ENACTING AN ETHIC OF PEDAGOGICAL VOCATION: PURSUING MORAL FORMATION IN RESPONDING TO THE CALL OF SACRIFICE, MEMBERSHIP, CRAFT, MEMORY, & IMAGINATION

by

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the moral formation associated with enacting an ethic of pedagogical vocation. Vocation links social service with personal fulfillment – integrating work and life. I argue that practitioners can intentionally cultivate an array of moral sensibilities and dispositions – a professional conscience – as they apprehend and respond to vocational obligations inherent in the norms and ideals of teaching practice. Following Thomas F. Green, I view these obligations as arising from the moral spheres of sacrifice, membership, craft, tradition, and imagination. I contend that various metaphorical images embody these norms and ideals, and when critically engaged and appropriated, they serve as powerful vehicles for enacting a personal or vocational ethic. Through four chapters, I demonstrate that images of servanthood, moral friendship, mentorship, and covenant possess sufficient depth and complexity to be credible candidates for illuminating the relational and virtuous-normative nature of pedagogy.

Servanthood centrally demands self-indifferent contemplation: attending lovingly and responsively to the particularities of persons and pedagogical tasks. A servant-orientation need not involve moral heroism or joyless self-denial, since the sacrifices of vocational work and the fulfillment which accrues, properly balance each other in a dynamic and proportional equilibrium. Moral friendship is predicated upon the vocational ideal of fostering mutual relations whenever possible. I argue that the mutual influence and transformation of teacher-student friendship is foundational for moral
community and moral formation. *Mentorship*, with its language and sensibility of gift-giving, allows the personal and relational dimensions of pedagogical craft to take center stage against a background of various knowledge bases – even in the grade-school context. In this view, pedagogy demands a range of character virtues and a relational knowledge of young people. *Covenant*, with its features of gift-giving, commitment, and fidelity, emphasizes grateful responsiveness in personal relations. I argue that professional codes and contracts are subordinate to and find their higher purposes and meaning within covenants.

**Keywords:**

teachers professional ethics, vocation, teaching moral and ethical aspects, moral development, imagination moral and ethical aspects
Dedication

Each of us can be grateful for all those ‘circles of sufficiency’ – those relationships of blessing – that we are fortunate enough to enjoy. For my wife, Eileen, my children, Misty, Wes, Julie, and Brad, and my parents, Bob and Betsy. Thank you for your love, and for generously allowing me a time and place apart to labor on this volume. I am grateful for all your understanding, encouragement, and many sacrifices.
Quotation

Whatever is foreseen in joy
Must be lived out from day to day.
Vision held open in the dark
By our ten thousand days of work.
Harvest will fill the barn; for that
The hand must ache, the face must sweat.

And yet no leaf or grain is filled
By work of ours; the field is tilled
And left to grace. That we may reap,
Great work is done while we’re asleep.

When we work well, a Sabbath mood
Rests on our day, and finds it good.

(Berry, 1987, p. 19)

...yet we rejoice... in being blessed

By vision of what human work can make:
A harmony between wood-land and field,
The world as it was given for love’s sake,
The world by love and loving work revealed

As given to our children and our Maker.
In that healed harmony the world is used
But not destroyed, the Giver and the taker
Joined, the taker blessed, in the unabused

Gift that nurtures and protects. Then workday
And Sabbath live together in one place.
Though mortal, incomplete, that harmony
Is our one possibility of peace.

(Berry, 1987, pp. 15-16)
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I would like to acknowledge the collegial support of Peter Grimmett, who encouraged me to pursue doctoral studies and generously offered to serve as my senior supervisor. Thank you for your belief in me, for your patience, and for your many kindnesses. Thank you also to Stephen Campbell and Heesoon Bai for all your efforts on my behalf, and for your most thoughtful and helpful advice. I wish to acknowledge and thank each one of you for your warmth and generosity of spirit.
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Preface

The reader will discover that my work is situated within the rich tradition of scholarship on teaching as a moral and intellectual endeavor. Notable in this tradition are Dwayne Huebner, P. W. Jackson, Thomas F. Green, Paulo Freire, Maxine Greene, Herbert Kohl, David Hansen, David Purpel, Hugh Sckett, Max van Manen, and Hanan Alexander. I have also looked to theorists who specifically consider the place of a pedagogical vocation within this moral and intellectual tradition: David Hansen, David Purpel, William Ayers, David Orr, and Dwayne Huebner.

The broad thesis of my dissertation is that teachers who aspire to enact an ethic of vocation must attend to their own moral formation. In Chapter 2 I detail an ethic grounded in dialogical personalism, or mutualism. It is my belief that morality originates in the encounter with the Other. The presence of the Other demands our attention and recognition - we experience their presence as a call on our lives demanding a response. As I see it, our broad moral project - both as persons and teachers - is to recognize and respond with care and love to the call coming from the Other, and not to see it as a threat or burden, but rather as a gift and grace for mutual growth and wholeness.

This overarching moral perspective of inclusiveness or universality spans all four chapters. At the same time, the reader may notice, especially in the language of sacrifice, love, and covenant, clear allusions the Judeo-Christian ethic. I believe sacrifice, love, and covenant are tremendously powerful concepts for understanding the dynamics of a vocational ethic, and they deserve close examination in spite of their religious
associations. In a work such as this one, it would be difficult for an author to submerge their own assumptions, beliefs, and values — whether they are religious or philosophical. So, my hope is that in the spirit of scholarly hospitality, the reader will remain eager to engage the ideas and arguments concerning moral formation in teacher vocation. My hope too is that as we reflect together we might advance an understanding of how teachers can better respond to oftentimes demanding and difficult professional circumstances.
Foreword

Vocation is about work – passionate, strenuous, yet satisfying work, offered in the service of others. This thesis is concerned with pedagogical vocation. It is directed to those educators who desire to consider anew their pedagogical responsibilities and to reflect upon the personal formation involved in enacting an ethic of vocation. It emerges from a personal journey of inquiry – theoretical and practical – which I trust addresses not only the mind but also the heart.

Educators may recognize in these pages parallels to their own experience, and they may wish to return to those experiences as they contemplate how to more adequately answer the call of young people. Education is by nature emphatically normative, and precisely because of this ethical foundation, teachers must attempt to engage in productive critical reflection upon their practice. I have sought to organize the text so that the reader experiences a sense of continuity and development, yet the various chapters can also be considered separately. I hope they serve to stimulate further insights and spark alternative interpretations – for I have not aimed at novelty, but at truthfulness.

One final comment here. Vito Perrone (1991) and Paulo Freire (1998), both first-rate intellectuals and scholars, each chose to write more intimately and personally to their fellow teachers, calling their works letters. There is something most appealing to me in this effort. And nothing would please me more than if this present work was read by fellow practitioners in the same spirit of fellowship – as an extended letter to a friend.
INTRODUCTION

Teaching is privileged and demanding work. As a moral\(^1\) (and intellectual) endeavor, issues of character or personhood and relationship stand at the very center of professional practice. My thesis is that the extraordinary challenges in every teacher's life require an ongoing cultivation of moral sensibilities or dispositions,\(^2\) for these serve to strengthen pedagogical virtues and pedagogical relationships. However, with the exigencies of dailiness and with oftentimes non-supportive institutional environments, practitioners tend to lose sight of their own need for personal and relational transformation. We often fail to consider ourselves, and our work, with the reverent attentiveness that both deserve. I wish to argue, therefore, that the language and substance of vocation – its meanings and values – can help us recover a sense of the profundity and grandeur in the relationship and transformation that lie at the heart of teaching.

In the balance of this introduction, I will qualify what I mean by vocation, then briefly outline the purpose, premise, and importance of this study, and finally offer a succinct overview of each chapter.

Characterizing Vocation

Although vocation is admittedly an imprecise concept (Emmet, 1958, p. 242), it is widely seen as being enacted precisely where the spheres of personal fulfillment and public service intersect (Ayers, 1993; Buechner, 1993; Emmet, 1958; Hansen, 1994, 1995; Orr, 1994; Palmer, 2000).\(^3\) In a vocation there exists a vital link between personal
engagement, identity, and satisfaction on the one hand, and social meaning, values, and responsibilities on the other. David Orr (1994) suggests that a vocation or calling “has to do with one’s larger purpose, personhood, deepest values, and the gift one wishes to give the world” (p. 22); it emerges from a desire to integrate the various dimensions of one’s life and to channel one’s ambition toward the greater common good (pp. 22-23).

A vocation can be distinguished from a profession on at least two grounds. First, prototypical professionals may fulfill their social responsibilities without necessarily securing a sense of identity and fulfillment, and second, professions, unlike vocations, tend not to forefront the personal rewards accruing from the relational and moral aspects of practice (Hansen, 1995, p. 8). Whereas a professional ethic largely concerns established norms and codes of conduct, a vocational, personal, or covenantal ethic also concerns the social relationships of individuals who operate from desires and motives internal to themselves.

In Dorothy Emmet’s (1958) analysis, this vocational impulse emerges from “qualities internal to the individual” (p. 242), particularly “creative resourcefulness” (p. 244) or “creative originality” (p. 248). It consists of a “personal devotion... in ministering to people’s needs”, it is “also... the urge to venture and devote oneself in working in a first-hand kind of way” (p. 255). Venturing here speaks of a hopeful, adventurous, and outward-looking stance despite uncertainty or unpredictability inherent in the work, and devotion alludes to the persistent desire and firm commitment to bring these positive motivations to life (Hansen, 1995, p. 5). A sense of vocation, then, depends to some degree upon the “conditions” and strengths of one’s “character” and one’s “capabilities” (Emmet, p. 250), as well as one’s own self-knowledge or insight into
these (pp. 252, 265). Similarly, for David Hansen (1995), social ethics and personal ethics merge in "a way of life" which draws upon one's professional knowledge and skills, as well as one's intellectual and moral discernment, emotions, and various qualities of character (p. 116). The work of vocation, then, demands "moral judgment...[and] moral strength, ...it draws upon the very core of [one’s] character" (p. 123); it calls for certain "conditions of heart and mind" (p. 125). It is these "unique dispositions and moral sensibilities" (p. 129), Hansen argues, which allow for the "nuanced, sensitive interpretations” of practice (p. 137).

Purpose

Even as I have delimited and qualified what I mean by vocation, the educational project it points to is complexly demanding, and one which allows for a wide range of interpretations and analyses. The specific purpose of my study is to inquire into the formation of moral dispositions and sensibilities in teacher practitioners as they respond in an intentional way to the call of vocation. It would be desirable, then, have some insight into the various spheres of vocational obligations and the corresponding moral qualities in practitioners these would appear to call for. Hansen (1995) offers some help in this regard for he makes the connection between vocational responsibilities and the moral demands of pedagogical craft (p. 124) and tradition (p. 133). In the end though, I have looked to the more comprehensive analysis of Thomas F. Green (1984, 1999), for he locates the call to moral formation in general as arising not only from the spheres of craft and tradition (memory), but also membership, sacrifice, and imagination. It is Green’s categories of moral conscience, then, that provide the thematic framework for my study – as is evident in the chapter titles.4
Premise

The profound professional challenges of education are implicated in a tangle of complex intellectual, moral, and normative questions. I do not wish to minimize this complexity and the challenges it presents, but I will briefly try to lay out here a few of my basic assumptions. I hold that as a moral endeavor, the obligations of teaching practice need not be imported from without, for they are rooted in the practice itself (Hansen, 1995, p. 124). I also presuppose that without an articulated ethic of service or vocation, teaching cannot be perceived, or perceive itself, as either a moral endeavor or as a profession in the traditional sense (Sockett, 1987, p. 217). I presuppose too that the prevalence of ethically disordered norms in educational institutions does not ultimately excuse practitioners from the cultivation of an ethical personality, for there always remains a degree of voluntariness in activating one's own conscience and in exercising the capacity for reason, judgment, and insight (Melchin, 1998, pp. 68; Jacobs, 2001, pp. 2-3). Thus, given that moral character and relationship are central to a vocational ethic, it is my premise that educators can intentionally develop, strengthen, and sustain an ethic of vocation as they attend to the formation of a range of moral dispositions and sensibilities which pedagogical practice at its best demands.

Thesis

Maxine Greene (1973) insists that,

The more sensitive teachers are to the demands of the process of justification, the more explicit they are about the norms that govern their actions, the more personally engaged they are in assessing surrounding circumstances and potential consequences, the more 'ethical' they will be. (p. 221)
This personal engagement and sensitive, critical insight into one’s moral craft, is, I would argue, central to enacting an ethic of vocation. *It is my thesis that it is within the power of practitioners to intentionally cultivate this sensibility and reflective judgment as they come to better understand and internalize the moral norms and ideals of pedagogical practice.* To this end then, Hansen (2001) suggests “tenacious humility” (p. 167) as the central regulative ideal of “character or personhood” (p. 158) in teaching, whereas I have adopted “love” as the preeminent virtue and the one that more appropriately directs and disciplines a host of related ideals in teaching practice.

In addition, central to my thesis is the argument that certain metaphorical images embody an array of moral norms and ideals, and thereby serve as powerful vehicles for enacting a vocational ethic. I will experiment with the images of *servanthood,* *friendship,* *mentorship,* and *covenant* as I attempt to demonstrate that these metaphors are credible candidates for illuminating the relational and virtuous-normative nature of pedagogical practice. To suggest that these metaphors are appropriate involves making a case for them at “both imagistic and conceptual levels” (MacFague, 1987, p. 32). I will argue that when critically engaged and appropriated, these images operate to energize and direct, as they provide order and meaning to one’s perceptions, and supply imperatives for practice. Moreover, I will attempt to show that these images are both universal and archetypal in character – their enactment is normative under virtually all conditions – thus they offer a basic script that practitioners can use to author their own vocation-stories.

**Why is this Important?**

Recovering the sense of a profession’s deep moral and public obligation is one central reason for seeking to fund an ethic of vocation in teachers and aspiring teachers.
A sense of vocation serves to counter tendencies of careerist self-driveness or job routinization brought on largely by external mandates, policies, and values which—though intended to secure competence and accountability—frequently operate to erode a personal and communal sense of creativity, vitality, and moral agency. But a professional conscience only emerges as an array of moral sensibilities and dispositions are cultivated. Professional codes and contracts are simply inadequate instruments for honoring the full scope of professional obligation in the helping professions such as teaching, which serve unpredictable needs. Thus, I am arguing that code and contract must remain subordinate to a covenantal/vocational ethic that illuminates the context of mutual need, gift, and indebtedness that properly exists in personal relations. Of course, an ethic of vocation is important for a host of other reasons—personal and professional—but the thrust of this thesis seeks to move practitioners beyond mere recognition of its value, and onto the difficult work of thoughtfully enacting this ethic through personal moral formation in everyday practice.

Organization

In chapter 1, The Call of Sacrifice, I argue that vocation is misconstrued as moral heroism, joyless self-denial, or self-diminishing sacrifice—these, in fact, typically spawn a host of pathological tendencies. I propose instead that the sacrifices that are a part of vocational practice, and the fulfillment which accrues, properly balance each other in an equilibrium that is both proportional and dynamic. This requires that the discipline entailed in the self-sacrifice of committed work be set within the larger search for deeper, integrating values, meanings, and ideals in one's life. Central to this self-discipline, then, is the cultivation of a contemplative stance in normative practice, for this disciplines us
into attending lovingly and responsively to the particularities of the persons and tasks around us, while also freeing up a space that allows us to become detached from self-aggrandizing impulses.

