

CHARLES UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY

Philosophy

Doctoral thesis

Epimeleia:

Care for the Soul

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The purpose of this work is to introduce the subject of Epimeleia (care) as the necessary and fundamental premise of educational endeavours. The focus of these endeavours is not directed toward any fixed point but instead, driven by attention to and delight in the process. The outcome of this human experience in becoming, is absent of any goal, beyond that of a life well-led.

Abstract

Educators remain the most instrumental force toward the develop of the next generation of people, who will in turn be representative of the era to come. Rediscovering the fundamental purpose of the Educator is paramount toward a world of authenticity, fulfillment, and truth.

Since the time of Socrates, care for the soul of mankind has been the course toward enlightenment. Through Anamnesis we emerge as we uncover the truth that was hidden. Over the millennia however, education has lost its way and become a means of control and manipulation. Teaching is predicated on the answer not the question. The world has become one of certainty and absolutism. The Educational Industrial complex is manufacturing people as tools toward their own end. Teachers are products of an Economic Zeitgeist that has designed the very foundations of their worldview. They have embraced the false logic of the scientific society however, there is hope. Nothing is immutable and we can rediscover how “to put question marks in front of dead ends”.¹ By eliminating universal objectives we can return each person to a fundamental question of being, “What is a life well-led?” We can eliminate distracting notions of privilege, bias, and inauthenticity through a life of internally designed and perpetuated motivation. We can stop preparing students to enter the world we have created, and instead begin preparing them to create the world they will enter. We can stop giving people what we want them to have and begin to provide what they need. This can be achieved through Epimeleia; care for the soul.

¹ Jan Patočka, *Kapitoly ze současné filosofie*[*Chapters of Contemporary Philosophy*], in: Sebrané spisy J. Patočky, sv. 1 (v. 1996/2), *Péče o duši I*, ed. I. Chvatík a P. Kouba (OIKOYMENH, Praha 1996), p 98.

Keywords

Teaching, pedagogy, education, philosophy, happiness, new-age education, care, soul, Comenius, Dewey, epimeleia, Gardner, Multiple Intelligence, intelligence, criteria for intelligence, assessment, psychology.

Acknowledgements

The time I have spent on this work has been one of tremendous challenge, struggle, and growth. I am eternally grateful for what I have become and those that have assisted and guided me along this amazing journey. I would like to thank all my wonderful teachers, Prof. PhDr. Ilona Semrádová , Prof. ThDr. Jan Blahoslav Lášek, and Doc. PhDr. Naděžda Pelcová and my wonderful advisor Doc. David Rybák for their knowledge, time, and patience. I would like to thank my mother Marilyn who told me I could be and do anything; To this day, I have never stopped believing her. I would like to thank My Father Stephen for his never-ending, unshakable support; he is the rock that tethers me to safety as I take leap after perilous leap. I would like to thank Steve Starkweather, colleague, contributor, and friend. I would like to thank Kate Kohut who with boundless energy shared with me a tremendous profound dialogue, kept me focused, and edited this unwieldy manuscript. Lastly, the wonderful, wise, endlessly patient, Prof. PhDr. Anna Hogenová . Professor, thank you for believing in me, for not ever giving up, and for always reminding me to live without fear.

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Introduction

Why do we Teach?

The question posed above is not one to be answered. It is instead the driving query toward a life of discovery. Teachers often say that they have learned as much from their students as their students have from them. This is a strange and profound revelation that suggests a mutual reliance on the teacher-student relationship. It reminds one of Heidegger's hermeneutic circle; the teacher's being can not be understood without the students as relative parts of that becoming and the classroom as a whole. Hermeneutically, the task is "about establishing real relationships between reader, text, and context".² We are cooperating on a journey of trustful exploration and we have been chosen as the leaders of the expedition. We are not merely experts in our field. We are not merely sources of information. We are not superiors giving orders. Our job, is not merely to teach, but to travel with and conscientiously support our students as they find their own way. Often we lead but, just as often, our travel companions rush ahead toward a clearing of their own discovery.

Imagine comprehension as a place the teacher has travelled to before and knows well. The instructor knows the customary way they regularly take but, must also recognize that their path is not the only one... nor, necessarily the best one. The pitfalls they easily overcome may be insurmountable to the students they lead, just as likely, the stumbling blocks that they themselves circumvented or, were unlikely to traverse may prove easily navigated by the new adventurers under their guidance. We, as teachers, explore and assist in our student's becoming, and in doing so, we too discover a new world and a new self. As the saying by Jan Komensky, The Father of Modern Education goes, "He who teaches others, teaches himself" is very true, not only because constant repetition impresses a fact indelibly on the mind, but because the process

² B. Ramberg, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2003, 2005.

of teaching itself gives deeper insight into the subject taught."³

Each obstacle in our path represents a teachable moment for both instructor and student. Each student will approach becoming in their own unique way. Some of these methods will be less direct, some more, some students will defer to the teachers guidance, others will be quickly dissuaded from continuing the journey, and give up on the task. The teachers responsibility is to provide various possibilities and encouragement, but most importantly care. The student may overcome an obstacle that very minute or perhaps it will ever remain an impediment, the experience beyond their grasp: The teacher must provide the care necessary so as to allow the student to proceed on their journey, whatsoever it may be. This might require circumventing a host of obstacles completely, only to double back later to revisit them with a fresh perspective. **Care is the fundamental principle of teaching.** We must persist in our collective journey, and as we continue, we leave no individual student behind. This doesn't however imply forced dictatorial coercion toward any singular objective. With care as our guiding principle, we must provide the best possible environment toward the students growth, in whatever direction, shape, or need they require. This may mean allowing them to follow an alternative path or, perhaps, relinquish their care to that of another teacher that provides attention more suitable to their needs as people. Everyone doesn't need to take the same route to the top, nor must they even climb the same mountain.

In our role as Educator-guide, each time our party reaches a new frontier, it is important for us to look back over the journey. How did we arrive here? Did we take a new path? What wonderful new ways of traversing the landscape of learning have we experienced. Each time, the view from atop a ridge gains a unique perspective. We have guided a new group of students to a familiar place however, that place and the journey that we took together is original and rewarding each time. It is new because it was never about the objective or reaching a particular point. The journey of becoming must be its own reward; looking toward other profit is a course toward futility. Other ambitions and expectations will surely result in poor council, discontent, and resentment.

³ John Amos Comenius, *The Great Didactic*, p 156-157,
https://archive.org/stream/cu31924031053709/cu31924031053709_djvu.txt

Perhaps as the question arises as to why teach, we should try exploring our motivations with this self reflection:

Can you return to the same place many times and find something new again and again?

Are you likely to find fulfillment in the service of others?

Are you patient and flexible enough to allow for many paths toward understanding?

Are experiences and community more important than material things and status?

Do you enjoy tending to things and watching them grow?

Epimeleia: An Educator's Duty

The process of education is a journey from the darkest recesses of the cave, up, out, and into the light. The correct path, if there can be such a thing however, has always been a matter of contention and debate. Since before the time of Plato and his rejection of the methods and interests of the sophists, educational purpose has become a centerpiece of Western philosophical thought. The dichotomy between the pedagogical philosophies of Plato and Aristotle may have been the first identifiable western template toward our contemporary schism in educational thought. The decline of the old gods and mythology left a vacuum in education. The universe abhors a vacuum and this void was filled by science and later technology. The current era is a realm of certainty and absolutes. Foucault describes the “Cartesian moment” as what signifies the change from care of the soul to “the modern age of relations between subject and truth.”⁴ What is said to be lost in this shift is the most vital consideration of humanity; what Plato called *epimeleia*. The beauty of words in ancient times is that they were not required to have a strict or singular use. They could carry more than words do today. They were less certain but more correct, less specific but more soulful. *Epimeleia* has the same root as the word melody. For the sake of argument, and a contemporary audience, Foucault used the more limited and specific, *epimeleia heautou* as a description for the care of the self. We will continue to use the term *epimeleia* unencumbered by a strict, singular and precise definition. Instead, let us allow it to contain all the contextual variety that it did in ancient times. *epimeleia* will, for our purposes,

⁴ Foucault, M., *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, translation by Graham Burchell 2005.

stand for the ways in which care can be taken and given, to be in charge and to have something in one's charge, and the exercises, practices, and attitudes toward the care and fulfillment of the soul. When considering I in the interpretation of a life well led, let us not begin with the Cartesian foundation that has dominated western thought, I think therefore I am. Instead let us emulate the philosopher Levinas' Ethical "I", "I am called therefore I am."⁵ Here the "I" exists subjected to the other. It makes care the center of our concern and the reflection of that care a defining characteristic of our very existence.

The theoretical vista of educational planning and curricular design is far removed from the experience of the individual student. Decades of life and a paradigmatic shift in perspective separate us from those we would seek to instruct. Although each of us has participated in our own instruction and growth, we were unaware of the intricacies that worked toward our particular cultivation. Now, as a product of that cultivation, we are unacquainted with the minutia of our own design. We, as educators, learn pedagogical philosophy and methodology but, how do we determine their value to the individuals in our charge? Even the most mindful instruction cannot ensure which conditions will influence and become magnified through the course of development. With all our designs, models, and formulas, we cannot guarantee a result. Instead we must identify a guiding principle that will, by nature of our belief, allow us to express good will. As Immanuel Kant said, "The only thing that is good without qualification or restriction is a good will."⁶ Moreover, if we are to use *epimeleia* as our guiding principle or maxim, how then is it best achieved? Let us examine the two major influences that balance educational design and practice.

A consideration of the contemporary aim of education seems to suggest a widening schism between curricular design and implementation philosophies. On the surface, this polarization appears to represent the dichotomy between two schools of thought which, for the purposes of this work we will refer to as prescriptivism and idealistic developmentalism. The Prescriptivist's intention is to prepare a curriculum designed to foster success by directing education toward the needs of current and predicted societal structures. As this form of curriculum developed it

⁵ Professor Michael Barnes, Emmanuel Levinas. Heythrop College, URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heHJm4ge-L0>.

⁶ Kant, E. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. New York: Harper Collins, 1964.

gained more supporters as well as some critics. An important addition to the linear model of curriculum design was the incorporation of objectives that show the intended outcome as a product of the teaching.⁷ The effect was a further standardization along the linear path of learning. For many more idealistic curricular theorists, this became a point of contention because they saw learning as a multidisciplinary process or as Dewey says, “the development of new attitudes, and new interests in, experience.”⁸ The Idealist's intention is to design a curriculum toward the aim of achieving a better society through more diverse scholarship. This split in ideology begs the questions: Which theories should be applied toward meaningful, practical, responsible educational design? How is our duty as educators best achieved? Perhaps Czech educational philosopher Jan Comenius said it best when he remarked, “Let us have but one end in view, the welfare of humanity.”⁹

How to achieve this lofty goal is a question of tremendous contention. We know as educators that there is no responsibility more weighty than directing the course of the next generation, and by doing so, each sequential one as well. However, we must reconcile how this duty is to be fulfilled with its internal motivational factors. The responsibility of guiding the future is upon us.

Educational prescriptivists are primarily interested in a linear course toward achievement and certification. Each academic level has specific goals; achievement is then measured by standardized testing. Upon completion, performance is appraised and the pupil certified. The focus of this approach is a structural ladder. It is destination-imperative. The goal-environment is static in relationship to the student; however, its boundaries are not concrete. They are shaped by perceived societal requirement. Prescriptivists follow a top-down approach in trying to determine what is currently valuable to society and then construct curriculum to support it and assessment toward certification. This educational structure, which was once a matter of local necessity, is becoming increasingly subject to global interests. For prescriptivists, the end is certified, and their course is a clear path toward that end.

Educational idealists/developmentalists construct instruction that is often identified as

⁷ David Scott, *Critical Essays on Major Curriculum Theorist*. Psychology Press, 2008, p. 22.

⁸ John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty: A Study of the Relation of Knowledge and Action*. New York: Putnam, 1929, p. 37.

⁹ Comenius, J.A. *The Great Didactic of Jan Amos Comenius*. London: A. and C. Black, 1907.

descriptive or naturalistic. They are interested in guiding students on the basis of a set of principles and prescribe a far less objective/outcome-based learning structure. They prefer a non-linear, bottom-up approach, and in doing so, believe that the students will be well prepared for the future. Idealists conceive of a foundation that is solid enough to accommodate and promote varying structures. Furthermore, they intend for these dynamic, self-realized students to shape the future to suit them as opposed to fitting into its current dimensions. Idealists consider what has been important to the development of people throughout our history combined with proposed possibilities for the future. However, they believe their most important focus must be the needs of the individual in the present. Idealists are concerned with what might be lost by the pragmatists' top-down approach. They believe that the future is not an answer but a question to be asked. Educational idealists are preparing their students to ask those questions.

Educational Prescriptivism

There are various curricular models that propose a Prescriptive point of view. The Tyler method, pioneered by Ralph Tyler, and his formation of the National Assessment of Educational Progress in the United States, deserves an important mention. The “Tyler Rationale's” influence has had an effect on templates for educational design around the world. Tyler championed the move toward a Prescriptivist course in education. In *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1949), he set a precedent for viewing, analyzing and interpreting the curricula and instructional programs of educational institutions. This book was a best-seller and has since been reprinted in 36 editions. The Tyler method is one of educational outcome. The model mandates specific objectives that support this outcome. Results are assessed through standardized testing.

The most prevalent criticism of the Tyler method is the question of the purpose of this outcome. Detractors argue that the purpose of the Tyler method is to support industry. If this is correct, then curriculum is being designed to promote economic achievement. Its objectives correlate to success in the marketplace. Critics surmise that under these circumstances, the entire educational structure becomes an economic model. Every aspect of life becomes tied to wealth accumulation. All successes are measured financially and the stock market is deified. Their is

cause for concern that the prescriptive model could in unconscientious hands be repurposed to insure patriotic citizenship, or easily-led populations through universal indoctrination.

These are compelling arguments and the questions that rise from them are intriguing in both fact and fiction. The prescribed purpose of any model could be benevolent or malevolent, as could the outcomes. There will always be debate over the outcome/purpose of prescriptive designs. We will question who is making the decisions at the highest level and the framework of their motivation. We will wonder about political influence and the guiding interests behind the scenes. Whose purpose the prescriptivists are working toward is the question we have been told to ask. The answer is canned and ready however we should not accept the answer to the question were we told to ask. Instead let us propose our own question. It is necessary to recognize that even if a prescriptive curricular design was constructed with the most sublime and altruistic intentions, this question would remain: Can we achieve *epimeleia* by constructing a curriculum that is based on any specific uniform purpose or outcome? A first step towards doing this would be a movement away from a content-focused curriculum towards a concept-focused curriculum. This means rewriting standards and curriculum to promote the understanding of complex problems. Therefore, standards and curriculum should focus on the depth of a discipline and how to use the tools and inquiry of the discipline in real life. ¹⁰...“Behavioral objectives (i.e., *Students will be able to...*) do produce measurable outcomes but have been criticized because they do not consider the unmeasurable outcomes that happen in the classroom.” ¹¹

Critic of the Tyler method Sadie Hill said “Tyler's method is a mechanistic, uniform, lock-step, behavioristic model... how can we help each child develop to the fullest if we use it to build our curriculum?”¹² This criticism speaks to the more vital issue in question toward this model; If each student is a singular, unique individual, then each one will need conscientious cultivation. We must then provide a varying approach to the care of their own individual soul. How can one set of objectives, no matter how well meaning, fulfill the *epimeleia* of all students?

Educational Idealism and Cultural Naturalism

¹⁰ David Scott, *Critical Essays on Major Curriculum Theorist*. Psychology Press, 2008, p. 11.

¹¹ E. W. Eisner, *Educational Objectives: Help or Hindrance*. School Review, 1967.

¹² Walker, D.F. And J.F. Soltis. *Curriculum and Aims*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2004.

In this, a today's era time of certainty, Educational Idealism has lost advocacy amongst curricular designers. Our *noesis* carries a pre-prepared *noema* and our expectations predict our outcome. In our objective-based educational paradigm, idealistic models are often regarded as lacking direction. The most widespread international example of educational Idealism is the Montessori Educational approach. Here students are presented with educational materials/activities that work toward discovery as the children follow their own individual course of development. The curriculum is based on student choice and freedom of movement as opposed to controlled learning and direct instruction. The teachers then act as guides to nurture and cultivate the natural strengths and inclinations of the individual.

The great Educational philosopher, John Dewey was a great proponent of the American school of thought, called Pragmatism. He believed that students aren't merely passively observing a static world around them but instead active participants in creating it. His philosophy places the individual in the center of the learning experience as the most important and unique consideration. Dewey states that "Human thinking is not a phenomenon which is radically outside of (or external to) the world it seeks to know; knowing is *not* a purely rational attempt to escape illusion in order to discover what is ultimately "real" or "true". Rather, human knowing is *among* the ways organisms with evolved capacities for thought and language cope with problems. Minds, then, are not passively observing the world; rather, they are actively adapting, experimenting, and innovating."¹³ This tradition is one that has passed from great educator to great educator. In rejecting the scientific, dualistic approach of Descartes, Comenius and Dewey placed human beings as the center of experience, learning, growth, and becoming in the world. Specific approaches from teaching have emerged through this tradition and although less prolific, have made their mark on education. They have informed and inspired an array of contemporary Idealistic educational structures.

Idealistic approaches like Montessori take a cue from nature. There are many different varieties of plants. Each has different attributes and method of growth. Some grow tall to reach

¹³ David Hildebrand, John Dewey, *Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy*, 2018, URL: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dewey/>

the sun, others grow wide. Some flourish in riparian habitats, whilst others the driest deserts. They generally require sun, earth, and water but in entirely different quantities. There is no objective toward their growth except to be healthy and flourish. This is the way diversity leads toward success and harmony. Each finds its own way without having to compete toward the same specific goal. Uniformity is a weakness; diversity is their greatest strength. Suppose every plant's objective was to grow as large and tall as possible; first, for many it would be in violation of their nature, thus making it impossible. Secondly, if they could be molded into uniformity they would be poorly suited to the various environments they inhabit. Lastly, with the entirety of competition being directed toward a singular objective, there is no possibility for all of them to succeed.

Can a philosophy without prescribed objectives lead to *epimeleia*? Part of the human spirit is categorized by reaching out to something beyond its grasp. Must this possibility be placed before us so that we may move toward it, like a tree does sunlight? Professor Fred Lunenburg said, “The ultimate in a nonlinear, descriptive approach is the absence of a model when curriculum makers are operating intuitively.”¹⁴ Introducing various outcomes without advocating any singular objective affords the student something to reach for without prescription. Nurturing the student's movement toward a self-realized goal provides them with a destination and the means to get there.

Epimeleia

It is revealing that an idealistic approach remains the guiding philosophy of teachers themselves. The preponderance of teachers, without necessarily being able to pinpoint the precise reason, believe that fostering the student's knowledge and growth should be the focus of education. They resist “teaching to the test” in favor of guiding students toward a larger understanding of the discipline(s). Perhaps it is because the teacher and the student's *epimeleia* are inextricably woven. The two are spiritual counterparts that must fulfill the dialogue that gives rise to universal reason (*logos*). The teacher must take care in nurturing the concerns of the

¹⁴ Lunenburg, F.C., *Curriculum Development: Inductive Models*. Schooling, Vol 2, #1, 2011, Sam Houston State University.

student's soul. The students, then finding their own path toward fulfillment as a result of this guidance, reward the teacher's soul through the knowledge that he has successfully nurtured those in his charge. This is the mutual, reciprocal nature of *epimeleia*.

