relational satisfaction is increased when both partners perceive each other as similar in personality.

Agreement between self- and other perceptions is highly influenced by amount of information available (Beer & Watson, 2010). According to Goodwin et al. (2014), information about another's moral character—including traits such as kindness, honesty, and trustworthiness—is a primary determinant of person perception. Additionally, another's social status is often inferred from perceptions of their relational ties and the direction of interaction with their social networks (Betancourt et al., 2018). The authors also found that perceptions of social status may vary based upon the different groups to which the other belongs.

Individuals may be motivated to distrust others from different groups based on prejudgments or experience. Perceptions that an individual is discriminated against by the other have measurable effects on the individual's psychological well-being, including influencing self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and so on (Schmitt et al., 2014). As well, individuals are less likely to seek support from others they perceive to have lower self-esteem (Cavallo & Hirniak, 2019). LeBlanc and Garcia (2019) argued that perception of others can be negatively biased by previous unhealthy relationships. However, in conflictual situations between individuals, the intensity level of the relationship increased perspective-taking of the other person, according to Steins (2000).

Marriage and Learning the Other

My sister Dianne once told me, "You cannot understand what it means to have children unless you have them yourself." I took offense to that statement. I believed that a well-intentioned and thoughtful person might come to the same conclusions about relational issues. After all, I was a child of parents. I later came to understand my intellectual arrogance in taking offense to the suggestion of having a lack of experience.

I came to marital life and raising a family much later in life than my older siblings. Although I had dated in high school, during my young adult life, I had taken up a vow of celibacy for a number of years while in the seminary. When I continued on with graduate school, though dating was not prevented, the rigors of study certainly stunted proper attention on my part to healthy relationship development with a significant other.

Toward the end of my doctoral studies, I met Melanie. She came to Carbondale to start a new life away from home, and we crossed paths in school. She was a non-traditional, first-generation undergraduate student. She was a package deal: she was a single mom with a toddler. Although I was a little slower to come around, Melanie has stated on numerous occasions over the years to me and many others that she knew within a few weeks of meeting me that I was the man she wanted to marry. I still do not fully understand that sentiment.

We had a few occasions to interact over the next year and a half. I was dating someone else at the time, but at the end of that relationship, a mutual friend mentioned that I should contact Melanie. Our friend had seen her at a grocery store and struck up a conversation with her only to discover that Melanie's daughter, Gabrielle, had developed an illness, and Melanie was fearful.

I had remembered meeting little Gabrielle, and I felt concern for her and Melanie's well-being. I contacted her, and over the course of the next few months, we became closer friends. We called each other regularly. While away at an academic conference in San Diego, I contacted her, and over the course of that conversation, I asked her out on a date. When I returned from California, we arranged to meet, and all three of us went to the St. Louis Zoo. It was the week before Thanksgiving, and there was a special exhibit with a leucistic alligator named "Louis LeBlanc," on loan from the New Orleans Zoo. Melanie returned the favor and invited me to the Thanksgiving party she was having with friends at her house the next day. Thus began our journey together.

We learned about each other through conversations: our commonalities and our differences. We both came from large Catholic families. She had seven siblings to my six. Some of her siblings were half-siblings, and some were step-siblings. She also had a twin brother. That first year, she invited me to meet her family in northern Illinois. They were having a "get together": a pig roast. When she said "Meet the family," I learned she meant "extended" family, including her aunts, uncles, cousins, and so on.

The following summer, her twin brother, Michael, was marrying a woman named Crystal in California, and Melanie wanted to go. I offered to rent a car so the three of us could drive to the wedding and have a little vacation at the same time. Her friends told her, "If you survive a road trip with this guy, marry him." We fought the whole way to California and back. But we also learned we had a shared love for the beauty of nature and the enjoyment of travel. A year later, I asked her to marry me while hiking on the South Rim of the Chisos Mountains in Big Bend National Park.

Much of our journey for the past twenty-plus years together has followed similar paths. I went on to finish my doctoral degree and landed teaching jobs at the university level. We got married and moved to Texas, where Melanie continued her education and found her own love of teaching, albeit with young children. We had two more children of our own and became a family of five. Over the course of our life together, we have had many opportunities to argue and learn about each other.

Choosing to spend a significant portion of life in the presence of another comes with the choices that the other has also made on her or his journey. Relationships are a “work in progress.” As such, the journey is never truly over.

Perspective-taking also tends to influence empathy. Empathy toward the other is achieved through “cooperation, trust and successful embodied understanding in interaction” (Bruttomesso, 2016, p. 361). Empathy can be increased through having accurate knowledge of the other. Interestingly, Yeh and Liu (2007) found that clinically depressed individuals tend to provide more accurate descriptions of significant others compared to individuals who are not depressed. High self-esteem influences the tendency to forgive self and others, while empathy only influences the tendency to forgive others (Turnage et al., 2012).

Conclusion

Perception of the other allows for other awareness, which is enhanced and enriched in relationships. Although self-awareness (chapter 2) comes before other awareness (chapter 5) when describing our journey, as we have seen here, the journey is not so linear. Indeed, the influence of others on self-perception and awareness is apparent in our daily lived experience with others. As well, our understanding of ourselves influences our awareness of others. How we talk to those we are in relationships with may influence both self- and other awareness.

As reported in chapter 2 (“Self-Awareness”), Arroyo and Segrin (2011) found that relational commitment and satisfaction among friends was highly influenced by self-perceptions of social skills, in particular communication competence. However, in the same study, Arroyo and Segrin (2011) found that relational satisfaction and commitment were also influenced by individuals’ perceptions of their friends’ communication competence. In addition, time spent with others over the long journey can influence our mutual assimilation of one another’s perspectives and ways of interacting with the world. We converge with those closest to us.

In terms of milestones, our first instance of other awareness may happen in infancy (see chapter 1), although our awareness of distinction between the self and the other happens much later. Yet different other awareness milestones may occur in times of conflict with our relational partners. The first time one experiences a difference in the other that was not known before the conflict occurred can bring about a change in direction: a turning point.

It is in the understanding of those differences of experience that allows for other awareness distinct from self-awareness. This distinction creates the opportunity for sharing self with others through storytelling. Telling stories is the beginning of a new path on our journey. The next chapter will describe teaching as a form of storytelling, of sharing of self (or knowledge held by the self) for the benefit of others.

Chapter 6

Teaching

The journey of learning about the world and others leads to the need to share what has been learned with others. This act is an intentionally communicative one that can be directed toward one other or many others. This chapter uncovers the qualities of teaching and of the teacher, from motivation and communication to the act of mentoring.

"When you get, give. When you learn, teach." Maya Angelou (cited by Okura, 2014).

How do we teach others? What motivates a person to want to teach others? What are the communication qualities of teaching? What does it mean to mentor?

Introduction

"Having heard of it is not as good as having seen it. Having seen it is not as good as knowing it. Knowing it is not as good as putting it into practice." (Xun Kuang, a.k.a. Xunzi, born ca. 310 BCE, 2014, p. 64).

Teaching is a profession in which the goal is to impart what one knows or to provide the means by which another can come to know. Accomplishment of that goal requires communication. Perception of self and others, which contributes to the formation of self-awareness and self-identity, is accomplished through communication (Potapchule et al., 2020). Professional self-identification as a teacher, for example, develops through training in the profession (Potapchule et al., 2020) within the context of self-awareness (chapter 2), listening (chapter 3), knowing (chapter 4), and other awareness (chapter 5).

Communication is at the core of teaching, whether the relationships are one-on-one, one-to-many, or many-to-one. To ability to communicate effectively may serve as a motivator to teach and even join the teaching profession. Research suggests that there is a significant positive relationship between communication skills and attitudes toward the teaching profession among teachers in training (Yeşil, 2010). How individuals communicate with others, particularly during the act of teaching, can have positive effects on the developmental journeys of others. For example, Cameron and Pierce (1994) found that positive verbal feedback enhances an individual's internal motivation. The qualities of teaching and of being a teacher develop over time through interaction.

In this chapter, we will examine the profession of teaching, including the current qualities of teaching and teachers, the motivation to teach, and the communication skills necessary for teaching. This chapter will also describe one-on-one teaching known as mentoring.

The Art of Teaching

Teaching is a process much like storytelling where an individual tries to impart upon another the knowledge they have for the betterment of the other. The teacher, thus, must know (see chapter 4) something in order to share it through the act of communication and demonstration. Yet effective teaching may also require both self-awareness (chapter 2) and other awareness (chapter 5). According to Sanderson (2020), competency as an educator requires self-reflection to increase self-awareness.

Self-awareness is enhanced through reflection and feedback. In a profession such as teaching, feedback comes from students and from colleagues. Research has found that teachers who participate in a reflective practice group with mentors show increased feelings of effectiveness, which in turn result in higher student performance (Chase et al., 2001). Feedback helps individuals view perspectives different from their own and often helps them notice aspects of their own behavior that they miss through self-reflection. For example, student feedback can help because “teachers are not always aware of the biases they hold or the influence they have upon learners” (Riley & Ungerleider, 2012, p. 319). Some such biases can increase the likelihood of harming the very people teachers hope to help through teaching. Thus, feedback and reflection can help teachers be self-aware of their language use toward others.

For example, gender stereotyping and discrimination can be greatly reduced by using gender-fair language, including using gender-unmarked forms of terms or using pronouns that include all genders (Sczesny et al., 2016). Conversely, practice and inclusion teaching styles positively influence students’ perceptions of their own competence and autonomy (Kirby et al., 2015). More specifically, teachers who practice “communicating high standards and a personal assurance of the student’s potential to reach them can bolster minority adolescents’ school trust and improve their academic behavior in response to critical feedback” (Yeager et al., 2014, p. 820).

The teacher can also positively influence student learning through modeling behaviors. These modeling behaviors can assist in learning by providing visual cues to the content and process related to the learning goal (Salisu & Ransom, 2014). According to Savion (2009), providing opportunities for the student to serve temporarily

as the teacher, by repeating the teacher's modeling behaviors, allows the student to develop an understanding and self-awareness of the student's approach to problem-solving and complex material. Providing these opportunities may also help the student take the perspective of the teacher, increasing both the student's self-awareness and other awareness.