The foundational thesis of chapter 2, *The Call of Membership*, is that the personalist (or mutual) model of human community – wherein persons by intention and love seek the fulfillment of the Other – is a vocational ideal. In this view, the service-orientation of vocation, grounded in an overarching intention to foster mutuality, properly serves as the interpretive center for pedagogical practice. I argue that since moral friendship is the most fully realized expression of mutual relations, teacher-student friendship serves as the basis for both moral community and moral formation. I contend, then, that students ought to be viewed as co-participants in the moral life. This implies, therefore, that critical and honest insight into the nature of our personal relations is required.

In chapter 3, *The Call of Craft*, I move from a broad consideration of conscience of craft, and technical and moral orientations, to more specific issues of loving students as persons, pedagogical relationship and virtues, gift-giving in mentoring relations, and mentorship as an image of pedagogical relation. I argue that the moral dimension of craft is far more profound than that suggested by a care for doing work skillfully and one’s own reflexive capacity to make judgments concerning this. I maintain that, unlike many professions, teaching is not characterized by widely accepted norms of practice that can be looked to for standards of excellence in performance. Pedagogical craft is more idiosyncratic, its personal and relational dimensions properly take center stage, against a background of various knowledge bases. In this view, pedagogy demands a range of
character virtues, as well as a relational knowledge of young people – not only their attitudes and perspectives on the world, but also the inner life and uniqueness as a person. Finally, I advance the claim that the concept and image of mentoring, with its language and sensibility of gift-exchange, characteristically values these personal and relational dimensions, and is appropriate to the grade-school teacher-student context.

In the first half of the fourth chapter, *The Call of Memory and Imagination*, I pick up the theme of gift-giving in pedagogical relations and set it within the wider framework of covenantal relations and traditions which draw upon a biblical understanding of covenant. Then, I briefly explore hospitality as a metaphor for fashioning covenanted classrooms. I go on to argue that professional codes and contracts are subordinate to and find their higher purposes and meaning within covenants. In the second half of the chapter I present a more thoroughgoing case for the formative value of pedagogical images in shaping the moral imagination of practitioners. Next, I go on to argue that a sense of vocation cannot be restricted to the classroom context, but demands imaginative social critique – and prophetic traditions offer valuable resources for this endeavor. In the final section, I highlight the importance of imagination in the quest for self-transcendence – which I take to be the pursuit of vocation writ large.

Throughout the analysis in chapters one through four, a number of related implications and conclusions emerge. In the conclusion of the thesis, then, I pull these together, and highlight the theoretical and pedagogical contributions I have made along the way.
CHAPTER ONE
THE CALL OF SACRIFICE

There are few places where virtue plainly shines: great art, humble people who serve others.

- Iris Murdoch

Self-Sacrifice and Self-Fulfillment in Vocation

For men and women who take on the challenges of significant public service, such as teaching, the continual demands on self can be exacting and strenuous. And yet, I want to argue that wherever the work is tackled with a sense of vocation, these individuals experience an enduring sense of satisfaction, meaning, and identity that buoys them up and sustains them in their labors. I share the premise that self-sacrifice and self-fulfillment operate as fundamental and inseparable constituents of vocation (Ayers, 1993; Buechner, 1993; Emmet, 1958; Hansen, 1994, 1995; Orr, 1994; Palmer, 2000). Not only are they indissolubly linked, I would further posit that they function, metaphorically, as the twin pillars upon which the concept of vocation rests. For the theorist then, it would appear impossible to inquire into the nature of this sacrifice of self-interest -- as I have sought to in this chapter -- without also probing the nature of the accompanying vocational fulfillment. Consequently, throughout the analysis here, these two conceptions unavoidably interweave.
Moreover, underlying the entire discussion is my thesis that sacrifice and fulfillment must dynamically balance each other in the vocational life of an individual. I contend that it is profitable to view this dynamic equilibrium as a guiding principle or maxim – one that evidently has not received its due attention either in the literatures on 'vocation' or those on 'service'. To his credit, David Hansen (1995) does direct us, albeit briefly, to the mutuality of these criteria with his particularly fitting image of "symbiosis" (p. 126). Symbiosis speaks of more than an intimacy of association, for it also highlights the interdependence of the relationship between sacrifice and fulfillment. And yet, it would appear that what has not been explored is the essential proportionality and dynamism of this relationship. In the first half of this chapter, I seek to elucidate the nature of this relationship. For instance, I demonstrate that over-valuation of one criterion or the other inevitably diminishes the concept of vocation, even to the point of ruining it utterly. I should emphasize here that this principle of dynamic equilibrium undergirds my entire volume, and it will be evident as a recurring theme.

To begin to consider some issues concerning self-sacrifice, it is appropriate to have in view a sense of the challenging nature of teachers' work. Lee Shulman (1983/2004) articulates such a perspective, one that also offers us an opening into related topics:

The impossibility of teaching in the best of times results from the confluence of multiple competing role demands on the teacher. She must be individual tutor, distributor of scarce resources among many pupils, curriculum completer, and school team member. She is also a publicly employed representative of a society obligated to be mindful of its own unequal distribution of power and opportunity. (p. 153)
He also reminds us in his essay that teachers operate in bureaucracies – they do not enjoy the freedom of prototypical professionals – so their professional judgment and choices are constrained by innumerable policies, directives, mandates, standards, and expectations.

In Shulman's view, these conditions of teaching with their attendant frustrations and tensions “foster burnout and the even more insidious charring that slowly eats away at a teacher in the performance of her duties” (p. 157). Given this assessment, it is not surprising that he calls for reforms which center on both altering the structural conditions of teaching and on reinvesting in the continuing professional development of teachers. On the surface, such correctives appear to be fitting ones, and yet Shulman appears to overlook the fact that the work, demanding as it is, may be intrinsically fulfilling – or that this might be a fundamental reason why the vast majority of effective, committed practitioners never experience burnout, and never will.\(^2\)

Central to his essay is the paradoxical thesis that precisely those characteristics that render teaching impossible also present it with the potential to transcend the apparent limitations of the job and make it professionally creative and autonomous. That is, the autonomy intrinsic to teaching is achieved as a function of its multiple competing and conflicting obligations, not in spite of them. (Shulman, 1983/2004, p. 151)

This claim is a curious one first of all because Shulman appears to want it both ways: on the one hand he recognizes that teachers exercise limited independence compared with other professionals (p. 144), yet on the other, he expects teachers by virtue of their autonomy of judgment, creativity, and decision-making to somehow surmount the “impossible” demands of the work (p. 157). Secondly, Shulman offers up little to
support the claim itself, leaving one wondering whether autonomy alone is a candidate of sufficient stature to deliver the goods on teaching excellence and teacher retention – particularly since a personal or vocational ethic does not figure large in his conception of autonomy. The absence such an ethic is most evident at the close of his essay. For at just the point that he appears to side with Fenstermacher and Amarel (1983) – whose work stresses the importance of teachers' own personal values and commitments as it relates to their exercise of professional autonomy – Shulman immediately reverts to equating autonomy solely with professional choice and judgment, stripped of a personal ethic.

It is noteworthy too that Shulman’s (1983/2004) remarks range beyond the “impossible” challenges of teaching “in the best of times”, to the concrete difficulties of contemporary conditions in teaching. It is his contention that the current “character of the work” (p. 160) and its accompanying satisfactions are insufficient to “attract and hold” the “intelligent, moral, well-educated” people the profession requires, consequently he urges that “we will have to make teaching a more satisfying, stimulating, and rewarding career....” (p. 157). I would argue, however, that such an analysis places undue emphasis on external rewards and correspondingly minimizes the significance of intrinsic fulfillment that accompanies the work of teaching. He fails to fully appreciate that a teacher response, grounded in a service-orientation, allows innumerable practitioners to thrive amidst difficult conditions. In addition, his analysis here would have us forget that teaching is an ancient practice, one that has long been satisfying, stimulating, and rewarding in its own right, and that careerism is by comparison a relatively self-interested newcomer.
Like Shulmann (p. 160), Hansen (1995) understands that the person of the teacher is key to improving our schools, however it is not teacher-as-professional possessing a sense of autonomy that animates his thinking, but rather it is teacher-as-practitioner possessing a sense of vocation. He contends that it is precisely because of the complex and demanding nature of the work, its relational aspects, its pull on one's emotions, mind, and heart, that the concept and language of vocation are especially appropriate. Like Huebner (1966/1999; 1993/1999), Hansen maintains that technocratic and occupational languages fail to do justice to the deeply personal aspects of teaching or the place of the person who gives form and life to the role (p. 114). His comments concerning the four practitioners documented in his long-term study are revealing in this regard. These individuals conducted themselves "as if teaching was more a way of life than a task that calls on minimal aspects of persons they are"; their personal fulfillment derived from the "fact that they do bring so much of themselves to bear while on the job" (1995, p. 116). Indeed, practice would not be vocation if teachers kept the work at arms' length, removed from their sense of identity – though, as we shall see, it requires that they have far more in view than their own self-satisfaction (p. 3). This is not to suggest that a sense of service can be invoked rationally or willed into existence, for it is a disposition that takes shape over time as one labors to better appreciate what the work entails and to perform it increasingly well (p. 4).

Hansen's (1995) analysis also suggests that without an inner motive to serve, educators open themselves up to a number of temptations which operate to compromise their practice, such as mechanically 'covering' the curriculum, or accepting low expectations for students, or shelving public expectations for one's own personal
preferences (p. 151). Vocation, he insists, calls upon teachers to more fully realize the inherent values in the work, and so "to be active, imaginative, and responsive" in seeking to fulfill its demands (p. 151). Furthermore, the larger ideal is to apprehend in the work "an enlarged sense of human possibility" (p. 154), one tied up with "the very meaning of one's life" (p. 156). More recently, Chris Higgins (2003) has similarly argued that practice should be seen as a sphere for self-cultivation, though as we shall see shortly, his perspective differs sharply from Hansen's in important ways. In the remainder of this first half of the chapter I will probe a number of questions relating to the nature of self-sacrifice and fulfillment: What are some of the psychological hazards to self that accompany sacrificial service? Is devotion or self-abnegation or even moral heroism appropriate? How do sacrifice and fulfillment operate in a relationship of dynamic equilibrium? At what point does funding self-understanding and self-affirmation become a rationale for giving primacy to self-fulfillment? What does it mean to have a critical view of the concept of vocation, and what are some traditions of criticism that we can look to?

It should be stressed here at the outset, that while a service-orientation remains explicit and prominent throughout this chapter, it is, I would urge, also important to perceive the implicit and underlying pedagogical images of servant and servanthood in the analysis.

**Some Psychological Hazards of Sacrificial Service**

Psychiatrist, author, and activist, Robert Coles (1993) has spent much of his life documenting the phenomenology of volunteer service: exploring its gamut of activities, impulses, and motivations, searching out underlying rationales and values, cataloguing
the achievements as well as the vicissitudes, missteps, and defeats. It is because he has probed both the factors that serve to sustain a commitment to service as well as those which undermine this passion, that his insights are particularly relevant to our present discussion.

Some of Coles's early work centered on the psychological distress of certain civil rights activists, whose exhaustion, depression, or sense of futility stemmed largely from the threats, brutality, or incarceration they had experienced. More recently, he has documented that even in comparatively comfortable communities—such as nursing homes or mental hospitals where volunteers serve without opposition or harassment—"a measure of hesitation, of tiredness, of relative apathy can begin to take root" (p. 124). Energetic, enthusiastic, and generous individuals fired up with altruistic ideals can—given various intransigent conditions such as under-staffing, mediocre food, or uncaring staff—come to find the work wearisome and draining. Worse, this sensibility can harden into a kind of cynicism—a doubtfulness about people and their possibilities or about altering the conditions and the structures in which these people find themselves. Coles traces a common though not inevitable progression of subsequent emotions or phases, together with their corrosive effects: cynicism often spawns anger, which can lead to self-righteousness or arrogance, then to despair, and ultimately to the depression of burnout (p. 143).

A commitment to service, in Coles's view, typically spawns a mixture of satisfactions to relish, and hazards to suffer—such is true of life itself. He therefore counsels that we use the passing low points in a life of service to become more reflective and realistic over the long haul. Parker Palmer (2000, p. 29) also warns us that work,
career, scholarship, or similar pursuits lying outside our genuine interests and capabilities can create depression, anger, fear, and a host of other pathologies. Higgins (2003) enumerates many of these same hazards of service in the teaching profession, and in the remainder of this section, we will examine his views on how and why these pathologies arise and what the corrective might be, before moving on to critique the philosophical basis of his anti-vocational ethic.

Higgins regards the service-orientation itself as problematic, for in giving primacy to students' needs and opportunities, desires and ambitions, teachers cheat themselves out of their own. Such suppression or deferral, he argues, is unhealthy – manifesting itself in various unwholesome guises such as regret, bitterness, or anger. In fact, he posits that helping students to flourish is only a weakly indirect, and a temporarily intrinsic reward – one lying outside a teacher's own aspirations, strivings, or projects.

In maintaining that "it is precisely because the work is selfless that it cannot be sustained" (p. 148), and in suggesting that teaching is an impossible profession – one that compels educators to adopt a tragic vision of practice (p. 151) – Higgins begins to stake out a position so extreme as to not even admit consideration of correctives to psychological hazards of practice. He imagines that the work itself does not allow for sufficiently stimulating or rejuvenating experiences: "After years of ascetic service, one tends to become dried out, dessicated" (p. 153). Further, he supposes that if exhaustion and thirst for personal development does not drive practitioners out of the profession, then altruistic idealism will, subtly though inevitably, metamorphose along pathogenic lines. Teachers come to imagine an inverse relationship existing between other-centeredness and self-stultification, or, in attempting "to meet their own needs vicariously..."
through their teaching, [they] betray the moral core of teaching” (p. 151). Following Nietzsche, Higgins holds that eventually what develops is a perverse “egotistic self-mortification”, “a bizarre form of vanity in which one demands honor precisely for how little is left of oneself” (pp. 151, 150).

Although there can be no denying the psychological pitfalls of practice, such a fatalistic progression is pessimistic in the extreme. True, one can find some teachers who – perhaps innocently, or through a misguided survival mechanism – come to play dramatic, larger-than-life characters or roles in order to engage their students. And for a few, what often begins as a ploy to gain attention, unfortunately carries over into private life as an inflated personality – a self which feels forever under-recognized. For other practitioners, there may develop “a kind of arrogance that comes from doing impossible work. You see it,” comments educator Robert Inchausti (1993), “in urban emergency room doctors and nurses, Third World missionaries, and inner city cops and social workers. It is a vanity born of self-sacrifice” (p. 62). Theirs is work that few people want to do, or are capable of doing. Inchausti has experienced firsthand the aliveness of being immersed in the action of such vital and demanding work – aliveness for him that has felt immensely satisfying, even glorious, but also troubling at times. Troubling because he has discerned that, while his teaching has served as an invigorating source of meaning and identity, these legitimate feelings have on occasion fueled in him illusions of self-importance and self-righteousness.