Can a remote dictatorial approach achieve *epimeleia*? Without the reciprocity inherent in care for the soul, the circle remains incomplete. It is the dialogue from which *epimeleia/logos* arises. As administrators move away further away from direct instruction and student interaction, reciprocity inherently diminishes. By what methods might we bring educational planner and student together? It is of the utmost importance that *epimeleia* is practiced at every level. We as educators must not isolate ourselves from our students. From far away all one can see is the boundaries of an object. From a distance, it's easy to make the mistake of perceiving students as the adults we want them to become, as opposed to the people that they are. When we envision our students as a final product, we forsake our most important duty; the care for the soul.

Prussian Model of Education

Many of our contemporary educational issues arise from the mechanisms of the Prussian Educational system. The efficiency and general universality of the program were most likely benevolent in conception furthermore, it is a powerful nation building device. The Prussian system of education was both a product of its time and also part of the system that drove that time period. The Industrial revolution was upon us and people needed to be freed up to work in the factories and on assembly lines to drive the Industrial complex and feed Capitalism. The children needed to be stored while the parents worked long hours. School was designed as an assembly line with students divided by age, moving through a sequential series of quantifiable procedures toward the need of... industry. The system is a systematic mechanism toward economic success.

The Prussian system is no longer necessary. It is the result of a bygone era and needs to be replaced with individualized educational strategies. A lecturer can reach many students at home though technology to inform, entertain, and enlighten. Then when the student goes to school, the

teacher is there to help them with “homework” allowing them to spend time on the subjects they need assistance with and allowing for personalized instruction. Open flexible class times based on ability can help allow students to move through education in their own way. It will allow them to spend extra time on chosen concentrations and topics of interest. They could be awarded specialization commendations based on these criteria. It’s important to make the distinction between what we are accustomed to and what is good. We must adjust to the the changing needs of the people in our care. As Jan Amos Comenius said, “Let the main object... to seek and to find a method of instruction, by which teachers may teach less, but learners learn more.”¹⁵

A Culture of Measurement

We are taught to measure our abilities, success, possessions, experiences through the lens of quantity and quality. It is so ingrained in western culture that one might ask, “What other manner of measurements are there?” That will be discussed but, to begin with, I propose the question, do we need to measure these things at all? Does every journey have a measurable outcome? Once people reduce their lives to measurements we are no longer human: We become a sum sheet of numerical values.

This preoccupation with measurement often begins in school. In today’s educational system it seems that student development has taken a backseat to student achievements. These achievements are all intended to be measured by the same standards. These standards are content focused and generally determine what is taught in schools.¹⁶ The child’s mind is malleable and ready to be shaped. It is here we introduce the concepts of measurement and external approval based on the former. We categorize students on a scale of least to most based on a continually narrowing set of skills and abilities. The student’s abilities are measured and they are rewarded for their strengths. Why are these strengths chosen? Who determines what abilities are valuable and which are not? How is the scale of measurement developed and to what end? What is success and how is an idea of a well-led life established?

¹⁵ Jan Amos Comenius, *The Great Didactic*. London, 1907, p. 3.

¹⁶ Stephan Starkweather, *Redefining Roles in the Curriculum*. University of Kansas, 2018, p. 5.

Criteria for an Intelligence

Howard Gardner, the American developmental psychologist that developed Multiple Intelligence theory, is a Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard University. His research in neurology, psychology, and education have melded into a unique perspective on education and thought. Gardner utilizes a eight point system toward determination of a candidate intelligence. It incorporates indicators from various perspectives including evolutionary biology, psychology, and neuroscience. By introducing his concepts in such a scientific manner, he legitimized them to even the most inflexible and conservative audience. Educators and students alike have benefited tremendously from Gardner's work. Howard Gardner expanded the possibilities of what it means to be smart and by widening that spectrum, gave people new opportunities toward epimelia. Education is a continuing path up and out into the light and so the possibilities must be widened again. They must be widened to include all the ways in which people connect to the world, the ways in which they identify themselves, and the way in which they are considered by those around them. Gardner use a scientific method/ criteria which is both his concept's greatest strength and its most humanistic perspective, its most salient weakness. When something is validated through science, it is just as likely to be invalidated through the same genre of evidence upon newly discovered data. The proof that emerges from the phenomena is contrarily indisputable.

People connect to the world through the phenomena they experience. It is not through the inner-workings of their minds or the substance of the world; it is the way we experience our world as both a singular and shared phenomena. There are infinite ways in which being is experienced. These experiences are placed into categories and for the sake of human understanding and endeavour, enter the realm of classification. These artificial boundaries remain over time, evolve, or possibly even cease to exist. These categories are best applied

without rigid or narrow structure but stretch and flux to contain our experiences. They are not intended to define or negate or experience but to give it shape and direction. These categories with expertise and time become disciplines in their own right and develop rules to guide their theory. Their principles are guided by experience and passed down through generations. These principles may be studied by future generations and practiced toward expertise. These disciplines encounter virtuoso whom by their tremendous ability demonstrate irrefutable testament toward greatness. It is here that we find the most easily identifiable marker of Multiple Intelligence. When we have no choice but to acknowledge a natural gift that has emerged so triumphantly it defines the apex of that manner of becoming. There are endless historical selections that one might employ as example by defining their genius as a manifestation of their expertise in a singular discipline. These examples however, stand in contrast to the prevailing contemporary understanding of intelligence.

Gardner's Criteria and Culture

The phrase Multiple Intelligences refers to a particular formula toward determining what constitutes an intelligence as devised by Howard Gardner in his seminal work, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983) Gardner offers this explanation for his understanding of intelligence: "If we synthesize information from several disciplines, ranging from anthropology to brain study, it emerges that human beings are better described as having several relatively independent information processing capacities, which we call the "multiple intelligence"¹⁷

In order to proffer his theory to an analytical psychological community, Gardner developed an eight point criteria for his multiple intelligences. Among these criteria are potential isolation by brain damage and a preponderance of psychometric data.

The Eight Point Criteria Identifying an Intelligence, Dr. Howard Gardner

1. Isolation as a Brain Function As medicine studies isolated brain functions through cases

¹⁷ Howard Gardner, *The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 487

of brain injury and degenerative disease, we are able to identify actual physiological locations for specific brain functions. A true intelligence will have its function identified in a specific location in the human brain.

2. Prodigies, Savants and Exceptional Individuals Human record of genius such as Mozart being able to perform on the piano at the age of four and Dustin Hoffman's "Rain Man" character being able to calculate dates accurately down to the day of the week indicate that there are specific human abilities which can demonstrate themselves to high degrees in unique cases. Highly developed examples of a true intelligence are recorded in rare occurrences.
3. Set of Core Operations. There is an identifiable set of procedures and practices which are unique to each true intelligence.
4. Developmental History with an Expert End Performance. As clinical psychologists continue to study the developmental stages of human growth and learning, a clear pattern of developmental history is being documented of the human mind. A true intelligence has an identifiable set of stages of growth with a Mastery Level which exists as an end state in human development. We can see examples of people who have reached the Mastery level for each intelligence.
5. Evolutionary History. As cultural anthropologists continue to study the history of human evolution, there is adequate evidence that our species has developed intelligence over time through human experience. A true intelligence can have its development traced through the evolution of homo sapiens.
6. Supported Psychological Tasks Clinical psychologists can identify sets of tasks for different domains of human behavior. A true intelligence can be identified by specific tasks which can be carried out, observed and measured.

7. Supported Psychometric Tasks The use of psychometric instruments to measure intelligence (such as I.Q. tests) have traditionally been used to measure only specific types of ability. However, these tests can be designed and used to identify and quantify true unique intelligences. The Multiple Intelligence theory does not reject psychometric testing for specific scientific study.

8. Encoded into a Symbol System Humans have developed many kinds of symbol systems over time for varied disciplines. A true intelligence has its own set of images it uses which are unique to itself and are important in completing its identified set of tasks.¹⁸

We cannot allow the scientific society to define, nor negate our experience in the world.

We can however, utilize Gardners list as a tool to help us discover and identify intelligences. This is a marvelous gift we have been given; ways to broaden our ability to celebrate the uniqueness of being. This will be our lens for the examination of Gardner's criteria.

His criteria, whilst fundamental toward legitimizing his initial theory and valuable towards a wider consideration of intelligence, has become constrictive toward the advancement of an ever broadening educational definition of intelligence. Gardner considers himself the custodian of his theory and as a developmental psychologist his task is defending the legitimacy of his life's work against a scientific society that places the brain and cognitive processes as the center and summation of the human experience. Gardner however, consistently betrays this criteria with his definition of Multiple Intelligences. Gardner defines an Intelligence as “the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community.”¹⁹ He himself regularly states that he believes that there could be many more Intelligences but since he can't prove this to be the case through his criteria, largely based on psychometric data, that the possibility, for now, must be negated. This stands against one of the

¹⁸ Gardner, H., *Intelligence reframed: Multiple intelligences for the 21st century*. New York: Basic Books, 1999, p. 35-41.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

most important fundamental ideas of this work. To reiterate, **We cannot allow the scientific community/society to define or negate our experiences in the world.** Gardner has stated again and again that intelligence is a phenomenological experience. It occurs in the world when people solve problems or produce things that the community values. Then he goes back and negates these same occurrences through an arbitrary criteria. The reason it must be arbitrary is because the these intelligences did emerge though actions taken in the world. Thusly, the people that produced them are demonstrating an intelligence by Gardners own fundamental definition. Gardner has proven to be a great leader in a movement toward an expansive, inclusive definition of intelligence but like an overprotective parent concerned with his child's safety, he is not allowing his progeny the freedom to grow into what it must become.

Gardner's original list of Intelligences included: linguistic, logic-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Each correlated to a way of interacting with the world, a genre of thought.²⁰

Gardner's theory changed the way people thought about being smart. It made the world question what standardized testing was actually testing. It redefined borders. However, in learning, borders must remain flexible. Knocking down one set of concrete walls to construct a new one just makes for a larger prison. A conceptual understanding of Intelligence must be as flexible and abstract as the capacity for human thought. The entirety of the human experience must be the template for the way in which we seek to discover ourselves and the optimal course toward the development of education. Just as Gardner himself advocates, we are looking at intelligence through a cultural lens. Culture is the basis for an understanding of varied intelligence. Its as if Howard Gardner knew this as he was developed his theory but always shied away from the uncertainty of an unknown, immeasurable quantity. Intelligence is an art; It is not measurable. Intelligence is an emotion, it can't be placed on a scale. Intelligence is the capacity of becoming in the phenomena. "The information taught in the classroom does not consider the situations that are particular to local areas. Schools need to be a place where students can develop their values about the world and see how the social conditions influence those values."²¹

²⁰ Ibid., p. 41-43.

²¹ Eisner, E.W., *Educational Objectives-Help or Hindrance*. In D.J. Flinders & S.J, 1967.

When we look at the superlative of intelligence we have genius. Mozart is often referred to as a genius. He was able to write entire symphonies in his head. This is an extremely rare aptitude, a virtually incomparable talent. What does this say about the way Mozart related to the world? Could Mozart have expressed himself as well in poetry or mathematics? It's impossible to know; perhaps if he was born the son of a poet, or mathematician he might have changed the way we look at those disciplines. More likely, he devoted himself to a single discipline because it was his singular genius. He probably didn't have a general intelligence that allowed him to do anything at such a remarkably high level; if he was a rare genius polymath like Da Vinci, he most likely would have produced exemplary artifacts of those abilities. What is clear, is that Mozart found a method for expressing himself and connecting to the world that was so magnificent, his genius is still celebrated hundreds of years later. When we refer to Mozart we do not refer to the man, a being of flesh and blood, but to the way that being connected to the world. He is completely defined by his soul's expression. Mozart is far from alone in this respect.

We are all defined by our soul's expression. Our intelligences are the way in which our soul relates to the self and connects to the world around us. Our intelligences are the defining characteristic of our personal identity and by what means others relate to and identify us. Our intelligences prescribe how we comport ourselves in the world. Intelligence is the means by which our soul extends out through our biology; the physical being, the mind, and into the outside world.

Intelligence is a sociocultural phenomena. It is steered by our surrounding as the infinite soul attempts to relate to the experience of being. As we are saturated by culture, our pneuma seeks to connect to our internal and external surroundings. We are introduced to socio-culturally appropriate methods of relating to the world. In any given micro-culture or macro-culture, some expressions of intelligence are nurtured whilst others may be unaffected or repudiated. The soul is always seeking a path of expression. Our culture provides the map for that expression. At times the map does not offer routes that are acceptable to the soul or ones that do not take it as far as it needs to go. In these cases we seek out new cultures with different maps and varying routes toward epimelia.

One way has many paths. It depends on where one begins and the choices one makes along the way. The end is always the same; all rivers flow to the sea. *Panta Rhei*. They start at the source and flow in many directions, some race quickly, with raging rapids, others trickle slowly toward inevitability. They change size and shape. We embody them all in different quantities and expressions. They are the progression of a thought. The relationship of the dialogue. The continuity of a lifetime.

Intelligence is a socio-historical phenomena. The way in which our cultural-historical heritage sets the background for our relationship of being is determined by the intelligences that have been sewn into the fabric of our experience. Consider Daniel Everett's work with the Piraha people of the Brazilian Amazon. "The Piraha have little need for any form of mathematics, they have merely the concepts of a small or large amount, enough, or too little. Attempts made to teach them mathematics saw little to no progress. Interestingly enough, some of the young Piraha that did have some success in numerics were quickly ushered away from the activity, as it had lost its entertainment value and was viewed as having no value to the community. As hunter gatherers, the Piraha can go into the jungle naked without tools or weapons and return with fruit, nuts, and small game. Their language can be whistled or hummed and lacks most complex grammatical structures western society considers necessary for language.

The Piraha's *pneuma* rises into being in ways distinct to their culture and unique in humanity. One can only imagine how they comport themselves in the world and only guess at the way in which they experience the phenomena of being. Conjecture holds that their naturalistic intelligence must be profoundly developed and a primary pathway for their souls understanding and expression. Could a series of whistles from a talented Piraha concerning the movement and progression of the hunt be equated to *Eine kleine nachtmusik* by Mozart? Might they be equal in grace of expression and each, genius, in their own socio cultural intellectual way? Each of their souls connecting through their own most extraordinary form of intelligence and becoming themselves in the world."²²

²² Colapinto, J., *The Interpreter: Has a remote Amazonian tribe upended our understanding of language?*. The New Yorker, 2007, URL: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2007/04/16/the-interpreter-2>.

Moving away from the question of the superlative, let us consider the prodigious variety of substances that arise from the intellectual manifestation of being. Singular intellectual conveyance is a rarity. Most beings become themselves in the world through a vast array of intelligences. We are ceaselessly comporting ourselves in the world through the various intelligences we employ and the relationship we forge between them. As stated before, the patterns of intelligence we use to approach the world define the way we comfort ourselves and the the way others identify us. Consider a man who has a very standard protocol of intellectual sequencing; he seldom deviates from this pattern. When his soul seeks to rise up into the world through expression he considers his intrapersonal/emotional intelligence as his first filter. He reconciles how he feels about it and sends it directly to his language filter to be constructed and sent out into the world. Here we have raw emotion only distilled through language. Can you picture him? He doesn't consider the effect he will have on others (interpersonal intelligence) He doesn't rationalize the best method for conducting his feelings, or whether they should all reach out into the world. If his emotions are generous and benevolent and his language intelligence weak, he may be considered a kind-hearted soul who's words though few, are heavy with love and compassion. If he carries an abundance of both intelligences and is of compassionate inclination, he may become a great poet or orator. If his intrapersonal intelligence is malicious but his language intelligence strong, he will seduce, convince, and entangle those around him in the web of his dark passion. If his intrapersonal expression is of erratic or malevolent disposition and his Language intelligence weak, he will most likely be labelled troubled and become a pariah.

The above is a simple but emblematic demonstration in practical terms how people relate to the world through their intelligences. Take the same characters we have imagined and add other intelligences into the equation. What if the raw emotion/intrapersonal expression was tempered through an interpersonal filter that considered how these feelings would be considered by others or the effect they might have on the world? The interpersonal intelligence could refine them and deliver them to language in a way that is more socially acceptable. If the raw emotions ran through themselves through Language and Musical intelligences it might lead to a great songwriter, singer, rock star.

Examining Intelligences is not a topic for the application of metric data but instead an examination of the souls passage into the world of being.

The way in which we understand intelligence defines the way in which we interpret the world. Our consideration of others and ourselves is built on the way in which we think about their souls hand reaching into the world. Can we appreciate an intelligence that we don't possess? Consider: Someone has a relatively narrow, basic mathematical intelligence. They are shown a full board of equations by an average university mathematics teacher and then a full board of equations by a Fields Medal recipient. The mediocre mathematical mind will not have any idea which is superior. They won't understand either, nor have any appreciation for the brilliance of the mathematical genius. Moreover, without the cultural esteem we have socialized into idea of the discipline, they may dismiss the equation as senseless numbers. Likewise, someone with a weak musical intelligence might dismiss Mozart, or a poor culinary intelligence, a James Beard Foundation Award winner.

In the *Phenomenology of Perception*, Ponty say that “the orator does not think... while speaking; his speech is his thought... just as the artist has only one means of representing the work on which he is engaged: by doing it.”²³ This is the way in which our thoughts enter the our actions and experience in the world. They emerge through our intelligence and the action they take in the world as we become.. The same can be said for the expression of an athlete engaged in the game. The athletes thought is his action and is expressed in the world through it. It can be said for the Chef and all his or her culinary articulation and placement. Their thoughts move outside their minds as they become in the world and come into being. It is an important mention that this way of being in the world is the mindset we need to attain to work through the Phen. It is as real a thought expressed in becoming as anything in the world. It is not a thought that merely exists in the mind. It reminds one of Anselm’s Ontological argument... the argument of the *Proslogion* can be summarized as follows:

1. That than which a greater cannot be thought can be thought.
2. If that than which a greater cannot be thought can be thought, it exists in reality.

²³ Merleau-Ponty M., *Phenomenology of Perception*. Routledge Classics, New York, 2002, p. 209.

Therefore,

1. That than which a greater cannot be thought exists in reality.

If we consider Anselm's proof as applied in the world. It exemplifies the limitations of traditional thought and the limitlessness of expression. It can not be related through normal language, only poetry or song, it must be danced, performed, converted to metaphor, it can be held in the Phen mindset for a moment and expressed but never explained. It is to live in that authentic place of beauty that is so universal, so infinite that we gasp in recognition and appreciation. The soul represents something larger than what the world contains and we must extend into and through that eternal source so as to become our authentic selves in the world.

How can one envision a path not taken? A road so long and foreign and a method of travel so peculiar that even detailed explanation would be of little use to another to traverse it. This is the road we take into the world, delightfully shared by those that enter it in a way similar to our own.

General Intelligence and IQ

IQ or the Intelligence Quotient test, a generalized cognitive exam, is the most widely implemented and popular measurement of general intelligence. The proponents of IQ usually assert its validity on the basis of a simple formula; outcome reliably predicts success. The success that is advocated is both in higher education and in specific professional fields of practice. The basis for the IQ tests are a series of about 100 questions both linguistic and mathematical with abstractions that force the subject to exhibit problem solving abilities.

There are and have been multiple criticisms of the validity of the IQ tests. The results vary heavily on the basis of race and cultural background. This is a subject that most scholars steer clear of in the affirmative or rage against citing evidence toward cultural bias. If we were to define intelligence as a cultural emergence in the world these questions are all but eliminated. Of course if we measured several specific cultural intelligences we would find that certain cultures were more proficient based on the usefulness of the intelligence to their culture at

present. We are not proposing this research as a criteria to divide and categorize but instead as an idea of the way in which our cultural intelligences may emerge in varied and differential ways. Our goal as educators is, of course to help us nurture each student in the way they require.