Sharing the experience of tasks through trading roles can also create a sense of belonging in the learning community. Belongingness can impact students in different learning contexts. In contexts where community is less tangible due to physical space—such as in distance learning and remote learning (online) environments—practices that enhance this sense of belonging may be critical to success. Research has found that a sense of belonging to the learning community can help students persist in online learning environments (Hart, 2012).

Persistence can also be influenced by students' perceptions of faculty support. According to Morrow and Ackermann (2012), higher levels of faculty support are positively associated with intention to stay in school. Perception of support can be a function of the strategies of teachers and/or by the learning environment. Holistic approaches that consider not only content mastery but development of the person can be highly supportive. A holistic learning system allows students to focus on purposefulness and mindfulness towards well-being and meaning for their lives (Koul & Nayar, 2021). In this environment, the teacher takes on the roles of facilitator, coach, and mentor (Koul & Nayar, 2021).

Active teaching strategies can also improve a student's sense of competence, autonomy, and self-awareness. Research has demonstrated that active teaching improves student outcomes, including student motivation and grade performance, and mitigates difficult course content (Andres, 2019). Student performance also can be improved by providing opportunities for students to learn how to apply assessment criteria such as by using exemplars (Rust et al., 2003). According to Scoles et al. (2013), students who utilized exemplars scored better on tests than students who did not. Relatedly, highly structured online discussion instructions and rubrics that facilitate and assist in evaluating online discussion postings result in better understanding of course content (Gilbert & Dabbagh, 2005). Lemons and Lemons (2013) proposed that teachers, particularly in the sciences, provide multiple opportunities for students to practice answering higher-order questions. Teachers (in higher education) can assist students from diverse backgrounds in obtaining college-level vocabulary through intentional strategies, according to Green (2013).

Other teaching strategies can positively influence student learning outcomes. For example, teachers can influence a reduction in student procrastination by creating

assignments that students find interesting, that have clear instructions, and that involve a variety of skills that students can view as rewarding (Ackerman & Gross, 2005). According to Sadler (2005), for grading standards to function properly, the standards should be made available to students beforehand, should be utilized by the instructor for assessment, and should be reviewed by a panel of experts. Such approaches can assist with students' sense of self-efficacy and may increase motivation. Better grades are achieved by students who are highly internally motivated compared to students who have high or low external motivation (Lin et al., 2003).

For students who may have less internal motivation, providing lecture notes to students can be an effective way to compensate for students missing class (Kiewra, 2002). However, according to Cornelius and Owen-DeSchryver (2008), students who receive partial course notes from the instructor perform better in class than students who receive full notes from the instructor. Also, increasing classroom interaction through teaching strategies can help students who respond to positive external motivation. According to Ingram and Elliott (2016), extending wait times between when a teacher asks a question and a student respond can set new norms for classroom interaction. However, once those norms are accepted, further extension of wait times can lead to students second-guessing their responses (Ingram & Elliott, 2016).

Students also respond to feedback. According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), there are four levels of feedback that teachers can provide to students: (a) about the task, (b) about the process, (c) about self-regulation, and (d) about the self as a person. Positive feedback about the task, process, or regulation is typically most effective in assisting in increasing student performance. Feedback about the self, whether positive or negative, is rarely effective in increasing student performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback should be goal-referenced, tangible and transparent, actionable, timely, user-friendly, ongoing, and consistent (Wiggins, 2012). However, emotional maturity influences how students respond to feedback from teachers and grades (Pitt & Norton, 2017). The authors recommended that feedback focus on performance and not on the student's individual characteristics (Pitt & Norton, 2017). Regardless, students perceive personalized video feedback as more useful than written feedback (Turner & West, 2013).

Pedagogy vs. Andragogy

As the above section has described, the techniques for transmitting knowledge or providing opportunities for individuals to learn the tools useful for gaining knowledge may differ based on the developmental level of the student. The primary, or perhaps the

most common, term for teaching methodologies is *pedagogy*. However, the term pedagogy implies teaching techniques for students who are children (root *peda*). A different term may be more appropriate when the students are adults, as the techniques used for teaching adults may be quite different.

The term *andragogy* was first used by Alexander Capp in 1833 to differentiate education in adulthood from learning among children (Loeng, 2017). The term was not in widespread use until the latter part of the twentieth century, when education researchers began looking more closely at the differences in needs between children and adult learners. In the 1970s, education researcher Knowles developed a conception of andragogy that stems from a set of assumptions about the state of development of adults as being distinct from that of children, having followed from a progression over time. (Loeng, 2018). Teachers of adults work within a community of learners taking advantage of the knowledge, experience, and autonomy of individuals (Note et al., 2021).

The root of andragogy (*andra*), however, implies the learners are male, which may have well been the case for Capp's adult learners in 1833. Loeng (2018) suggested a new term to encapsulate teaching techniques for all adult learners, *teleiagogy*. Regardless of the term used, importance should be placed on considering the developmental level (see chapter 1) of the students and the purpose for teaching them.

Teaching Motivation

As described previously, teaching involves either transmitting knowledge or providing the tools for others to gain knowledge. The approach a teacher takes may be a function of the teacher's motivation. According to Kember and Kwan (2000), the two main orientations to teaching are transmissive and facilitative, where transmissive approaches are teacher- or content-centered and facilitative approaches are student- or learning-centered. However, motivations for choosing teaching as a career are similar across different cultures of the world (Watt et al., 2012).

According to Thomson et al. (2012), prospective teachers express altruistic, intrinsic, and extrinsic reasons for choosing the profession of teaching, with altruistic and intrinsic motivations appearing to be stronger than extrinsic reasons. Altruistic motivations may include seeing teaching as promoting a social good by helping children (and adults). Intrinsic motivations include sharing knowledge and working with others. Extrinsic motivations include having long holidays and the status of the profession.

Working with children is one of the strongest motivators for teachers in training, followed by attitudes towards the professional status of teachers (Șerbănescu & Popescu, 2014). Teachers in training in a study in Romania and other European countries referred to the motivation to teach as a vocational “calling” (Șerbănescu & Popescu, 2014). Autonomously (internally) motivated teachers tend to use more student-centered approaches than nonautonomously (externally) motivated teachers (Hein et al., 2012). According to Roth et al. (2007), teachers’ sense of autonomy is associated with feelings of accomplishment. Additionally, Roth et al. (2007) found that teachers’ sense of autonomy influenced students’ motivation for learning.

According to Berger and Girardet (2021), teachers who are motivated by the social utility (altruistic) value of teaching are more likely to feel a sense of responsibility to their relationships with students and students’ motivation and achievement. A social utility value for teachers may be that working with young people gives them a sense of contributing to society. Interestingly, altruistic teaching motivation occurs in tight job markets as well as in locations where there are shortages of teachers (Wong et al., 2014). Additionally, the researchers (Berger & Girardet, 2021) found that teachers who are motivated by an intrinsic value to teach feel a higher level of personal responsibility for the quality of their teaching.

Motivation to teach concerns not only teachers but also others considering the profession, although the type of motivation may be a function of commitment or “calling.” For example, interest in a career in teaching among non-education majors is related to extrinsic rewards (personal utility) for males and altruism (social utility) for females (Giersch, 2021). This gender difference may be attributed to a relative lack of males in the teaching profession for lower grades and consequent perceptions of low extrinsic rewards (Giersch, 2021). And for preservice teachers, the expertise needed for the task and the level of difficulty of task demands along with the possibility of working with children or adolescents serve as the top three motivators for choosing teaching as a career (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2014).

Attitudes toward the teaching profession strongly influence both self-efficacy and motivation to teach among prospective teachers (Gök & Atalay Kabasakal, 2019). According to Kim and Cho (2014), the level of pre-service teachers’ sense of self-efficacy influences their internal motivation to overcome concerns about the difference between what they learn about teaching and the practice of teaching. Prospective teachers view experience in practicing teaching as important for their motivation to teach and feelings of competence (Ismail & Jarrah, 2019).

Satisfaction of teacher needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness to colleagues is strongly and positively related to teaching motivation (Esdar et al., 2016).

Teachers who emphasize process over content in their teaching tend to be more highly motivated (Visser-Wijnveen et al., 2014). According to Şenol and Akdağ (2018), for teachers in training, having a positive attitude towards uncertainty related to their chosen career positively influenced their motivation towards teaching. Put another way, the more comfortable a person is with mystery (see Chapter 4), the more likely they will be motivated to pursue a particular career path.

Ambivalence toward motivation to teach among student teachers comes from lack of confidence related to teacher agency, changing roles of teachers within the local social context, and rising task demands placed upon teachers (Cheng et al., 2015). Enjoyment of teaching and job satisfaction may be related to “supportive professional environments with manageable workloads and professional autonomy” (Cheng et al., 2015, p. 155). For teachers in training, one important motivator to enter the profession includes experiencing an inspiring teacher as a model (Rafailă, 2014).

According to Herman (2019), the most frequent external motivators for students entering the teaching profession include models provided by other teachers, the holidays, and working conditions. The most frequent internal motivators for students entering the teaching profession include love of children, changing society for the better, and wanting to support others to learn (Herman, 2019). However, altruism seems to be a stronger motivator for teacher trainees entering the profession than extrinsic or intrinsic motivation (Htang, 2019). Altruistic motivations include believing in teaching as an important profession and wanting to help children learn. Consequently, teachers’ beliefs that there is meaningful work influences job satisfaction and professional and organizational commitment (Lee & Nie, 2014).

Developmental processes, milestones, and turning points matter in the training of teachers. In particular, motivation to teach increases for teachers in training after their first practicum (Sinclair, 2008). Motivation to become a teacher also increases with age (Anghelache, 2014). To maintain motivation to teach, support for continuing the professional development of teachers is necessary (Gao & Xu, 2014).

Many teachers struggle to determine their teaching responsibility due to conflicting messages from external forces, including community expectations and governing board mandates related to curriculum and instruction (Biesta et al., 2015). The cultural and social environment in which teachers practice can influence their motivation to teach (Trent et al., 2014). Teachers placed in unfamiliar or unsupportive social environments tend to lose motivation to teach. Autonomy of the teaching profession that is based on faculty expertise in a specific domain is currently challenged by educational policies mandated by boards (Hermansen, 2017).