Vocational service, particularly when uncritically engaged in, may well lead to pathologies of various sorts or even to burnout – though these are neither as common nor as inevitable as Higgins would have us believe. In fact, traditions of service – both
sacred and secular – have long been understood as a primary source of the sort of self-development that Higgins purports to advance (pp. 152-53). His stress on good teaching as requiring “self-cultivation rather than self-sacrifice” (p. 131) may be a timely word for certain practitioners who have not achieved a balance between the two, however self-cultivation need not rule out self-sacrifice. Interestingly, at one point Higgins raises this very possibility of a “middle ground” (p. 146) between the two, but in his subsequent analysis he comes to view the positions as mutually exclusive (p. 148). Interestingly too is the fact that although he is familiar with Hansen’s work, and cites conversations with him (p. 154), he elects not to mention Hansen’s substantial work on vocation with its integration of self-fulfillment and service.

It is Higgins’s philosophy that altruistic service in teaching forecloses on what he regards as the legitimate aspirations of teachers for self-cultivation in practice. He roots his claim in ethics: because ethics broadly concerns itself with what we value, an ethics of teaching can properly concern itself with “why the activity of teaching is worthwhile to the teacher” (p. 134, italics in original). Apparently taking his cue from Charles Taylor and Alasdair MacIntyre (p. 147) (or possibly even Maxine Greene), he contends that “teaching is itself a project for a teacher” (p. 135), and so it is appropriate “to ask what teachers as individuals in search of a good life want, need, and derive from their practice, and to view such questions as ethical in nature” (p. 137). Such an instrumental and self-seeking conception of project contrasts markedly from Greene’s (2001) expansive and communal one – she urges teachers to remain wideawake to life, and to engage in a broad epistemological and ontological project of self-transcendence in order to bring this maturity of self to bear in their practice, not the other way around. His view
also contrasts with R.S. Peters (1979) who argues that self-realization does not primarily involve a self-conscious search, since persons who achieve some kind of self-fulfillment are usually absorbed in various activities and duties with which they identify themselves wholeheartedly without much thought to realizing themselves. (p. 479)

Higgins attempts to make the case that the altruism of service cannot properly serve as an ethical ideal because, in being so other-centered, identity formation is impoverished to the extent that one's bundle of projects and strivings is forestalled (p. 142). Of course, such a view also ignores the multitude of practitioners possessing flourishing, multifaceted identities and who are demonstrably service-oriented. To his credit, Higgins's impulse to move teachers to see their aspirations for self-development as arising from within their practice is a most valuable and timely one, it is unfortunate that he perceives altruistic ideals as inherently conflicting with this enterprise.

Patricia Carini (2001) fully grasps the essence of vocation without identifying it by name: it is "experiencing the fulfilling satisfaction from work well done – work of benefit to ourselves and to others" (p. 100). Importantly, she resists both sentimentality and triumphalism by situating work within the stark reality and vulnerability of our lives: our moments of doubt, disappointment, and falling back. She refuses to shy away from who we know ourselves to be at times: "vulnerable to loss and grief, vulnerable to shame and humiliation and pride, vulnerable to the extremes of our own passions, vulnerable to self-satisfaction and greed" (p. 100). I would argue, then, that any attempt to portray the life of vocation differently would be to reduce the complexity and mystery of being human.
Moral Heroism or the Dynamic Equilibrium of Sacrifice-Fulfillment

While Higgins affirms, at least in principle, that student development must be a defining concern of teachers, he is critical of the premise “that we think more or better about our students’ interests when we look beyond... our own interests” (p. 151). One concern he raises here is that teachers may tend to live vicariously through their students, as for example when they begin to regard them as potential disciples. Resisting such vicarious entanglements, he argues requires “not obliviousness to self”, but a reflexiveness that yields “self-knowledge” (p. 152).

Several things might be said very briefly in response here. First, typically all of us do think more and better about others when we look beyond our own interests – such a premise is exceedingly difficult to challenge. In fact, living this out is the basis for vibrant, caring communities; its perversions lead to the sort of co-dependent pathologies he appears so concerned about. And although the demands of practice regularly require us to bracket our self-interest, this does not relieve us from the necessary and difficult work of looking inward. Margret Buchmann (1986), contra Higgins, defends the argument that “self-realization in teaching is not a good in itself, but only insofar as pursuing self-realization leads to appropriate student learning” (p. 538). My premise, then, is that there is demanded here both an obliviousness to self and the cultivation of self-knowledge. Moreover, in some respects such knowledge is cultivated communally, emerging intersubjectively in relationships built upon mutual trust.

Nonetheless, in accepting the premise that Higgins seeks to reject, we are compelled to grapple with the issue of the scope to which practitioners ought to look beyond their own interests. Indeed, Emmet (1958) suggests that “the ethical questions of
vocation in what may be their most testing form” relate to “the kinds of sacrifice that may be justified” in one’s personal life “for the claims of one’s work” (pp. 252, 262). To what extent should the sacrifice of self-interest extend to the realm of devotion, self-denial, or moral heroism?

A wide range of responses to this question in the literature can be uncovered and critiqued, however I believe this to be a questionable approach, essentially because the theoretical arguments involved may be inhospitable to the concept of vocation itself, as it has been articulated at the beginning of this chapter. It is not inherently problematic that theorists fashion their claims from a variety of roots: theological (Schuurman, 2004; Götz, 1988; Barth, 1961), virtue-based (Slote, 2001), civic ethics (Strike, 2003) and so forth, or some combination of these. Quite the opposite, the breadth and depth offered by a multidisciplinary understanding of vocation ought to be welcomed. The difficulty as I see it is that such claims are flawed from the start if they lack insight into the balanced and dynamic relationship between self-sacrifice and self-fulfillment, which I contend, properly defines vocation. Let me briefly illustrate using the position of Kenneth Strike as I elaborate upon this maxim of dynamic equilibrium, before returning to our question of the scope of practitioner self-sacrifice.

Strike discerns three broad categories of civic norms that he interprets in terms of a three-fold ethics of teaching, comprised of the regulatory, the civic education, and the enabling education views. In his enabling view of the place of ethical conceptions in education, he holds that youngsters require emotionally secure environments “where they are... valued, cared for, and even loved,” in order to foster their growth and risk-taking (p. 521). However, Strike worries that his position might be construed as suggesting an
unduly expansive vision of the role of teacher, one that moves an ethics of teaching “in the direction of a vocation” (p. 521). His presupposition is that a sense of vocation is apt to become “all-consuming”, one “that dominates the whole of life,” and so like David Carr (2000), he urges that in “the modern world” we should view teaching as a profession, not a vocation (p. 521). Professionals can still be expected to act as moral role models, albeit limited ones: exemplars of the excellences and virtues associated with their subjects, and exemplars of the prevailing civic ethic.

It is noteworthy that Strike characterizes vocation as an outmoded concept, perhaps implying a throwback to religious orders in which vocation did make demands upon the whole of life. Clearly, he is not promoting moral heroism of any sort; his emphasis is on professional integrity, and a delimited one at that. And even where he alludes to “one’s moral commitments and ... character,” Strike narrowly conceives that “[m]astery of a practice shapes character” (p. 518), and not the reverse, that character shapes mastery of one’s practice. All this leaves one wondering whether an expanded ethics of teaching would necessarily erode the distinction between teachers’ role and their private life as he fears, or encroach upon the “educational functions of family, church, and community” (p. 512). To teach with a sense of vocation, I would counter, is not equivalent to importing one’s personal moral views into the classroom in the manner he implies. Rather, practitioners allow the work itself to call upon their moral judgment, strength, and goodness – upon the depths of their character as persons. Youngsters must be “valued, cared for, and even loved” as Strike insists, however I want to argue that one does not value, care for and love others at the margins of one’s being, but at one’s core. This desire to venture and devote oneself in service is given form and life in a social
practice (Emmet, 1958). For while social practices such as teaching possess their own integrity, identities, and traditions, these practices are enlivened by individuals who bring their own unique selves and distinct sense of service (Hansen, 1995). Langdon Gilkey perceives that the individuals willing to expend themselves on behalf of others to the greatest degree tend to be those "whose sense of calling or vocation was broad enough and deep enough that the calling could adapt to the most chaotic disruptions" (Langerak, 1994, p. 99).

So long as the measure of one's service corresponds to the degree of fulfillment garnered, vocation remains healthy and vital. Moreover, we affirmed at the outset that the particular level of service and corresponding satisfaction is peculiar to an individual: the two must dynamically balance each other in the vocational life of an individual. Thus, what one individual might regard as excessive or even heroic efforts, another may take in stride as the norm. We must recognize though that both these individuals may in fact bring to their work a legitimate sense of vocation – however it is unlikely that the first is realizing the same degree of fulfillment as that achieved by the second. Furthermore, because the extent of sacrifice and the nature of the internal rewards is such an individual matter, no one can delineate in advance – as Strike evidently does – a circumscribed vision for the role of a practitioner. And this is the central point of the illustration. Strike's ethics of teaching is in this respect irredeemably flawed since it is premised on grounds that do not allow sufficient room for a personal ethic – a vocational ethic.5 Correspondingly, while we might canvass the position of any number of theorists on teacher self-sacrifice (or a host of relevant issues), this may be of limited value if they argue from a stance that excludes or opposes a vocational ethic.
My thesis of the dynamic equilibrium between sacrifice and fulfillment offers a corrective even for theorists like Parker Palmer, who, as we shall see, affirm the sacrifice-fulfillment duality but come down more heavily on one side. For as I indicated at the outset, I see these two as the twin supports upon which the concept of vocation rests—elevating one criterion or the other distorts and weakens the entire structure. In fact, I believe it may be more accurate to conceive the sacrifice-fulfillment dynamic as a symmetry, rather than as a duality. In general, any system possesses a dynamic equilibrium if it maintains an internal balance in spite of changing forces or conditions. Characteristically, if forces act to diminish (or enlarge) one constituent, then other interconnected constituents attenuate (or increase) accordingly to re-establish a balance. Now this may sound overly mechanical given that the relationship in view is an organic one, and yet, this same principle extends to systems of negative feedback found at many levels of biological and ecological systems.

One might imagine servant-teachers who, after several years of practice, become more fully attuned to the demands inherent in the work itself: more sensitive to the contours of tasks and requirements, more alert to the particularities of character and relationship. And as they reflect upon their current efforts, they sense the potential to more fully occupy their role, to bring more of themselves to bear. This principle of dynamic equilibrium would suggest that as they venture to more fully devote themselves in particular aspects of their work with students, they would derive correspondingly deeper and more enduring satisfactions. Hansen (1999) captures this notion, arguing that as educators give themselves over to the terms of the practice, working with diligent commitment, they
open the door to the fulfillment and satisfaction that can accompany helping students learn and grow. And that fulfillment can motivate teachers to greater heights of effort and imagination, thereby positioning them for that much deeper sense of internal reward from teaching. …Internal rewards are potentially unlimited… (pp. 219, 218)

Nel Noddings (1984) appears to appreciate something of this dynamic as well, for she links a practitioner’s commitment (or sacrifice) to an ethic or ideal of care with a “receptive consciousness” of joy (or fulfillment): “joy in relatedness… encourages growth in the ethical ideal. Our joy enhances both the ideal and our commitment to it” (pp. 147, 132).

Now, if for our imaginary teachers these satisfactions were not forthcoming, if say they were experiencing greater anxiety or weariness, then one need not reject the maxim but rather inquire into the nature of their self-sacrifice. For example, perhaps in venturing to relate more holistically with students outside of class a teacher offered to coach a school team. However, if sufficient giftedness in the sport was lacking, then these extra efforts, while well-meaning, may yield negative results for the team and actually generate student resentment and corresponding feelings of anxiousness on the teacher’s part. Or, perhaps the teacher was a gifted coach, one valued by the team and the school community, but all the extra hours devoted to team practices, games, and road trips translated into less time spent with family. It is actually this sacrifice of family time – perhaps not fully appreciated in advance – that turns out to be the source of the frustration and dissatisfaction, not the service itself.

These brief examples are meant to be illustrative – they do not capture neither the psychological complexity nor the moral depth that regularly informs the choices we undertake. Similarly, we should not presume that simply because the ideals of service are
altruistic ones, that individuals can dispense with the sort of honest and probing self-scrutiny that we alluded to earlier. We must remain skeptical about our own motives, about the denials and reaction-formations, the projections and identifications, that make mental life so topsy-turvy, and convert envies, rivalries, fears, rages, and lusts, into what seem to be quite the opposite. (Coles, 1993, p. 202)

More generally, practitioners with a sense of vocation must remain vigilant lest they adopt an uncritical attitude around the very ideals of service that evidently matter to them. As Noddings (1984, p. 108) puts it, “self-deception has the potential to destroy the ethical ideal” itself – and I will say more about this in due course.

Clearly, I have not been arguing for moral heroism here, indeed, heroism is often an immature aspiration. This perspective is evident in Karl Barth’s (1936/1961) analysis of vocation:

Neither the people among whom we have to work, nor things, relations and problems in their everyday form, are waiting for the man [sic] who is ready to sacrifice himself for them with some heroism and excitement. On the contrary, men [sic] want to be seen and understood as they are. They want to be considered in their situation and from their own point of view, and addressed and treated as such. (p. 642)

This lure to heroism might be distinguished from a genuine responsiveness to the call for self-sacrifice – a call that does not violate the dynamic sacrifice-fulfillment balance. For instance, Robert Welker (1992, p. 123) finds in the sweep and grandeur of Maxine Greene’s and Henry Giroux’s writing something of a heroic demand placed on educators – a compelling call for critical, reflexive, and moral intelligence and agency. Greene (1996) herself insists: “A kind of heroism is demanded of the principled teacher eager to initiate students into principled decision making and a rational way of life” (p. 203).
Yet, it would appear here that Greene wishes only to emphasize the strenuous nature of this way of life; she is not intending to promote a self-sacrifice that is unhealthy.

Furthermore, Barth's words alert us to the temptation to be motivated by egoism—by a desire to be seen as heroes in the eyes of others, rather than to serve others thoughtfully and responsively. Robert Inchausti (1993), like Barth, seeks to restrain this vain lure to heroism by reminding us that: "The real achievements in life come after the heroics, and they are expressed in service and humility" (p. 115, italics in original).

Self-Affirmation and the Over-Valuation of Self-Fulfillment

There is a common and relatively recent misconception that while a job simply supplies a paycheck, a vocation offers individuals opportunities for self-fulfillment. Historically, one finds that vocation centered on the responsibilities and obligations that attended an individual's various roles in society; it was understood that fulfillment may emerge from self-sacrifice, but it was viewed as a mistake to aim for it directly (Schuurman, 2004, p. 118; Barth, 1936/1961, p. 642). As we have seen, the wisdom of this historical perspective is dismissed by Higgins who calls practitioners to cast off the burdens of duty and aim at self-fulfillment directly. Parker Palmer (2000) adopts a similar though much less extreme position— one evidently formed in reaction to the Protestant notion of vocation with its stress upon transcendent ideals. In his personal experience, he believes these ideals exerted undue demands, for in not adequately affirming his "selfhood", they fueled feelings of inadequacy and guilt (p. 10). Consequently, he holds that the voice of vocation is not that of conscience but of rational self-determination (1998, p. 31); self-care as a way to service necessarily takes precedence over the service itself (2000, p. 17).
It needs to be pointed out that Palmer's articulation of vocation is a careful, sensitive one deserving of our attention. He is not remiss to argue for the importance of living an integrated life, for a proper understanding of one's own limitations, or for engaging in pursuits congruent with one's capabilities (pp. 30, 43, 39, 11). He does well to remind us that burnout arises when practitioners seek to give what they do not possess, or presume to be that which they are not, or ignore their own limitations (p. 49). Without question, vocations ought to answer our need for responsibilities proportioned to our capacities or giftedness. Indeed he might have gone further. I want to argue that, in the biblical tradition – to which Palmer alludes but appears at times to misunderstand – self-understanding is central to the discernment of one's strengths and weaknesses, and it operates together with the insights contributed by one's community. Furthermore, it is only by developing an honest, critical appraisal of our own capacities and limitations – and the limits of our callings – that we can be freed up from a sense of false guilt. Additionally, it should be emphasized that a prudent and legitimate self-love does in fact issue from a proper sense of our own worth. This I think is why Douglas Schuurman (2004, p. 93) can posit that any principle of self-sacrifice should take a strong, though not an absolute priority, over self-interest; for if granted absolute priority, any particular endeavor can become all-consuming – dominating the other spheres of life in the time, energy, and care devoted to it.