The IQ test is a test measuring a highly specific direction toward success. This word alone should give the educator pause. The judgement and measure of success is in constant consideration but it remains perhaps, the most under-considered notions in education. The IQ test seems to measure an opportunity for success in economically rewarding fields. Is this the measure that we as educators want to encourage our students to pursue? We, ourselves, as educators, have chosen not to pursue economically rewarding fields. If we support the IQ test we are supporting its measurement of success. If we encourage economic models of success or a life well-led we are essentially advocating that our devotion to care is less worthwhile than more financially rewarding vocations. We are promoting a worldview where monetary reward is success.

This worldview is then idealized and reinforced by a society that been indoctrinated to believe that this is actually an objective understanding of intelligence. There is no measurable criteria for intelligence, we are not numerical, we are people. So the test was created to measure certain specific abilities which were valued by the makers of the test. The makers of the test designed it to serve industry. The test was administered to people who were told that this test determined their likelihood of success. Those that did poorly on the test were largely relegated to a life of mediocrity. They were told that they were unable and they largely believed it. The entire society has based their self concept on this century old determination of worthwhile attributes that contribute toward success. The fields that required the highest cognitive ability scores attend university, they are most valued by this indoctrinated society, they are directed toward the most valued/highest paid employment and an entire civilization assumes that this all occurred because of scientific outcome as opposed to a self fulfilling prophecy. The question for you as the next generation of educations will be “will you continue this world view?” Will you propagate the structures that diminishes your very own lives and careers as unsuccessful. Will you support a philosophy that defines and negates our human experience in the world.

In a reduction to the absurd consider if we constructed an IQ test based on species survival ability. What if we idealized qualities that were most suitable for fending off predation, maintaining homeostasis, reproducing, acquiring resources, etc. Imagine that we designed a test that would measure achievement in these areas and determine who is best suited for survival. Imagine if this was the idea of success. It just as well might be, its far more biologically and evolutionarily suitable a criteria than the standard IQ test. What if this was how we determined what was valuable to our society? Consider how this paradigm would shape our society. In the case of the contemporary view of intelligence as measured by the IQ test we are moving toward a largely technological, elitist, capitalistic, individualistic society. What are the attributes in society that build bridges, that help us bond and relate to one another? Shouldn't we reinforce the social and cooperative elements that have sustained us as a species? We must decide what kind of society we wish to create. We are responsible for shaping the self concept of the next generation. We are not preparing students to enter the world we have created, we are preparing them to create the world they will enter.

In a recent example, Howard Gardner's theories were used we put into application in a "Multiple Intelligences Curriculum" in Australia. It seems that the teachers had found that the indigenous people seemed to gravitate and display certain intelligences in particular and soon these aboriginal students were actually being directed away from their perceived "weaker intelligences" toward ones that their population seemed to be generally better at. Gardner came out in opposition to this application of his theories calling it prejudicial. The concept of a wider consideration of intellect is not to categorize people or populations, its to be cognizant and conscientious of the way micro cultures to macro-cultural tendencies can help us to be more effective educators through thoughtful analysis of what the students manner of approaching the world may be.

Gardener admits that Multiple Intelligence theory, like any great tool is likely to be misused. In his 1999 Book *Intelligence Reframed*, he describes several of the ways his theory has been muddled or its application confounded.

“One of the unanticipated consequence of any theory is the ways in which it can be abused. There are several batteries of short tests that claim to measure the intelligences, but these tend to be strongly linguistic and often confound an Interest in an intelligence with a demonstrates skill in that intelligence. These tests simply Multiply by seven or eight the sins of original intelligence tests (or the original sin of intelligence testing).

Another risk in the assessment mentality is the tendency to label children (and others) as “linguistic” or “spatial” or “not at all musical” or even “interpersonal challenge”. This is not wholly a bad thing. Children are attracted to the idea of Multiple Intelligences, which involves fun activities and looks far beyond the idea of a single intelligence. Also, categorical system provided a way for people to engage in personal Reflections, which can be productive.

But the risks of labeling are patent. Labels can be stimulating, but also confining. No one likes to be called “stupid” because of low IQ scores, but the label “spatial but not linguistic” can be debilitating as well. Also, labeling intelligences involves two erroneous assumptions: (1) We know exactly how to assess intelligences, and (2) The determination of an intelligence represent a lasting judgement. If I were asked to assess someone's intelligences, I would not be satisfied until I had observed him solving problems and fashioning products in a number of settings. This is usually not practical. And even then, I would have no guarantee that the Intelligence profile would remain the same a year or two later. Indeed, shifting a person's daily routine dramatically can alter his or her profile of intelligences: That is what methods like Suzuki Music Talent Education Program or (less pleasantly) military boot camp achieve. But labels tend to stick, and few people go back later to document a shifting profile of intelligences.”²⁴ Each time I enter dialogue with Gardeners thought and intention I find him a kindred spirit and prodigious thinker. Perhaps his inclination toward measurement is just a necessity of the era in which he introduced his ideas. Maybe he believes maintaining metrics, testing, analysis, and scientific proof is the only way to validate these important theories to the scientific society; Perhaps, he is right.

²⁴ Gardner, H., *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century*, Basic Books, 2000, p. 138-139

The Limits of the Scientific Society

What can exams, tests, measure? We have established that they cannot measure the student. Does this mean that they are useless? That all data and measurement should be abandoned? No. The data cannot define our experience or negate it but it has value. It can do what it was originally designed to accomplish. To help determine students strengths and weakness so as to assist the educator in better understanding the students needs. By understanding how the student grows, the educator can nurture them appropriately. But understanding the students current limitations, the teacher can modify curriculum to bolster the areas of difficulty. Science is very useful as a tool toward our benefit. But this tool cannot become our master. People must not become subordinate to our own constructions.

Learning at a Desk

When we learn, we aren't merely absorbing information, we are placing that information into our way of being. As Comenius would say, the tree feeds at the root and the droplets on the leaves are merely useless adornments. We must experience this learning by making it part of the world we live in. This placement works through the type of intelligence(s) we utilize during the learning process, it involves the circumstances in which we are placed, the method of practice, but also learning has a geographical component. The learning that we experience sitting at a desk often remains at that desk.

Having studied acting and theatre for many years I have to learn and memorize hundreds of pages of text. I found that learning my lines was much easier when they were placed in context, with the other actors responding and interacting with my lines and cues as is the essence of dialogue. My fellow actors and I would often sit around reading lines with slightly abridged physical cues and be able to recite them verbatim without referring to the script. We did not actually gain entrance to the theatre until the day before the show at which point many of the actors would forget their lines on the stage we were set to play on. I wondered about this

phenomena as I myself had experienced this sudden geographic amnesia. It seems that the lines had remained in the practice. We hadn't learned them universally, we had learned them for that place and in that setting and that is where they stayed. After a few practices with lines in hand we would begin to adjust and then words and movements would find a new home on the performance stage. I noted that several of the actors didn't seem to have this problem so I asked them how they prepared and shadowed them in the next performance. The difference I noticed between their practice and the actors who lost the lines was the places in which they studied. The actors that retained their lines universally studied in multiple locations, often walking places or sitting outside. The lines weren't limited geographically because they weren't tied to a particular place. It is in some ways analogous to the way a particular smell will ignite a specific memory of a place and time. It seems that we rely on our spatial intelligence to place concepts in a particular location. This is why learning from a book is often much more comfortable than reading material of study in virtual space. We have physical context clues that connect us to the material spatially; for better or worse.

“A study was undertaken in 2013 with tenth-graders in Norway, where the students were divided into two groups. One group read two texts (1,400–2,000 words) in print and the other group read the same texts as PDFs on a computer screen. In the reading comprehension test that was administered, the students who read on paper scored significantly better than those who read the texts digitally. It was easier for those who read on paper to remember what they had read. Mangen et al. say that this is because paper gives spatio-temporal markers while you read. Touching paper and turning pages aids the memory, making it easier to remember where you read something. Having to scroll on the computer screen makes remembering more difficult.”²⁵ This spatial phenomenon may explain several interesting aspects of educational assessment and understanding. First, if we are placing our learning in the desk, will it be able to move out into the real world? Secondly, should we attempt as much is possible to place learning in the location of its likely application so it can be drawn on where needed? Tertiarily, Do students that perform well on pen and paper tests at a desk have an unfair advantage in testing when compared to

²⁵ Caroline Myrberg , Ninna Wiberg, *Screen vs. paper: what is the difference for reading and learning?* UKSG in association with Ubiquity Press, URL: <https://insights.uksg.org/articles/10.1629/uksg.236/>

students that place knowledge in a different geographic location or ones that don't use space specific learning?

It seems that placing knowledge in specific spatial locations using this intelligence has its benefits in testing if the learning and testing occur in the same location. If we plan to utilize learning in the outside world, then it should be placed there. Overall, perhaps the best blanket use of spatial learning is to vary the location and circumstance as much as possible to produce a universal application of learning. The simple take away is to study in place and way most similar to the application environment and if possible vary the learning location as much as possible so as to be universally prepared toward application.

Redefining Intelligence

What do we mean when we say that someone is intelligent? Consider: Does it mean that they speak well; communicating their ideas in a clear and eloquent fashion? Can they easily solve complicated mathematical equations? Are they able to complete a difficult puzzle in a short period of time? Each of the questions above suggests a completely different capacity, yet they are all abilities we label as requiring intelligence.

In my years of working with various age groups and teaching different subjects my concept of general intelligence was quickly placed into serious question. I rarely had student saw students that excelled in all areas, moreover, success in one area didn't seem to correlate to another with any regularity. Students would produce advanced language skills and abilities and I would label them as smart, then we'd turn to another discipline and they were they proved mediocre. My efforts to discover a general intelligence that applied to all circumstances was thoroughly in vain. Howard Gardner discovered similar incontrovertible anecdotal evidence in his work with victims of traumatic brain injury.

Dr. Gardner states: "The daily opportunity to work with children and with brain-damaged adults impressed me with one brute fact of human nature: People have a wide range of capacities. A

person's strength in one area of performance simply does not predicts any comparable strengths in other areas.

More specifically, some children seem to be good at many things; others, very few. In most cases, however, strengths are distributed in a skewed fashion. For instance, a person may be skilled in acquiring foreign language, yet be unable to find their way around an in familiar environment or learn a new song or figure out who occupies a position of power in a crowd of strangers. Likewise, weakness in learning foreign language does not predict either success or failure with most other cognitive tasks.”²⁶

“It’s important to recognize that intelligence rises out of the way in which we engage in the world, so one way of engaging in the world does not necessarily predict another unless they work synchronistically. Intelligences may work together or even be dependant on one another. A strong social intelligence may help precipitate a strength in language. Those who want to be able to communicate and understand others will be more apt to discover language in their becoming, just as those that are good at language may very well find social circumstances more appealing benefitting their social intelligence. When several intelligences work together in concert we see an elevated level of ability occur at a exponentially higher rate. A strong mathematician that also possessed great spacial and tremendous aethstetic ability may become a brilliant architect. Marvelous musical acumen paired with sharp kinesthetics, and solid emotional intelligence could produce a concert pianist.”²⁷

Classification: Moving beyond Gardener

Howard Gardner began his work on multiple intelligences almost a half century ago. He worked to prove to a scientific audience that he had identified several distinct, discrete and separate ways of being smart and connecting to the world. The traditional IQ test that we are all familiar with

²⁶ Gardner, H., *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century*, Basic Books, 2000, p. 31.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 42.

measures three major aspects of capacity: Spatial, mathematical and Linguistic. The test has become the standard by which intelligence is universally recognized to tremendous follow. The test assumes a very narrow measure of a particular form of capacity. Howard Gardner believed there was more to human intelligence than this criteria suggests. His work has proliferated the field of education and has become a basis for a more thorough and diverse way of understanding the way we as people think and understand the world. Fundamentally, he has advocated a method of classification and packaged it in a way that people connected to at their particular place in history and culture. This packaging appealed to the pedagogical community because it scientifically validated that education had further dimensions beyond speciality, linguistic and mathematics. His ideas on extending the accepted perimeters of how we think and connect to the world is a tremendous metaphor for all classification and classifiers of thought. Howard Gardner called his system multiple intelligences. This is somewhat deceiving because what he was describing was the way in which each person finds a unique way of connecting to the world. This is something that had been lost in our top down/sophistic process. Gardner and those like him freed teachers to expand and extend their reach in ways that had seemingly been forgotten. The narrow framework of contemporary western education was stifling educators in claustrophobic confinement. Student's entire worth was predicated on 3 abilities: math/logic and or language/expression. And speciality. These were and are still the measures that standardized tests diagnose toward educational advancement and success. Educators know that there was so much more but science being the paradigm of certainty, if must be proven ironically through the exact process it intends to rebuke. Only through scientific findings and convincing rhetoric was the educational community able to accept that there is more to education than science, speciality, and rhetoric. They were eager to use this evidence to legitimize something they knew that arose from their very souls. Because even the educators worldview is a product of the scientific society they themselves could not believe in a truth, no matter how profoundly obvious it was to them, unless it was validated by logic and science.

Despite the ends justifying the means, Gardner knocked down the very rigid walls that had caused educational claustrophobia. Western teachers looked out into a vast landscape of

possibilities toward curriculum reconfiguration. Would the new standards support all 8 intelligences? Would the new measurement tools weigh each equally? Educators wondered how they would incorporate each of the intelligences into their subject matter.

The Intelligence revolution was largely subordinated by the same system that created it. Governments are looking for a specific outcome and type of production from the generation to come. They are building the future toward an imagined economic model that reflects their idea of progress. These are the people that are designing the future. Disinterested in fulfillment, joy, or creating community, they impose the circumstances that will leave future generations in a unending battle for economic prosperity, against multitudinous competitors both foreign and domestic. Instead of growing in various ways, creating diversity, harmony, and an interdependency that benefits from diversity, we are instead raising the youth to be adversarial, constantly competing in the same manner toward the same finite resources.

What societies place value on is the product of their becoming just as becoming is based on what society values. The things that people do, aspire to be, value, idealize in this golden age are measured in dollars. Thusly, every action is interpreted through an economic lens. Consciously or subconsciously we are measuring every aspect of being from this perspective. We direct taxation toward the avenues we hold in esteem. Our educational system is built on a basis of an economic one. The subjects with the predicted highest average economic reward are the best funded, and the most featured in the standardized testing by which education is assessed. Those with some chance of financial reward are given some funding and those that appear to be unlikely to lead toward economic prosperity are defunded and or abandoned. Often the the members of a community experience a vague disappointment and lament the loss of music, or art, or sports programs but they aren't quite certain why. Conversely, getting rid of STEM related subjects such math or science is entirely unconscionable... also with the same uncertainty as to why. Teachers defend Mathematics with claw and bite but toss away her sister philosophy without care. Sciences like chemistry have only been around for a moment but they quickly and summerarily replace the age old study of art and music. There is no fundamental basis of

education. We create what's important. Everyday education is demonstrating economic bias in the subjects they present as valuable.

It's an ironic twist of fate that educators are teaching society that they themselves (teachers) are valuable. We wonder why students do not respect their teachers. We are teaching them to look down on educators and education as a whole. Consider: Teachers are guiding the coming generations into "becoming" under the premise that only economically rewarding skills and abilities are valuable. Teachers lie on the lower end of the scale in terms of economic remuneration. Those who don't achieve great monetary wealth or have the ability to demonstrate prosperity through material possession are devalued in the economic society. So teachers are reinforcing that they themselves are with little value to society by the very nature of their instruction. Schools are merely places to receive certification by any means possible. Society then rewards students economically for certification. Our philosophy of education is devaluing education. This is not the progression toward the light; this is wallowing wretchedly and hopelessly in the cave.

It's not just Education that is diminished through our economic biases, we are indoctrinating our students toward a philosophy of self loathing. The paths that lead to economic wealth are few and the type of intelligence one needs to achieve it select and narrow. We must work to base their self concept on achievement by their own standards and prosperity on immaterial wealth. It is not a fantasy or a dream. We are the shapers of society. This is not just an aphorism suitable for a cartoon poster over the students cubbyholes. This is what educators have not considered; we are the most powerful group of people in the nation. We are stronger than the military, a more potent catalyst toward change than our government officials. We mold and shape the coming generations. We, as a collective are the greatest single influence on mankind. We care for the entire youth population. Without us, parents couldn't work. Without us, society would fall apart both quickly and entirely. The next generation wouldn't be able to operate the mechanics of this technological society. A loyal, united, national teachers Union with focus and discipline would be an indomitable force. "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself."²⁸

²⁸ Dewey, J., *Democracy and Education*. New York, Macmillan, 1916, p. 239.

If nothing else, in order to begin to care for the collective souls of the students in our charge we must work to eliminate a bias that promotes one sort of intelligence, one way being over another. Students must be free to choose their path based on the way in which their truth rises from within and expresses itself in the world. The Educator must support an egalitarian notion toward choice.

Gardner utilized as one of his criterium toward a multiple intelligence, the ability to produce something that was valued by society. It's a surprisingly ephemeral and geographical criteria for intelligence. We teachers are the most likely group enmasse to be able to effect a change on that value. By eliminating prejudice of Intelligence we can initiate remarkable, observable change in our lifetime. Imagine changing the way we value our fellow human beings. This change can be enacted if at every level of education we rebuke the corrupt top down mandates. If we live an authentic life and through example and practice teach our students to do the same. Quietly or otherwise, once we have discovered the truth of the systems mechanisms, it is our solemn duty to dismantle them from the inside. Emmanuel Levinas, Philosopher and holocaust survivor opines the authenticity of the Western world and the scientific society.

“...In our world, the modern world, the “Western” global world, the most sophisticated and dangerous opposition to religious-ethical life comes from two related fronts.

First, there is the rise of modern science, which in its legitimate search for verifiable evidence deepens an ancient Hellenic disdain for biblical wisdom with a new disdain for the notion of purpose and value altogether. Second, and in a seeming paradox, there is the rise of relativism, both subjective and social, psychologism and historicism. The two dangers are related because a science that denies a value of values in the name of realist objectivism produces, as a necessary by-product, a subjectivism of values. If values are not real or true, in other words, they must be merely subjective and arbitrary.”²⁹

...The hard won and now pervasive success of modern science has falsely accustomed us to taking “the real”- especially what can be objectified via quantity and measure- as the standard of

²⁹ Cohen, Richard A., *Emmanuel Levinas: Philosopher and Jew*. Revista Portuguesa De Filosofia 62, no. 2/4 (2006): 485-6.

values. It is an old association, deriving from ancient Greece: what is best must be what is most real, and what is most real is what rationality (today's empirical objective sciences) says is real. All of contemporary thought is an effort to come to terms with this reduction, this exile of value."³⁰

The course by which we become is not quantifiable, it is not measurable. We must rebuke these classifications when we refer to ability, choice intelligence, etc. These are lives, not equations. If education is the preparation for a life to be led then measurements and quantities have no place in determining how students emerge in the world and how their cultural intelligences are considered.

Education must begin to value all aspects of intelligence and place career choices on a level playing field. It is not that Education should have a leaning toward a different concept of success; it is instead that students should be encouraged to determine their own measurement of a life well-lived. The idea of multiple intelligences is a tremendous template toward this ideology. We must place equal importance, credence and value on all the abilities that emerge from the individual. We are becoming in the phenomena of life because "The self is not something ready-made, but something in continuous formation through choice of action." — John Dewey."³¹ The tremendous variety of possibilities that appear, develop, and flourish are a valuable manner of becoming in the human experience. We cannot limit our attitude toward the phenomena through any subjective scrutiny or singular lens. There are multitudinous expressions of humanity and each with its own subtle uniqueness. The phenomena is more real than anything else. To limit the boundaries or define the magnitude our experience through science or psychology or any other method of observation is to diminish our humanity.

The Basis of a Useful Criteria

The question of how to measure people is one I am uncertain should even be asked . Furthermore, it is, and will hopefully remain unanswerable. Notwithstanding, a deeper understanding of self and the way in which we connect to the world is of the utmost importance

³⁰ Ibid., 486.