Often teachers are required to work in teams with individuals who have different motivations. Teamwork by itself does not decrease the motivation to quit the teaching profession (Neto et al., 2018). Teamwork can increase conflict and cause a loss of a sense of autonomy. Teacher training, socialization, and mentorship can assist in mitigating these conflicts. Socialization of teachers in training by mentors influences shifts in motivation to teach (Tang et al., 2014). Effective mentors influence increases in enthusiasm to teach (Tang et al., 2014). Mentorship will be covered in more detail later in this chapter.

According to Thoonen et al. (2011), experimenting with teaching techniques and reflection on approaches strongly influence teaching practices, more so than keeping up to date with teaching trends. Strong mentorship and organizational leadership that supports teacher engagement in professional development influences continued motivation to teach (Thoonen et al., 2011).

Motivated teachers motivate students to learn. According to Tremblay-Wragg et al. (2021), diversification of teaching strategies including the use of student-centered active-learning techniques improves student motivation to learn. As well, a higher level of autonomy provided to students by teachers increases students' motivation to learn (Sieglová, 2019). Interestingly, Jiang et al. (2021) found that teachers' intention to use teaching techniques such as flipped teaching is mainly motivated by their need for competence and autonomy satisfaction. Flipped teaching is a technique in which more time is utilized for applying knowledge to assignments than is spent on knowledge transmission through lecturing.

Motivating or demotivating students through teacher behaviors falls on two dimensions: the degree of controlling behavior and the degree of directive behavior (Vermote et al., 2020). Teachers who provide for students' needs for autonomy and competence (degree of control) and are supportive of students' initiative (degree of directiveness) more strongly motivate students to learn. Contrarily, teachers who are more domineering and unsupportive of students' initiative more strongly demotivate students. However, according to Jensen et al. (2015), active-learning strategies are more indicative of positive learning outcomes than the distinction between teacher-led and peer-led learning.

Although motivated teachers can influence motivation among students, student-reported teaching quality is not related to teacher motivations (Praetorius et al., 2017). Rather, there are other factors that may more strongly influence student motivations in an active learning environment. For example, Uitto (2012) found that students sought to discover personal aspects of teachers' lives that contributed to their understanding of the teacher as a person. Uitto (2012) recommended that teacher training include

support for teachers to understand how to work with this aspect of students' need to connect with their teachers.

Teaching Communication

Students connecting to their teachers is largely a function of interpersonal communication. Strong communication skills among teachers result in more successful learning environments for students (Duță et al., 2015). These teacher communication skills also can serve as modeling behavior for students. Teaching skills in communication will benefit students in a number of ways and in many disciplines. Universally, oral communication competency is necessary for academic success (Mahmud, 2014).

Regardless of academic discipline, communication skills are viewed as critical. For example, according to Rahman and Lee (2014), mathematics teachers understand the importance of effective communication (including listening) between teachers and students in learning math concepts and processes. Teaching communication skills is also important for medical education (Makoul & Schofield, 1999). Medical education organizations internationally understand the importance of teaching interpersonal communication competency skills including effective listening, observation, and providing feedback (Rider & Keefer, 2006). The teaching of communication skills in medical education should be supported and valued at all levels including during clinical practice in order to be effective (Perron et al., 2015).

In English as a second language courses, direct teacher-student communication has more positive results in learning than multi-directional or multi-level communication between teachers and students (Li, 2016). Among educators in Romania and Spain, according to Duță et al. (2014), the top three ranked competencies are scientific competence (knowledge about the subject matter), teaching competence (performance of knowledge transmission), and transversal competence (transdisciplinary skills in areas that inform teaching competence such as language abilities and teamwork skills). Communication in teaching and mentoring relationships should be practiced in a reflexive manner between student and teacher (Barna & Barna, 2012).

Mentoring

Mentoring involves one-on-one interaction between someone with more experience or knowledge and someone with less experience or knowledge and typically comes in

three forms: (a) student-teacher dyads, (b) peer-led dyads, and (c) internships (Abrami et al., 2015). According to Abrami et al. (2015), mentoring can augment other teaching strategies to enhance critical thinking. In each of these three mentorship forms, mentoring processes involve three components: the relationship, the context, and the developmental aspects (Ambrosetti et al., 2017).

According to Schatz-Oppenheimer (2017), functions of mentoring include “interpersonal communication, emotional support, and emphasis on professional guidance” (p. 285). Ewing (2021) described mentoring qualities as encompassing approachability and supportive and nurturing communication, which includes practices such as coaching and collaboration. Effective mentoring has four characteristics: structuredness, relevance, applicability, and workability (Hairon et al., 2020).

For mentors, mentoring competencies include: “(a) maintaining effective communication, (b) aligning expectations, (c) assessing understanding, (d) addressing diversity, (e) fostering independence, and (f) promoting professional development” (Gandhi & Johnson, 2016, p. S301). Additionally, Pfund et al. (2016) suggested there are several core attributes for effective mentoring relationships including: (a) active listening, (b) aligning expectations, (c) building trust, (d) building protégé career self-efficacy, (e) advancing inclusion, (f) fostering independence, and (g) promoting profession development, among others.

As with teaching, motivation to serve as a mentor may be altruistic, internal, or external. Yet mentoring relationships typically develop from a specific need of the protégé. In these relationships, role clarity and the self-efficacy of mentors is most strongly associated with mentor commitment to the mentoring relationship (Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015). Mentoring should be collective, collaborative, and democratic (Goerisch et al., 2019).

According to Lynn and Nguyen (2020), mentoring relationships develop through four phases: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition (see Kram, 1983) and center on two dimensions: degree of directiveness and degree of input (Hennissen et al., 2008). One major challenge for mentoring occurs when the goals of the mentor do not meet the needs of the protégé (Sanfey et al., 2013). Examples of bad mentorship may include inappropriate praise or criticism, disregard for the protégé’s opinions, and failure to define appropriate boundaries (Sanfey et al., 2013). Mentors’ effective methods, according to protégés, include the approachability and accessibility of the mentor, humility and caring of the mentor, and the use of other protégé-centered techniques (Li et al., 2018).

According to Lejonberg et al. (2018), engagement by mentors is more strongly associated with mentors taking a reflective approach compared to an evaluative

approach. Self-focused motives of mentors lead to outcomes beneficial to the mentor, whereas protégé-centered motives of mentors lead to outcomes that benefit protégés (Liu et al., 2021). Mentors may have multiple self-focused motives for engaging in a mentoring relationship, including intrinsic and extrinsic motives. More effective for outcomes of the mentoring relationship may result from protégé-focused motives or relationship-focused motives (Janssen et al., 2014).

According to Koç (2012), there are five mentoring roles: (a) self-trainer, (b) networker, (c) social supporter, (d) academic supporter, and (e) psychological supporter. Effective mentors set both short-term and long-term objectives (Kraiger et al., 2019). Short-term objectives may include tasks to accomplish some achievable goal. Long-term objectives may include career development and advancement of the protégé.

As with teaching, effective mentoring begins with training. Key aims for many mentoring programs involve critical self-reflection, collaboration, and professional development (Shanks, 2017). According to Lejonberg et al. (2015), training for mentors influences mentors' awareness of their mentorship role. Mentors who self-reflect on their mentoring relationships may find it easier to relate to the lives of their protégés and provide support and guidance for their protégés while also learning about themselves for personal and professional growth (McConnell et al., 2019).

Mentors who are selected and trained in mentoring and start the mentoring process at the beginning of their protégé's role as teacher tend to be more highly motivated in their roles as mentors (Alhija & Fresko, 2010). Motivation to engage in continued professional development is influenced by beliefs of autonomy and relatedness to others (de Wal et al., 2014). Strong influencers of professional commitment include self-efficacy and professional identity, as well as support from a team (Chemers et al., 2011).

According to Wanberg et al. (2006), proactive mentoring is associated with psychosocial and career guidance. For protégés, perception of similarity with the mentor is associated with psychosocial guidance. Protégé trust in the mentor will influence intent to accept advice and counsel from mentors, respond positively to constructive feedback, and ask for guidance on career goals (Wyre et al., 2016). Interestingly, closeness and quality of the mentoring relationship is associated with positive adjustment-related outcomes of protégés (Goldner & Mayseless, 2009). Positive evaluations of the mentoring relationship by mentors lead to similar evaluations by protégés (Lyons et al., 2021). The commitment of mentors to their role is positively associated with protégés' reports of relational quality (Allen & Eby, 2008).

Mentoring can be an important component of professional development programs and should be a component of teacher training (Pleschová & McAlpine,

2015). Mentoring is associated with more positive outcomes among students and various work environments (Eby et al., 2008). Mentoring also positively influences development in nonprofessional careers (Jyoti & Sharma, 2015). Successful experience in professional development involves helping students cultivate their own professional identities as well as grow awareness of the roles of others in their environment (Bridges et al., 2011). Faculty perception of mentoring goals for undergraduate student research include a blend of psychosocial and instrumental goals (Vandermaas-Peeler et al., 2015).

Mentorship training and teacher training often go hand-in-hand, although success as a teacher does not always translate into success as a mentor, and vice versa. According to Avalos (2011), teacher development is complex and involves multiple processes beyond in-service training, including mentoring and long-term developmental support. Mentoring should be core to the professional development of teacher trainees and can lead to the transformation of teaching practices, according to Lofthouse (2018). Evidence indicates that teacher mentoring programs have an overall positive impact (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

According to Ambrosetti et al. (2017), teacher development is enhanced when mentoring relationships involve three members: the instructor, the final-year preservice teacher, and the first-year preservice teacher. Interestingly, according to Allen and Eby (2004), males tend to provide more career-related mentoring, whereas females tend to provide more psychosocial-related mentoring. As well, research suggests that incorporating research experience in mentoring undergraduates is important for students' development of autonomy (Linn et al., 2015).

In medical education, mentorship provides a means to assist in the development of professional self-identity (Cruess et al., 2014). The type of mentoring offered can also have an effect on the mentors. For experienced mentors, focusing on career guidance and support for protégés, as opposed to psychosocial support, will moderate mentors' perceptions that their careers have reached a plateau and reduce emotional exhaustion and turnover intentions (Wang et al., 2014).