Having said this, the issue of balance or proportionality still remains. My argument is that by subtly privileging self-fulfillment over the self-sacrifice of service, the very conception of vocation Palmer seeks to advance is weakened. Consider, for example, his assertion that what is done for self is ultimately done to serve others (p. 71).
He gives no hint here that self-care or self-affirmation might become self-serving, or that this care and affirmation might be qualitatively different when directed outward to others. Consider too his argument that one's limitations and liabilities should be viewed as "the inevitable trade-off for a particular strength" (p. 52) – such is not always, or even usually, the case. And the personal illustration he offers is not without its troubling features: claiming his strength as a teacher resides in dialogue and interaction, he believes he "will never be a good teacher for students who refuse to dance [fail to interact]," and, this belief he has "embrac[ed]... as part of himself" (p. 53). However, such a view could be interpreted as a kind of rigidity and resignation, a lack of desire to grow and to develop other pedagogical strategies. Palmer remains quite satisfied to simply continue to invite interaction, for he is apparently resigned to a particular pedagogy that he sees as resonating with his giftedness.

Also problematic is his critique of transcendent moral ideals, for it is a criticism not accompanied by a corresponding appreciation of their value – as we find for example, in Hansen's (2001) analysis. "The God I know," writes Palmer (2000), "does not ask us to conform to some abstract norm for the ideal self. ... Moral norms are not something we have to stretch for" (p. 50). Surely, as a sociologist he must recognize that ideals or abstract norms are embedded in the everyday social norms of institutions, relationships, professions, and the like, and as such they exercise a hold upon each of us. Moreover, his God may well be encouraging us, not to slavishly conform to particular ideals, but to willingly pursue them, to strive after them, in the very journey of self that Palmer seeks to articulate (p. 47). Elsewhere he claims, "The teacher within is not the voice of conscience but of identity and integrity," this inner teacher empowers us to live "not by
external norms but by reasoned and reflective self-determination” (1998, p. 31). And yet, the distinction or opposition he seeks to establish here simply cannot stand. For as Thomas Green (1999) reminds us, conscience itself entails a reasoned reflectiveness, and, while simply adhering to external norms is mere socialization or ‘weak normation,’ internalizing them issues in the 'strong normation' around which identity and integrity are fashioned. Ideals themselves cannot be blamed for generating pathologies of service, as Palmer suggests, rather these arise out of an inadequate response to ideals. Certainly, as he indicates and as we have seen, such pathologies may be linked with onerous institutional constraints – constraints that he views as compromising the integrity and identity of his authentic selfhood (1998, p. 167f). But his solution – reminiscent of Jacques Ellul's (1972) – to locate one's “center” (p.167) outside of institutional life, defeats the very essence of vocation which is to allow the work to call upon the depths of one's self, to draw out the best one can offer in public service – service which for most teachers is offered within institutions.

Maxine Greene (1987) warns that as individuals withdraw into their own spaces of self-concern, the gap between public and private worlds widens, and the public space diminishes. She cautions that in such withdrawal, individuals tend to succumb to “a kind of rootless, weightless freedom... of... irresponsibility” and concomitantly they become less vigilant in refusing “kitsch” – metaphysically understood as that which is unacceptable in human existence (p. 178). Far too many practitioners come to view the bureaucratized structures and processes of schooling as natural and immutable – but even for those like Parker Palmer who reject the system's apparent inexorability, this should not “mean escaping it and seeking liberation in private life” (p. 185). For in distancing
themselves, teachers tend to give up on interrogation, critique, and resistance — activities central to self-agency and ongoing school reform. This flight from the public world — where open, diverse discourse seeks to fashion and defend what can be held in common — has implications not only for institutional renewal, but also for the self. Both Roberto Unger (1975, p. 291) and Michael Novak (1989, p. 69) remind us that the ideal of self, or self-transcendence, can never be realized solely in private, for it is an actualization dependent upon society. "To cut the tie that links the person as self-in-the making, a consciousness reaching toward what is not yet, to the actualities of the social world is to automatize the self" (Greene, p. 185). Yet most teachers, in Greene's view, become passive before the institutional kitsch of schools, and uncertain or hesitant when it comes to living out full and vital human relationships. Many come to experience a "divided consciousness" (p. 180), for (as Frances Bolin, 1987b, also observes), complying with the demands of technical efficiency is frequently at odds with personal values and beliefs.

How different this is from the call of vocation that beckons us to search for deeper, integrating values and meanings; it is a quest carried on jointly with colleagues, and with students and their families (Huebner, 1987/1999). Our particular school communities are the places where we are called to live our values openly, intentionally, and responsibly, while being ever alert to our own fallibility and sensitive to the various negative influences of institutional cultures. It would appear that both this sense of place and the communal nature of vocational service are undervalued in Palmer's conception, where primacy is placed upon self-awareness and self-determination. To "center" one's life outside of one's work is to risk viewing the personal and the professional as discontinuous rather than as integral — in fact, such a view tends to compromise the very
integration he ostensibly prizes. But to apprehend practice as vocation is to recognize teaching as a valued way of life. A way of life offering intrinsic meaning and worth as it draws upon the depths of one’s heart, soul, mind, and strength – the entirety of one’s person. Personhood, and the relationships which serve to constitute it, is, as we have seen, central to vocation, and will be explored at some length in the next chapter.

As important as they are to Palmer, outside sources of renewal and sustenance are somewhat peripheral to the issue here.6 And although institutional conditions may on occasion constrain the exercise of vocation, virtually to the point that it ceases to meaningfully exist, this is not the central issue here either. The key issue in this discussion centers upon living out full and meaningful relationships as one seeks to enact an ethic of service. This is especially important in helping professions such as teaching, which regularly serve unpredictable needs. A service-orientation characterized by vital, mutual relationships demands the exercise of moral disciplines to strengthen and sustain a willing commitment to the sacrifice of self-interest.

**Funding A Critical View of the Concept of Vocation**

We have seen that for theorists such as Higgins and Strike, the concept of vocation is rejected outright because for them it conjures up images of selfless devotion and sacrifice that are more appropriate for saints than for teacher practitioners. It is true that when used uncritically the language of vocation can be sentimentalized or romanticized. However, this misappropriation is insufficient grounds for jettisoning the conception altogether. Hansen (1995) reminds us that vocation does not call for social zealotry, nor is its orientation necessarily heroic, rather it
implies a measure of determination, courage, and flexibility, qualities that
are in turn buoyed by the disposition to regard teaching as something... to
which one has something significant to offer. (p. 12)

We have seen that although the measure of such qualities and this disposition of service
will vary from practitioner to practitioner, the corresponding satisfactions that accrue
should be in keeping with the service rendered. And as teacher-servants exercise critical
reflexiveness in this regard they will be less susceptible not only to the lures of heroism
and zealotry, but also to other distortions of vocation.

While a vocational ethic can blossom in fruitful directions, it also has the potential
of going to seed. Robert Coles (1993) relates how one student in his medical humanities
seminar had thrown herself with abandon into volunteer work at a nearby homeless
shelter. Her friends and family were impressed by her tremendous charity and idealism –
her efforts seemed to border on the fanatical – however they grew concerned over her
lack of attention to her own self. Interestingly, she never took their concerns seriously
until she applied a critically reflexive interpretation to a repeated daydream that she had
been experiencing, a vision utterly at odds with her world of service: she had been
imagining herself living a pampered life in a swank New York apartment. Her
interpretation had been triggered by George Eliot's novel *Middlemarch*, which she had
been reading for the seminar in an intensely personal manner. By allowing the book to
become her teacher – more specifically, in reflecting upon Eliot's character of Dorothea
Brooke, who appeared to lose her commonsense – she perceived that she was becoming
something of an ideologue herself. Coles remarks that the novel's message, exaggerated
in her mind's symbolism of Manhattan's self-indulgent lifestyle, was a warning to heed
the clear dramatic pleas of the story: to care and nurture herself, to not ignore her own
ordinary human needs. It was a message to stop and reflect, lest she become "more driven, self-preoccupied, inaccessible to family and friends, and worst of all, smugly self-righteous" (p. 163). This distortion of vocation is, as we saw earlier, what Parker Palmer is both reacting to and associating with the traditional Protestant notion of vocation. Coles’s account here ought to be taken as a warning that an uncritical idealistic devotion to service can wind up becoming self-defeating, ineffective, and even harmful.

The pieces which serve to fund a critical perspective on vocation – or the habit of critical reflection more generally – can be drawn from diverse sources and traditions; literature is prominent among these, and Coles appears to have utilized it to good effect. In his seminar, The Literature of Social Reflection – open to students in schools of law, medicine, education, and business – he provides novice professionals with opportunities to dialogue and reflect upon their practice, and upon what they would like to be doing, as they ponder some of this literature (p. 147). He draws upon the fiction, biography, poetry, and essays of a range of authors who offer their experience, practical wisdom, and sense of what is important in life. For example, William Carlos Williams, Raymond Carver, and James Agee have, in Coles's estimation, given "much thought to the dilemmas and confrontations and impasses that occur between those 'doing' community service and those 'receiving' it" – their stories offer insights into seeing others with greater clarity, how, for example, we all too often misinterpret others’ motives, or how being with others can teach us about our own assumptions, limitations, and blind spots (pp. 149-150). Tillie Olsen, Zora Neal Hurston, and Dorothy Day are other authors whose works he draws upon, for they offer practitioners a textured and expansive awareness of psychological and moral complexity, and an awareness of the subtle
nuances of human character. Maxine Greene (1991) reminds us too, that our involvement with fictional characters can serve as an analog to the ties that we hope to forge with persons in our own world. Approached in this manner, “the texts opened up are as much the texts of readers’ lives as they are of the invented lives of characters in the texts” (p. 548), offering us a means of reaching out to concrete persons in their differences, in a way that is neither uncritical nor “emotionally detached” (p. 551).

Many students enter professions without the benefit of extensive studies in the humanities – studies that ideally prompt the sort of self-scrutiny, inquiry, and illumination that Coles seeks to promote. “I... can anticipate certain troubles,” one seminar student concludes, “because I've learned from the reading I do, and get less discouraged because I've seen a bigger view courtesy of these writers” (p. 148). For Miriam, another student, her “growing authority as a teacher was... due in no small part to the courage and confidence she felt as a result of her own life as a reader who called upon certain books as sources of intellectual and moral energy” (p. 156). Julia, yet another student, reflecting upon Thomas Hardy's Jude the Obscure, came to understand more fully that, by itself, knowledge may be ineffectual in dealing with life's problems – often it only serves to buttress one's pride. Julia's keen interest in reciprocity spilled over into Coles's own work, leading him to develop a new seminar, Community Service, whose direction and aim was “...not just a matter... of an enlarged sensibility and awareness... being brought to the academic setting, but of a broadened mind and deepened heart... being brought back to the place where community service is being done....” (p. 167). One finds though that seminars such as these – which draw upon literature to stimulate the moral imagination and strengthen a critical, open-minded and open-hearted
vocational ethic – are the exception rather than the rule in universities and professional schools. Of course the argument can be made that practitioners can and should seek out this literature themselves, as a necessary part of their personal and professional development. I am not contending otherwise here. My central point is that too many professionals remain oblivious to this rich literary resource and its value for funding both reflexiveness and criticism in practice, having never been alerted to it in any pre-service or in-service seminars.

Critical reflexiveness is foundational to a vocational ethic. Such an ethic encompasses not only one's standards of moral discernment and intellectual judgment, it also addresses the relationships of individuals whose own unique strengths propel them to discover ways of working from the hopes, aims, and motivations which are internal to themselves (Emmet, 1958, p. 255; Hansen, 1995, p. 142). Both Dorothy Emmet and David Hansen are careful to also affirm the value of a social ethic of practice, but their interest lies in highlighting the importance of practitioners enacting a personal or vocational ethic of practice – one that society can influence but cannot dictate. It bears repeating here that self-realization is not to be directly sought; enduring fulfillment is realized indirectly in self-transcendence: a dynamic movement beyond self, in the activities of knowing, choosing, loving and the like, to realize the good of others. Such fulfillment deeply satisfies fundamental human desires: truth, value, and love, to be sure, but also meaning, beauty, justice, peace and joy. In this view, service to others is but one aspect of the more universal impulse for self-transcendence – through the gifting of self – which I believe, lies at the core of our being. In the second half of this chapter I will inquire into the nature of moral formation through disciplined self-sacrifice, which is
vital for sustaining this ethic of service — and more broadly, for sustaining this impulse and desire for self-transcendence.

**Self-Sacrifice In Moral Discipline**

'Discipline' and 'sacrifice' are words that strike many of us as a bit extreme, for they suggest a sort of violence against the self. And yet, I would argue, most of us also recognize that the sacrifice entailed in disciplined practice is what underlies every enterprise that demands creativity and aspires to success. Self-discipline is to moral formation as a training program is to an athlete — it is the means to excellence. Out of the concentration and rigors of disciplined effort emerge intensity, energy, and maturity. The ascetic (Greek *askesis*) of self-discipline is essential to an ethic of service because, as we have seen, vocations can become distorted or stunted, or even lost — they are not one-for-all-time achievements. To be clear, ‘ascetic’ is not used here to connote joyless self-denial, but rather in the sense of *structures of discipline* that focus us upon what is important in illuminating the nature of servanthood and thereby sustaining a vocational ethic.

What then, are the aspects of moral self-discipline in view here? To begin with, the disciplining of self demands an inward turn, one that cannot be encompassed by the aforementioned exercise of critical reflexiveness alone. In recognizing the vulnerable nature of vocation, Huebner (1993a/1999) and Götz (1988, 1997) both urge practitioners to develop individual and corporate spiritual disciplines. Although religious associations are relevant and significant to a broad conception of vocation, (as Emmet, 1958, demonstrates), I will not be exploring the particular spiritual disciplines of religious orders, but the contemplative life more generally. Authentic vocation is necessarily
shaped by an attentiveness to the inner life — without such disciplined attention we merely scurry about to meet role expectations or job descriptions.

Recent years have seen a growth in the literature emphasizing the contemplative in educational theory and practice (Glazer, 1999, p. 42), and this has spilled over into the scholarship on teaching thinking, which has traditionally used planning and decision-making as its categories. Some of this literature clearly has vocational importance, particularly where disciplined practice is in view and issues of personhood and profession converge. Theorists Robert Yinger (1990) and Margret Buchmann (1993) both demonstrate how the moral discipline of contemplation serves to expand and enrich our view of valuable thinking in teaching practice.