³¹ Dewey, J., *Democracy and Education* .New York, Macmillan, 1916, p. 408.

to educators. Placing things in boxes is a convenient way to organize human thought. As much as I would like to eliminate boxes and focus on the person as a whole. Classifying Intelligences provides us a way to celebrate student abilities and strengths. It also offers a way to identify weaknesses and utilize the students strengths to overcome them as will be explained further.

Gardner is the self-proclaimed custodian of his theory and like a proud parent has guarded the fledgling theory. He has guided it, and been the major force in defining it. To continue this analogy however, we recognize that a child that is overly controlled and restricted cannot reach his or her full potential. They are stifled by the walls built to protect them. The Multiple Intelligence, that Gardner believes to be legitimate in the phenomena, he then second guesses through his method of certification. As discussed earlier a fundamental principle for all teachers to function in the authentic life teach toward and in the phenomena is that the scientific world cannot define or negate our experiences in the world. Furthermore, we cannot allow our phenomenological knowing or planning to be compromised or sabotaged by the illusionary restrictions of scientific "factual" negation. In Gardner's follow up work, *Intelligence Reframed*, while suggesting three new candidate intelligences: naturalistic, spiritual, and existential intelligence, he again allows his notion of proof through scientific me

ans to constrict his reach. He states that although his "mission is to explore anew the process of identifying an intelligence he has reservations about extending the concept in less secure directions."³²

Aside- There are stages that the educator will move through in the phenomenological pedagogical experience. You know but you can't explain. You justify your feelings with research. You conceal your understanding until its certified. Certification!!!! That is the issue. We are always seeking certification. Isn't it enough to know it? Validation, certification plagues us because we have been given an analytical brain that seeks certification for everything we feel, experience, etc. We rely on others to make determinations of truth as opposed to trusting our own experience and the infinite abundance of knowing that occurs in the phenomena. It is a bold experiment but begin to allow yourself to know without data or rationalization. Don't look towards affirmation to redeem your subtle understanding. Merely

³² Gardner, H., *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century*, Basic Books, 2000, p. 47.

smile to yourself when you realize that the scientific world finally identified what you knew all along. Don't look for confirmation. The scientific world was looking to affirm the thing that had not need of being affirmed. The practice of this phenomenological knowing without seeking of validation will soon become a constant communion with the phenomena.

Natural vs False Hierarchy

Hierarchies are naturally occurring phenomena. The moment people gather into tribal groups they begin to produce products and services that are of value to the group. In the beginning this would have been hunting, making clothes, caring for wounds, forging weapons. There would have been a group of abilities that in concert would prove to make some members of the group more proficient than others in these areas. These abilities would range from best or most proficient to worst or least proficient. The best hunter would bring in the most game. It then follows that other hunters would bring in less game and thusly be considered by the group, less proficient hunters. Consider a naturalistic intelligence as the basis for this proficiency. Those most successful would most probably understand the natural world in a superior way which allowed them to better track the animal, navigate the terrain, conceal themselves in the nature, and think like the animal so as to overcome it. The hunt would return and a group of people would be responsible for preparing the food. Some of which would have an ability to imagine flavors, mix herbs and spices, prepare the meat in such a way it was more valuable to the group. Someone, undoubtedly would have been the best at this skill and their culinary intelligence would make them most desirable in food preparation. The skins of the animals from the hunt would have been taken and prepared to be assembled into clothing and blankets, certainly someone in the tribe was more proficient than the others and transformed utility into the artistic tribal costumes that represent the tribe. Consider that early aesthetic intelligence as the infancy of the world of fashion we know today.

This is the manner by which natural hierarchy is formed and exists. Applying Gardeners Cultural criteria "Intelligence is the ability to make goods or services that are culturally valuable" We establish that a Cultural Hierarchy develops on the basis of merit and Cultural intelligences

are in turn, rewarded and esteemed in a Natural Hierarchy. These intelligences are valued by the society and are utilized as such that they become the representative identity of a people. This identity is then passed down to coming generations through tradition and purposeful education. The traditions will evolve on the basis of what remains important to the society. Some Cultural intelligences will become more esteemed than others due to scarcity, abundance, and necessity. These intelligence's value will adjust as their products and services relative worth to society fluctuate. This may potentially occur to such a degree that some Cultural Intelligences and their relative skill set may become completely valueless to the society. It is social evolution that maintains and configures the Natural Hierarchy.

The Exclusion of an Intelligence

The exclusion of an intelligence in a hypothetical world as a philosophical or scientific exercise falls into the benign realm of intellectual discourse and rigor but what of the real world application? We both determine whether an intelligence is valuable and have the opportunity to practice/train in that intelligence on the basis of whether it is proposed as a reasonable acceptable avenue of practice and study. The student is introduced to the intelligence through some initial circumstance and then in some way assessed as to their ability, then they practice skills associated with the intelligence or falling within the scope of its classification. The student begins to apprehend that this intelligence is valued by influential members of the society. Their success in genre related activities is rewarded. Their failure or avoidance discouraged. The student begins to build a portion of their self concept/academic identity on the basis of outcome. Certain Intelligences being more heavily weighted in value and practice become more influential in determining self-concept/academic identity than others. All of this largely arbitrary to the student in question. What remains is a student that is constructing concepts of success, failure, self worth, etc on the basis of factors that have little to nothing to do with them as individuals. They are labelled good students or bad students, they become behavioral problems because they're not achieving in some prescribed area. An unnatural hierarchy develops among students as some possess these desired intelligences and others compensate by turning toward mischief,

disobedience, malaise, avoidance, bullying, depression. Self loathing and behavior occurs. Erroneous comparisons become the measure of worth. This is the basis for a societal hierarchy that has and will place people at odds. It will disallow mutual respect. It decimates a universal concept of individuality and the worth of every participant in society. To focus attention and value on a very limited group of intelligences is in practice, to exclude the majority of your population from an egalitarian experience. This practice forces those that remain into a competition toward a singular goal that ignores any care for their souls need.

To place this scenario in a practical situation let us speak about the way in which exclusion of an intelligence can mark a young person's life in a few brief examples of becoming. Consider the young comedienne who sees the clever turn in everything around her. She looks at the world in a way so unique, others are delighted by her assessments of experience. She isn't particularly strong in math or language but has a physical way of examining and mimicking nature and humanity that is simply beautiful and poignant. The child's demonstration of ability and avoidance of subjects is considered a distraction and a behavioral issue. The other children begin to relate to her as the naughty child. Parents and teachers reinforce this label and before long she, herself identifies as a misfit, freak, or outsider. Instead of recognizing her genius, she is labeled a failure. Even worse she may never become aware that there is an avenue toward her tremendous intelligence that is valued immensely by her culture. Children only reach into the realm of possibility they are introduced to. Their dreams extend into reality as far as it appears the real world will allow. Physical comedians like Mr. Bean, Jim Carrey,, Charlie Chaplin, and Buster Poindexter are considered genius by society. Their intelligence rewarded both in monetary terms and public adulation. They are and have been considered some of the most influential, highly regarded, celebrated members of society. What if their genius didn't find wings? What if they were never able to overcome the labels and self concept that emerge from unappreciated intelligence? Charlie Chaplin made us laugh, he made us think, he made us feel... I don't believe anyone has ever inquired into his algebraic acumen.

This is where Gardener's unshakable eight, his rigid adherence to an arbitrary criteria and a system he imagined falls short, disenfranchises youth, and fails to proceed forward toward the all-inclusive philosophy it was destined to become. There's not merely eight intelligences, or a

few extra candidate intelligences as Gardner is considering but dozens of intelligences that need to be valued, expressed, serviced, practiced, and exalted. Multiply that by the students that possess these intelligences and anything less than complete educational proliferation of the varied cultural intelligences is a scornful reproach of the vast array of human ability. To hold onto a idea longer that it remains of service to the people it is meant to benefit, encumbering the ideas evolution through rigid structure is not the right of a parent. You give the child its best start, you offer guidance, you lend support and you allow it to grow into what it must inevitably become.

New intelligences are constantly emerging through cultural evolution. We need to practice flexibility and egalitarian principles. By doing so we will reduce competition, increase self esteem, support acceptance, and build mutual admiration. We will widen our curriculum to include every major aspect of our cultural experience. Once we have establishes these correlating intelligences we have a wonderful new opportunity to blend them together and introduce them as phenomenological experiences. We also can utilize them as bridging mechanisms when we need to reach a destination not easily accessible. A way to identify weaknesses and utilize the students strengths to overcome them.

Cultural Intelligences

Culture exists, in its tremendous and fascinating diversity, as the source of identity for every person in every nation across the world. It is defined by the prodigious influence of geography, politics, and religion. It is shaped by regional and local tradition and custom. It is molded in the schools and refined by individual educators. Finally, culture is forged in the hearth of the family home.

This means that culture varies from country to country but also from household to household. It is responsible for the preponderance of the broad strokes of human learning as well as the detail brush of minutia. We enter this world as a biological substance with a certain texture, tactility, malleability, etc. and it is then culture that acts as upon us as it helps to mold

and shape us with these biological guidelines as its constraints.

From the moment we arrive on earth, culture determines what we will see, hear, taste, smell, touch, experience, learn, believe, feel, understand, and fear. Culture is the world as it is presented. It is an interpretation. It is the way in which those around us have learned to interact with their surroundings. As Lev Vygotsky, the brilliant cultural-historical psychologist said, “through others we become ourselves.”³³ Those that have come before, pass on their knowledge and understanding of the world as they shape our minds and bodies through instruction and experience.

Culture is everything we do. It is day-to-day The way in which we eat, the utensils we use, the time of day we have our meals, how long we take to eat, and the foods we find palatable. We are saturated by culture. We operate in it and of it, but there is more. We become a physical, psychological and even spiritual representation of the culture that shapes us. Whether we rebuke or embrace aspects of our culture we do so from our cultural perspective. It is an indelible union.

In coining the phrase Cultural Intelligences it is important to make the distinction between its contemporary singular use and and its function in its newly conceptualized plural form. Cultural Intelligence is defined as “a person's capability to adapt as s/he interacts with others from different cultural regions.”³⁴ This term is often used by businesses or government agencies to determine the cross-cultural competence of their employees.

Blending Intelligences

The cultural intelligences organically blend because they emerge from our cultural experience. The rich palette of human experience is there ready to be explored, duplicated, identified, separated, mixed, examined, and reblended. How many people in the world have learned language through music? How many have practiced kinesthetics and spacial proficiency

³³ Vygotskij, L. S. (1987). *The genesis of higher mental functions*. In R. Reiber (Ed.), *The history of the development of higher mental functions* (Vol. 4, pp. 97-120). New York: Plenum.

³⁴ Earley, P. Christopher (2002). *Redefining interactions across cultures and organizations: moving forward with cultural intelligence*. In B. M. Staw. *Research in Organizational Behavior*. 24. R. M. Kramer. Oxford: Elsevier. pp. 271–99.

through art? These are standard blends of intelligence. They are so natural to the human experience, we don't even consider that we are using several different distinct and separate intelligences to accomplish them. The more we compound these intelligences, the more likely we are to activate the broadest possible range of intelligences. The teacher that moves around the classroom, placing each word in its own specific language space, while singing a song and creating corresponding movement has just blended 4 distinct intelligences: language, Spatial, musical and kinesthetics. The student can now rely on any one of these four intelligences to help absorb and approach the material. The student with a keen spatial intelligence finds the words fitting into areas of the room and organizes them in his mind as such; generating spatial recall. The student with the dominant musical intelligence memorizes the tune and the words flow out of and within the music as if they were born there. The student with the kinesthetic intelligence is placing the words into his or her movement, they are finding a way to dance with the student in the phenomena. The linguistically talented student is hungry for words, they relish the way the words leap of their tongues and bounce into their ears but all the other practices and intellectual representations only work to reinforce the intelligence they already possess. In general, most of the students possess a reasonable degree of most intelligences, blending can only serve to reinforce those students while also being critically important for those who possess meager ability in one more more of these intelligences.

As p 6 stated above, multiple intelligences are blended in the world so all we have to do is look around. Soon we will find ourselves creating thematic lessons blending various of intelligences Lets create a thematic lesson designing a house. When we begin to design a house we must take a lot of measurements which will eventually become equations we can use toward our math section. The way everything goes, its relationship to other things, and how it all fits can be used toward our spatial section. The interactions of people in the house and the way they will relate to one another, would be discussed in interpersonal intelligence section. The way in which people spend time alone, how they use space to ensure a productive, relaxing, functional environment fits neatly into our intrapersonal intelligence. The plants inside and out of the house, a consideration of pets fish tanks, an indoor atrium, landscaping, sunroof, terrace, etc, could all fit into a naturalistic intelligence. The kitchen, dining room, breakfast nook, etc, all fall

under the culinary arts section. We can write about all of this using all linguistic intelligence, The design, decorating, color schemes, etc will be in our aesthetic section. Eight Intelligences have risen from this real life situation without any difficulty all intellectual burden. They emerged organically from culture and can just as organically be placed in a lesson that blends them all into a very phenomenological experience. Authentic interactions will emerge from this practice and the students will find themselves into the phenomena where learning seizes to be a thought experiment and becomes a real human interaction in the world. Another key outcome to this blending method is to demonstrate each of three separate and distinct intelligences and how each is valuable in its own way. Each is as special as the student who came up with the great idea and placed it into action in that section; to be held in high esteem as an important contribution and contributor.

The Melody of Epimeleia

Epimeleia: This word comes from the same root in Greek (meleo) as the word melody. It is mentioned in Foucault's forth lecture on Courage of Truth but, only mentioned, before Foucault, without further comment, moved on in the lecture. This was meant to intimate something to those who were ready to hear.

The hint of a things original context or a relationship it once carried is not only sufficient but the precise element required to inspire a lightning bolt of comprehension. When compared to a melody, epimeleia has many of the same properties. Each melody is unique in that it has its own specific progression and sequence of notes. However, they are all similar in that they contain many of the same ones. They differ in the way the notes are played and how long each is held. The patterns however, hold very similar relationships, esp. in the same genre of music. The tuning of the composition is harmonious but, from Eastern music to Western is as dramatically different as disparate cultural norms. Perhaps our lives, are music, and our souls are the melody.

Foucault's brief utterance revealing the most narrow edge of a thought was certainly not a

way to relate to everyone. Perhaps he didn't believe he had the analytical ability to dissect this subtle truth or perhaps he considered language too coarse and rough for such a thought of such divine quality. Instead, he offered the hint of the idea to those that could follow its thread.

This is the manner in which Foucault spoke to me. He knew, as I quickly understood, that he should offer it to someone with the musical intelligence to understand it and perhaps even, the analytical and linguistic abilities to offer a more complete explanation or description of it. Perhaps the idea wasn't meant to be thought of in rational terms but merely to provide a sense of knowing or a building block of understanding, for all those who connect to the world in the way the hint suggests.

Perhaps I should have been astute enough as not to have tried to convey a truth so light words could only weight it down but, I think, although I was not able to convey the depth or breadth of the concept, my attempts were not fruitless. They stand as a relative example of the way in which our individual intelligences interact. My attempt demonstrates how various intelligences compliment, aid, or restrict one another. Even though I know I understand the relationship between Epimeleia and a melody in profound measure through my musical and perhaps spiritual intelligence, I lack the ability to express the full volume of that understanding as an interpretation through my analytical intelligence. I can only formulate and conceive of portions of the understanding into a vague translation, which I then have attempted to convey through my linguistic intelligence.

I recall in my readings of the life of Nietzsche that he was noted on at least two celebrated occasions to retreat to his piano for clarity of mind. The first being a young man, "mistakenly" taken to a brothel, he became overwhelmed and incapacitated. He sought out the piano, played, regathered his wits and was then able to think clearly and depart. In the second instance, he was visiting a romantic interest and he with few words approached the piano and played a stormy, rousing piece, apparently both organizing and demonstrating his depth of feeling. Young Fredrick was able to connect to his musical intelligence when language failed him, when kinesthetics faltered. He connected to something fundamental to his being and fed his soul's privation. Nietzsche's promotion of Wagner is yet another demonstration of a remarkable connection to musical intelligence. He experienced a divine connection to the infinite through

music. Wagner's music was, for him, something so sublime, he could not express it through language. Despite Wagner's possible other shortcomings, when it came to music intelligence, he was a genius.

The Tool of Tools

Lev Vygotsky called Language the tool of tools. He meant that in the sociocultural context with which we connect to world, we direct the greatest quantity of our other intelligences through this one. Words after all, take an ocean and place it in a teacup. Lets us begin with the tea party.

We use language as an external form of communication so as to convey a variety of ideas. These ideas come from a particular intelligence and then maybe filtered by other intelligences on their eventually path to their exit or entry through our language intelligence. This is not an absolute by any means. It is however the reason language is the tool of tools. Its versatility, much like the human hand, is involved in facilitating almost every other tool. In the last paragraph, I proposed as exemplum, my conclusions from a reading of a lecture by Foucault. I began with a concept that I believe to have a thorough comprehension of within the realm of my musical intelligence. I could have taken that concept and tried to convey it to the outside world through a musical composition. Since we have little practice communicating through musical interpretation, I'm uncertain what I might have been able to conveyed. Perhaps on the other hand it might be more pure than the above contrivance. I could have conducted my music intelligence and its understanding directly through my language intelligence. Without concern for structure and logic, I could have just written down the words that seemed to connect to the ideas my musical intelligence knows. Perhaps in doing so I would have inadvertently ran the music through my intrapersonal/emotional intelligence, then through my language intelligence, describing how the musical understanding made me feel internally. In either case, devoid of my

analytic intelligence, the result would have been poetry. I chose to use Musical-Analytical-Linguistic.

Why? This formula has become the dominant form of external communication throughout the world because it is clear and distinct. It is the Universal language. One must communicate in this manner to “make sense.”

Bridging Mechanisms

Imagine there is a clearing in the forest where you and your friends have planned to meet. The path to the clearing has obstacles and difficulties to traverse. You are familiar with the path and have overcome the obstacles to reach your destination on many occasions. You have agreed to guide one of your friends to the clearing as he has never been there before. You set out on the trek and reach the first obstacle; it is a deep pit. With your long legs and great leaping ability you easily jump over the obstacle. Your companion is less willing. They are completely unable to negotiate the pitfall. They stop where they are. They will not continue. You return to them and must now consider how to get them to the clearing... although you have been there many times, this is the only path you have taken to get there. You are familiar with no other way... How do you proceed?

This metaphor is ever-present in my teaching approach. I understand the material and can show the students a path towards understanding but I must remain mindful that it is merely a way, not “the” way. I ask myself several questions that help me self-assess my progress:

1. How can I help the students reach the destination in their own way?
2. Have I tried various paths each without success?
3. Are they ready for this journey?
4. Am I the right guide for them at this juncture?
5. Is there another reason that this journey should not be taken at present?
6. Is it important that this student/or students takes this journey at all.

These are questions educators who are promoting an ideal of Epimeleia should ask themselves to ensure that they are not merely teaching but caring for the student in the way the student needs. These questions precipitate holistic ways of approaching the subject matter through the students need. I refer to this method as a bridging mechanism. This is the mechanism of metaphor naturally occurs to a person with a strong Educational Intelligence.

The student isn't grasping music, they have a strong mathematical intelligence, demonstrate the music from a mathematical perspective. The C note in relationship to the F and G notes becomes the first, the fourth and the fifth. The student has a strong kinesthetic intelligence, draw the notes and corresponding numbers on the ground and let him move to the corresponding note as we play, or have a giant walk on piano if your lucky. The use of bridging mechanisms should be a standard teaching tool, over my years of teaching it has substantiated its effectiveness with remarkable consistency. Here is an example:

Many years ago I was teaching in a one room schoolhouse for students of various age and ability. My youngest student was 4 years old and I was convinced he had the cognitive ability to begin simple mathematics. The distance learning program the school was affiliated with had simple addition and subtraction in an age appropriate lesson plan so I tried working on it with the four years old. First I showed him the numbers one, two, and three, each of which he correctly identified. Then I showed him the cards provided, with the numbers one, two, and three, and visual images of one, two, or three, apples. I asked him to count from one to three, which he accomplished, then I ask him the question, what one plus one was, to which he answered two. I wasn't sure whether this was cognitive understanding or previous drills on simple concepts. So I moved on.