Training and participation in mentorship relationships influences the development of positive and helpful beliefs about mentoring for mentors (Matheson et al., 2020). Even online mentoring can be effective if it is structured, involves a peer-mentoring group, and meets the scheduling needs of mentors and protégés (Kumar & Johnson, 2017).

The Professorate

My life as a teacher began in my second year as a master's student at Louisiana State University. As I was new to the profession, I saw my role as transmitting information about how to prepare for and present speeches, then evaluating students' practice of that information. For two years at LSU—and also during my doctoral studies at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, where I also received a teaching assistantship—I continued having this view of my role as a teacher.

During my third semester as a TA II at SIUC, I had a student in my class who sat in the second row in the middle of the classroom on the second floor of Pulliam Hall. The student stood out among his classmates. He had a distinctive scar on his right arm just below his shoulder. He was just another student among his peers, though I perceived rightly or wrongly that the scar put others at unease. Otherwise, he came to class as usual.

Many of the students at SIUC were from the Chicago area. Over my years at SIUC, I learned that many of these students came to school in Carbondale specifically because it was the furthest college away from Chicago while still remaining within the state of Illinois. This was the case for this particular student.

One day late in the semester, he asked to talk with me after class. I met with him, and he told me that he was from Chicago, but he was trying to get away from his neighborhood. He admitted that in his youth, he had gotten involved in a gang and that his scar was a “brand” that identified his membership in that gang. He told me that his desire to get away from Chicago came with the birth of his son and that he wanted to do right by his son. I listened though I did not know what to make of his confession.

He then told me that he may have to miss the last week of classes. I inquired, and he told me that coming down to Carbondale was a violation of his parole and that he would have to report to the Jackson County Jail in Murphysboro for thirty days of detention. I arranged for him to complete his coursework, then I told him I would come visit him in jail.

The week after classes, I went to the Jackson County Jail to see him. When he came to the visitation room, he looked surprised and told me he did not expect me to come. I told him that I would not make a promise to a student I could not keep. We talked for a while, and then I left, a changed person. I do not know if I had any impact on him, but his impact on me was and is still significant. My role as “teacher” changed that day.

When I finished my doctoral courses at SIUC, I left and moved back to Baton Rouge. My mother had passed away of an unexpected illness a few years prior, and my father was still grieving her loss. As I had just come back to town without a solid plan, I moved in with him. I still had my dissertation to complete, but I had reached a point in my journey where I was unsure whether I wanted to finish and join the academy.

Events in my life between the death of my mother and the move back to Baton Rouge stunted any grieving I could have done for her passing. As I was witnessing my father's grief, I began processing my own, which culminated in the writing of a book of poetry and short narratives I titled *The Spirit of Travel*. This self-published book was not intended for wide distribution and was only shared with my immediate family. Later throughout my grieving process, I would give the book to close friends and colleagues.

I found a job working as a manager at a local nonprofit foundation, and Melanie and Gabrielle moved down to Louisiana. We found a rental home in Zachary, and she found a job at a health insurance company. While I was working at the nonprofit, an opportunity arose for me to teach two courses at Baton Rouge Community College. I had held these two jobs for a year when another opportunity arose for me to teach full time as an adjunct at LSU. I was back in the academy, albeit in a contingent role.

The opportunity to teach at LSU at this time had an additional benefit. I was contacted by my dissertation chair from SIUC, Dr. Bryan Crow, and was told that doctoral studies have to be completed within a seven-year timeframe or I would have to start over from the beginning. I had one year to complete my dissertation. As I had completed my master's at LSU, I knew Middleton Library and the Statistics Department well.

The summer before my first semester back teaching at LSU, Sophie was born. With a growing family, deciding about my future career to support them was becoming increasingly important. I spent long nights in my office at LSU finishing my dissertation. I took on extra teaching duties to supplement the family income, teaching six courses per semester. I even taught a seventh extension course one semester at the local nuclear power plant north of Zachary. Even with both Melanie and I working full time, the salaries for our positions would make raising a family difficult.

I finished my dissertation and taught the following year at LSU while joining the job market. I was fortunate to have been offered my first job as an assistant professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio. At the end of my second year at LSU as a

lecturer, Melanie and I got married and shortly thereafter moved to San Antonio with Gabrielle and Sophie. I rejoined the academy.

In the years I have been at UTSA, I have focused my teaching on the needs of the students. Although the characteristics of students at SIUC, BRCC, LSU, and UTSA are different, individual students come with their own stories and life journeys. I had not considered that when I started my teaching career but only came to understand that by a chance meeting with a student who I visited in jail.

Conclusion

Teaching is a calling to help others learn about the world and one another. However, many stories we tell serve the purpose of teaching, even when not in a formal professional position. As described in chapter 1, parents or other caregivers serve as the first teachers to children. Later in development, peers serve the same function. Even in the process of conversation between peers, intentional or not, sharing experiences with others takes on a teaching quality.

In other professions, the opportunity to serve as teacher may come into play. A coach is a teacher, as a teacher is often a coach. Managers serve as teachers when training workers about tasks or the culture of the organization. To teach is to guide others. Put another way, to teach is to lead. The “techniques and processes leadership coaches utilize to develop leaders closely resemble the discoveries and practices facilitating intentional change and transformative learning” (Halliwell et al., 2021, p. 13). According to Grunberg et al. (2020), “To develop into optimally effective leaders, healthcare providers should develop awareness and regulation of their own and others’ behaviors, cognitions, motivations, and emotions” (p. 5) much as teachers are called to do.

In terms of milestones, teaching derives from self-awareness (chapter 2), listening (chapter 3), knowing (chapter 4), and other awareness (chapter 5). The first time a story is told for the purpose of instruction may happen between peers during childhood or adolescence. What is the first story you told for this purpose? When was the first time you recognized a peer told a story for the purpose of instruction?

This chapter examined teaching as a profession and as a process, although the applicability of teaching processes can go beyond the formal profession of teaching. This chapter also demonstrated that teaching methods may change according to the characteristics of the student. To be sure, approaches toward students may and should differ when the student is an adult. Teaching is often (but is not always) from one to

many and is sometimes, as in mentor/protégé relationships, one-on-one. The next chapter will extend the discussion to leading, even possibly to the task of teaching the teachers.

Chapter 7

Leading

Sometimes a journey is well planned. Other times, an unexpected turn brings about a side journey that leads to a new role as a communicator—maybe even a leading role. Planned or unplanned, a successful journey happens when attention is paid to the qualities that make for effective communication, whether in personal or professional relationships.

This chapter describes processes and outcomes for converting personal communication habits into professional communication habits.

How do we lead others? What are the qualities of a good leader? What are the communication virtues that make for a good leader?

Introduction

“If thou be a leader, as one directing the conduct of the multitude, endeavor ways to be gracious, that thine own conduct be without defect” (Ptah-hotep, born ca. 3550 BCE/1918, B.5.).

“Therefore, my brothers, let us set an example for our kinsmen. Their lives depend on us, and the defense of the sanctuary, the temple, and the altar rests with us” (New American Bible, written ca. 100 BCE/1979, Judith, 8:24).

Living a communicatively virtuous life tends to attract others. In this way, such a life can take one down a path of leadership. History is replete with examples of leaders, some good and some not so good. If we endeavor to follow the path of the good as Ptah-hotep and the unknown author of Judith instructed, then there are many examples of leaders over the millennia that can be emulated.

In the previous chapter (chapter 6), we examined the profession of teaching as a means of sharing what has been learned with others. The profession of teaching requires having the qualities of a leader. But how does one become a teacher of teachers? What extra efforts are required of this task? Beyond motivation to teach and strong communication skills, and even experience with one-on-one mentoring, what additional qualities are required of master teachers or of leadership in other organizational contexts?

In this chapter, we will examine the qualities that are beneficial for leading others in professional relationships. We will begin with an examination of the virtues and vices of communication and apply those to ideas about what qualities make for an effective leader. We will discuss the process of leading and ways of enhancing leadership through authenticity and humility.

Communication Virtues and Vices

As human beings, we make choices and act upon those choices. As described earlier, communication is an intentional act that binds us together. Choices in how and what we communicate influence others around us. Leaders may have an enhanced influence over followers' ethical behaviors. "As moral (or immoral) agents, leaders may advance virtue or vice within organizations" (Quick & Wright, 2011, p. 987).

According to LeBlanc and Magallanes (2007), individuals "recognize the underlying components of ethical communication" and that communication virtues of honesty, integrity, modesty, and patience are positively correlated (p. 373). Individuals also recognize vices such as deception and arrogance, which are negatively associated with those communication virtues (LeBlanc & Magallanes, 2007). Individuals learn about right and wrong through moral development (see chapter 1) in their interactions with others. Within group settings, "leaders likely develop their character through social learning" (Hannah & Avolio, 2011, p. 992). The public does expect leaders to avoid deception, even political leaders, although perceptions of deception may be biased depending on whether the leader shares the same ideology (LeBlanc, 2019).

Reflection and self- and other awareness contribute to that social learning. For leaders, social learning helps them develop knowledge and understanding about how to approach tasks involving others. Self- and other awareness helps leaders and potential leaders in determining how to collaborate with other team members to approach common tasks. According to Senbel (2015), leaders' self-awareness about strengths and weaknesses positively impacts team effectiveness.

Communication between team members and between team members and the team leader greatly impacts the team's outcomes. Leaders who utilize transparency in dissemination of information and utilize team members' expertise will strengthen the organization (Farrell, 2017). Listening and providing inspiration through action are meaningful habits for followers of relationship- and task-oriented leaders (Biganeh & Young, 2021). One mechanism for providing inspiration is through openness and honesty. Rohrer et al. (2021) suggested that leaders should support a culture of self-correction. Through a demonstration of virtues, the leader supports other team

members to follow that path. Organizational citizenship behavior “supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place” (Organ, 1997, p. 95).

Organizations can build a culture of leadership through strategic planning over the long-term, including using long-range planning, assessment, and professional development and evolving civility through a code of conduct (Janz & Honken, 2015). Such codes of conduct may be informed through the social expectations of team members and the culture in which members of the organization reside. Leaders develop and mature over time in relationship to physical, social, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual domains (Dent et al., 2005).