Captured in its most elemental terms, Yinger understands practitioner thinking as the situated, reflective, and responsive interchange between thought and action — encompassing what Schön (1987) terms “knowing-in-action” (p. 32). The 'language of practice', he argues, consists less in the scripted, impersonal, rationalistic techniques of planning, implementation, and reflection, and more in the intuitive, patterned, synthetic 'conversation' of preparation, improvisation, and contemplation. Contemplation for Yinger operates integrally as a sustained, discerning attentiveness to the whole landscape of practice, including its vital connections to the larger community. The root of the word 'contemplate' is 'temple' or 'sanctuary' — a place marked out for attentive, reverent perception and thought — what Yinger calls “thought-in-place” (p. 87). Contemplation demands a serious, disciplined attentiveness and imagination directed towards what others take casually. In contrast to what can be the coolly analytical vision of reflection — peering down from the outside, Yinger sees contemplation as more embracing and
receptive -- looking up and out from a place of traditional familiarity and use. The contemplative mode is "a way of being in the work even when the work is not being performed" (1990, p. 87). Its orientation is a coherent one -- intellect in touch with emotions -- shaping wholeness and balance without asserting undue autonomy or control; its particular values -- place, community, participation, and commitment -- emphasize both relationship and stewardship.

These insights into the place of contemplation in teaching practice are important ones, although of a limited and broad nature owing to Yinger's greater interest in improvisation. For this reason I have searched out the more detailed analysis of Margret Buchmann. Following Aquinas's lead, Buchmann (1993) understands the active life of teaching as being properly guided or directed by a deeper contemplative life. In her particularly illuminating essay, we can discern the importance of contemplative thought in vocational life on three accounts. First, the contemplative life keeps at bay self-aggrandizing impulses that, for one, distract practitioners from the particulars of their work. Second, contemplative thought provides guidance to the typically busier and more controlling thought processes that underlie our actions, for in directing our vision toward professional ideals and transcendent perfection, it offers sources of deeper, more expansive meaning and value. And third, the contemplative life is crucial to enacting the collectively rooted goods and excellences that a normative practice embodies and extends. Such enactment requires capacities of responsiveness and relatedness, which in turn depend upon a range of human virtues and dispositions. I will let these three aspects or operations of disciplined contemplative thought frame my subsequent discussion in the next three sections.
Quelling Self-Aggrandizing Impulses

Earlier in this chapter we examined some of the distortions to vocation that accompany an over-valuation of self-realization. The wider literature on this topic is considerable – particularly in politics, philosophy, and theology – and a few examples are worth citing here. Robert Bellah (1985) and his co-authors document the erosion of political community that occurs when self-absorption generates the attitude that the only relationships one can identify with are those formed voluntarily and which provide self-fulfillment. Amitai Etzioni (1983), a prominent social scientist, worries over this widespread social disconnection and alienation and issues a “call for a social philosophy and an individual orientation that are much less ego-centered.” Herbert Butterfield (1979), professor of modern history at Cambridge University, concludes that, “[c]oncealed egoism is perhaps a greater cause of political conflict, a greater source of political problems, than anything on this globe” (p. 57). Charles Taylor (1991) acknowledges the pervasiveness of self-realization in mass culture, and he alerts us to the fact that even a prudent “self-realization presupposes that some things are important beyond the self, that there are some goods or purposes the furthering of which has significance for us and which hence can provide the significance a fulfilling life needs” (p. 507). Both Emmanuel Levinas and Simone Weil understand the dismantling of the autonomous I to be elemental not only to the cultivation of responsive relationships, but to the learning process itself. For both these philosophers, learning is necessarily “directed to ethical, social, and spiritual development that pierces the pretensions of the ego and is accomplished through the pedagogical vehicle of a not-indifferent, passive, and open practice of attention” (Eppert, 2004, p. 49).
We need the structure (ascetic) of something like disciplined contemplation because the seductive lures of ego gratification that begin within us, are aggravated by our culture; the "deep-rooted, me-first distortions of our humanity have been institutionalized in our economics and by our psychologies" (Peterson, 1985, p. 42). The seduction for educators is alluring too—we can expand our influence, flaunt the power and expertise that accompanies our role, or pursue a solo quest after transcendence. An ascetic is designed to scuttle this pervasive and presumptuous lust for power. It pulls us out of illusion and self-absorption, and back to the reality and limits of the human condition.

Through most of its history, the comprehensive ascetic or Rule (Latin *regula*) in the Christian church functioned to lead persons out of self-absorption and into a responsiveness to others, and to God. Daily psalm-praying, community worship, and recollected prayer constituted this ascetic, although given situational demands, individuals also drew upon associated disciplines such as spiritual reading, solitude, fasting, sabbaticals, and the like. Historically, the genius of the monastery was to socialize and thereby interiorize the contemplative life. Now my point here is not to recommend monastic vows for practitioners, but rather to suggest that without integrating disciplined contemplation into the everydayness of our work, a contemplative life will become difficult to sustain, regardless of how much we believe it valuable or necessary.

Contemplation disciplines us in 'living into' a way of vocational spirituality. It delivers us from self-absorption by re-centering us in our practice: directing our attention outward to our students, to our subject matter, and to the ideals of practice. Contemplative thought both detaches us from the pulleys and levers of *egocentric* self-
assertion and opens up a space in which wholeness – individual and communal – can take root and thrive. Notice here, I am seeking to make a distinction between a healthy and appropriate self-assertion, and an egocentric one. The energetic initiative and confident action of self-assertiveness is vital to living well, however, I would argue, that when it is distorted into indulgence and impulse-gratification it upsets both individual development and community wholeness. And community is not insignificant. For although the essential work of ethical formation necessarily involves the individual practitioner, the contemplative life never begins and ends with the individual – each of us are sustained in communities.

Practitioners then, must have “some understanding of practice and contemplation as a kind of thinking defined by many negations: absences, oppositions, surrenders, or repudiations” of self (Buchmann, 1993, p. 158). They must apprehend that “[t]he chief enemy of excellence in morality... [is] the... self-aggrandizing and consoling wishes and dreams which prevent one from seeing what is there outside one” (Murdoch, 1970, p. 59). They must recognize that if the voice of conscience as self-sacrifice is to come into its own moral strength and be heard above the clamor of prudential self-interest, then “the exercise of empathy must be transformed from the status of a natural presence into something like a moral project, a kind of educational drill” (Green, 1999, p. 88). The ascetic of disciplined contemplation is just such a project and drill.

Often though, we seek to evade or shrug off these sacrificial claims. Or even when we are moved to sacrificial service, it is often out of a disguised appeal to self-interest. That is, while only half believing it, we rationalize that our most lasting contentments are those secured in advancing the good of others. Thomas Green contends
that clarity around the problems of moral formation requires that we move beyond what may be little more than self-deceptive appeals to prudential interests. The voice of conscience, he argues, calls to the prudentially-oriented practitioner to have different desires - desires to serve others, not merely self, desires that move beyond mere wishfulness, to action. Frank Kirkpatrick (1986) makes a similar point as he argues for the mutuality inherent in community life:

As long as we try to erect self-worth on the basis of what I alone can do, even if it is to sacrifice myself for another, then we fall back into an essentially individualistic or egocentric way of thinking. (p. 187)

For Buchmann (1993), the refined, honest perception of contemplation must always be directed mindfully towards the things and people that properly demand our attention - this is what makes it a "moral discipline" (p. 159). Such discipline requires a detachment from self and a corresponding attachment to right objects of thought:

Contemplation sets aside ties to self-involved willing and feeling, to given ways of thinking and schemes of action, making room for the quietly receptive attention that any dedicated work requires. (p. 164)

This notion of contemplation - detached and concerned - is something like a meta-moral attitude or disposition within the realm of moral concerns, one that serves as an ideal orientation or perspective for conducting one's moral thinking. In fashioning her view, Buchmann follows Schopenhauer (1844/1956), and also Haezrahi (1956) who understands contemplation as "an act of unselfish almost impersonal concentration" (p. 36) in which one's will, emotions, and rationality are not granted pride of place. It is of particular interest that this view coheres with Thomas Green's (1999) assertion that moral formation in general is practically effected as an individual chooses to perform acts beyond the sphere of mere duty. What is more, Green contends that such grace-filled acts
are not so much sacrificially self-denying as they are acts of indifference or detachment, which obliquely issue in self-fulfillment (p. 93). Such acts of self-indifference function to tutor us in the direction of self-sacrifice, and are most easily discerned in the contexts of friendship or membership – more about this in later chapters.

Detachment or reticence is a requisite teacherly skill, one that grows out of the disciplined practice of contemplation. Detachment speaks of being gentle, quiet, humble, and un-self-assertive, but paradoxically, its goal is to be vitally present and attentive without being obtrusively present. “It is the properly humbled mind in its proper place that sees truly,” asserts Wendell Berry (1983), “because ...it sees details” (p. 71). A contemplative detachment entails a proper understanding and respect for human limits – a sensibility of when to draw back, when to stop, lest we interfere. Many of the interferences, pretences, missteps, and pitfalls that occur in practice find their source in the hubris of the practitioner. Without the moral discipline of contemplation as integral and vital to our vocational ethic, we can slip into becoming manipulative and patronizing of others, as we ourselves become impatient, exhausted, and joyless.

*Contemplative Vision as a Source of Meaning*

Recent decades have seen a renewed interest in ethics and spirituality, particularly as it places the quest for a more expansive moral life at the heart of the educational endeavor (Alexander, 2004). And while the consideration of spirituality may be expressed in cultural or religious symbols, it need not express particular ideologies or religious doctrines – it ranges from religious to secular, rational to mystical. Huebner (1993/1999) understands spiritual formation as nurturing the connection of self and community with the 'moreness' that transcends space, time, and value. This perspective
builds upon Philip Phenix's (1971) view of our innate lure to transcend current realizations of being—expressed in relational, temporal, and qualitative dimensions. Spirituality then, centrally concerns itself with the ways this transcendent view is understood and experienced and acted upon, as in wonder and awe, devotion and reverence. In Steven Glazer's (1999) view, it concerns

intimacy with our perceptions—the experience of having a body; our thoughts—the experience of having a mind; and our emotions—the experience of having a heart. ...Spiritual identity arises as an expression, not from indoctrination; it arises out of our unique, particular mingling of awareness, experience, and expression. (p. 2, italics in original)

Alexander (2001, pp. 12-24) attributes the renewed interest in spiritual matters to our contemporary world's failure to provide compelling visions of what it means to live a worthwhile or flourishing life. Further, he maintains that in order to avoid extremes of subjectivity or relativism, such visions must transcend both self and society (pp. 55-108). Of course, this spiritual quest for a guiding ethical vision of the Good falls within the scope of classical ethics, and it is one that Buchmann (1993), via Iris Murdoch (1970), extensively draws upon. Because Buchmann appears to root professional ideals in more expansive transcendent ideals, and because she views these as vital objects for disciplined contemplative practice in teaching, I shall make a very brief and selective excursus into Murdoch's conception of the Good as an exemplar of transcendent ideals. At the end of chapter 4 I will explore at some length a strongly imagined vocational project of self-transcendence.

Drawing upon Plato's Republic, Murdoch offers an exposition of the unifying power of the Good:
The mind which has ascended to the vision of the Good can subsequently see the concepts through which it has ascended (art, work, nature, people, ideas, institutions, situations, etc., etc.) in their true nature and their proper relationship to each other. (pp. 95-96)

That is, we introduce order and integration into our view of the world (and our professional practice) through our insight into the Good — although none of us achieve complete unity, because none has ascended to the pinnacle of this vision. Nevertheless, in moral formation and advancement, our intuitions into the whole of what is excellent in life becomes more confident and profound. For example, we come to perceive freedom, not as autonomy, but as “the disciplined overcoming of self”; we come to understand humility, not narrowly as self-effacement, but as the “selfless respect for reality” (p. 95). Further, this intuited unity of goodness must be linked with a greater contemplative capacity: a surer grasp of life’s “complexity and detail” (p. 96). This dual insight — unity and detail — is evident, Murdoch reminds us, in great art and intellectual work. Correspondingly, I would argue that pedagogy, to be legitimately termed ‘pedagogy’, must also be characterized by this insight into the unity of goodness and attentiveness to complexity and detail.

Murdoch, following Plato, recognizes that the concept of the Good is indefinable. This is because the source of the vision of the Good is not readily seen, and because it is obscured by human frailty and selfishness, and also because it is difficult to sustain a gaze upon the true Good, for although our impulse to worship is strong, it is easily corrupted by our tendency to worship self. In sum, the “true mysticism which is morality” is precisely this “attempt to look right away from self towards a distant transcendent perfection” (p. 101). For Murdoch, un-self-assertive love is the one virtue that comes closest to encompassing the whole of excellence, which is the Good. This, as
we shall see, has particular bearing upon our inquiry into contemplation in vocational practice, as does her further insight that,

when we try perfectly to love what is imperfect, our [contemplative] love goes to its object via the Good to be thus purified and made unselfish and just. The mother loving the retarded child or loving the tiresome elderly relation... when it is even partially refined it is the energy and passion of the soul in its search for Good, the force that joins us to Good and joins us to the world through Good. (p. 103, italics in original)

In a strikingly parallel way, Buchmann (1993) affirms “serenity and clarity of vision” or “peace and purity of heart” serve to “direct one’s attention to worthy objects. Importantly, it is less those objects than oneself and one’s thinking that get changed.” (p. 165). “Via fidelity – faithfulness to others and to what is there – truth and goodness converge in the contemplative experience.” (p. 165, italics in original). Other parallels to Murdoch, with regard to ideals, can be discerned:

In their vital imprecision, professional ideals [the indefinable Good] provide a growing sense of order [intuited unity], direction, and deepening meaning. They attach people to their best selves, and to worthy objects of attention, illuminate the real and desirable, and supply ways to distinguish the passable from the excellent. (p. 166)

Such ideals structure normative practice, serving as “a generative background of attachments” (p. 172), so that teachers’ decisions consist “in choosing activities so that [they] will encounter opportunities and can cultivate abilities for acting on ideals” (p. 166, italics in original).

Inducting people into teaching entails helping them attend to ideals of perfection [a prominent theme in Murdoch (1970)] relating to their work and its distinctive good, fostering dispositions to think and be concerned about those goods and people affected by one’s work, and upholding... general human virtues such as truthfulness, sobriety, gentleness, and courage. (p. 166)
Not only is perfection associated with the ideals of practice, contemplation itself can be viewed this way: "What the ideal and the unknown demand is infinitely perfectible, attentive thought" (p. 172).

Buchmann is clearly unwilling or unable to characterize ideals, either professional or transcendent, and one might wonder what lies behind her reticence. It might be that she recognizes the postmodern condition – that there remains so little that is widely authoritative anymore, so that even to advance the notion of a common set of hypergoods is suspect. Or perhaps, she seeks to avoid the sort of provincialism that is sometimes attributed to educational theorists of a particular stripe – care ethicists, feminist, emancipatory, and the like. More likely though, she senses that ambiguity is unavoidable before life's big questions, before a surplus of meaning: the descriptor "vital imprecision" (p. 166) suggests ideals to be inherently difficult to specify – they "suggest unattainability" (Peters, 1979, p. 467). She seems to realize, as Hansen (2001) does, that ideals outstrip hopes or aspirations in breadth of scope and depth of meaning – they are by nature elusive – and "may be hard to... pin down, in part because they describe that which has not yet come into being" (p. 159). Whatever the reason, Buchmann understands ideals to be vital to a professional orientation, serving to guide, discipline, strengthen, and motivate practitioners to perform at their best.