“What is two plus one?” “I don't know” he answered.

“Three minus two?” “I don't know.”

“Three minus one?” “I don't know.”

I realized that he had not yet discovered the way of processing mathematical concepts. I tried a spatial approach with balls that we played with...

“How many balls?” “Three” he answered.

“I have one ball, I add two how many are here?” He counts... “One, two, three.”

“Great” I exclaim! “What’s 1 plus 2?” “I don’t know.”

I move to our jumping jacks squares I ask the student two go to the first square, then move two squares. Which square are you in now? Three, he answered.

“Great! what’s one plus two?” “I don’t know.”

I decided that perhaps this was not the time to teach mathematics. Perhaps he wasn’t in the right mindset, or not yet cognitively ready for it so we moved on to music class which he loved and excelled at. I brought out the ukulele and he began making the simple chord shapes I had taught him, playing little songs we had worked in past lessons. I was playing a simple riff of the ukulele and he asked me how it was played. I told him number frets to hit in sequence and he quickly duplicated the pattern, then it struck me! Start on the third fret and move down two frets what fret are you on? One he replied.

So then what’s three minus two? One he replied.

Now start on one and add two what fret are we on? The third fret he replied.

“So what’s one plus two?” “Three.” he replied. Eureka!

I have since taught mathematics to preschoolers using flutes/recorders and ukuleles with tremendous success. This is an idea example of the trial and error of bridging mechanisms.

It would be a tremendous and daunting undertaking to attempt to describe the various possibilities that bridging mechanism present. Simply stated, now that we have identified that there isn’t just one kind of general intelligence but a vast realm of possibilities, we must consider the way in which the student’s intelligence culturally emerges in the world. By doing so we can bridge the student’s strength toward developing his or her weakness. Placing the uncomfortable or “weak” intelligence in the realm, shape, and terms of the student’s cultural intelligence makes it part of their world. It brings learning into their way of being and develops the intelligence through the students’ own nature. This is epimeleia.

Self Esteem

We as educators must establish a course toward epimeleia. This path however, is rife with pitfalls and often the most benign inclination proves misguided under more intense scrutiny.

The forefront of our influences (parents, culture, educators, etc) become the back wall of our own formation as we emerge in the act of becoming just as the forefront of their influences became the background of theirs. We are living a chapter that is not the beginning of the story but instead picking up our chapter many many pages into an epic narrative. There are historical biases, prejudices, and predispositions embedded in every council or instruction. If the course toward epimeleia is one of care for the soul, then we must examine how these influences act on the development of the soul and whether we are actually seeking the realization of our students fulfillment or, our own. We must examine our own person biases and the way in which they compromise our students need.

We create bias and prejudice merely by being. We have a way of approaching the world, which is usually based on our personal strengths. When we teach, we have a tendency to engage the students the way in which we would hope to be engaged. We utilize our own learning styles and as we do a hierarchy develops on the basis of how strongly the students abilities/ways of becoming match our own. We are the role model in the classroom and we determine what attributes/intelligences are valued and which ones are dismissed. Before long the students judge each other as smart or simple, strong or weak in comparison to the teacher's way of being in the world. Those that become like the teacher thrive, those who dont lose their personal and microcultural sense of worth. The classroom is the microculture and the teacher creates the climate for success or failure.

It is the most insidious of betrayals because the teacher is merely trying to use their best abilities toward the betterment of their students. Perhaps they are a rebellious response to the same stifling culture they themselves face as students. Their way of becoming was stifled so they now shine in the way that was prohibited and in doing so encourage a way of being that excludes a new section/segment of the student population. Consider the creative teacher that has emerged through the boundaries of the scientific society and believes life is art. They try to demonstrate how we can find expression in all that we do and everything around us. They stress that open communication of these ideas are paramount. This becomes the the goal of every

lesson; from music to math. The students that have these intelligences thrive and are valued. The students that have a mathematical/analytical/perhaps intrapersonal intelligence shy away from the teachers structures in all disciplines. Mathematical minds may begin to feel aversion toward math because it is always placed in an interpersonal creative lense that doesn't suit them. Abandoning their subjects of strengths, these students can quickly become disillusioned even as the teacher is working with forthright intention and conscientious consideration.

Teaching toward our strengths is a great way to leave the majority of our students behind. In a single year they may learn and be subject to lifelong prejudice and bias. Consider the ramifications of school systems that have a singular primary teacher for six or even nine years. Imagine how these prejudices are magnified into an entire bias toward ways of becoming, intelligences that should be valued, careers that are suitable, lives that are well led. We must not be the instrument to intentionally or otherwise forge the conclusions as to what is a life well led. Whether it be by our will or by our carelessness it is the same effect. We educators are the medium toward promoting a life well led, not determining what that life should be.

Teaching as Metaphor

Upon examination of the teachings of Jan Amos Komensky, his education according to nature seems a natural stepping stone toward education as a metaphor for life and art. It is not merely the things around us but the things that we create and become in the phenomena of being that may be extended as metaphor toward our educational process. When we can ascribe through metaphor the phenomena we experience as a series of relationships to a process or methodology, we have afforded the student a more complete phenomenological example than mere explanation. We have led them through the wood to the clearing without actually taking them their or even providing instruction. The metaphor extended from known to unknown affords the students guiding principles, coping mechanisms, and philosophy toward their journey. For example, I propose the metaphor of juggling. Juggling is a systematic spatial challenge based on the laws of physics and arranged by the creative manipulations of the Juggler. A juggler knows

that it is not the speed of hand movement that keeps the balls in the air but, the spatial understanding of the balls in relationship to one another. The juggler practice adjusting his reflexes to react to the understanding of movement he or she has studied. The juggler knows that adjustment can be made to height so as to provide more time for more complex manipulations or more balls in the rotation. The juggler understands that difficult maneuvers can become easy with the proper form. Jugglers understand that more complicated configurations scaffolded by several simple ones and that knowledge changes shape as it compounds to the point where the outcome is unrecognizable from its humble beginnings. This practice and consideration of the phenomena becomes part of the Juggler and then can be applied to many other situations. The author John Irving wrote about how his experience wrestling prepared him as a writer. “Writing is no contact sport, but there are similarities with wrestling, he said. Each require discipline. Dedicating yourself as an athlete to any sport requires a certainly unnatural ability to focus, and the focus is often a matter of giving your attention to very small details that need to be repeated and repeated and repeated,” Irving said. “There’s a tremendous amount of repetition involved, which for most outsiders would be excruciatingly boring in the extreme.” Sparring partners drill various maneuvers — “outside single leg, the high crotch, the duck hunter, the arm drag,” he lists — to hone their skills. And then they do it again. It’s drilling a person would never do without loving the process itself, Irving said. “And you’d better not call yourself a writer or dream of being a writer if you don’t have the willingness not only to reread, but to rework, revise, reconstrue, reconstruct, rewrite, rewrite, rewrite, what you already have written a hundred times. And then put it away and wait. And then go back to it and do it again,” Irving said. “That patience isn’t natural. You have to love the process itself. You have to love the doing it. If you’re only enamored of the final product, the moment you get to put on the singlet and walk out in front of the crowd and wrestle for seven minutes, the moment when you have a publication, which is the end of anywhere from five to seven years of actual writing and how many years of taking notes before that — if you’re in it for that, well, you won’t do very well. Being an English student didn’t teach me that as much as wrestling for 20 years and coaching until I was 47 did.”³⁵

³⁵ Tara Anderson, *John Irving and The Values Of Wrestling, Writing and Repetition*. 89.3 WFPL, URL: <https://wfpl.org/john-irving-values-wrestling-writing-repetition/>, November 5, 2015.

Phen

Epoche is the ancient Greek term that means to withhold judgement. Edmund Husserl used a Phenomenological method of avoiding judgements and assumptions about experience along with his process of bracketing his known biases. This is contributing foundation toward what the educator must become in the classroom and the world. They must adopt an attitude of curiosity and relinquish biases. They must allow themselves to extend themselves into the pure experience in the world and think in that space. Imagine an action taken in the world that is unconscious, a reflex, a way of being. Usually this kind of experience is subtle and discreet from the rational mind but what if it wasn't? What if the separation was bridged, consolidated, combined into a way of being and connecting to others. Imagine the unconscious instinct, reflex, understanding sublimated into conscious thought. It could occur as the thing is happening or as a "Phen state" recollection. For the purposes of this paper we will henceforth refer to this Educational mindfulness as "The Phen" The Phen is an attitude toward the world; it is a way of being. It is a practice and approach to being that brings awareness of the phenomena into everything we do. It is a language, a logos that was once more commonplace but now needs to be rediscovered. It is the knowing of a being in the world without the boundaries of logic, reason, or language. It is the most true because it rises unhindered, unadulterated, unrestrained from the phenomena. It is uncoveredness; it is *alethia*. The Phen is not only a lens, it is not only a path, it is not only an attitude, it is all of these things in concert as a way of being an educator. The Educator/Philosopher must extend themselves into the world without fear of the questions that arise. They must live in the Phen. In *Kapitoly ze současné filosofie* the great Czech philosopher and revolutionary says:

If the creator of a philosophy is himself a strong personality, he can succeed in fulfilling the philosopher's greatest task—in being not only the self-consciousness, but rather the true living conscience of his time: he can put the finishing touches to this life-form and criticize it through his own life, bring its ideals to completion, give them a new turn and a

new form; put question marks in front of dead ends so as to bring to the fore what such a person is capable of presenting us with as alone worthy and noble. Socrates was such a philosopher . . . In the beginning [of philosophy] was the deed, a deed which meant the possibility to criticize life in all its components and manifestations, to criticize it in ultimate depth, to inquire into its ultimate and exclusive end, in regard to which all individual ends are but means. Socrates was this deed.³⁶

When we develop this Phenomenological way of becoming, we are in unity and dialogue with everything around us and Epimeleia is not a task but an expression of our way of being.

Epimeleia has not choice but to rise from the phen, The connection, the emergence, the proliferation of all things that occurs in the Phen is the definition of Epimeleia, The pure phenomena relating to itself without intermediary, without distance; all sharing the same space. The Phen extends into a future that is connected to the present and past without distinction. It does not discern between things because it recognizes no boundaries. Everything is in balance and just as it should be so there is no concern for what will happen, what has happened, or what is... they all just are and the decisions you make are directions you have already written, are now following and have yet to follow. “Coincidences” abound and you marvel at their propensity, you are shocked by the constantly emerging connections... but you should be more shocked when they don't occur. It is synchronicity, it is the Tao, it is Lichtung, Alethia. Gelassenheit, Kundalini Awakening; it is a universal principle. When applied to our educational practice and calling it is the Phen. “Synchronicity is an ever present reality for those that have eyes to see”

Consider the english term mind-set: placing oneself in a particular mindset as preparation to confront some challenge. Now imagine a “being-set” that is the base reality to confront every aspect of being. Mindsets fluctuate on a series of reliable and unreliable factors but a “being set” is present and true in the world.

³⁶ Jan Patočka, *Kapitoly ze současné filosofie*[*Chapters of Contemporary Philosophy*], in: Sebrané spisy J. Patočky, sv. 1 (v. 1996/2), *Péče o duši I*, ed. I. Chvatík a P. Kouba (OIKOYMENH, Praha 1996), p 98.

Teacher Bias

Each Educator has a way of being, a way of becoming in the world. They approach every aspect of their lives from their own unique and singular perspective. This perspective is based on their personal strengths, intelligences, abilities, upbringing, and culture. The very fact that they have a particular way of approaching their world will naturally create biases both in the student and educator. The student will emulate the way in which the teacher approaches things and the teacher will have a natural disposition toward a certain manner of teaching and areas of interest. Teachers are human and this is the natural way of things however, if the educator is to have a major role in the student's life for perhaps a period of several years, these small biases can quickly be magnified. The teacher's approach and preference will, as a mentor role-model figure become the standard by which the students judge themselves and each other. A highly creative teacher may leave the Math and science children feeling like they don't fit into the educational world. The strict analytical instructor may convince the musical and artistic students that their abilities are unimportant.. Children use the tools we give to them, they adapt to their surroundings. We, as educators, cannot eliminate our biases or completely reimagine our approach to the world at nearly every turn. We can however, be open and honest about who we are and the way in which we approach things; how we become in the world. We can also vary the way we teach and the subjects we focus on and give importance to, so as to diminish bias as much as possible.

Open and Honest

It's important for the students to reconcile that we too are people. We are not perfect, we are not merely there to serve but to learn and grow and become ourselves. We need to let them know what inspires us and that we are doing our best to live a life well led. We will have a predisposition toward a certain way of becoming in the world; let the students know that predisposition. Make it clear that it is not better or worse, right or wrong; just different. Glorify

and extol those differences. Beyond this, let the students know that you will try to vary your teaching styles as much as possible to allow for their various strengths and interests. Each way of being as unique, special, and important as the others. Through improvisation and roleplaying, you the teacher can approach the lessons from different perspectives and give the students an entirely new look at the same lesson. Complete immersion in the character isn't necessary, just a little bit of a different course changes the students relationship toward you and the material. Choose people that you know and have ways of becoming that contrast your own... or choose a television character that you are very familiar with. Now try to imagine how they would approach a lesson. What words would they use, how would they relate to the class? How would they move? Respond? These kinds of games can teach an educator a lot about what and how individual students respond to varying approaches. They also offer the Educator personal insight and reflection. Finding new parts of oneself can be the greatest aid toward reaching the unreachable student, or discovering something new about the most familiar classroom. I played a character that was very inquisitive about everything: the students, the room, the books, everything. The character was modeled on a close friend of mine that was a biomechanical scientist. She examined everything with wonderful fresh eyes, looking at things she had seen many times before with fresh eyes; an Epoche worldview I wondered what it would be like if she was teaching my class. The outcomes were remarkable. I took new interest in student's questions, sometimes realizing that the questions I have previously thought were off topic and dismissed, actually held great merit. I discovered that one of the students was cheating by taping his answers to the ceiling, being interested in everything helped me notice what I wouldn't ordinarily turn my attention to.. I found that several of the students I thought were working diligently were actually producing art and graffiti; which helped me to later encourage their artistic talents. I learned that one young lady was selling homemade enchiladas from her backpack; they were delicious. I found that I related to several of the students better than I ever had and some I related less well. These are merely some of the findings I discovered from shifting my perspective and approach.

We are also biased toward the subjects that we identify with and enjoy. I personally have a very creative liberal arts centered area of interest. I'd prefer to act, write, sing, draw, or paint,

then to study math or science, etc. Even at this point at my educational level of experience I fail to truly identify with how people can really love math, or memorizing the periodic table. This is my failing and such a failing can easily turn into an imposed bias on the students. I have, early in my career, downplayed or entirely dismissed mathematics as topics of interest. I proposed it as a drudgery that we had to fulfill. I would shorten the math lessons as much as possible or try to merge them into another discipline. This could be a wonderful teaching technique if I was trying to bridge a complicated math problem by using other disciplines as discussed in the chapter on bridging mechanisms but, this wasn't what I was doing at all. I was trying to avoid, mathematics as much as possible and in doing so, diminished all the students that cherished it. As a young teacher, I quickly became the favorite of the artistic types. The math and science kids felt out of place and devalued. I was teaching them that their way of being was inferior. This is not a path toward epimeleia. We must glorify and extol each way of being that rises from the soul and is placed in the world. Through this practice we will feed our students souls and allow them to discover their own life well led.

The Phenomenological Educator

The Hindu guru Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj stated very plainly the Hindu and Buddhist thought on the nature of being when he said, Past and future are in the mind only- I am now. This is the the phenomena of being, living, becoming, now; however, a teacher is continuously planning the course by which their students will travel. We prepare for alternative navigation. We look toward avoiding pitfalls and conscientiously assist in their students becoming.

As one begins to consider education as a series of analogies to the phenomena of being, one can move closer to providing guidance based on becoming in the world as opposed to thinking about the world, or unquestioningly following a prescribed course. Thinking of the world is in itself a misnomer the process because one uses to develop ideas and eventual conclusions is based on unknowable variables. Furthermore, the way in which we consider ideas of cause and effect, other people's reactions, and even our mis-identification of unknowable things in

themselves add to the impossibility of using a typical thought process. We live in phenomena all the time however, usually only philosophers spend more than brief moments thinking about thinking. The experiences we have in the world; both subtle and obvious, conscious and otherwise are reliable and authentic. They are the stuff of the world and the closer we can model our plans and actions through this authentic knowledge of experience, the more genuine our teaching will become. The world unfolds itself to us and we find the subtle truth in something both in imitation and creation. Metaphor, Meditation, Art, Imagination and Play are amongst that which lends themselves toward communicating the indefinable aspects of experience. They can be, when done with complete honesty, sublime transmissions of the Phenomena.

What this suggests on a practical pedagogical level is for the teacher to take in the material; to experience it, and then to allow whatever rises from their soul to produce its expression. This authentic expression of the experience can then be transmitted to the student. The student can likewise experience the material, readings, lesson, etc and allow whatever rises from their soul to produce its expression. They can then share with classmates, and the teacher and by doing so create a larger symphony of authentic creation that is simultaneously also a mirror, a shadow, an analogy of the original piece of work.

Percy Bysshe Shelley's famous work Ozymandias comes to mind when considering how an aspect of the phenomena is conveyed through poetry. Here is an example of when Heidegger disclosed the fore-structure of understanding in what is considered merely "reading what is there"

Ozymandias

I met a traveller from an antique land,
 Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
 Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
 Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
 The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
 And on the pedestal, these words appear:
 My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
 Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.”³⁷

In reading this text one does not need to explore the realms of Hermeneutics or historicity. We do not require any for-knowledge so as to interpret the poem. The ephemeral nature of life, the foibles of wealth, status and power are apparent through the poetic expression, the notion of our own mortality is eerily conveyed. So much so that our human connection to the piece requires no assumptions. We have achieved a far more authentic connection to what rose from the author's soul through experiencing it as a human being than we would only learning that history, structure, background, etc We do not need to know that Ozymandias (Ὀσυμανδύας) was a Greek name for the Egyptian pharaoh Ramesses II.

It is unnecessary to know that Shelley began writing his poem in 1817 as a poetic competition with his friend Horace Smith, soon after the announcement of the British Museum's acquisition of a large fragment of a statue of Ramesses II from the thirteenth century BC, The fact that this poem is a sonnet isn't pertinent toward the human realization of impermanence, the ravages of time, and our walk toward seiless stroll to oblivion.

It takes practice to exchange a comfortable, well understood method for one that is unfamiliar in any case. The seemingly esoteric qualities of a phenomenological approach toward education initially will most likely, appear even more incomprehensibly foreign, even irrational to many educators but when hearkens back over a lifetime of experience it is easy to recall how the best laid plans did not achieve their expected outcomes. and how the expected outcomes of

³⁷ Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Ozymandias*, Wikipedia, URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ozymandias>

that planning turned out undesirable. They will recall the unfulfilling conclusion to achieving even the most ardent desires. They realize that the highest truths cannot be put into words, therefore the greatest teacher has nothing to say, they just give themselves in service and never worry.

The shift toward a phenomenological teaching expression is a move away from comfort toward an uncomfortable ease. It is allowing oneself to move away from considerations of objectives but to enjoy and delight in an often seemingly chaotic process. It is a joyous lack of control, an abandonment of certification, that allows the class to become in an authentic way. The process may begin as a chore but will quickly turn into a manner of living so natural and authentic that the teacher will hardly believe that they had not always been in it and it within them.