Leaders of organizations are also influenced by the culture in which they reside. “Culture influences the four components of transformational leadership which are manifested in a leader’s behavior” (Suppiah et al., 2019, p. 99). For example, communication virtues from an Islamic perspective include “truthfulness, veracity, sincerity, honesty, uprightness, righteousness, justice, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, gratefulness, humility, trust, gratitude and patience” (Abd. Ghani, 2004, p. 61). Communication vices include “falsehood, lying, slander, backbiting, hatred and suspicion” (Abd. Ghani, 2004, p. 59). As another example, the Hindu concept of *Sattva Guna* refers to the qualities of a selfless individual who works for the betterment of others (Suppiah et al., 2019). Relatedly, Indians’ cultural perspective holds that, “the characteristics of good leadership communication consist of the practice of participatory leadership style, positive ethics and effective communication of a leader which motivates, inspires and creates confidence among people towards social change” (Suppiah et al., 2019, p. 103).

In the case of the leadership communication of the Malaysia leader Mahathir, the leader’s approach had a significant impact on social change in the Indian minority group of Malaysia (Suppiah et al., 2018). Relatedly, according to Cheah, Yusof, and Ahmad (2017), Confucian values of *zhi* (wisdom), *xin* (trust), *xiao* (filial piety), *ren* (benevolence), and *zhong yong* (moderation; see Cheah & Ahmad, 2017) are important to the communication of Malaysian leaders when interacting with the Chinese minority. Members of the Chinese Malaysian minority community believe following these values would produce good leaders who are humane and fair (Cheah & Ahmad, 2017).

Leadership Qualities

According to Men et al. (2018), effective leadership strategies include authentic, transparent, visionary, and symmetrical communication. Charismatic leadership communication that is characterized as visionary, enabling, and energizing meets team members' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Men et al., 2021). Team trust in leadership during times of change is enhanced with charismatic communication (Men et al., 2020).

The job performance of team members is positively influenced by a sense of autonomy and communication competence (Yu & Ko, 2017). Autonomy can be reframed as self-leadership (Yu & Ko, 2017). When leadership is shared, performance and satisfaction are increased (Drescher & Garbers, 2016). However, commonalities among team members are important components for shared leadership (Drescher & Garbers, 2016). Authoritarian leadership styles stymie communication, which reduces solidarity and job satisfaction in the organization (Kelly & MacDonald, 2019). Interestingly, junior military leaders practice assertive communication that focuses on the mission as described to them by their superiors (Sousa et al., 2015).

According to Brandts et al. (2015), teams that elect leaders have stronger and more positive team outcomes than teams led by a randomly assigned leader. In their experiment, elected leaders displayed more effort on team tasks than randomly assigned leaders. Research indicates that a democratic leadership style influences team morale and satisfaction (Temel et al., 2011). The physical context of the team work environment may influence these outcomes. For example, team members working in a virtual environment consider relationship-oriented leadership behaviors to be as important as task-oriented leadership behaviors (Zimmermann et al., 2008).

More specifically, certain leadership qualities may contribute to both the effectiveness and the cohesiveness of teams. For example, authentic leaders demonstrate fidelity to an organization's mission both within and external to the organization and consider the impact of organizational decisions on the community (Glistrap et al., 2015). Authentic leadership enhances trust in communication about project tasks in organizations (Majeed et al., 2021).

In the management literature, authentic leadership is composed of four components: "self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and an internalized moral perspective" (Banks et al., 2016, p. 635). Also in the literature, transformational leadership consists of four components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Banks et

al., 2016). However, a meta-analytic review of these two forms of leadership reveals that authentic leadership and transformational leadership constructs are nearly identical (Banks et al., 2016).

Transformational leaders tend to use emotionally intelligent and transparent communication styles (Brandt & Uusi-Kakkuri, 2016). According to Yue et al. (2019), transparency and transformational leadership styles are positively associated with team members' trust in their leaders. This trust influences openness to organizational change. According to Braun et al. (2013), transformational leaders contribute to both individual job satisfaction and team performance, and transformational leaders also contribute to trust between team members.

Qualities of transformational leadership, in particular intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, impact team performance by influencing an increase in team communication on tasks, which leads to trust (Boies et al., 2015). The authors suggested that this form of leadership tends to create a more open and inclusive group climate (Boies et al., 2015). Transformational leaders engaging in solution-focused communication promote functional problem-solving by team members and discourage counterproductive communication, including criticizing or talking off-topic (Lehmann-Willenbrock et al., 2015).

Leaders who demonstrate loyalty toward and confidence in subordinates tend to inspire purpose among team members, which leads to supportive but precise communication patterns (Crews et al., 2019). However, traits of intellectual stimulation among transformational leaders tend to influence the use of verbal aggression (Crews et al., 2019). Team members' perceived leader performance is more strongly associated with transformational leaders than transactional leaders (Neufeld et al., 2010).

According to Coetzer et al. (2017), servant leadership is composed of seven components: authenticity, humility, compassion, accountability, courage, altruism, integrity, and listening. Competencies required for servant leaders include empowerment, stewardship, building relationships, and compelling vision. Authenticity involves transparency about one's intentions and motivations and being open to criticism and behaving consistently. Humility involves modesty, self-awareness, open-mindedness, and understanding one's talents. Integrity involves honesty, fairness, and having ethics.

Servant leaders foster team members' engagement through two-way communication more strongly than transformational leaders due primarily to servant leaders' value being placed on listening (Rabiul et al., 2021). According to Lefebvre et

al. (2020), self-compassion is associated with authentic and servant leaders who engage in positive relationships with subordinates.

The Practice of Leading

Communication scholars frame leadership as deriving from positive influential behavior, communicative ability, valuing persons over profit, and developing through self-reflection and analysis (Martin, 2017). Leadership communication has the dual purposes of transmitting knowledge and information related to organizational tasks and co-creating meaning for organizational members (Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014).

Leadership is enhanced through existential communication that considers alterity, presence in context, intersubjectivity, and dialogue (Ashman & Lawler, 2008). Communication skills needed for leadership include listening, speaking with expertise, processing new information, adapting to the audience, displaying empathy and navigating conflict, and building relationships (Koerber et al., 2021). Additionally, communication effectiveness positively influences team members' perceptions of leader performance (Neufeld et al., 2010).

As described earlier, communication involves both verbal and nonverbal channels. Leaders often convey instruction for tasks verbally. However, "the ability to convey subtle nonverbal cues is equally—if not more—important" between leaders and subordinates, especially when the team is working virtually (Darics, 2020, p. 21). Effective leaders utilize communication to establish expectations, objectives, and goals. Therefore, communication is a method of leadership (Farinha & Sousa, 2015).

According to Fortunato et al. (2017), competent leadership communication requires the development and maintenance of relationships with organizational stakeholders and the ability to predict, address, and respond to organizational members' concerns. Employees see leader communication as the most important factor for developing positive relationships (Vačar, 2015). Leadership involves the managing and facilitation of communication and co-construction of meaning (Jian, 2019). Therefore, leaders should focus on the relational function of communication over the message transmission function (see Ziegler & DeGrosky, 2008).

Relational outcomes of leadership communication are often more important than the content of the message (Ruben & Gigliotti, 2017). Effective and appropriate communication from relationship-oriented leaders strongly influences team members' motivation, satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Mikkelsen et al., 2015). According to Mikkelsen et al. (2019), team members' receptivity to and trust in

messages from leaders is strongly influenced by leaders who utilize relationship-oriented communication. However, team members are more likely to be influenced by leaders' task-oriented communication.

Jian (2021) suggests three sequential actions for the development of relational leadership: (a) proactively collecting multiple narratives, (b) achieving understanding through the empathic reading of narratives, and (c) constructing narratives that invite empathy. Supportive relational communication from leaders influences symmetrical communication within teams (Lee & Kim, 2021). According to Men (2014), transformational leaders influence symmetrical communication within organizations, which in turn contributes to positive team relationships.

Relational challenges seem to increase over time for leaders and team members, although teams do not necessarily improve over long periods of time (Horila & Siitonen, 2020). The methods used to resolve these challenges also change. To counter that, leaders should promote "positive social relationships in order to increase collaboration among participants" (Kramer & Crespy, 2011, p. 1034).

According to Smith et al. (2013), communication between team members can contribute to team cohesion in groups led by a transformational leader. As well, agreement in communication style between a servant leader and members of an organization increases positive organizational citizenship behavior (Abu Bakar & McCann, 2016). Additionally, the degree of agreement between leader and subordinate ratings of leaders' communication is positively associated with subordinates' job satisfaction (Erben et al., 2019).

Decisions by transformational and transactional leaders regarding the types of media to use for remote team communication can affect the outcomes of organizations (Hambley et al., 2007). Transformational leadership has a stronger influence in virtual teams compared to face-to-face teams (Purvanova & Bono, 2009). However, the physical placement of team members influences emergent leadership within the team due to differences in communication patterns (Charlier et al., 2016). Additionally, transformational leadership is not very effective in countering the effects of dispersion on team performance, likely due to changes in communication patterns (Eisenberg et al., 2019).

Leaders are more likely to act in a transparent fashion when transparency is a goal of the organization (Houser et al., 2014). Leader transparency encourages more cooperation between organizational members (Houser et al., 2014). Leadership does not exist on its own but rather emerges through "a highly contextualized, interactive process" among relational beings (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012, p. 1058). The context in which leadership occurs and is practiced is critical to the functioning of the organization

(Tourish, 2014). Changes in leadership style may be situationally adaptive and should focus on the role of followership.

According to Cook et al. (2021), belief that leadership should be shared leads to tendencies toward decentralized communication networks in organizational teams. However, individuals within the team who perceive the communication to be more centralized also assess the leadership to be centralized, particularly when the leader is perceived as having a strong motivation to lead.

An organization exists as a system with leaders and followers, and communication in such a system involves a process of negotiated meaning between these group members (Ruben & Gigliotti, 2016). Systems are greater than the sum of their parts. Leadership within an organization exists through communication. Leading and following are dynamic and composed of interactions in which any member of a group can participate, depending on the context and environment (DeRue, 2011). According to Ruben and Gigliotti (2021), leadership is co-constructed between leaders and followers in ways that are mutually defining.