A professional orientation is also a communal one: it is always as a member of a "community of... craft" (Buchmann, 1993, p. 162). Normative practice in this view is much more than modes and outcomes of skilled work, it also includes the goods and excellences – the ideals – that are rooted collectively. Just how this collective view of human flourishing takes shape, Buchmann never says. Green (1999) and Alexander...
(2001) maintain that it has to emerge through membership in communities that have strong, vital traditions of practice – a topic that I will explore in chapter 4. Yet such traditions would appear to be the exception rather than the rule in current educational communities. One might interpret the contemporary move to increasingly professionalize teaching in the United States and elsewhere – through policy processes of licensure, certification, and accreditation (Darling-Hammond, 2001) – as an indicator of this lack of vitality. In fact, such external incentives seem quite removed from a vocational ethic and from the reflectivity and sensibility of craft knowledge – portrayed so compellingly in Buchmann’s essay – which “emphasizes judgment and empathy, and ... is infused with morality and contextual understanding” (Munby, Russell, & Martin, 2001, p. 888).

**Responsiveness and Relatedness, Virtue and Disposition**

Buchmann (1993) contends that a practitioner’s contemplative gaze ought to be directed not only toward ideals, but also toward the particulars of subject matter and persons (notably students). If this gaze is bureaucratic and technical, and insufficiently moral and ethical, then, I would argue, the particulars of practice tend to be interpreted in relation to the sovereign self – leaving relationships that are formal, impersonal, and uncaring.

The receptive attention of dedicated work is very different. Freire (1998) reminds us that sometimes seemingly insignificant gestures by a teacher can have a marked formative effect on a student. He remembers as an adolescent being quite insecure about his appearance and uncertain about his capabilities. During class one day, a certain teacher had been calling students up individually, briefly commenting on their marked
homework assignment. He recounts, "When my turn came I noticed he was looking over my text with great attention, nodding his head in an attitude of respect and consideration" (p. 47). This simple affirmation, Freire recalls, had a deep and lasting effect upon him, much more than the mark assessed. Recognition that his work had value inspired in him a sense of worth. His instructor had not merely offered a mechanical repetition of some word or gesture, but a comprehension of the value of persons and their needs (p. 107). "I cannot," confesses Freire, "refuse my wholehearted and loving attention... where I see that a student is in need of such attention" (p. 128).

William May (2000) reminds us that it is only "with a fundamental responsiveness" that "professionals undertake their secondary... initiatives on behalf of others" (p. 124). One finds that Barth's (1936/1961) perspective in this regard is congruent with Buchmann's analysis: the telos of vocation consists in attending to unique details of persons and tasks with all the knowledge, capability, and "meaningful devotion" we can bring to bear. He writes:

the smallest things and simplest of relations and problems demand our acceptance of their particularity, our willingness to immerse ourselves in them. They certainly demand our devotion, and this may entail sacrifice. ...we are there to adjust ourselves to them in the measure and tempo and manner of our effort and movement, to take to ourselves their need and worth and purpose, and on these presuppositions to give them of our best. (p. 642)

Notice here, contemplative attention extends beyond a leisurely immersion in the multitude of particulars in our work. This is because the quality of such attention requires the cultivation of empathetic insight into the needs, values, and aims of persons and tasks, a quality of attention that enables us as practitioners to relate and respond suitably – with congruence and fidelity to these needs, values and aims. It requires, as
Jackson (1992) reminds us, an interpretive orientation that is manifested in a desire to probe beneath the superficial to uncover hidden meaning. Such fine-grained, discerning attention can only be cultivated from a sobering awareness of our ignorance; there is far more complexity before us that escapes our understanding, than there is that we do apprehend. These sensibilities of devoted insight and responsive action are hard-won – they call upon our best efforts in the strenuous and protracted disciplining of self that sacrifice involves.

The nature of contemplative attention is admittedly a vast area of inquiry,¹¹ and I will restrict myself here to sketching out just a few more themes. Borrowing from Simone Weil, Iris Murdoch (1970) understands 'attention' as expressing “the idea of a just and loving gaze directed upon an individual reality”, and she makes the normative claim that such attention is “the characteristic and proper mark of the active moral agent” (p. 34, italics mine).¹² Barth’s (1936/1961) view is remarkably similar. He contends the greatest reward of fidelity to vocation “is to be able to devote ourselves to our concern not only with interest but with desire and love, ...to do justice to what is demanded at the place which we have occupied” (p. 642, italics mine). Huebner (1993a/1999), who conceives vocation as “way of making a life” (p. 411), echoes these perspectives as well:

That part of the teaching life that is a response to the call of the student results in the work of love; to the call of content, the work of truth; to the call of the institution, the work of justice. As in all vocations, these works are easily distorted by principalities and powers. ...forces... [which] restrict and impede the religious journey, condition human life to the mundane world, or fixate human life before the journey is completed. (pp. 411, 406, italics mine)¹³

Notice, for each of these theorists, the balance of a just loving, or a loving justice, ought to characterize the attentiveness that we bring to our work.
Love is our fundamental relational mode. But to primarily direct love inwardly, and not outwardly, is to distort it – for it is to use it selfishly, and consequently unjustly, weakening society and ruining the self. We have seen that when love withdraws from the public into the private – when it curves back upon itself – it is irresponsible and immature. Peterson (1985) describes this distortion in picturesque language:

> When we look through eyes diseased by self-love, we see neither beauty nor virtue. We stumble in a blurred, unfocused, misshapen world and complain that it is ugly or threatening or boring. Self-love twists the spontaneities of admiration into calculations of envy. Everything attractive and desirable is given a price tag. ...Envy and its attendant anxieties replace adoration with its inventive praises as the dominant mood of self-love. (p. 156)

Mature love, by contrast, is characterized by inclusiveness, and a desire for wholeness that moves outward in adoration, wonder, and reverence. The just, loving sensibilities of receptive attentiveness act to powerfully counter the self-serving gaze that incites envy – as well as the isolation and anxiety emerging from it. Contemplation educates and redirects these powerful energies of attachment outward, not only towards family or friends, but also to colleagues and staff, students and parents. For as Buchmann (1993) maintains:

> It is a mistake to assume that what is most personal is also most profound and most reliable as a source of energies; the self often moves in a vain circle. Detached and concerned, thoughtful persons are valued for their attachment to the right objects of thought. (p. 161)

Not a clinging attachment that seeks to dominate or possess, but a mature, liberating love that slips past the defenses that have been erected to protect against rejection. It is an un-self-interested love that “brings the self to the highest pitch; love brings society to its
most mature expression. Love is the one act in which the public and the personal coinhere most dramatically” (Peterson, 1985, p. 153).

One should not suppose though that to alter one’s loves – one’s desires and emotional attachments – willpower alone is sufficient. What is also needed is an imaginative, contemplative reorientation: “the acquiring of new objects of attention and thus of new energies as a result of refocusing” (Murdoch, 1970, p. 56). Eugene Peterson (1992) recounts such a reorientation that occurred in his life, four years into his work as a pastor – it came with the sudden astonished recognition that a chasm had opened up between his personal faith and his pastoral practice. This incoherence or discontinuity was neither resolved suddenly nor easily – it was only after long stretches of aridity and disciplined effort that a semblance of vocational spirituality emerged. It began with the realization that he had been making a career out of his religious vocation, that his work demanded a much more passionate response, one that called upon the depths of his personhood. Along the way, having made numerous unsuccessful attempts to find a vocational mentor, he happened upon Fyodor Dostoevsky. It was out of a regular and reflective reading of his entire corpus – an immersion into the un-self-assertive, God-passionate lives of such characters as Prince Myshkin, Alyosha, and Father Zossima – that vocational integrity emerged in Peterson's life. Such characters fed his imagination with images that were congruent with his calling – images and models very different from those offered by 'principalities and powers' that are strong on power and outward appearance.

Unlike Peterson's gradual transformation, more abrupt contemplative reorientations are not uncommon: “the crucial instances of self-transcendence are those
special, life-transforming events we call conversions” (Conn & Conn, 1981, p. 144). Such conversions can involve a wholesale re-orientation, a paradigm shift of one's cognitive, moral, and affective dimensions that allows self-transcending love to take center stage in one's life. This outward-looking love becomes “the norm by which every other personal concern, interest, need, desire or wish must be judged – and, if necessary, sacrificed” (Conn & Conn, p. 143). Giving ourselves in love is what we do best, for it is the most sublime expression of our humanity. Our life is for others, not ourselves. The paradox is that in giving our lives away, we find ourselves – fullness of meaning and purpose and hope. I wish want to argue, then, that the gifting of self in loving service lies at the core of servanthood and vocation, because it lies at the core of a well-lived life.

Of course, such sudden re-orientations in life can be less encompassing. Peterson (1992) speaks of his own “Joycean conversion” (p. 127) triggered when reading through James Joyce’s Ulysses, a novel concerning an ordinary day in the life of one unremarkable Leopold Bloom. Joyce’s detailed (contemplative) rendering, mythic in scale, woke Peterson to the depth of significance and meaning within the bounds of any ordinary person on any ordinary day. He suddenly saw his work anew, a work requiring the capacity to see each person in his care with the same imagination, discernment, and depth exercised by Joyce – “listening for nuances, making connections, remembering and anticipating” (p. 126). Peterson’s pastoral work of quietly receptive attention, watching the storied lives of parishioners take shape, is not unlike the work that educators are called to: it demands the same disciplined contemplative exercise of concentration, appreciation, wonder, and love.
It worth noting here that acquiring such a contemplative stance— not by gradual normation into a community of moral practice, but by a sudden re-orientation— would seem to lie outside of Green’s (1999) conceptualization of moral formation, (valuable though it is), as outlined earlier in this chapter.\textsuperscript{15} But regardless of mode of formation— conversion, normation, spiritual disciplines, or some combination— what is of supreme importance, in my view, is that a deepening and expanding contemplative love comes to establish itself as a regulative principle in one’s life, and so in one’s work. In the process, what gets built into it, or around it, are an array of moral and intellectual virtues and dispositions. As I suggested in mid-chapter, the process of ‘moral formation’ would seem to be a somewhat simplistic and restricted conceptualization of what in reality is a more encompassing journey of self-transcendence.

\textit{Bringing Sacrifice and Fulfillment Together}

Much more might be said about contemplative love and its place as a regulative ideal in teaching practice, but in concluding this chapter I would like to probe a short but valuable work by Heesoon Bai (2002), and through it revisit some of the themes we have been considering: moral obligation, emotions of self-assessment, self and Other, sacrifice and fulfillment. In her essay, Bai is responding to Barbara Houston’s (2002) concern over the lethargy we often exhibit when faced with our moral responsibilities. Both theorists view this experience of moral resistance and paralysis of action as emerging from an inadequate normative conceptualization of responsibility— one in which causation quickly shifts to an accusation-guilt-defensiveness dynamic, which inhibits what they see as the more positive conceptualization and operation of moral agency.
Bai offers support for this latter conception on two counts, both grounded in mutual causality or 'mutuality', a view in which the self is co-emergent and coextensive with others in relationship – a view, incidentally, which is congruent with the one explored in the next chapter. First, the attribution of blame (or praise) is softened and rendered more complicated given that moral responsibility is, like self, coextensive. One effect is to impel us to become more care-full in our actions; another is to move us to view blame more positively, as a protest and an encouragement to do better. Second, mutuality operates both to strengthen our capacity to bear responsibility, and also to alter our perspective toward it so that it is less singular and more communal, less arduous and more natural.

Even though agency and responsibility are not the moral categories that I have used, Bai’s claims here do not appear to be incompatible with the positive normative conceptualization of vocation that I have sought to articulate. It would be instructive at this point to briefly examine the issue of perspective toward moral responsibilities that she elucidates, and its relation to sacrifice and fulfillment. Bai (2002) argues that by virtue of our prevalent ontological view of atomistic individualism, “individuals see themselves as singular agents who alone are responsible for what they do” (p. 21), and such a perspective invites a sort of reflexiveness that is morally paralyzing (p. 22). In what sense, one wonders, is moral paralysis a function of their perceived singularity? Might paralyzing singularity be a generous way of connoting egocentrism – the term I have opted for? I offer this because individuals who view themselves “as singular, self-bound, self-centered”, who “externalize other beings”, and whose “self-identity precedes relationships” (p. 19) – such egocentric individuals would clearly possess a diminished
sense of moral responsibility (and reflexivity). And perhaps this is Bai's point. Moral obligation presumes bonds of membership and relationship in a moral community, yet clearly, vitality of relationship does not characterize their lives. Moral paralysis, it would seem, derives from moral immaturity – as Houston (2002) points out, "unrecognized self-interest... may have led to the inertness or resistance in the first place" (p. 11).

Bai goes on to make the point that,

when we think the self is alone, ... and that all of our doing is the result of this singular self willing and taking responsibility, the sense of burden is so great as to intimidate and repel the person. ... Responsibility becomes a burden, a liability, a cost to the self. It takes a sacrifice to the self.... Not so... [for the] person of mutual causality.... He pictures himself inherently as part of the larger [social] whole, and in facing whatever task, he has the sense of bringing the whole along with him to bear upon the task. His responsibility is not so much discharging a duty... but fulfilling his potential in being a particular part of the whole. ... What he is doing is not so much taking on responsibility as fulfilling the potential of the being inscribed in the position he currently occupies in his moral universe. (p. 22, italics in original)

I have taken a somewhat different position. Self-bound, self-centered individuals shrink from self-sacrifice perhaps not so much because it seems a singular effort, but because they have not yet moved beyond the natural impulse of prudential self-interest to the moral maturity of attending to the interests of others – which, for Green (1999, pp. 88-89), is a mark of mutuality. Their conduct is still governed largely by the desires and interests of prudence; the sense of duty or obligation to others that is learned or acquired in a moral community has not yet taken hold in their lives. Indeed, mutuality itself presumes the insertion into such communities and the acquisition of corresponding social norms, so that the “person of mutual causality” would quite naturally consider themselves as part of a larger social whole with positions or roles to fulfill.
Summary

It has been my contention throughout this chapter that the sacrifices which are so much a part of the life of committed practice in no way deny our own fulfillment or self-realization. Rather, they prepare us for it — they make us adequate to it — as they discipline us into it. Vocation is wrongly construed in terms of moral heroism or self-diminishing sacrifice; its essence is significant social service that yields corresponding fulfillment. Fulfillment is not so much the result of our caring and sacrificial activities, as it is to be found within their very practice. Following Buchmann (1993), I have argued that a contemplative stance in normative practice disciplines us into attending to the proper objects of worth: students, subject matter, and ideals of practice. Contemplation frees up a space in our lives that allows us to become detached from the willful machinations of self, as it opens our hearts to the particularities of the persons and tasks around us. Contemplation creates this necessary detachment from self, and corresponding freedom to love — for loving service cannot be compelled, it can only be given freely. Just as suffering is not a virtue in itself, but is related to virtue, so self-sacrifice is not a virtue or end in itself but rather an element of this disposition and action of loving. I have maintained, therefore, that self-transcending love, or some similar regulative ideal, must serve as a generative source in one's personal or vocational ethic. In this view, shouldering the moral responsibilities of practice flows from one's “capacity for moral agency” (Bai, 2002, p. 21, italics mine), or from the qualification of one's agency,19 which is to say, from one's strength of character and the mature love that is its centerpiece. When practice is conceived as vocation, the self-sacrifice of such love is not loss at all — rather, it is a precondition for fresh creativity, heightened wonder, enduring fulfillment, and a more perfect love.
CHAPTER TWO
THE CALL OF MEMBERSHIP

Love is not a feeling, or a special way of feeling, but the divine way of relating to others and oneself that moves through every dimension of our being and restructures our world for good. ...Not having the burden of defending and securing ourselves... we can devote ourselves to the service of others.