The Cave

Imagine as a teacher you are holding the singular flashlight for a group moving through the darkness. Your responsibility, to guide the group forward, providing as much light as possible for everyone. Along the way, you will shine a light on points of interest and navigate pitfalls. When a member of the group moves toward possible danger you warn them against it. When an individual or small group endeavour to move away from the group toward an area of interest you try to extend the light toward their exploration without leaving the majority of the group in complete darkness. Other guides will appear and take over in the place where you leave off. There will come a time when those precarious adventurers can venture off independently, having found a light of their own.

The Language of Internal Motivation

In order to live a fulfilling life, one must be able to allow that which rises from the soul to emerge into becoming. This becoming will be influenced by external forces, this is being however, the motivation that conducts the being through the world is most authentic when it

moves with the fewest externally reinforced prejudices and biases. The person that we become is always moving through a windtunnel of experience and culture. To move through in the most authentic way we must be allowed our own internal barometer of truth toward self assessment and action.

Affording this freedom to the student is not an easy task for the educator because they have their own way of becoming and subsequent predispositions, biases, and prejudicial behavior. Despite the educators best intentions, they will, through seemingly benign acts to impose their will on the students in their care. External reinforcement lends to an abundance of inauthentic beliefs, ideas, and ways of becoming but how can we the educators avoid this pitfall?

The key is supporting and encouraging internal motivation. Young students look to the teacher for validation. Is what I did good, is my direction correct, are my ideas correct. The more the educator validates their way of becoming, the more the student seeks out this external validation throughout their lives. We helping to build the blueprint of the way in which our students will approach the world. If we train them to constantly seek external approval, they will be dramatically influenced by the windtunnel of experience as their own will becomes twisted, confused, and manipulated. They will unknowingly become puppets, controlled by the every passing fancy, manipulated in every interaction. They will build false realities based on ideas and biases that are not their own. They will be feathers tossed and turned by the winds of society.

In Sartre' book Being and Nothingness he relates as metaphor a subjective relationship dichotomy with a mannequin that appears to be human. The person is the center of their own universe until they mistake the mannequin for a person. At this point they consider themselves from the perspective of this new subjective perspective and try to arrange themselves accordingly. They are viewing themselves through an imaginary subjective. The mannequin has no values, no ideas. Yet they are trying to comport themselves in a way the mannequin would appreciate. They then realize that the mannequin isn't real and they return to the center of their universe. Let us look further into this idea, replacing the mannequin for a mirror. We look into the mirror and it seems to be us judging an image staring out at us that we categorize as belonging to us however, in making judgments about this character we are considering all the

subjective experiences we have acquired and subscribed value to. The idea that Sartre suggested that we create about the person that doesn't exist is now cast into the mirror. The extension of our ideas of self becomes a being in the mirror that judges us. We are not looking in the mirror, the mirror is looking at and criticising us. If we were alone in the world, what opinion could we have about this person in the mirror? Could we say his face was handsome? Could we say he dressed sharply, or that his figure was pleasing? These judgements are that of a illusionary subjective society that we have constructed. It is that False consciousness that looks at us in the mirror. There, we are trapped under a microscope, judged and scorned by a manifestation of subjective ideas. This is the inauthentic self, so prejudiced by society and driven by external motivation that they have lost all objectivity. So desperate for validation, acceptance and love, this spiralling self esteem will resort to extreme measures toward self protection.

Building Alternate Realities

This is where the diminishing self begins to build false realities that support their troubled relationship to the world. The pathology that arises as a defense mechanism is dramatic and varied. The inauthentic self will exploit exaggeration, deceit, and dishonesty so as to build a reality that they can control, feel safe in, manipulate, etc. Soon, conversations, actions, reactions, entire relationships are predicated on the initial lies. We learn to lie at about the age of three years old. Before then the child believes in one universally knowable reality. They have not yet learned how to build a false reality. When the child is trying to avoid punishment or get out of trouble, and they are proposed with a yes or no query, at some point the spark of the finite mind ignites into the realm of infinite possibility at the same moment the infinite mind comprehends finite restrictions. "Did you do this?" asks the mother... If she is asking me, she has now created two potential realities from which I am allowed to choose. If she truly does know which reality is true, why not choose the one that seems to benefit me? If the child is successful, they will be more likely to utilize an alternate reality in the future. If they are unsuccessful they will be less likely. If a child sees a role-model employ alternate realities successfully, they may duplicate this practice. Once a child starts to use this extremely convenient and tempting

convention, it is difficult to eradicate the behavior. The desperate individual will learn to deal in *mauvaise foi* (bad faith) in many interaction. The process is insidious in its development. The first lie creates a false reality that now both the liar and lieee are participating in. The lieee is now relating to the lier as if the things they said were true; their feelings, motivations, entire relationship is based on the image they have created from the lie. Now the liar responds to these now illegitimate feelings, emotions, etc. The butterfly effect builds a false reality, a false logos, a false way of becoming. The liar can't tell reality from the fiction they have created, they are most likely tremendously externally influenced and become desperate as they often believe that their based needs are compromised. These false realities build upon each other and compound until their maintenance is so burdensome that they cause a breakdown, or they become so natural that the authentic reality is entirely sacrificed. In the case of the prior, the person must rebuild from the basis of authenticity and avoid the temptation of false realities. This can be an extremely difficult task as a penchant toward deceit from childhood is extraordinarily difficult to curb. In the latter, the person may very well have to be abandoned entirely. Anyone who has allowed themselves to immerse themselves so completely into delusion becomes unable to deal in good faith or have authentic relations with anyone else.

Don't Tell your Daughter she's beautiful

A representative example of this phenomena has become shockingly apparent through my years of classroom experience and time spend with young learners. From an early age we have a tendency to externally motivate boys toward accomplishment praising their strength, or speed, or smarts, or abilities. We are far more likely with girls to praise their physical appearance. From a very young age little girls are validated when they look pretty. They quickly learn to want to wear dresses, jewelry, and do their hair. Such a pretty little girl they are told by good natured friends and family. The little girl begins to build her self-esteem on the basis of her looks. This compounds over a lifetime as the young woman spends her time, money, and energy on clothes, makeup, hair, fitness, surgery, etc in order to maintain the external accolades she requires to

maintain her self esteem. Body dysmorphia, followed by depression, anorexia, bulimia, etc are common place in the female population. We have built their self-esteem on external body aesthetics, the worst possible foundation for an authentic self. When I have encouraged parents, teachers, etc not to encourage this dangerous foundation of self image I have been met with adversity. “How will they know that they are beautiful? How will they feel good about themselves? How will they know their worth?” The answer is through meaningful actions, good works, personal growth, and confidence in their abilities.

Consider, only a small portion of the girls becoming women will meet the often impossible beauty standards that have been established by society. The few that do will be valued for only their external aesthetic which is a poor foundation for relationships, self concept, or a life well led. They will spend their time maintaining their packaging and not their content. They will end up in partnerships that are shallow and unfulfilling. In the end they will lose this external ideal as age and time are inevitable and they will find themselves empty and undesirable. I have spoken to beautiful women that have spend the first half of their lives subscribing to an external self concept; they have told me that it is the most shocking and disheartening revelation when they discover that they are no longer the beautiful young woman that they predicted their entire relationship with the world upon. Sometimes it creeps up upon them and other times it occurs in a moment. When it suddenly leaves them and they realize that there is no internal source of self esteem, they find themselves ill equipped to face the second half of life and the world ahead. They become invisible.

The girls that don't meet this ideal of beauty will always yearn for it but in many cases will slowly replace this unsustainable source of self esteem with substitutes. Being used to external sources of self esteem, these women often gravitate to other forms of external self esteem, building their self concept around others wants, needs, and desires. The authentic self is rarely realized and these women often fall victim to abusive spouses, predatory relationships, and manipulative employers. Women deserve better. They deserve a life predicated on good works, confidence of ability, and a strong internal self concept. (Woman don't like each other, they cant, they are mostly all trapped in the same slave mentality, which forces them to resent one another.)

This is a product of our biology informing society and then society creating a feedback loop

that gone uncontrolled and unchecked has led us to dangerous consequences. Women rely on youth and beauty to reproduce and spread genetic material. Men use shared resources, standing in community, etc. So boys are taught to build self esteem on the basis of ability, girls are taught to establish self worth on the foundation of beauty and youth. We are not merely animals. We are subject to our biology but we should not design society to make us slaves of it. If young women are encouraged to promote internal sources of self esteem the pool of women will still be viable candidates toward procreation, they will also be more fulfilled, confident and healthy.

Fairytale: Once upon a time there was a little girl with an ugly smile. She was however, very pretty when she was sad and as her face flushed with a pinkish hue, even prettier when she cried. When she smiled people looked away but when she cried everyone was kind to her and often told her she was beautiful. She wanted ever so much to be beautiful. After years of looking sad she began to feel very sad. She married a man that hated her smile but it was a rare thing to see since her face was almost always sad and she cried often. One day she lost her beauty and all that was left was the sadness.

Girls aren't the only victims to the scourge of external reinforcement. Boys also are taught to crave validation for their works, actions, accomplishments, and in growing trends beauty as well. Boys are looking outside themselves to answer the question, "Am I good enough?" They may have different external motivators but they lead a similarly unhealthy course toward an inauthentic life. How do we encourage without reinforcing external motivators?

It is the question that continues the dialogue and moves us on the course through our becoming. If we look at Plato's epistemological theory we see in both Meno and Phaedo the concept of anamnesis, the idea that our souls possess knowledge to be rediscovered. We are uncovering our true self so answers are unnecessary and certification/confirmation are wantful chimeras. The student can discover their own truth by asking the right questions. These questions will lead to a new and ever continuing revelation of self. When the student comes to the teacher regarding a work, the teacher should ask questions as to the students thoughts on the project in question. The teacher can lead the students own personal assessment of the work by asking questions pertaining to the assignment.

Example questions for student self-assessment:

What is it that you have created? Describe it.

Why did you make the choices that you made?

Do you think your work answers the questions posed to the class?

Does the work fulfill your own personal objectives?

What did you learn from the project?

Do you have a better understanding of _____?

Did you enjoy doing it? Which parts did you enjoy?

What do you think were your strengths in this project?

What were your greatest difficulties in the project?

Did you discover something new?

Do you feel like the project is complete and does it meet your personal satisfaction?

How might you proceed differently next time?

A gold star, a grade, or a job well done pat on the back has become the standard in education. Educators unknowingly use these tools as a seemingly benign patch toward reinforcing and subordinating students through external reward and approval. They end up behaving like a dog that is classically conditioned to do a trick for a snack. The problem is that the tricks keep getting bigger and more complex, how can the rewards possibly remain commensurate? It has become common place for parents and even schools to pay students for grades. This will directly reinforce the students' striving toward employment primarily on the basis of economic reward, abandoning the individualistic attempt toward a life well led. Students proceed toward an endgame or a goal looking toward the next reward as life passes them by; a life meant to be fulfilling not just completed. There is particular linguistic turn that has become very popular as of late and strikes me as a grim product of an objective based society. Travelers don't say that they visited the Charles Bridge, explored the Old town, enjoyed Prague; they say they did the Charles Bridge, they did Old Town, and they did Prague. It's as if everything in life is just a task

to be completed, a lifetime of goals to be checked off... and it all begins as children with a gold star.

Self Assessment

Self assessment was touched on above but it is the most important tool of tools to be utilized toward challenge, goals, achievement etc. Self assessment redefines meaning internally and creates the foundational philosophy for a life well led. Success can be measured however we choose. For some picking a particular point and reaching it is success but this is a very limited definition even if we were to opt for a measurable concept of success. Achievement could easily be measured by past experience and growth. It can be measured by consistency. It can be measured by enjoyment of the activity. It can be measured against one's peers. It could be measured by the friendships it created. There is no singular measure of success in any activity. Becoming doesn't have a standard unit of measurement and so success is merely an abstract concept defined for and by each individual. Here are some examples of ways students can measure their own success.

Measurement tools toward an internal concept of success

- 1.Measuring one's time, or ability against a previous time or ability
- 2.Considering ones enjoyment of said activity
- 3.Have we created social unions through the activity?
- 4.Adding difficulty to the task and increasing the level of challenge
- 5.Is the activity fulfilling and does it make us better people

6. Does or will the activity aid us in performing other tasks?

7. Are we more fit or healthy in body/mind through the activity

8. Measuring against your age, experience, gender, size, etc

Let us apply these questions to two separate and disparate activities to demonstrate how these internal measurement tools can be utilized. The questions were distributed to several students randomly and with the simple directions to think about self concept and consider your answers through a lens of internal assessment, with regard to a life well-led. The first interview was with a gentleman we will refer to as John. Here are the results of the questionnaire in reference to his practice of running.

Running:

1. Last month I ran a 7 minute kilometer, this month after daily training, I ran the kilometer in 6 minutes.
2. I used to feel very uncomfortable with my breathing and stressed when I ran but I have overcome these troubles and begun to enjoy the nature and look forward to the runner's high
3. I run at a conversational pace with several other people on a regular basis and have developed several strong friendships. We are planning a 10K in spring
4. My longest run was four kilometers a month ago but I am now doing 6 regularly and hope to achieve 10 by spring to participate in a ten K race

5. I find running a great personal challenge and feel a sense of fulfillment as I watch myself grow in ability. I also notice I am more patient and less easily agitated.
6. Since running my family hiking trips to the mountains have become a great joy. Also carrying groceries from the shop and up the steps is easy.
7. My body feels fit and trim, I have lots of energy and my breathing is strong. My singing has improved.
8. For a beginner in my age category, I think I am off to a fine start and am proud of my current level of ability.

It is easy to see how these kind of questions lead to an emergence of self and consideration of becoming. Are the things that I am doing benefitting my personal and present concept of a life well led? Personal internal assessment emerges as the central concept toward a barometer for success. Consider how this meaningful, mindful inquiry compares with a ribbon, medal, or any external reward for one's journey. Proceeding to the next example let us consider another student's contribution to the questionnaire. The student we will refer to as Mary and her progress in painting.

Painting:

1. At the beginning painting was difficult. I struggled to slowly gain proficiency in the various techniques. Years later, I don't even think about technique, I have become so comfortable with the brush that I am able to concentrate on my inspiration.
2. The more I do it, the more I realise the therapeutic effect my art-making has: I completely relax as I get fully involved in the process, I really enjoy my time painting.

3. As I make more art, I become more interested in learning other artistic forms of self-expression. I visit exhibitions and attend workshops which is a great for meeting new people, sharing knowledge, and learning.
4. I see myself loosen up emotionally the more I am connected to the world of art. I am now able to approach pieces that previously seemed beyond my skill level.
5. Making art has definitely taught me to be less judgemental of others and myself. I see more than I used to.
6. The patience and thoughtful attention I have learned through painting has affected many other aspects of my life. Writing long manuscripts has become a possibility that I never thought would present itself to me.
7. Definitely more healthy in mind, more peaceful. Less stress... my blood pressure has went down.
8. As an intermediate level painter I feel like I have good technique for my level of experience. My artistic vision can sometimes be limited by my 9 to 5 job and family circumstances, I don't have the opportunity to live the extreme lifestyle that would lend to pushing my art as far as it can go. I would be curious about pushing further into experimental art as I reach retirement.

The above example is that of a student of advanced age however, it is easy to see how these questions would apply toward the self exploration and self assessment of a student at any age. A pattern of affirming the students abilities through praise will only stand to perpetuate the need for external affirmation. They will fail to engage with their work because they are not looking inside to the source to ask the questions the endeavour requires. Art students that seek external affirmation are merely extensions of the teacher through the mechanics. Their art will always be

derivative and their inspiration stunted. Students that journey into the human experience of creation through self assessment and critique are following the question deeper and deeper down the rabbit hole of their own becoming.

We are taught that our sense of self is a concept that is delivered to the recipient; a gift for others to bestow upon us. We are groomed to believe that success is a singular point; a set of predetermined values and that life is a race toward that point. This is where the fallacy of privilege occurs. We set life up as a race with a fixed singular point and the winners of this race are successful. This externally generated idea of success builds the foundation for a lifetime of self imposed uniformity. We are being conditioned to pursue an inauthentic life in competition toward scarce and fleeting resources. It is a pyramid scheme perpetrated so insidiously that it seems to be an inherent aspect of the human experience. There is hope of avoiding this global Ponzi scheme. By eliminating external motivation and supporting a paradigm of fulfillment through a life well-led, we can dismantle the very cornerstones of the pyramid. Without a population biting and clawing their desperate way toward a singular goal and buying into the same empty promises of advancement, we can crumble our current ideas of success, privilege, and failure. We can move our population toward a more authentic and sustainable ideal.

Privilege

The concept of privilege has arisen as a popular talking point, a catch phrase, a buzzword, a label to place on a group of people that seem to benefit from their gender, race, religious background, land of origin, economic status, etc. Privilege has been used to validate one person's supposed "underachievement" and to invalidate another's achievement. Our understanding of privilege however, is fundamentally flawed from its very conception. The premise from which these concepts arise is initially corrupt. The concept of privilege is a method by which the oppressors assuage their guilt. Consider a native tribe in Asia or Africa, living an isolated existence, with their own tribal norms, dress, rituals, behaviors, language, etc. Imagine them living off the abundance of the land and sea in simple huts. Imagine that they are fulfilled by their rituals and

customs. We would not consider them underprivileged. They are living their own culturally fulfilling life in their own manner. They are the other and they don't fit into our conversation however, as cultures draw closer to our own by similarity or proximity, we begin to feel guilty about imagined disparities. Since we live in an economic era our lense toward unfairness is monetary one. We carry the symbols economic prosperity. The clothes, the jewelry, the labels are all symbols that we are part of a superior class by exhibiting our surplus. We experience guilt as a product of a our greed and must find a way to diminish the feeling of iniquity, not through action but, through thought. By the mere act of acknowledging our privilege and speaking out against social injustice, we have becomes the heroes of the oppressed while maintaining the surplus of the oppressor.

We then benevolently bestow our concept on the oppressed toward the end of self and mutual flagellation. They are indoctrinated to believe that they have been entirely disenfranchised.. They proceed to wield this new weapon with obstinate self righteousness as they batter themselves unwittingly. All the while, wounding themselves in a fictional battle in which the most tremendous victory and greatest defeat result in the same end; abandoning their cultural emergence in an attempt to become their oppressors. This then reaffirms the oppressors superiority and validates their way of life completing the circle of privilege.

Regarding non-violent oppression in particular and to a lesser but qualifying degree, violent oppression; they who are oppressed are only oppressed if they believe that the dominant parties definition of success is true or paradigmatic. They must believe that the oppressors are greater, not just by means of control or power but that their culture, rituals, and traditions are are superior. The goal of life then becomes becoming the oppressor. Learning the oppressors values and adopting them as their own.

The oppressed are in turn impoverished by their inability to reach their newly adopted goals. They are oppressed because they believe in the their oppressors value system. They don't question whether the oppressors values are healthy, virtuous, fulfilling or right. They fail because they dont succeed in becoming their oppressors. Non-physical oppression is accomplished by the

creation and reinforcement of a world view and convincing the oppressed that this world view is the most desirable and paradigmatic. The oppressed fall in love with their oppressor. Neither the oppressor nor the oppressed are aware of their unconscious disposition. In a version of Hegel's Master Slave dialectic they want to become the oppressor by adopting his values and holding the same ideals as the oppressor. They begin to hate their own kind and the values and attributes that their fellow oppressed hold dear become repugnant to they themselves. They model themselves after the oppressors and fall short because of a lack of "privilege." They unknowingly reinforce the oppressor's values by lamenting the unfairness of the game. They regret their failing in a set of relatively arbitrary circumstances that they not equipped/ prepared to be successful in. They continually edify the oppressors values as paradigmatic by mutual agreement. The oppressors set the rules of the game. They gave themselves the best pieces and the best odds. Then they taught the oppressed the rules of the game and the oppressed learned them by heart. They scramble about in the mud fighting amongst themselves trying to defeat one another. They use violence. They shout and protest about how the game should be more fair. The oppressors have better odds. The oppressors have better game pieces. The oppressed fight to get the best pieces. They strive against incredible odds. The secret however is simple. Stop playing the oppressors game.