An exchange process between leader and subordinate unfolds over time and may converge to a degree where the subordinate is viewed as an in-group member to leadership (Markham et al., 2015). According to Lee (2021), “Active discussion on positive aspects of an organization and its management in supervisor-subordinates and peer-to-peer relationships triggers individual employees’ motivations to voluntarily seek and distribute valuable information inside an organization” (p. 15).

Strengths in listening are paramount in leadership and for potential leaders. For example, emotion recognition is positively related to extroversion among emerging leaders (Walter et al., 2012). Secondary leaders often emerge when the primary leadership fails, and secondary leaders tend to share duties (Kramer, 2006). According to Arklan (2011), compatibility between communication and leadership style and organizational structure is important for the success of the organization. Leaders should reflect upon the challenges of leadership to discourage tendencies toward utilizing the same leadership styles or behaviors in different contexts (Willis, 2019).

Leading in the Academy

My life as a department chair began nine years into my life in the academy. I had not intended to take on a leadership role when I first entered the academy, but after a few years, I thought I might have some skills that I could share with my colleagues. I discussed this with my then supervisor, Steve, who appointed me as assistant chair,

giving me the duty to develop class schedules. A few years later, I took on the role of graduate advisor for the master's program in the department, which I served as for three years. At the end of my term as graduate advisor, I applied for and was appointed chair of the department, a role I served for four three-year terms.

The role of department chair has many responsibilities, from scheduling classes to managing faculty and staff. Managers sometimes have access to confidential and specialized information that they are not at liberty to share with supervisees, despite having a desire to be transparent. This information differential provides opportunities for lack of trust to grow (see LeBlanc, 2017). Department managers rely on team members to trust in good faith that the leaders will use this information for the good of the team. An example of one type of confidential information that I had access to was payroll, which included the pay raises of faculty and staff in the department.

Although department chairs do not determine or control their departmental budgets—that responsibility lies with the dean—chairs are tasked with managing the budgets provided to their department. Six years into my service as chair, the university saw a significant drop in revenue. This drop was passed down to the colleges in the form of budget cuts. Consequently, department chairs were tasked with reducing payroll expenses. Our department held a faculty meeting in which I informed the faculty of the task set before me. I told them the amount the budget had been reduced and what that meant in terms of faculty payroll.

Universities, like the cultures in which they exist, have class systems. Some faculty are contractually protected from reductions in teaching assignments, and thus pay, while other faculty members, those on fixed-term contracts, are more vulnerable to those reductions. I was responsible for informing those faculty members who would be affected by the budget reduction. I shared knowledge of this task with all of the faculty, and I also informed them that I was taking a pay cut. The more difficult task lay ahead: informing our two part-time lecturers that we would not be able to fund courses for them the following semester. I met with each of them individually and gave them the bad news.

I was able to rehire these two faculty members the next year, and in the time following, I had strategized to find alternate means to protect vulnerable faculty members in the department. One strategy was to increase the rate and frequency of promotion among fixed-term faculty. Another strategy was to seek out alternative funding streams. This second strategy involved the development of an online bachelor's program in the department, and in doing so, I reached out one-on-one to

fixed-term faculty to engage in the process, either by developing the courses or by teaching them.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, universities had to conduct a rapid transition to online learning. By this time, our department had already converted over half of our courses to online delivery. This served as a benefit to the students who had to attend classes remotely, but it also had an unintended benefit for many of the faculty, as their transition to online learning had already occurred.

The pandemic also brought a significant reduction to the departmental budget. Again, department chairs were tasked with reducing payroll. Yet with a new online bachelor's program, started before the pandemic, our department had an alternative funding source. Reductions in courses for fixed-term faculty for the residential program were replaced with courses in the new online program. I was happy to avoid the task of laying off faculty members, particularly the lowest paid, most vulnerable, fixed-term, and part-time faculty members.

After stepping down as department chair, the transition to a non-leadership role was difficult. I had specialized knowledge and a skill set from twelve years of experience that was going unused. The experience felt like a repeat of the turning point in my life after I left the seminary. Like then, I was given time to self-reflect on my journey. At first, I felt as if I was put out to pasture. This feeling conflicted with a desire to do something meaningful.

The vice provincial determined I needed to take time for some self-reflection. Like the time I transitioned from seminarian to lay person, I was granted a year leave from my teaching duties at the university. Within that time, I wondered what my motivation was to become a department chair in the first place? If I was being honest with myself, I needed to consider all of the reasons. Sure, I had a desire to help others and a desire to use my talents. But were there other reasons? To what degree was my motivation to lead in the academy self-serving?

I reflected and concluded that to be honest with myself required that I consider the possibility that choosing to serve as both a graduate advisor and the department chair were at least in part a reaction to my experience as a student in my doctoral program. I wanted to be different than what I experienced, and I wanted to *know that I could be different* than what I experienced. Like grieving the deaths of my parents, I was grieving the loss of that experience. Being authentic requires that I share that knowledge.

Conclusion

Turning points in our journeys do not always culminate in a leadership role. Sometimes the role of leader emerges out of a need to complete a task with others. Leaders can emerge, be elected, be appointed, or be self-appointed. The paradoxes of leadership include the need to be decisive while also allowing organizational members to participate in decision-making and the need to focus on the vision of the organization while paying attention to the details (Farrell, 2018). Sometimes, however, successful teams can complete tasks with relatively little leader guidance (Pavitt et al., 2007).

Not all group tasks require leaders. Such a role can be context specific. For example, in the health care context, teamwork and leadership competencies are crucial (Smithson et al., 2020). How individuals in a health care-professional context view leadership may be a function of how their relationships with leaders are framed: by expertise, by collegiality, or by expectations within the organization (Mikkola & Parviainen, 2020). According to Houchens et al. (2021), a key strategy for improving safety for patients and job satisfaction for employees in a health care context includes leadership development.

In terms of milestones, leadership should occur after other developmental milestones have been reached. Leaders can be the teachers of teachers. But one has to know how to teach before one can show others the art of the craft. Journeys happen. Those journeys can be planned by others, or planned by us, or planned by us for others. Leadership often involves planning the journey for others.

This chapter examined communication virtues and vices, the qualities of leadership, and the action of leading. Effective leaders share qualities and exercise virtues that contribute to the good of the group while remaining both self-aware and aware of others. Although there are many different leadership styles, the servant leader approaches tasks by putting the needs of the other put first. The final chapter focuses on a particular quality of the servant leader: humility.

Chapter 8

Humility

Voices throughout the ages have shared wisdom gained from their journeys. Experience leads us to understand the virtue of moderation. It is the derivative nature of knowledge that is the basis for humility.

This chapter describes the qualities of the humble communicator, with received wisdom passed down from the ancient rhetors.

“Observe due measure. Proportion is best in all things” (Hesiod, born ca. 700 BCE/1914, ll. 693-694).

How do we define humility? In what way does communicating with humility enhance our lives and the lives of those around us?

Introduction

“Be not proud because thou art learned, but discourse with the ignorant man, as with the sage” (Ptah-hotep, born ca. 3550 BCE/1918, B.1.).

“Indeed, as a rule, you will find that arrogance implies a false self-esteem, whereas those who possess true merit find satisfaction enough in the consciousness of possession” (Quintilian, 95 CE/1922, Book 11, Chapter 1, Section 17).

The final stage in our journey is the achievement of humility in our communication with others. If we seek to live a life of purpose in relationship with others, personally or professionally, the way we communicate may have profound effects. According to Button (2005), humility may be one of the most important virtues for communicating in a pluralistic society. A humble person “will make a belief in the equality of persons a guiding principle in her choice of actions” (Grenberg, 2005, p. 193). Awe leads to greater humility (Stellar et al., 2018).

In the previous chapter (chapter 7), we examined the qualities of a leader and leadership, including communication virtues, which enhance group performance and satisfaction. According to Bauman (2013), integrity is a fundamental moral concept that supports claims about leadership. Integrity is based upon an individual’s commitment to

core values (Bauman, 2013) and acting in line with those in ways that are evident to others. Leaders support and encourage the actions of groups members and provide examples, through modeling, for the success of others. What makes for the strongest source of example? The best leadership is described by five major world religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism) as being developed from spiritually based values including integrity and humility, among others (Kriger & Seng, 2005). Perhaps communicating with humility can provide that strong source.

In this chapter, we will examine qualities of the humble communicator. To accomplish this, we will examine the wisdom of writers, teachers, and leaders from the past and present. By looking at the wisdom of others, we can begin to assemble our own plans for communicating with others with humility.

Qualities of Humility

According to Grenberg (2005), “Humility is [a] meta-attitude which constitutes the moral agent’s proper perspective on herself as a dependent and corrupt but capable and dignified rational agent” (p. 133). Humility provides the opportunity and perspective to value oneself in the context of other’s values and experiences. Janz (2007) describes Grenberg’s definition of humility as the human virtue of coming to terms with ourselves as fundamentally limited beings. An accurate self-assessment and acknowledgment of one’s limitations along with the tendency to set one’s needs aside compose true humility (Tangney, 2000).

According to Morris et al. (2005), “Authentic humility involves neither self-abasement nor overly positive self-regard” and includes openness, self-awareness, and transcendence beyond self (p. 1331). As such a virtue, humility comes later on in the development arc. The journey leading to virtue requires milestones and turning points in relation to others. For example, “humility and modesty are human qualities very likely derived from the experience of loss and coping with this experience” (Harvey & Pauwels, 2004, p. 621).

Humility involves relation to the other. It requires the individual to remain unimpressed with the self (Garcia, 2015) and places others before self. “Humility is the noble choice to forgo your status, deploy your resources or use your influence for the good of others before yourself” (Dickson, 2011, p. 24). As such, humility requires knowledge of the self as being worthy of dignity and making a willful social choice to help others (Dickson, 2011).

Humility involves an internalization of the development of self-identity as a valued agent within the context of moral principles simultaneous with an understanding of one’s

own limits (Grenberg, 2005). The ability to recognize one's limits is a condition of humility, and humility is conversely a condition for self-respect (Grenberg, 2005). According to Grenberg (2007), "Humility is defined as a state in which, by comparing my agency to the moral law, I come to terms with myself as a dependent and corrupt yet capable and worthy agent" (p. 623). Grenberg (2005) specified the characteristics of the humble person as one who pursues self-knowledge and has respect for other people.