- Dallas Willard

Personhood, Community, and Vocation
Within a Personalist Philosophy

Within the context of an ethic of vocation, the topic of ‘membership in community’ could be analyzed from a variety of vantage points. My approach here has been philosophical, principally because the next two chapters in this volume consider in a more practical way the central implications of this chapter. Nel Noddings (1984) takes a similar approach in grounding her ethic of care in the theory of mutualism, notably the version articulated by Martin Buber. Paralleling her ethic, then, I will argue here that an ethic of vocation is also premised upon mutuality of relations with students, but I have looked to the more extensive theoretical underpinnings found in the work of the personalist philosopher John Macmurray, a contemporary of Buber’s. Like the work of the late philosopher Bernard Lonergan (considered briefly in chapter 4), it is unfortunate that Macmurray’s work has not yet received within the educational community the attention it has been seen to merit in other scholarly circles. While this is unfortunate, it
is perhaps not surprising, for even prominent curricularists have had their work neglected: forty years ago, James B. MacDonald (1966) sought to advance a person-oriented curriculum as he looked to the personalist philosophy of Emmanuel Mounier (1952), but in the years since, educational theorists have failed to substantially build upon his initiatives.

By way of introduction, let me affirm that teachers’ energetic and discerning membership in various collegial and institutional communities, as well as wider learning and professional communities, is always to be encouraged and supported. This being said, and without intending to detract from the importance of these associations for practitioners, I want to argue that it is the classroom community that must have the greatest salience in a discussion of vocation. This is because, as I have sought to demonstrate in the last chapter, insight into the issues of personhood and relationship are central to enacting an ethic of vocation. I have, for instance, already highlighted the dispositions of loving attentiveness and responsiveness in a vocational ethic. In this chapter I wish to demonstrate that such dispositions are inescapably informed and animated by a practitioner’s more fundamental beliefs and understandings of what constitutes personhood and thriving relationships. These issues are not so far removed from an examination of membership in community as one might at first suppose, since the “concept of community is logically prior to the concept of role. The very possibility of the pursuit of an ideal form of life requires membership in a moral community” Buchmann (1986, p. 538). Moreover, I will attempt to show that each of the major contemporary theoretical models of community presumes a very different fundamental concept of human nature and human fulfillment (Wood, 1972, pp. 2-3).
The personalist model of community explored here rests on the premise that the natural condition of human life is one of mutuality or "reciprocal rootedness" (Willard, 2002, p. 179) in others – "we live not in separation but in relationship" (Gilligan, 1982/1993, p. xxvii). I will presuppose that the need to love, and be loved, is deeply rooted in human nature. There is something inherent in our humanity – in our personhood – that can only be realized in and through a love of other persons. The assurance that others are for us is vital for stable, flourishing living. And so it is that our reception and acceptance in relationships provides stability and self-acceptance; our affirmation in formative years can be an important source of sustaining strength in facing various forms of withdrawal or rejection in later years. Acts of reaching out, welcoming, providing for, making a place for, offering hospitality, befriending – these acts of neighbourliness, I would argue, are the most life-giving and life-affirming things a person can do (Willard, 2002, p. 183). One must wonder then, being the most basic and universal acts of concern and care, why they are not more evident in our relationships – including our professional ones.

If persons can find ultimate fulfillment only in relations of mutuality, then it logically follows that community life is meant to consist in those forms of association that promote, rather than obstruct, the conditions for mutuality. While contemporary social, political, and economic forces may regularly reinforce egocentric impulses that run counter to mutualistic love, our institutions ideally serve as devices or instruments for just the opposite purpose. For if the call of the Other in our lives is a constant, basic reality of moral existence – even in institutions – then I want to argue that an ethic of vocation encompasses our responsiveness to this call. Nearly a century ago, Buber
sought to articulate and popularize the ‘I-Thou’ unity of the personal in making the claim that at a deep level, mutuality of community is expressive of this personal unity. It was shortly thereafter that Macmurray subsequently sought to provide, in a more comprehensive fashion, the arguments to support this claim of dialogical personalism. Whereas Buber’s work is informed by his Jewish beliefs, Macmurray’s perspectives are congruent with his Christian faith. It is through his affirmation of the ontological primacy of persons and their enduring fulfillment in intentional and loving relations, that Macmurray provides us with the categories and principles for a personalist model of community.

In this chapter, then, I argue that a practitioner’s overarching intention to foster mutual relations with students properly serves as the interpretative center of pedagogical practice. I sketch out some theoretical underpinnings for this assertion: a comparison of major models of community; a brief examination of some moral foundations of personhood; and an analysis of mutuality’s essential elements in the parent-child relation – with its innate drives of love and fear, and its rhythm of withdrawal and return. I argue that since moral friendship grounded in an intention and motive to love is the most fully realized expression of mutual relations, teacher-student friendship serves as the basis for both moral community and moral formation. I contend, therefore, that students ought to be viewed as co-participants in the moral life. It follows, then, that this demands critical and honest insight into the nature of our personal relations with students.

Three Conceptual Models of Community in Overview

In social philosophy and religion, three basic theoretical models of human association have been articulated in the last century or so. Few concrete communities are
living embodiments of any one model, and yet, like the concept of vocation, they offer us a 'concrete universal' – both a descriptive insight and an ideal to be aspired to. The basic modes are: (1) associations of atomized individuals contracting with each other in a context where power relations and a fear for personal security predominates; (2) functionally interdependent organs sustaining a larger organic whole; and (3) persons in relation, who by intention and love, seek the fulfillment of the personal Other. These conceptual models have been termed respectively, the atomistic (or contractarian), the organic (or functional), and the personalist (or personal/mutual).2 I will argue that the personalist model is the most comprehensive and inclusive community, for as Macmurray (1961/1999) seeks to demonstrate, the other two models, in both theory and practice, can be regarded as constitutive of, and subordinate to, a personalist model.

In the atomistic scheme of community, relationships are conceived as causal interconnections between independent units. Persons are related mechanically and deterministically, and differences are not intrinsic but rather are dependent upon social position and role, and therefore upon the exercise of power. This is clearly expressed in contractual relationships. Law and contract provide an impersonal and technical solution to the problem of community inasmuch as all parties seek through legal force to establish a measure of justice between one another.3

In the organic scheme, the unity of the community depends upon a differentiation of functions within individual, cooperative, interdependent units. While this corrects much of the isolating individualism of the atomistic model, a thoroughgoing organicism does the opposite – it destroys individuality by stressing the functional connections to other elements within the social whole. Further, if a person's value consists primarily in
their communal or social function, then there is nothing in the organic model to indicate what value individuals have when they can no longer function. Moreover, this model says little of the value of the functional whole itself — but even if it is claimed to be inherently good, this claim still reduces persons to their worth for the larger organic whole that they constitute.4

In the personalist scheme, persons are not essentially functional elements serving a greater whole; rather, organic wholes properly function to serve persons. This is because persons are more than mere organisms; they can both belong to and utilize organic wholes. Mutuality is more profound than simply the interdependent cooperation of individuals pursuing self-realization, for it entails an intention to live for others and not primarily for one’s self.

Moreover, while our liberal tradition, through its atomistic and contractarian model of association has secured for us a measure of personal freedom and opportunity to pursue self-interest, it has typically failed to consider what it is that personal freedom should be directed towards. Freedom is, I would maintain, widely presumed to be a good or end in and of itself. And yet, this freedom has not come without its costs — notably isolation, loneliness, and a fear of others trampling upon our rights and interests. In much of our community life today, this isolating autonomy and corresponding mistrust has had a damaging cyclical effect, for as our wariness of others grows, the more we rely upon exaggerated forms of protection. And, as Stanley Hauerwas (1981) points out, the personal and social costs are significant, for when we “view one another as strangers rather than as friends, ...we become all the more lonely”, and all the more desperate in our search for authentic community (p. 80). I want to argue, then, that the personalist
model of community offers a corrective, for it holds that human fulfillment is ultimately found in caring and living in the intentional committed love which communion with others offers.

Having examined the key elements in the three basic models of community, it remains to examine briefly how they interrelate – for in concrete experience they relate in complex and diverse ways. As I have already indicated, one of the great strengths of Macmurray's personalist conceptualization of community is that it *encompasses* the contractarian and organicist modes of relationship – but only as *functional infrastructures* that offer necessary but insufficient conditions for mutual, intentional love. In this view, then, in different communities and in different contexts, one mode or conception of community may become the more appropriate and operative one. That is, no one model appears to be entirely right all the time – each is characterized by different expectations for relationship with others, and differing means and conditions for meeting those expectations. Each serves to guide, justify, and evaluate the structures, purposes, and expectations in the concrete economic, political, and social spheres of life in which we live. Nevertheless, I wish to insist that relations centering on contract or on functionality must properly serve a greater end – the end indicated earlier in my premise – *an overarching intention to give primacy to care and love in relationships*. This is what Walter Jeffko (1999), following Macmurray, refers to as "the principle of community as the supreme standard of morality" (p. 3). (Clearly, then, to counter with the argument that the personalist mode of relation can be reduced to the individualistic or atomistic, and that the organicist mode offers a corrective to this, is to misunderstand or fail to appreciate the position I have laid out here. In a personalist community, contractual
(atomistic) or functional (organicist) transactions must always remain subservient to encountering others first as persons, with the intention of giving and receiving care and love in establishing and strengthening relationships).

The cooperation of members in a network of typically impersonal relations is a fact of institutional life, including a great deal of classroom life. Clearly, effectiveness and efficiency will always be institutional standards, and competence in fulfilling work-related expectations are appropriate within spheres of relation that are essentially both contractual and functional. Indeed, teaching professionals are widely valued in our society, not for themselves as persons, but for their competence and expertise. Certainly parents and students can rightfully expect a certain standard of professional service as they establish a working relationship with teachers. However, I am arguing that when this professional 'exchange' occurs within a personalist community – or even within the context of an individual practitioner who by intention and love seeks the fulfillment of students – these pragmatic spheres of relation must be subordinated to the more encompassing sphere of mutuality of relations. Thus, in enacting an ethic of vocation grounded in personalist community, practitioners are enabled to situate and render meaningful the various forms of association in which they cooperate which are not for the express purpose of being for the Other.5

Teaching a lesson in geometry or art or history, then, cannot be considered an end unto itself – and this is true of the entire web of contractual or organic relations in a classroom community. For ultimately these activities and relations must serve as a means to a greater end, the life of mutuality, and these do so through providing some of the tangible resources upon which such a life depends. Indeed, as Macmurray (1961/1999)
reminds us, “efficiency which is achieved at the expense of the personal life is self-condemned” and in the end self-frustrating, for it has denigrated “the very end for which it should be only a means” (pp. 187, 213). It is a mistake, I would argue, to assume that pragmatic standards — whether curricular, professional, or economic — properly serve as the defining standards of value for life as a whole. Rather, — and this is the heart of the matter — to deliberately and continuously intend a life of mutuality is to respond faithfully to the call of vocation, a call that beckons us to quest for deeper, integrating values and meanings — even religious ones. Dorothy Emmet (1958) appears to have understood all of this very well. This is why she could say forthrightly, “The language in which people try to talk of vocation is thus likely to be not the organic functional language nor the political purposive language, but religious language” (p. 254)

As a practitioner, if I discover, for example, that a student is experiencing difficulties in the classroom because of family problems, health concerns, or similar issues, then I should be fully prepared to set aside some of the taken-for-granted terms of the teacher-student relation in order to respond more humanly to the needs the student is experiencing. Such is a concrete image of what it means to intend mutuality of community. Of course, there always exists the need for discernment on the part of the teacher, lest certain students opportunistically take advantage of their commitment to care and serve. Moreover, in the specific contexts of a professional teacher-student relation, it may not always be appropriate or even possible to relate primarily in terms of mutuality. However, as Kirkpatrick (1986) puts it, when a student’s “human need touches me over and above the contract relationship, I must respond to it if the intention for inclusive mutuality is my... governing intention” (p. 214). In this way, I place the terms of the
student-teacher relation into the context of a more expansive and important intention, that of fostering mutuality whenever possible. Thus, it is when I experience a student’s need and vulnerabilities, that “I experience the other as a voice, as an appeal to me. And this is what we mean when we speak of our living with children as a vocation, a calling” (van Manen, 1991, p. 141). But, again, if I have not apprehended the proper relation between standards of professional action and my intention to fund mutuality, then I may confuse classroom efficiency or satisfying curricular mandates with the personal fulfillment of sacrificial service that ultimately occurs only in and through relations of mutuality.

Servanthood, I am arguing, is a central expression of what it means to be human. We are most fully and authentically ourselves as we enter into personal relationships and place ourselves at the disposal of others. It is precisely this disposition and action of self-giving love that, I contend, is legitimately carried over into our work lives. In this view, the service-orientation of vocation grounded in an intention for mutuality properly serves as the interpretative center for all of one’s teaching practice. All of us have experienced those teachers, who by virtue of their role or position tend to clutch at the influence and power they can wield, or who cling to the attention and esteem that comes their way. However, an ethic of vocation founded upon personalist community turns this upside-down: the intentional self-giveness of practitioners becomes the pathway for bestowing attention and esteem on students, and empowering them. It also becomes the pathway for establishing a classroom community whose members are initiated further into a life of mutuality.
It is rare to find educational theorists today who insist upon placing persons and personhood at the center of educational theory and practice. Patricia Carini (2001) is one of those rare scholars. She writes:

I start with us, with persons. I start with the conviction that how we see each other, the view we carry of the person, profoundly influences what we see as possible for us to make of our lives and of society. It is an influence felt both individually and collectively; it finds expression in all our political and social arrangements. (p. 100)

Carini wishes to stress that it is an ongoing labor to remain alive to this human complexity, human creativity, and human value. “To fail to keep the fullness of person, of humanness, consciously and actively in view has consequences” (p. 101), since that which is not attended to tends to disappear from view, and so it is discarded, denigrated, or dismissed as irrelevant. Such incursions upon personhood – or humanness and human value – ought to therefore be viewed with concern.

In this section, I have been arguing that if members of a personalist community intend above all to enjoy the mutuality of care, then material conditions and infrastructures must be provided for this realization. Of course, office staff, custodians, librarians, aides, administrators, and other personnel offer this support at the school level, and classroom teachers attend to these conditions in a multitude of ways – seeking out various learning resources, integrating new activities, arranging field experiences, all with the aim of fashioning meaningful experiences for students that stimulate curiosity and inquiry. Generally, atomistic and organicist modes of relating typically characterize the operation of the infrastructures in our society, but I have insisted that these are subordinate to, and find their higher purposes and meaning within, the inclusive whole of the mutual community. That is, the economic, political, and social spheres are crucial to
the effective functioning of schools and other communities – and they are regularly expressed through atomistic/mechanical and organic/functional dimensions – but community must not be reduced solely to these terms. What I am urging here is the integration of these dimensions into a comprehensive whole governed by the intention for mutuality of relation. This is precisely the thought of Dwayne Huebner (1963/1999) who chooses “conversation” broadly to denote relationship, just as Buber (1955) uses the word “dialogue” to reflect the quality of one’s relationship to another:

If the functional transactions are subservient to conversation, then man meets the other first as a person to converse with, then as a functional role. During or after or even preceding the conversation, the transaction may be carried on, but the giver and receiver have given and received more than their economically assigned product or process, they have given and received of each other. (1963/1999, p. 83, italics mine)

This vision of community, I would argue, cannot be dismissed by realists as utopian, for it seeks to be faithful to our everyday experience of various forms of association even as it advocates for the dynamics of loving relations. The governing principle by which these two dimensions are subordinated to the personalist relation is that of an overarching intention. And as I will explore shortly, this unifying concept of community has important parallels to the intentional agency within the personal I-Thou unity, as seen, for example, in a person’s subordination of ‘pragmatic’ (instrumental) and ‘contemplative’ (aesthetic) modes of relation to the ‘communal’ (moral or religious) mode (Macmurray, 1961/1999).