The game isnt necessary... far from it. Power, money, status... why would you let the oppressors dictate those objectives? They aren't healthy, or fulfilling. They are purely arbitrary. In a nonviolent social engagement. We take them as constants only because we are living in an Economic/Consumption zeitgeist and an era of absolutism. These qualities are not inherently beneficial, nor do they lead to a greater good. These qualities are considered abhorrent by major religions and philosophies. They have been criticized as sinful through most of human history. They are the lowest and most base human desires. Why are we subscribing toward the worst possible human ambition when we have the have such tremendous examples of virtuous goals? Just consider the opposite virtues, of wealth, status, and power; Charity, humility, and lack of desire. It is all merely the product of the Zeitgeist that emerges from a faulty premise.

A premise, a universal unconscious foundation, produces a zeitgeist. It is the premise that we don't acknowledge because it is so systemic, so embedded in our collective unconscious. This Economic Zeitgeist misleads us from the beginning; we are not free to choose our models of admiration; they are predetermined. We are the products of an idea that is unhealthy, unsustainable, and inherently destructive. This Economic/Consumer Zeitgeist must reach its conclusion through a reeducation of humanity toward a sustainable, healthy, beneficial objective. We as educators must usher in a zeitgeist whose premise is justice, authenticity, and virtue.

We Educators must help develop the landscape from which the beings of tomorrow will take their leap into becoming. Thusly, we must be sure that these foundations are solid, otherwise they will be building the very basis of their understanding and following action from a misguided premise. A premise adopted very early in life by a large portion of the population becomes the basis of every other thought and action; every interaction returns to this premise. They never question it, they never reexamine it.

Upon discarding economic success/consuming as the objective for being, we must examine what is left. What's left is our life. We exist. What shall we do with this existence? Is it enough to live it? Must we have a goal? If the answer is no then we can just live it without desire and enjoy being. This may be enough; to live each moment as completely as one wishes and proceed to the next. Eastern philosophies describe this "being present" as an achievable and authentic state. If life is to have goals or objectives, it seems like it would benefit our purposes as educators to help our students seek out goals that would provide nourishment for their souls. However, being that life has no specific goal (except that which we provide) and privilege is an advantage given to a particular person or group toward a particular set of goals, then how can their be privilege? If we are not playing the oppressors game but inventing our own, if our game contains its own objective or goal, how can their idea of privilege be imposed upon us? If the reason for life is living it then it is its own end and its meaning is defined by the self. Teach the students to play their own game with the objective being a life well led.

A life well led can only be the judgement of he who lives it. Is happiness, the goal? Is it

maintaining good friendships, living with integrity, pursuing a passion, being a devoted parent, helping others, etc.

Eliminating these concepts of privilege by reeducating people to determine their own goals for a life well led is imperative toward caring for the soul. It opens up myriad possibilities for self care and personal fulfillment. If we are no longer subscribe to this artificially imposed criteria for success, we can explore and embrace our own personal successes.

Eliminating notions of privilege eliminates ideas of separation, of better or worse, objectives to be desired, and fall short of. (The monetary hierarchy. Eliminate it!!! Better and worse based on money, possessions, status) Jealousy, deprived, disenfranchised, etc.

We must eliminate the concepts of privilege, separation, hierarchical structures, success, failure, in the classroom which will continue to society. The classroom is the scaffolding of societies future.

We are trying to win in a game we don't even want to play. They teach us that this is the way the game works to fuel their economy. Not for our betterment. Then they feed us concepts like privilege which places us at odds and reinforces the structure. The classroom must be beyond that. The template for a new era. "Division is contrary to the nature of the Tao."³⁸

Sustainability

Everyone can't be wealthy. There aren't enough resources on the planet for everyone to be wealthy. If we make this the goal of our life well led, then success is only possible for a very small portion of the population. Furthermore, this section of the population must utilize a vastly disproportionate quantity of resources to succeed, leaving the rest of the population wildly disenfranchised and in diminished self concept. A redistribution of wealth is not the answer as it

³⁸ Walker, B., *Hua Hu Ching: The Unknown Teachings of Lao Tzu*. Harper One, 2009, p.5.

infringes on personal liberty. Forced varieties of equality like Communism are just as corrupt as the current system of manipulation; they are the same animal with a different a different colored coat. Individual liberty combined with self realized determination are key. “When we create standardized schools, we do not allow for praxis to develop. As Paulo Freire said, praxis is the power and know-how to act against oppression.”³⁹ “It is through local experiences that students view the world and these need to be the focus of the curriculum.”⁴⁰ True freedom can arise through each individuals own determination of a life well led and the mutual respect and admiration begotten by that ideology. Consider a world where each person is valued for their for their own type of intelligence and contribution to culture and society. Imagine a society where we respect each others unique idea of a life well led without prejudice or bias; everyone pursuing their own personal ideal of success. Envision a people that aren’t racing toward a goal but truly authentic lives as their soul drives their becoming. Lightening steers the universe and it is that light that uncovers and illuminates the universal truth about us all.

All the artificial constructs of privilege, success, failure, class, intelligence, etc all fall away in this idealistic notion. Is the practical application of this philosophy feasible or is it merely a theoretical experiment? Perhaps, a more prescient question is, “Don’t we as educators have the duty to foster idealistic philosophy and practice?” Isn’t it our responsibility to introduce the best possible initial circumstances toward a fulfilled, authentic, sustainable life.

What do People Want?

Humanity is a varied and unique species. It is not as easy or systematic to predict our needs as it is many animals however, we have some inclinations that are almost universally applicable. Humans generally look toward maintaining a hierarchy of need that is effectively delineated by Maslow in this handy chart.

³⁹ Freire, P., *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In D.J. Flinders & S.J. Thornton (Ed.), *The curriculum studies reader* (pp. 157-166). New York, 1970: Routledge.

⁴⁰ Stephan Starkweather, *Redefining Roles in the Curriculum*. University of Kansas, 2018, p. 7.



Upon reviewing Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, we don't see any direct reference to any specific type of success. The concepts of need are outlines for the individual to discover, explore, and experience. The hierarchy does not have any particular goals by design but there are certain genres of need that are almost universal among humans. When in consideration of the course toward a sustainable well-led life the Self-Transcendence level must first be reachable by all. The only way this is possible is if we are able to determine our own sense of meaning. To place material success, or economic achievement as the basis for our sense of meaning may be the most abominable deceit ever inflicted upon humankind. Human beings only need a few things to achieve well-led lives. As educators, we need to direct them toward an idea of what these needs actually are on a biological and human level.

We need shelter, safety, and sustenance. What kind of shelter varies from person to person without any specific ideal criteria. Many people live happy fulfilling lives in a small shared dwelling with very little personal privacy. Others live very lonely unfulfilled lives in large mansions alone. The standard of living has very little to do with size, area, cost, or even location. Each person should be encouraged to explore their own ideal living environment. My father told me that as growing up as kid in the New York inner city project apartment buildings he longed for a house of his own with a large property. His matched the collective dream of all the poor people living in the urban low income neighborhood. They dreamed of having what the

rich people had; what their teachers told them that they could achieve if they worked hard and pursued financially rewarding employment. Once he achieved his goal he realized that he had reached someone else's idea of success. He was alone with his big house and his high walls. Gone were the neighborhood barbecues, the conversations in the halls, the weekly card games, the strong friendships that arose out of close proximity, shared space, and having to rely on each other toward the common good. The misguided concept of privilege that has proliferated western cultural dialogue actually works against the Love and Belonging level of the hierarchy by separating people, limiting interactions, diminishing group settings and participation in activities. Primates have lived in tribal circumstances for innumerable centuries; we are social creatures and we have evolved and thrived in groups. To propose that a life well led is predicated on owning a house and living independently is yet another unsustainable and moreover, undesirable goal.

Game:

Exploring the Possibilities of Becoming In the Gameworld

Our duty as Educators is to allow, encourage, and aid the students in our care towards becoming in the world. In order to do this they must be able to explore the realm of possibilities; This is why we play. In play we can transmute time, space, gender, identity, circumstance toward the exploration of another possible self. This allows the students to extend forward into a future viewpoint that has a different relationship to the world. The student self is limiting in self concept. How can they know that they would be a tremendous leader if they have not led? How can they know that they would be a fantastic diplomat if they have never practiced diplomacy? In the Gameworld we can fully explore our becoming without the traditional human constraints that box us into a narrow sense of self. The Game isn't just for children; students of all ages benefit from extricating themselves from a static identity. You may not have the ability to navigate a difficult problem or circumvent a tenuous issue but perhaps another self does. Self discovery is not a singular emergence, it is a varied and continuous revelation. We are beings in

time, singular, sexually differentiated, transmitting energy, fixed in space but through play and the Gameworld, these constraints fall away, and we live in freedom.

Ritual, Threshold, and the Liminal Experience

“A ritual is the enactment of a myth. And, by participating in the ritual, you are participating in the myth. And since myth is a projection of the depth wisdom of the psyche, by participating in a ritual, participating in the myth, you are being, as it were, put in accord with that wisdom, which is the wisdom that is inherent within you...”⁴¹

It is ideal that my formal studies in Phenomenology began in Prague. The word Prague actually means threshold. Prague was the literal and metaphoric beginning of a new becoming. The threshold is the place where the liminal experience occurs. It is the transitional element that marks the initiation to the new ritual and the acceptance of the myth. Recognized or not, it is the seminal moment that acceptance of the myth occurs. Consider the metaphor of waking from sleep. We wake up in the morning presumably and our consciousness is placed back into our physical form, our eyes open and we readjust to the world. Light, sound, information fill our senses, we rise from bed and our feet are placed on the ground. This is our relatively universal experience of entering the “regular world” every day. Its groggy, its strange, its consistent, its human. Waking is the most reliable daily lifetime liminal experience until the day it is not.

Imagine if instead of opening your eyes to wake, stepping in to your senses as per usual, or getting out of bed, you melted out of a wall, formless and merged with the radiant energy of other beings. The circumstances for your new reality and its confines would be totally different. Your expectations, means of communication, interactions with environment, etc would have an entirely new foundation. It would be the way in which the circumstances for our becoming unfold. We would experience an entirely new way of becoming. That’s the wonder of the liminal threshold, it sets a foundation for the way in which reality will proceed. The above

⁴¹ Campbell, J., *The Wisdom of Joseph Campbell*. New Dimension Radio Interview with Michael Toms, Hay House, 2005.

example is an extremely fantastical premise but it came from the imagination and that is precisely where we must go and the only limit we have in creating the ritual and mythos of becoming. A more tangible example of the liminal threshold occurs in classrooms around the world. The threshold of the classroom is the entrance to a new becoming. We place ourselves in a world/environment that is crafted toward the goal of growth and learning. This environment may focus on individual scholarship or social learning as described by Vygotsky, "Through others we become ourselves." It may involve hands on, practical interaction with tools and circumstances that reflect real world situations. The classroom stage is set and the student actors get into character as they enter.

The following is an example of the impact of this premise: We step into a Foreign language classroom and we change our name to one indicative of the culture. In the Spanish class, I became Basilio, from Guaymas, Mexico. The liminal threshold experience would transform my name, my culture, my accent, my sense of self, each day as I entered the classroom. No English was to be spoken in this place. This is the power of the liminal threshold. Basilio felt different, he was a different me. Even his thoughts differed from my own; his way of interacting with the world. I was becoming through Basilio. I felt it the moment I reached for the door of the classroom. It was there at the liminal threshold that set the foundations for the experience. The initiation to the becoming.

Care and Initiation

Consider the Primary school classroom: The child enters the room with Mother/father/primary caregiver, the child is greeted by a secondary caregiver/teacher who calls the child by his/her name and welcomes then with some sort of direction. The parent then says goodbye to the child and teacher and withdraws from the scenario. This is the liminal threshold stripped down without any extraordinary initiation ritual, intricacies or details, the average day at school, but even here there is so much discreet initiation to a transition going on.

The Primary caregiver transfers responsibility for care for the student to the teacher. The student is not entering a space where they are now self sufficient or responsible for their own care. They are entering a new environment of care. Everyone in the interaction immediately acknowledges without words that the threshold transition of responsibility was from Parent to teacher. It was both physical in crossing the liminal threshold of the school and discreet in the transfer from parent to teacher. To the child these sort of transfers occur regularly and the son or daughter, now student and classmate, reacts accordingly. They are used to being governed and the authority of becoming, being transferred in this manner from caregiver figure to caregiver figure. The child changes their behavior, expectations, demeanor, etc. They alter their becoming to suit this new environment and the form of care that is being provided.

This is the singular child that possesses multitudinous ways of becoming. A child will be a behavioral problem in one classroom and model student in the next. He or she is becoming on the basis of their reactions to the world and the worlds reactions to them. This interaction is circular and cyclical like all things, external and internal influences improvising their dance; simultaneously leading and following the way in which they become.

(As an aside for consideration of the variety of transitions of care and ways of becoming: how does becoming differ when the responsibility for their care transitions to the student/child? Examine the manner of becoming on an unsupervised walk home. Imagine the teacher opening the door and handing the responsibility of self-governing and self-care to the child. At that point the teacher's responsibility for direct care is absolved. Since care is not being transferred, this liminal threshold would represent the transfer of the care from an external locus of control to an internal One. The child is no longer directly under anyone's care but instead has to practice *Epimeleia Heautou* (self-care).

Let us retreat back to the original student-teacher relationship. There is the unique relationship that the teacher and student engage in. During the time the student is in the classroom regardless of age, they are under the direct care of the teacher. Teachers have many goals in the classroom. The Educator will attempt to enlighten, instruct, engage, amuse, entertain, challenge, and assist

but none of these determine the authentic teacher's success or failure. Anyone of these variables can be abridged, included, omitted. All of these can be negated save one; care.

The Authentic teacher doing their duty will not succeed in every instance. They will fail to reach one or more of the students. They will be unable to teach one or more of their students. They will be unsuccessful in engaging one or more of their students. These intentions are not the criteria of the authentic educator doing their duty. The only thing that the educator has is goodwill carried forward into action. The student has been placed in our care and we must work toward the best possible care of that charge. As Immanuel Kant said, "A good will is good not because of what it effects, or accomplishes, not because of its fitness to attain some intended end, but good just by its willing, i.e. in itself; and, considered by itself, it is to be esteemed beyond compare much higher than anything that could ever be brought about by it in favor of some inclinations, and indeed, if you will, the sum of all inclinations. Even if by some particular disfavor of fate, or by the scanty endowment of a step motherly nature, this will should entirely lack the capacity to carry through its purpose; if despite its greatest striving it should still accomplish nothing, and only the good will were to remain (not of course, as a mere wish, but as the summoning of all means that are within our control); then, like a jewel, it would still shine by itself, as something that has full worth in itself".⁴²

That Jewel is not just the intention or hope, it is utilizing our best knowledge/knowhow and with that, as toward the best possible care of our student. When we clear away all the other attributes that an Authentic Educator doing their duty may or may not possess, care for the student is the variable that is immutable. When we evaluate the effectiveness of a teacher, the only thing that must always be demonstrated is that the most possible care was shown. When I was in Grad school pursuing my Masters Degree in Secondary Education, I attended a required class on Child Development. Having done my undergraduate thesis on Child Development I considered the class unworthy of my time or attention. I had studied all the subject matter in far more depth than even the instructor of the course and quickly became frustrated and despondent at what I perceived as a waste of my time. The instructor seemed to recognize and empathize with my

⁴² Kant, I., *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, 1785.

circumstances. He began asking me about my personal and educational aspirations. He took interest in me, often let me guest lecture, and asked me to take on side projects that suited my interest. When all else failed, this Instructor provided the one thing that remained within his education's scope; he provided care. At the end of the semester, the Instructor approached me and thanked me for my participation in the class and told me that he thought that I had contributed a tremendous amount to the class and hoped that I had taken something valuable away. I replied that I had but not what I had expected. I realized that merely providing care to a student can turn them around completely and help them achieve. He had created a climate for learning and growth, not through subject knowledge but through teaching. He taught me through care.

In most aspects of life we are independent beings, responsible for our own becoming however, the student-teacher relationship is very different. The student is either placing themselves or is being placed under the care of this Educator's instruction and guidance. In either case this Educator possesses some knowledge that will assist the student toward following a path toward becoming. They will act as this student's guide in whatever capacity has been mutually agreed upon. This Educator could be anything from a ukulele teacher to a physics professor, the student is placing themselves under the teacher's care because they believe them to be an experienced, knowledgeable guide toward their becoming in that subject or field. The child student is placed under the teacher's custody for the same reason, they believe that they will guide their student in a way that satisfies the parent's objectives... but what of the child? The child has their own particular manner of becoming which, however influenced by their parents remains separate and distinct. These individuals are being placed under the care of a particular teacher, an institution, a society, with objectives and eventual goals that may stand in sharp contrast to the manner of becoming that nurtures the student's soul. With educational standards, national curriculum, standardized testing and assessment where is the care for the soul?

Referring back to the initial circumstance of external governing: What has the transfer from parent to teacher represented for the child? The child has stepped into the mythos and made the

transition from child to student. They have left a world of care and home and family to embark on a new journey into a world of learning, and socialization.

The above account demonstrates the how such subtle minutia at the Liminal threshold can create profoundly meaningful introduction to the transitioned to environment. Students are independent of age being place under the care of the Instructor. Allow that to sink in deep. Independent beings are placing themselves within your personal care. That is the first thing that occurs upon entry to the classroom. The teacher might very well be wearing a shirt that says “welcome, you are now under my personal care.” That is the number one fundamental aspect to being an educator, demonstrating that you care through your philosophy and actions. The student entering your classroom is entering your realm of care. This alone is more important than anything else you will do as an educator. This is Epimeleia and it is the fundamental principle for the movement of energy in the realm of education.

Dasein and the Phen

The lack of a word for a human experience, often diminishes the experience itself. Paradoxically, words also limit experiences that would otherwise remain boundless. The trick is a marvelous paradox. Use the word to contain the concept, but never let the word define, constrict, or negate it. Words have the power to contain an ocean in a teacup. They allow us to identify and compare, organize and utilize concepts that are too unwieldy for us to manage otherwise. Philosophers are notorious for reimagining the use of words, inventing neologisms or just plain making words up. The words they invent represent a thought that has become so second nature to the individual it represents a fundamental principle of understanding. Without this building block the foundation of any further conversation lacks a cornerstone. Heidegger used term Dasein is revealed by projection into, and engagement with, a personal world⁴³—a never-ending process of involvement with the world as mediated through the projects of the self.

⁴⁴ Further, Heidegger considered that language, everyday curiosity, logical systems, and common beliefs obscure *Dasein's* nature from itself. Extending the Phenomenological

⁴³ Phillipse, H., *Heidegger's Philosophy of Being*, 1999, p. 220.