There are four dimensions of humility (Kupfer, 2003): (a) radical dependence, (b) moral comparison with other people, (c) moral ideals, and (d) objective valuation of things in the world. Radical dependence is the notion that individual success depends on other people, institutions, and circumstances outside of the individual's control. Moral comparison entails the idea that regardless of success in one domain, those achievements may be of little moral consequence. An individual can remain humble if he or she understands that moral ideals can never be fully realized. The humble person sees the value of things outside of him- or herself. Humility requires a deference to reason and evidence and respect for others' understandings of the world (Hare, 1992).

Respect for the autonomy of others, as a primary ethical principle (see Gillon, 2003a), requires having a realistic view of oneself within the context of others. Such a view is typical of humility. Respect for the autonomy of others is particularly relevant in medical ethics in cases where patients should be allowed to decide for themselves whether to undergo recommended treatment (Gillon, 2003b). However, Macklin (2003) argues that beneficence, or the principle requiring consideration of the ratio of benefit to harm, may need to take precedence over respect for the autonomy of others in certain cases. The danger lies in making such choices for others without humility.

Byerly (2014) distinguished between self-directed and other-directed accounts of humility in academic literature. Byerly (2014) described self-directed accounts of humility as focusing on cognitive, affective, and behavioral traits involving disposition towards valuable features, such as tendencies to not overestimate one's own talents (see also Cottingham, 2006). Byerly (2014) also described other-directed accounts of humility as focusing on the humble person's attitude or behaviors toward others, arguing that definitions of humility should include a "disposition to prefer the promotion of what is good for others rather than what is good for oneself in cases where one cannot equally promote each of these goods and where the value of what is good for others is equal to or incommensurate with the value of what is good for oneself" (p. 905).

Academic psychologists have been interested in discovering underlying and core characteristics of personality, and these scholars have specified that the "Big Five" factors of personality include extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotionality, and openness to experience (see Lee & Ashton, 2004). The research of

Lee and Ashton (2004), Ashton and Lee (2005), and Ashton, Lee, Perugini, et al. (2004) uncovered a sixth factor: honesty-humility. The honesty-humility factor includes traits such as sincerity, fairness, greed avoidance, and modesty (Lee & Ashton, 2004), which are facets of a personality that can be measured separately from the traditional Big Five personality factors (Ashton & Lee, 2005).

Contrary to contemporary personality theory that groups personality traits into five factors, Ashton, Lee, and Goldberg (2004) argued that the English language contains terms that can be clustered into six factors: (a) agreeableness, (b) extroversion, (c) conscientiousness, (d) emotionality, (e) openness to experience, and (f) honesty-humility. According to their research, honesty-humility is negatively associated with terms in the English language such as *slick*, *cunning*, *crafty*, *pretentious*, and *pompous* (Ashton, Lee, & Goldberg, 2004). Psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism are highly, negatively correlated with the honesty-humility personality factor (Lee & Ashton, 2005). In particular, narcissism and Machiavellianism predict lower levels of humility (Morris et al., 2005).

Humility as a virtue also influences how individuals view and interact with the world. According to McElroy et al. (2014), intellectual humility is composed of two factors: (a) “one’s ability to regulate one’s emotions in the face of conflicting viewpoints,” and (b) “one’s general interest and openness to different ideas” (p. 27). McElroy et al. (2014) found that intellectual humility was positively related to trust and forgiveness. Intellectual humility reflects an intermediate and realistic view of one’s own abilities and limitations to understand (Gregg & Mahadevan, 2014). Intellectually humble individuals would have a disinclination “to regard a belief as true because it is one’s own” (Gregg & Mahadevan, 2014, p. 8). However, self-reports of intellectual humility suffer from social desirability bias (Meagher et al., 2015). Measures of intellectual humility by relational others may be more accurate predictors.

The relationship between humility and knowledge was acknowledged by philosophers, including Aristotle, Aquinas, and Kant (see chapter 4). According to Langton (2004), Kantian humility comes from the inability to know the essence of things. We only can “know” characteristic phenomena. Understanding the limitations of human understanding suggests that collective knowledge in the sciences is contingent (Kidd, 2016).

Intellectual or moral relativism is not compatible with tolerance, and tolerance is a condition for humility (Speck, 1998). This condition exists because humans “cannot possess complete knowledge” (Speck, 1998, p. 77). However, tolerance in and of itself is not equivalent to humility, although humility might require it. Rather, “humility is part of the cardinal virtue of temperance, which in turn is the internal balance essential for a

good life” (McCloskey, 2006, p. 183), although humility is only weakly related to life satisfaction (Park et al., 2004).

Humility may be a core virtue, as suggested by the personality trait research of Ashton, Lee, and colleagues. As a core virtue, other virtues may derive from it. For example, justice stands on other virtues, of which one is humility (Meara, 2001). Humility drives the call to serve others. Servant leaders (see chapter 7) share the attributes of agape love, empathy, humility, and a calling to serve (Sun, 2013).

Humility and Spirituality

Contemporary scholars have offered definitions or descriptions of the qualities of humility. Some of these descriptions entail the notion of accountability. For example, Cooper argued that “people are humble if they hold their lives ‘answerable’ to or measurable’ against something, not self-justifying and immune from criticism” (1997, p. 117). Similarly, Crigger described the humble person as “one who is able to self-reflect and, through doing so, has a realistic view of himself or herself and the world” (2004, p. 574). The virtue of humility provides the space to forgive and grow (Crigger, 2004). Likewise, “genuine humility would show itself in the acceptance of truth when truth becomes evident more than in refusal to submit oneself to evidence” (Fagothey, 1963, p. 86). It is in this sense that humility serves as a religious attitudinal virtue (Cottingham, 2006).

Humility can also be a spiritual value, and the “humble person is centered, balanced, integrated, whole and healthy – physically, emotionally, and spiritually” (Klenke, 2005, p. 60). Humility is the opposite of pride (Klenke, 2005), and the virtue of piety fosters the virtue of humility (Kleiman, 2005). Klenke (2005) suggests that a focus on the spiritual moves the team beyond transformational and servant leadership (see chapter 7).

According to Reave (2005), integrity, honesty, and humility are the spiritual values most closely related to leader effectiveness. Integrity is demonstrated through adherence to a set of values. A leader’s integrity and honesty influence followers’ trust in the leader. However, a leader’s humility demonstrates a willingness to accept ideas and criticism from followers (Reave, 2005). Other spiritual practices related to leader effectiveness, as described by Reave (2005), include (a) demonstrating respect for others’ values, (b) treating others fairly, (c) expressing caring and concern, (d) listening empathically, (e) appreciating others’ contributions, and (f) self-reflecting.

As a spiritual value, humility touches the lives of individuals from many different world religions. According to Abd. Ghani (2004), humility is one of the praiseworthy character traits in Islam and is displayed through communication. In Confucianism, communication virtues include wisdom (*zhi*) and flexibility (*bugu*), which are associated with appropriateness (*yi*) (Tan, 2005). Wisdom, flexibility, and appropriateness in interacting with others is a hallmark of humility. Vaishnavan humility (in the Hindu tradition) requires respect of all living things and ignores social stratification and identity (Schweig, 2002). Humility is the opposite of pride in this tradition (Schweig, 2002). Openness to possibilities is a virtue in Jainism (Sukhabodhananda & Trivedi, 2008). Ego-transcendence allows spiritual leaders to deal with the provocations of oppressors and transform society through time (Parameshwar, 2005). Humility comes from the heart of a servant.

Religion and spirituality do not cause or create humility. Rather, humility is a virtue of its own that may enhance one's relationships with others. For example, according to Rowatt et al. (2002), highly religious individuals tend to appraise themselves more highly compared to others than do nonreligious individuals in self-other comparisons, demonstrating that highly religious individuals have less humility. The authors measured humility as a comparison of self to others with a lack of humility being seen as a holier-than-thou effect (Rowatt et al., 2002). Given this comparison, "humility is, then, this perspective an agent takes on herself in light of certain beliefs she has about the nature and value of moral principles and her own capacities as an agent of them" (Grenberg, 2005, pp. 147-148). By taking this perspective, an individual can appreciate others as equal agents.

Religious or spiritual leaders may call us to be humble, which influences our interactions with others. For one, Merton taught that recovering silence leads to authentic communication and compassion (Matthews, 2002). Matthews interpreted Merton's teaching to mean that "hidden beneath our fear of silence is fear of ourselves" (2002, p. 64). This fear can affect our communication with others.

Humility and Communication

Humility comes from a place of authenticity, which influences our interactions with others. Burke (2010) defines authenticity as "the coherence of one's actions within a narrative within which one chooses to participate" (p. 185). To remain authentic, one has to be tolerant of the other as a human being, though one doesn't have to be tolerant of the other's beliefs (Burke, 2010). According to Schlabach (1994), humility requires

being in dialogue with others who disagree on matters by positing truth-claims through sharing of personal experiences rather than by willful imposition of one's own understanding of truth.

These tendencies towards humility in communication can have significant positive outcomes. Research demonstrates that individuals who score higher in sociopolitical intellectual humility are more open to discussions with varying viewpoints and less likely to avoid political discussions (Krumrei-Mancuso & Newman, 2020). For example, openness and humility from the leadership of an organization promote healthy discussion and willingness to learn (Verschoor, 2003). Additionally, exhibiting humility and communicating truthfully are two of the principles that demonstrate integrity (Zauderer, 1994).

Other contextual cues may influence how team members perceive the intentions of team leaders. For example, team members may perceive humble behaviors as stemming from leaders' impression management communication (Bharanitharan et al., 2020). To counteract those perceptions, teachers (or team leaders) should consider their own limitations when conveying knowledge to students (or team members) (Glick, 1994). When only partial information is available, leaders and decision-makers should remain open and adaptable (Etzioni, 1989).

In professions such as journalism where the pressure to be deceptive may occur regularly, good character alone may not be sufficient to reduce the use of deception (Levy, 2004). Indeed, a code of professional ethics may be required to reduce the likelihood of temptation (Levy, 2004). In other communication professions, such as public relations, attention to how one communicates to audiences, listeners, and other stakeholders can greatly influence the perceptions of those listeners and ongoing relationships. For Pearson, "a key public relations goal is the establishment of symmetrical, dialogical, or ethical communication relationships" (1989, p. 81).