⁴⁴ J. Childers/G. Hentzi eds., *The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism*, 1995, p. 70.

experience into the present moment of thought without being misled by language or seemingly logical contradictions as an intuitive act is something regularly experienced but unnamed. Intuition is information, knowing, experience, data, that is coming too quickly or in too much abundance for the conscious mind to interpret. So called feelings about such and such are alarms that the phenomenological you has experienced and is repeating but again difficult for our conscious thought process to interpret. Its very simple to explain when we invert the example. Michael Jordan was the greatest, basketball player of his generation (perhaps the greatest of all time) If you asked Michael to explain how he did everything he did, he would be entirely incapable. How did he know when there was enough room to split the defense for a dunk? How could he determine their speed as the defense collapsed? What indicators did he notice when he went for a steal (he was 9 times all defensive first team). He doesnt recognize consciously all the aspects of being and becoming Michael Jordan in the game however, not being consciously aware these things doesn't for a moment cast doubt on their happening in the world. We are constantly knowing outside consciousness. This Didactic has reached a point as such that it would be foolhardy to continue without placing the proverbial ocean in a teacup. Thusly, Henceforth, this phenomenological manner of thought, knowing beyond consciousness will be referred to as “Phen.”

Just as Dasein differs from everyday consciousness, neither a Subjective or Objective perspective, Phen bares stark contrast to a logical thought process or even an emotional one. It is not the data or information around us, nor is it the way we consciously construct thoughts of aboutness. Most of our time in the world is spent in the Phenomena and as such, it is the most authentic manner of experience. The teacher must learn to extend their conscious thought process into the Phen; it is there in which they can reach epimeleia and work toward the best possible interest of their students. Using the Phen, is learning, teaching, and living the authentic life. This approach, as stated above, becomes more tangible once having been named. Indeterminate notions previously referred to as gut feelings, intuition, sixth sense, and instinct are all indicative testament to our experience with the Phen. Our familiarity with the Phen is so subtle and pervasive it is difficult to discern from living... this is because it IS merely living and our most primary and unobscured extension of thought that rises from it. We are of the pure

phenomena of being. It is here we are in truth. We can use the Phen to carry that truth forward toward an authentic educational philosophy and application.

Looking back at (Aristotles) concept whether perfect knowledge is better than real experience we see that real experience in the world is superior to perfect knowledge. We live in the world experiencing, reacting to, the vast subtle minutia of experience. It is a rushing saturating world of being and it is here where life is occurring. This is truth. It is not a conscious objective thought process removed from the world but the truth of subjectivity. The world as experienced. This is the reliable data, Here is the “real psychology.” The educator must not give the students what the data suggests. The teacher cannot offer what they think the student needs. They must use the Phen to examine teaching in truth. They must extend every aspect of the pedagogical present beyond the classroom toward curriculum design, lesson planning, class design, conflict resolution, etc.

The Authentic life

Authenticity is often a relic of a past relationship with the world long buried and all but forgotten. The grounds from which we are taught to operate is so far removed from the truth we are beginning with a premise so corrupt, even our most courageous acts are folly.

We as educators, must live lives absent of lies and self delusion. The truer we are to ourselves and our purpose the easier it is to stay in the Phen space. The more we learn to manipulate truth, the further we come from the actuality of being. We are trapped in a thought experiment that is twisted by desire and disingenuous mechanisms. The students in place in our care are then subject to these machinations. This is the gravest danger. This insincerity, this disingenuous life will be inherited by the next generation. We must stand as a beacon of light; of truth. We, of all vocations, callings must do right by those in our charge or the relic of authenticity will sink another generation deeper, and this time, eventually it will be beyond the possibility of salvation.

This is not an easy task

Consider this “walking meditation” When a circumstance arises, begin with something small, a choice of dinner options, a selection of clothing to purchase. As you peruse your selections try not to create too much language in your head. We are trying to redesign the linguistic patterns and must leap three or four cognitive hurdles to accomplish this. Dismiss all consideration of good or bad, preference, etc. Look at all things as correct and desirable outcomes. Now imagine the best possible you making the well informed selection/choice for each. Picture each of them in turn enjoying their selections. How does it feel? How does it feel being them? How might they act? Remember, they are equal best possible yous. How might they correspond with their environments?

Taking Phenomenological Pauses

The logical flow that constitutes our systematic application toward forging ideas is subject to an undesirable continuity. Each premise leads through to a supposition which develops toward a pattern that is unreliable because it exists entirely in the rational thought experiment of one’s own mind. This process compromises authenticity for a number of reasons. Firstly, the thought process has no checks, so it is able to leap forward without scrutiny. Each confirmed idea becomes leads to the next without phenomenological validation. Secondly, it gains speed and momentum with each connection it makes, as one who comes close to solving a puzzle hurries toward the end as the picture begins to come into view, often making mistakes or forcing pieces where they don’t belong for certainty of the predicted image. Tertiarily, it has an embedded desired outcome, subconsciously or otherwise, driving toward an expected outcome. We, as educators, must develop a mental process that practices mindfulness and advances our structures of thought into the phen. At first this practice may seem like a haphazard drudgery but before

long it will become an integral part of a relationship to our way of being. In order to maintain an authentic development of ideas we must begin a practice of taking Phenomenological Pauses.

The process is as such. Begin at a premise, an idea, the inspiration toward a plan. Allow yourself to remain in this first stage despite want to journey forward. Then apply this practice toward the initial stage.

1. Discuss the initial stage with others. Confer with students and teachers and lay people alike. Ask the stranger on the train and the four year old child. The more varied the selections, the richer your tapestry. Try not to direct them but instead ask them to remain on the first step with you without judgement. Just considering the initial idea. What feelings does the idea invoke? What words or ideas or connections naturally occur for them? What experiences do they relate to the idea?
2. Imagination: Place yourself in the idea. Live there for a while. Examine the surroundings, chat with the characters that appear, Allow yourself an imaginative leap into the place where the idea exists.
3. Write about the idea, using only metaphor: Who are the siblings, the relations of this idea? What are there properties, how do they live, what do they look like, how do they make you feel?
4. When at all possible, role play the idea using all the experience you have collected, question it, accept it, nurture it and then finally dismiss it. Has the idea matured and through its growth does it now have a life of its own? If so advance to the next part of the practice.
5. Usher the fledgling idea toward taking a small step forward and then begin the process again.

You are its custodian. Provide the care it needs but do not inhibit its growth or prevent it from flight.

The first stage of this process is discovery. The beginnings of this practice may seem superfluous or redundant however when surprising truths and revelation begin to emerge, the sense of discovery will delight the practitioner. Before long the individual revelations will become less unique and more expected. Like most practices the initial gains are the most satisfying; they come quickly and are exciting but as they wane we are left with an experiential bereavement. Just like most practices, the practitioner must persevere with patience and continuity toward the more subtle rewards of expertise.

The next stage in the practice is the method: Here the practitioner has reached a level of comfort with the practice. The process comes with relative ease and is in application toward one's lesson planning, curricular design, Classroom arrangement etc. The newness and freshness may have worn thin but the utility of the practice has become more apparent as a foundation for thought. Its application begins to find its way into other aspects of the practitioners life. The practitioner begins to have glimpses of the Phen.

The Adept: The Practitioner has tailored the practice toward their needs and uses it regularly as it begins to feel less like a practice and more like a way of being. There is regular access to the Phen and its insight into becoming. The step by step method is a good basis to return to when the master has lost their path. They have reached the point where the teachings and practice have synthesized into new methods and practices of their own. Their may still be difficulty transitioning from the Phen to the "Logical/analytical" world and a frustration with the scientific society that doesn't understand them.

The Master- The Phen is a way of being. All things and ideas exist in the Phen. The concepts of the scientific society all fit perfectly into the Phen. Absurd notions, paradoxes, and contradictions all live happily side by side in ironic agreement. The Phen absorbs everything because it is the the Phenomena of being. It is the infinite. It allows for ultimate plurality as the subjective dissolves away and at the same time, becomes more individually edified than before.

The place where we intuition borders on conscious thought, the place where conscious thought meets on intuition. The logos, the fire, the tension between yearning to know and realizing you

already do Somewhere here lies the Phen. The Intuitive/conscious understanding of the phenomena.

Living the Authentic life, along with meditation and the Game World are methods for bringing the Phen into focus, for widening its scope and the way in which we can operate through it.

Meditation on Comenius. Reflections on Nature

In order to fulfill the circle of Epimeleia, we must widen our scope of possibility. Like Jan Komensky, the Father of Modern Education we can look to nature as a metaphor for instruction. Nature provides infinite variation and wonderfully unexpected ways to flourish. Meditations on nature bring the educator into dialogue with the very essence of the circle of life. Comenius used a very straightforward method for his comparisons to nature. I will try to capture the spirit of his notations if not the structure.

1. Consider the vast array of plants and trees that cover the earth from the sea to the highest mountains. These plants all have different manners of growth, various methods of taking in energy, and differ in shape and size and appearance. Each of these plants has its own way of growing, but none is superior or inferior to the other. Such consideration would be absurd. Each just is what it is. It cannot be expected to be otherwise. Imagine asking someone which is better a Saguaro or a Maple.

-We as Educators must demonstrate no hierarchy in becoming. There is no better or worse, each child is different, unique, and must grow in their own way.
2. Diversity allows varieties of plants to live in different locations. Some grow in direct sunlight, whilst others require little to none. Some plants grow as tall as possible to capture the sunlight, others grow wide and catch the light that filters through the canopy. Some live in the shade, whilst others, can subsist on nutrients from the

riparian habitats in which they reside. Each has its place to thrive, and no manner of subsisting is better or worse except as determined by the needs of the plant.

Each child's needs are unique and singular. The way in which they thrive is unique. They must seek energy, enlightenment, experience in their own manner, toward their own becoming.

3. Each plant has a different method of growth and a different way of sustaining itself. Life differentiates itself so as to eliminate competition for the same resources. Imagine if all plants worked to grow tall toward the sun, blocking out the sky. Only a few of that particular variety would reach the top. All the others would be stifled out completely. No place would remain for all those that didn't succeed in gaining access to that singular limited resource.

Imagine if every child were told that there was only one manner of success. Perhaps it is monetary success. Now all the students are working against each other clamoring for this particular finite resource. Only a few will "succeed" and the others will believe that any manner of success is less significant.

4. Many plants don't try to reach high into the sky. This manner of growth would be ill-suited for their attributes and unhealthy for their growth. They receive their sustenance through other methods. Placing them in competition toward a resource they are ill-equipped to compete for will result in poor growth. Imagine a plant native to the rainforest thrown into the desert and expected to thrive in the harsh heat and intense sun.

Each child has their own manner of thriving. To say that their manner is wrong and force them to compete in an environment that is not suited to their becoming is an unhealthy and detrimental practice.

Tending to the garden

Perhaps we are not the right Gardener.

Perhaps it is the wrong garden.

We do not know exactly what proportions of sunlight, water, etc te plant may need so we must give them as many various nutrients to determine by which they best thrive.

We are handed a seed and do not yet know what species we are tending to. We know the general guidelines, that the seed will need sunlight and mineral rich soil and water...

If the plant is not given the right circumstance for survival it does not flourish so our care for the plant assumes our changing the environment, sunlight water, soil if need be, even handing the plant off to an expert, or other caretaker if we are unable to care correctly for it. In essence we must do everything necessary for the care of that plant. How can caring for a student be any less?

How do we prune the plants?

Each grows in its own manner

We know the plants direction in long term growth so sometimes we must gently prune or redirect. As we recognize what kind of plant it is, its possibilities for growth begin to unfold.

The tree feeds from the roots. Applying improvisational/ theatrical role playing to learning places the material in the Phenomena. The Theatrical/play world offers a better glimpse into the real lived experience than studying. Compare a medical student who has leaned the terms of the diseases/disorders through study. They are merely gathering water droplets on the leaves and trunk of the tree. Some may drip down and fee the tree but as time goes by and the water evaporates, most of the learning will be lost. It was never properly absorbed. Now instead, picture four Students playing the parts of Doctor, Patient, Nurse Practitioner/Rehabilitation specialist, and sibling. Imagine the doctor explaining the circumstances of the illness to the

patient who questions the doctor about the illness. Now imagine the Nurse practitioner/rehab specialist working with the sibling describing how life would change and what to watch out for... how they might be of assistance to the patient. Imagine the Patient and Sibling playing the parts in their lives experiencing how their relationship might change. The phenomena of play is certain to create a far more lasting impression because it isn't a thought experiment in the abstract but instead incorporates multiple intelligences which are the way we as individuals relate to the world. We are able to move through the learning period the way we move through life and the experience becomes part of us. It feeds entirely at the root.

That's Just What We Do

On a hilltop placed just by the sea, stood a small yellow house.
 Outside, a single swing in a small garden.
 Every morning Kalo, the little boy who lived in the yellow house, would walk down the hill to school.
 Each afternoon he would return home to his empty garden swing and daydream as he gazed out at the sea and sky.
 As evening approached, the sun set, and mother would call Kalo in for supper, followed by bedtime.
 The waves crashed upon the shore at the bottom of the hill and everything was okay but sometimes he was a bit lonely.

One day Kalo climbed the hill returning from school and found to his great surprise that the garden was not empty.
 A little girl in a shimmering lavender dress sat on his swing gently gliding to and fro.
 "Hello" said Kalo
 "Hello there" shouted the girl as she began to swing impossibly high.
 "Wow! That's the best swinging I've ever seen!!!! Where are you from?" asked Kalo
 "Oh, Im sorry, said the girl as she slowed the swing. Im Peripetia, I'm from a place far far away.
 "How did you learn to swing like that?" asked Kalo
 "Oh that?, where I come from, that's just what we do" answered Peripetia
 "I'd sure like to be able to swing like you do" said Kalo
 Well...That can be arranged, answered Peripetia, "get on"
 Kalo walked over and sat on the swing, Peripetia simply snapped her fingers and before he knew it
 he was swinging higher than he ever had, and then even higher and then upside down up over the swing again and again.
 When he finally stopped he was happy and tired and quite dizzy.
 He climbed off the swing and fell gently in the grass.

“Wow!!!! That was amazing!!!!” How did you do it?” wondered Kalo
 Hmm...not sure replied Peripetia, “Where I come from that’s just what we do”
 “Well its super!” Exclaimed Kalo
 “I’m glad you liked it”, replied Peripetia

The rest of the afternoon the two chatted and played and laughed in the garden having the most wonderful time. They surely were the fastest of friends. Evening came and Kalo’s Mom called him in for dinner.

“Oh, I have to go” said Kalo.
 “Me too” replied Peripetia
 “Will I see you again?” wondered Kalo
 “Yes, I’ll be waiting here for you tomorrow when you finish school” answered Peripetia
 “Great! See you then” said Kalo

That next day Kalo couldn't wait to get back home to his garden on top of the hill. He arrived to find Peripetia waiting there for him as she promised.

“What shall we do today” asked Peripetia
 “I must show you the creatures that dig in my garden, they really are wonderful to watch” said Kalo

They two crept through the garden on hands and knees watching the ants march in their grand parade, they saw the worms crawl, and the bunnies scurry down into their little holes and out of sight.

“They have a whole underground world down there, “declared Kalo,
 “It would be so amazing to follow them down and visit it!”
 “That can be arranged” giggled Peripetia and with a snap of her fingers the two of them shrank down to the size of a drop of water. Their toes and fingers sparkled and transformed into wonderful diggy feet and hands, their eyes shined beams of light to brighten the darkness below. The ground crumbled beneath their diggy feet and they descended into the wonderful worlds of twisty tunnels and the burrows below. Deep in the holes where underground animals go they went down to take a peak. They played checkers with a mole, joined a beetles for tea, and met some rabbits for hide and go seek. From quite far away and through echoes above they heard Kalos mother call him for dinner. They said their goodbyes, Peripetia snapped her fingers, and just like that they emerged from the ground back to normal size and shape as if nothing had happened at all.

Kalo grabbed Peripetia’s hands and spun her around in circles until they were both quite delightfully spinny.

“That was amazing said Kalo, such an incredible day! How ever do you do it?!?!?!?”

“Really?” chuckled Peripetia, “Where I come from that's just what we do

“Will I see you tomorrow?”, asked Kalo

Yes, tomorrow. answered Peripetia

That next day Kalo couldnt wait to get back home to his garden on top of the hill. He arrived to find Peripetia waiting there for him as she promised.

“What shall we do today” asked Peripetia

I often like to watch the waves dance up upon the rocks. Sometimes the clever dolphins play

together close to shore and if your patient, you might even spot a whale coming up for air. Down deep below there's so many places I'd like to go... if only we could breathe underwater and swim like the fish do.

Well, That can be arrange, replied Peripetia and with a snap of her fingers breathy gills appeared where their necks meet their shoulders and their elbows and knees sprouted fabulous fins.

Without even a word, they two ran down the hill and dove right into the sea.

They were greeted upon their arrival by Maurice the friendly sea slug

Then further embraced by the local magistrate with an eight armed octopus hug

Here, deep down in the blue, there were creatures of every variety

They returned a lost sword to a fish, helped a star make a wish, it was a very sophisticated society.

After a lovely day they said goodbye to their aquatic associates and swam back to the shore as they emerged Peripetia snapped her fingers and in a moment their gills and fins were gone.

Evening had arrived and Kalo's Mom called him in for dinner.

"Oh, I have to go" said Kalo.

"Me too" replied Peripetia

"Will I see you again?" wondered Kalo

"Yes, Ill be waiting here for you tomorrow when you finish school" answered Peripetia

"Great! See you then" said Kalo

The next day after school Kalo ran as fast as he possibly could up the hill.

By the time he reached her he was so out of breath he could hardly say a word.

Im... (huff) so (pant) glad yer (puff) here!!!!!! gasped Kalo

I have good legs but (wheeze) sometimes it would be so much nicer to fly!

Well... that can be arranged said Peripetia and with a snap of her fingers their arms sprouted feathers

A light wind lifted them up off their feet and into the air above.

They soared through the air, and danced in the clouds, so much higher than high you can cast off your worries, its peaceful and quiet, way up here in the sky.

Before long they had soared and dove and swooped the day away.

They landed on top of the hill in the garden and with a snap of her fingers, Peripetia transformed their wings back into arms.

"That was amazing said Kalo, such an incredible day! How ever do you do it?!?!?!"

"Really?" chuckled Peripetia, "Where I come from that's just what we do

"Will I see you tomorrow?", asked Kalo

I'm afraid not. answered Peripetia with a sad smile.

My holiday is over and I have to go back to my home far far away.

So, I'll not see you again, asked Kalo

I'm not sure, replied Peripetia, maybe not.

and after that they sat together quietly staring out at the sea and sky.

Kalo! Its time for dinner, Mom called

"Oh, I have to go" said Kalo.

“Me too“replied Peripetia
 With tears in his eyes Kalo wrapped up Peripetia in the warmest, nicest hug
 anyone has ever given or received
 No matter how long your away he said, I'll be here waiting for you.

And so it goes... Each morning Kalo would walk down the hill to school.
 Each afternoon he would return home to his empty garden swing and daydream
 as he gazed out at the sea and sky.
 As evening approached, the sun set, and mother would call Kalo in for supper, followed by
 bedtime.
 The waves crashed upon the shore at the bottom of the hill and everything was okay
 but sometimes he was a bit lonely.

and days passed...

and weeks passed...

and months...

and spring turned to summer and summer to fall
 The leaves drifted to the ground and covered the garden
 The birds began to leave for winter..

And then one day Kalo climbed the hill returning from school and found to his great surprise
 that the garden was not empty.

There at the top of the hill in her shimmering lavender dress swung Peripetia
 She leapt off the swing. He started to run and they met in the middle with
 the biggest, warmest, nicest hug anyone has ever given or received.

Kalo couldn't get out his words fast enough, his head being so filled with delight.
 I can believe your here! I missed you so much, I thought I wouldn't see you again!
 This is greater than great! I thought you said you couldn't come back...

Peripetia took his hands in hers and answered, “I had to return, I couldn't stay away.
 Something was without you. You have the most incredible way of caring.
 You make me feel more special and happy than I have every felt!
 It's not the same in the place far far away. I donet have friends like you.
 You are amazing!!!!” I donet know how you do it!

Kalo smiled at her and squeezed her hand tight,
 and replied, “Really? “Where I come from that's just what we do.”

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