Ryan and Martinson (1984) found that public relations practitioners typically use a highly subjective approach when dealing with ethical dilemmas related to weighing the good of clients versus the public good and suggested the development of a professional code of ethics. Public relations practitioners generally apply moral codes to the evaluation of ethical decision-making, according to Pratt et al. (1994). Pratt (1993) recommended that public relations practitioners make ethical decisions based on love for others, the welfare of others, and concern for others' happiness.

Public relations "practitioners must consider the public interest of paramount importance in all their activities and motivate themselves to follow it even when doing so may not be to the advantage of management or a client" (Martinson, 1995, p. 221). The practitioner should "not attempt to make an exception to himself or herself" (Martinson,

1998, p. 43). Ethical relativism is harmful to the profession of public relations (Ni, 2005). Dialogue can overcome conflicting interests that lead to ethical relativism (Ni, 2005). Rather, public relations practitioners should attend to distinctions between public and private information to avoid tendencies to deceive and should focus on objective truth and honesty (Olasky, 1985).

Practicing Humility

Knowing about communication virtues and vices (see chapter 7) may help with but is not the same as practicing those virtues and avoiding those vices. Leaders are considered by followers to be more authentic if those leaders self-identify as members and are true to the collective identity of the group they lead (Steffens et al., 2016). Ethical consciousness involves consideration of the needs of others (Bivins, 1992). This consciousness is particularly relevant in the counseling profession. According to Bivins, “It is part of the function of a counselor to consider all aspects of issues and potential outcomes of suggested actions” (1992, p. 380). Leaders who surrender their own egos “are more available to the needs of the people they serve” (Benefiel, 2005, p. 735).

Humility is demonstrated. More specifically, “humble leaders model how to grow to their followers” (Owens & Hekman, 2012, p. 801). These leaders exemplify humility by acknowledging mistakes and limitations, highlighting the strengths of others, and modeling teachability (Owens & Hekman, 2012). Humility and humble leadership do not come naturally. Practicing the virtue of humility as a leader has to be intentional. For example, trait humility can be increased through intervention strategies (Lavelock et al., 2014). Experimental intervention in humility also increases other virtues, including forgiveness and patience, and those increases in humility are available to individuals regardless of religiosity (Lavelock et al., 2014).

Intellectual leadership, as in the role of teaching, requires a balance between arrogance (toward having knowledge within the domain of expertise) and humility (toward the impossibility of knowing everything; Sekayi, 2000). Humility can be developed within organizations by focusing on exemplars and including this virtue within the culture of the organization, such as by rejecting arrogant or overconfident behaviors (Vera & Rodriguez-Lopez, 2004). According to Collins (2005), leaders who blend strong personal humility with professional will are more likely to be able to transform organizations for sustained success. Such leaders demonstrate focus on the needs of others. As Bivins stated, “the onus of acting in the public interest is on the professional” (1993, p. 126).

In the health professions, practicing humility can have positive health consequences for patients. For example, research has demonstrated that humility in self-assessment and conscientious behavior predicts professionalism in medical students (Stern et al., 2005). As well, humility is one of nine ethical values for therapists to practice (Jennings et al., 2005). For these authors, humility requires a self-awareness of one's limitations (Jennings et al., 2005). Additionally, cultural humility toward a client is positively associated with improvement in therapy (Hook et al., 2013).

Practicing humility in communication with others also has positive effects on personal relationships. According to Strom (2003), quality of marriage for both husbands and wives is associated with their perceptions of the others' virtues, including self-control, wisdom, faithfulness, industriousness, and humility. The virtue of humility teaches one to reflect on biases, focus on the process of decision-making, and be more tolerant of the experiences of others (Freeman, 2004). The process of forgiveness requires empathy, humility, and commitment to the other (Worthington, 1998).

Forgiveness

Resentment is an obstacle to wisdom and humility. Choosing between resentment and letting go has been a struggle on my journey. I only came to these conclusions recently.

As a communication scholar, I know from my studies that communication events have both intent and impact. Put another way, the sender of a message has an intended purpose and meaning for the message sent. However, receivers of the message are free to interpret that message, and often do interpret that message, based on their own experience and knowledge. There is no requirement that intent and impact match. Often, they do not.

Resentment is a reaction to an expectation of a match between intent and impact. Along my journey, I have often forgotten that. More often than not, conflicts occur because of what was said or not said. Still, I needed to take account of the resentments I held, or even still hold.

When I was around thirteen years old, my father and mother made a shocking admission to us kids. My father was an alcoholic. My mother had given him an ultimatum: "stop drinking or I am leaving." My father chose to stop drinking. However, our family needed some healing; thus began our journey with Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).

The first few months after this turning point were difficult. My father had to go to a halfway house for thirty days of detoxification. We all went to family therapy to sort through our emotions and resentments. I discovered that my relationship with my father was important to me but that I often felt abandoned. This fear of abandonment would haunt me for the rest of my life.

I engaged in the process at my mother's request by going with her to her weekly Al-Anon meetings, where I attended "Alateen." AA and associated groups practice a twelve-step program that is designed to help individuals deal with the emotions and behaviors associated with alcoholism. I learned these twelve steps but have often forgotten them over the years.

Recently, I reread the twelve steps (see Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 1981). Each of these twelve steps have had some relevancy in my life over the years, but in the current location of my journey, steps four and eight have come back into view. Step four requests, "Make a fearless and moral inventory of ourselves." Relatedly, step eight requests, "Made a list of all the persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."

Over the past forty-something years, I observed my father attempt on many occasions to make amends for the pain he caused the family. I came to learn that he had pain in his life that influenced his choice to use alcohol as a means to escape. Recently following his passing, three of my siblings and I got together to talk about my father's life, and I learned a few things about him from my oldest sister, Stephanie. My father, the oldest of nine children, wanted to work with his father and also wanted to help others, which led him to become a dentist. Yet he soon realized that the profession he chose created a conflict that he could not resolve. According to my sister, he experienced pain knowing the people he wanted to help very much disliked dentists because they associated dentistry with pain.

The grief of his recent loss prompted me to think about the pain I caused others, intentionally or not. The communication journey toward humility travels through the land of forgiveness. Forgiveness may be the means to resolve resentments and improve personal health (see Kelley, et al., 2018). Forgiveness requires understanding that the perception of a wrong is more relevant than an actual wrong. My father once told me that forgiving others keeps you from being held bound (see NAB, Matthew 6:14). Forgiveness in that sense is designed not to set the other person free but to set the self free. This freedom allows me to continue my journey and not be stuck in the same place.

Conclusion

Although we often have destinations in mind, the journey does not end. Once we reach some goal, some milestone we set for ourselves, a new one arrives in the distance. The search for wisdom through humility is one such journey, always ahead of us and never behind. Søren Kierkegaard described the search as a journey toward “a self, every instant it exists, is in process of becoming, for the self does not actually exist, it is only that which is to become” (1941, originally published in 1849, p. 44).

As others like Kierkegaard before us have noted, we remain in a process of becoming: an unending journey. At times the journey may be difficult, but as John Donne (1624) observed, “No man hath affliction enough that is not matured and ripened by it” (p. 109). Such is the search for wisdom through humility. This kind of search commences intentionally. Unlike other life goals, this goal is always ahead of us and requires constant attention. Loss of attention means loss of goal. This loss can happen early in the journey, as Carson posited: “It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood” (1965, p. 42). To keep the awe and wonder takes a moral compass intentionally working toward the good. As Hare described, “moral goodness is the most important kind of personal merit” (1996, p. 6).

In terms of milestones on the journey toward humility, we can self-reflect on our own development and the processes we went through to gain knowledge about ourselves, others and the world around us, and the ways we have used that knowledge and understanding to help others through teaching and leadership. As communicators and professionals, we are called to remember our own journeys in our interactions with others and to be cognizant that others around us are on their own journeys as well. This is our calling.

Epilogue: Journey's End

The journey is never truly over if the heart is open to learning.

How do we end our journey? What do we need to remember?

"What is seen now so much more clearly is that although the names keep changing and the bodies keep changing, the larger pattern that holds us all together goes on and on"
(Pirsig, 1984, p. 6).

The journey is over: at least this part of the journey! After every journey, it can be helpful to look back at the paths taken, and those not taken, and make an accounting. This reflection is also part of the learning process. We evaluate the route to make determinations on if we might change it or even the process the next time.

This retrospective reflection also allows us to recount the people we met along the way and the gifts their presence provided us during our journey. Although all connections influenced us to some degree, some connections influenced us more than others: some created turning points while others represented milestones. Many people served as important places on the road but got left behind as we progressed toward our destination. Others may still be beside us. All have taught us. Those with humility likely taught us the most.

My first teachers were my parents. They provided a foundation for my understanding of the world around me. Good or bad (mostly good), that foundation from my early childhood influenced my view of the world. For reasons not fully understood, I can remember the names of most of my schoolteachers, even the name of my kindergarten teacher: Ms. Bondy. Some teachers stand out in my memory more than others. I remember my high school teachers Ms. Day (English) and Mr. Allen (chemistry and physics) particularly fondly. I credit Mr. Allen in particular for motivating my travels.

Bob Westermann (college writing) gave me my first experience with viewing the world in alternative ways. He challenged me to give up many preconceived notions. Bernadette O'Connor (philosophy) showed me how to wonder deeply about the world. John Moder taught me how to be critical; it was in Dr. Moder's existentialism class that I first read Robert Pirsig and in his epistemology class that I was introduced to Bernard Lonergan. Other teachers did not have to be physically present along the road during my journey. Some teachers were found among the authors of books, many of whom are listed in the references for this text.

Teaching was not always what I intended to do. It was only after I started a master's program that I found the calling to teach. Teachers in my life have certainly influenced my chosen profession. But the turning point came when I was asked to teach—I then tried it and discovered my vocation.

Given the positive influences of teachers, I have selected the path that best emulates the qualities of those who are most influential. But the task is not complete. I strive to continue to improve my craft by continuing my education about teaching, including continuing to research and remaining “scholarly.”

Although this part of the journey is over, I remain convinced that the ideals sought are never truly found. What is important is to continue to strive toward their attainment: to continue the journey.

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