Some Moral Foundations of Personhood in Outline

William May (2000) reminds us that a central role of ethics in the professional sphere is to provide a sort of corrective lens which enables us to distinguish more
adequately between what *is* and what ought to *be*. This is meant to be an empowering endeavor since ethical theory at its best aspires to supply a renewing and liberating vision of practice. Ethical theory linked to practice expands our perspective, it corrects and qualifies our perceptions of practice, and in a limited way it enlarges our capacity for insight, decision and action. *Moral reflection* and *moral formation* are therefore central to professional ethics, and to the ethic of vocation that I have sought to articulate in this volume. Moral reflection seeks a revisioning of the world of practice, especially its foundations and ends, while moral formation seeks to fund the enactment of this vision. In a good deal of this chapter the exigencies of everyday teaching practice may appear somewhat removed from the discussion of moral foundations, but as I indicated at the outset, this discussion in my view is most necessary as it serves to illuminate the concrete issues of practice. In addition, while I do look to the insights of secular scholars – moral philosophers, developmental psychologists, and the like – it is a *religious or spiritual vision* that ultimately undergirds my discussion in this chapter, and this volume.

Macmurray develops a number of interconnected dimensions of personhood – including *mutuality*, *agency*, *reason* (or primary knowledge), and *friendship* – categories that have also been developed by other scholars of his work, including Walter Jeffko (1999) and Frank Kirkpatrick (1986). *Mutuality* signifies a relational theory of personhood wherein responsive relation is constitutive of personhood. The fundamental unit of personal existence expressive of this is the ‘You and I’ or the ‘I-Thou’ relation. In this view, the sphere of persons-in-relation is seen to be the inclusive context for all aspects of experience and culture. Mutuality would appear to be suggested at the core of Max van Manen’s (1991) understanding of pedagogical ‘tact’: it is “the practice of being
oriented to others”, in “a caring orientation”, “in thoughtful attunement to the other for the other”, thus “breaking the silence of my world, which is centered in the ‘I’” (pp. 139, 145, 141, 142). By contrast, atomistic individualism maintains that each of us is completely constituted as persons independent of others, and organicism reduces personhood and individuality to the level of functional interdependencies. The former privileges individuality at the expense of relationality, while the latter does the reverse, but the mutuality of personalism, I would argue, seeks to do full justice to both.

*Mutuality* is the context for *agency*, and the two serve as the broader context in which *reason* and *friendship* operate. Carini (2001) links the two in her image of an enacting, social self:

This is a self conceptualized not as a profoundly inner or psychological event, but an in-the-world, enacting self...a self intermingled at the root with other lives; a self plural in its own orientations and expressiveness; a self with a vital public, social permeability, both influencing and influenceable. (p. 43)

Agency, in Macmurray’s view, is more expressive of the relational aspect of mutuality, while thought expresses its individual aspect. Agency of the personal then, denotes that persons are primarily agents, and only secondarily thinkers. Thus, in giving the I-Thou relationship this metaphysical grounding, Macmurray seeks to overcome the philosophical dualism of mind and body, thinker and agent. These categories find their place in his central metaphysical thesis: “All meaningful knowledge is for the sake of action, and all meaningful action for the sake of friendship [community]” (1957/1991, p. 15). Persons are fulfilled, not merely in their *thinking* about others, but in their *active*, mutual relations with them – in friendships. Community, then, can only be adequately conceptualized if persons are viewed primarily as *agents*, (and only derivatively as
thinkers), fulfilling their natures through action intended to embrace others in loving mutuality. For if persons are essentially agents, then others are essential to one’s fulfillment – others who, worthwhile in themselves, are reached out to with intention and love. (I will argue later in this chapter that while love operates as the primary motive for friendship, the minimum constituent principles of friendship are freedom, equality, and justice).

Following Macmurray, Jeffko (1999) understands reason as “the capacity by which the agent-self determines how it should act and relate itself toward the other” and this he regards as equivalent to “self-transcendence: the self’s capacity to synthesize objectivity (primarily) with subjectivity (secondarily)” (p. 8, italics in original). Objectivity signifies a person’s capacity to feel, think, and act in terms of the Other; subjectivity is this capacity exercised for (or towards) the Self. In the synthesis of the two, each is the condition of the other. So, for example, the Self’s attentive care directed towards a personal Other is grounded in a subjective response to the objective needs of the Other (p. 8). Notice, in this synthesis, it is the knowledge of the objective reality of the Other that primarily determines the nature of the loving response from the Self, although the Self’s subjectivity freely initiates the response. Ultimately though – and this was emphasized in the last chapter – “I do not really experience the subjectivity of the other until I am able to overcome the centeredness of my self in the world” (van Manen, 1991, p. 140).

At this point, it would be instructive briefly to examine Macmurray’s (1961/1999, p. 112f) analysis of personal knowledge of the Other in its three fundamental modes – which derive from the three basic aspects of action: ends, means, and the interrelation of
ends and means. He distinguishes between contemplative, pragmatic, and communal modes of morality, that arise though these same three categories of apperception. In the contemplative (or aesthetic) mode, individuals resign themselves to conform their actions to the demands of the social order, for they view their private life as the sphere of personal authenticity and fulfillment. This is reminiscent of Parker Palmer’s outlook in the last chapter – individuals do meet their institutional and social duties, but they withdraw into a private world where their felt needs and ‘true’ selves can be realized. The fear that exists in relationships is a fear that others may disrupt ‘the center’ of one’s being. And so, relationships in the public world are largely scripted and automatic – drawing little upon the unique and personal aspects of an individual. Contemplative morality is the morality of social habit characteristic of the functional associations in the organic mode of community.

The pragmatic (cooperative or instrumental) mode of relation seeks to resolve conflicting desires and purposes through an individual’s appropriation of power. The problematic of action is to temper personal desires with the necessity to maintain social unity through cooperation (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 136). The norms of social conduct are legislated through law or contract, which serve as external motivators. The fear that exists in relationships is a fear that others may limit one’s personal freedom. And so, the morality of the law is invoked to quell this fear. Pragmatic morality is the morality of external control characteristic of the contractarian associations of the atomistic model of community.

I am arguing, with Macmurray, that the third or communal (moral or religious) mode of relationship is the only positively motivated form of relation, and the only one in
which individuals can be fully personal. In the communal mode one enters into a desire for personalist community established upon love, not fear. Action is dictated by a desire "to be with and for the other person" (Kirkpatrick, 1986, p. 181), that is, one intends in a direct way the positive welfare of others for their own sakes. The communal mode of relation ultimately encompasses the other two modes, which can be regarded as providing mutuality's necessary infrastructures. Its ground of morality is neither pragmatic nor contemplative, but rather, because the center of reference for the agent is the personal Other, morally right action is that which intends to maintain a community of agents.

These modes of apperception and relation can be distinguished still further. In contemplative morality, difficulties and fears of the real world are rendered unproblematic by withdrawing and taking the stance of a spectator, rather than a moral agent. An individual does not escape from practical cooperation with others, but they cease to consciously intend community since what is primary is the self-realization they achieve in a private world of feelings and imagination. Like the child who compliantly surrenders to the parent's wishes but who compensates by retreating into a fantasy world, so here a dualism exists between the world of idea and action: an ideal may be professed, but in practice it is not really intended. The pragmatic mode of morality is both the antithesis and complement of this. The reflective life is subordinated to the life of aggressive action, since it is through aggression that one can contend with the resistance of other agents. Reason is enlisted pragmatically to deal with the fear of others and to limit competition, thus achieving social unity based upon enlightened self-interest. However, I want to argue with Macmurray that pragmatic and contemplative modes are grounded in categorical misconceptions of human nature and relationship, leading to self-
frustrating actions between agents. This self-frustration arises through self-deception, in that we consider ourselves to be that which we are not. For when fear is our motivation, we appear to ourselves as isolated individuals who must defend, take action, and achieve success by our own individual efforts. In reality, our isolation is self-imposed, for it is a withdrawal from relationships based upon our fear of the Other. This attitude then, resembles a sort of adult version of the posture of the child whose parent withholds what he wants — it is a feeling sorry for oneself, out of fear for oneself.

The communal mode of morality is very different. I have argued here, with Macmurray (1961/1999, p. 149), that it is only in mutuality of relations that we come to be most maturely and authentically ourselves. We need fully positive personal relations grounded in fidelity, because such trust enables us to think, feel, and act together — in community. Carini (2001) takes this position. She contends

that it is the images, the ideas, the views of the person shaping a societal or educational vision that are the only reliable starting place, compass, and anchor for shaping a societal or educational vision. (p. 130, italics mine)

She urges a recovery of such images and ideas, insisting that they animate and vitalize our actions — even in a context where primacy is given to individual and economic interests. Maxine Greene (1986), for example, suggests that rather than viewing our class as a stratified group — with the most eager and promising at the top — we might instead imagine them to be a nascent community of persons, coming together in a space where each one is given an opportunity to come to voice and engage in meaning-making (p. 18).

Society that is based either upon force or upon consent is not communal since its object is to protect individuals in the pursuit of their private interests; both types of association presuppose fear. But community is for the sake of friendship and it
presupposes love. Our personhood is constituted in relation with others; our lives become invested with meaning and significance by others who care for us. This mutuality of relation provides the primary condition of our agency. Although proper ends (through pragmatic or scientific knowledge) and effective means (through valuational or aesthetic knowledge) are criteria of agency, they are insufficient when pursued for their own sakes, for in relating ends with means we must also consider our moral relation with other agents (Macmurray, 1961/1999, pp. 175-185, 211-222). So then, our capacity to act is problematical in the sense that it depends upon knowledge—particularly our interpersonal knowledge, for such knowledge conditions both our practical and reflective activities. Neither pragmatics nor aesthetics can extend this knowledge, for as I will go on to argue in this chapter, it can only be realized in mutual self-revelation, and this is only possible if fear of the Other is overcome by love, the love of friends. Moral (or religious) formation functions, in part, to secure this transformation of motives—fear into love—so that an adequate knowledge of the Other can be had. The motivational pattern rooted in fear and love is the theme that I will explore next by way of a discussion of its original and simplest context, family life. This will be followed by a consideration of the nature of self-revelation and friendship.

*Nascent Mutuality: The Parent-Child Relation*

In arguing for the fundamental relational significance of pedagogy, Max van Manen (1994) wishes to remind us that:

> Children do not grow in isolation or simply from within, such as seeds or acorns. It is only in certain relational contexts that the thinking life, the developing identity, the moral personality, the emotional spirit, the educational learning, and the social-psychological maturing of the young person occurs. (p. 141)
In both Macmurray's (1961/1999) and Gilligan's (1982/1993) analyses, an understanding into the complexity of how personhood solidifies through relationships, begins with insight into this most basic of relations, the parent-child bond. It is here that we find the essential elements of any fully personal relationship, and it is on these that I premise my subsequent analysis. First – and this sketch is by no means comprehensive – the intention for relationship is learned. If instinct is defined as a specific, unlearned adaptation to environment, then humans are born essentially without it since all our purposive behavior has to be learned. This does not minimize the inherited biological and psychological conditions for its development, but it certainly goes well beyond them. Infants are born utterly dependent upon adults for care, and this caring relationship is necessary for development, over and above the biological nurture required. It is through their capacity and impulse to express their comfort or discomfort that infants communicate with their caregivers. Physical presence, and physical contact in particular, are especially comforting – though these from a biological accounting appear to be unnecessary. The need and capacity is evidently a relational one (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 48).

Macmurray points to a second related element in the parent-child relation in which a nascent community is evident: the sheer delight of the relationship (p. 63). The Other is enjoyed – the relationship is enjoyed – intrinsically. Gestures of mutual enjoyment – caressing, rocking, crooning which are responded to with smiles, cooing, gurgles and the like – these would appear to serve no end beyond the relational. Third, and related to this, such mutual gestures exemplify the impulse to communicate, and it must be stressed, these gestures are the human infant's primary adaptation to the world.
Well before the infant demonstrates sustained reasoning there exists what Noddings (1984) terms the “natural inclination” and “capability of tenderness, of feeling, and reciprocation” (p. 120). Long before acquiring speech, children are able to communicate intentionally and meaningfully, and this, in Macmurray’s view, is sufficient to constitute the parent-child relation as the fundamental form of human existence, the mutuality of persons (1961/1999, p. 60).

Vivian Paley, in her *The Kindness of Children* (1999), recounts experiences of unsolicited, caring responses in school-age children, and at one point she wonders aloud, “How early does this inclination to be a friend [to another] in need show itself?” (p. 62). She goes on to share an account that illustrates not only the impulse to communicate, but also the desire to establish caring relationships, and the delight this brings:

I recall two babies in a day care center playing out a wordless scene, unnoticed by their teachers. Peter, not more than eighteen months old, having placed a ball at the edge of a table, is surprised when the ball rolls off and comes to a stop at Thea’s foot. In a crawling, partly walking maneuver, she returns the ball and stays to watch as Peter puts it back on the table. Again the ball rolls off. ...A frown spreads over Peter’s face as he retrieves the ball from under a cabinet. Hesitantly he repositions it on the table but this time, as he removes his hand, a tiny arm shoots out to keep the ball in place. Thea has pulled herself up to full height to come to Peter’s aid. The children stare at each other and then Peter smiles. A great and mysterious event has taken place and neither child moves to alter the balance until a bell sounds announcing snack time. (p. 62)

Of course, as children grow they develop a range of skills and dispositions that serves to support their intentional action. Personhood solidifies with the development of agency: the acquisition of a range of knowledge and skills, so that a system of intentions and a system of habits develops. Yet it must be emphasized here that this development – which originates in an infant’s helpless, random movements and gradually assumes a
continuity and hierarchy suggestive of conscious intention – has as its starting point the parent-child relation. So education is, from the start, a cooperative process demanding "the foresight, judgment and action of a mature person to give it an intentional form" (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 59). The reference and role of the caregiver is central, as for example when a parent models play and the child responds with a display which calls for attention, approval, and admiration of his or her success. In general – and this bears stressing given its prominence in the forthcoming argument – children learn to submit or subordinate their impulses, desires, or drives to an order and intention imposed by another person.

The fact that relationship is intended, delighted in, and founded upon communication has important implications for teacher-student relations, as I will seek to show. My premise throughout is that examining the process of development, or education, within the parent-child relation simplifies the analysis without taking us away from concrete experience. Though the child's personal life is far less complex than an adult's, through it we can apprehend something of the universal form of relation between every person and their world, at all of life's stages. Following Macmurray, I regard this account of the genesis of the personal as valid, for it does not significantly differ from an analytic account of mature experience, with respect to its formal conclusions (p. 107).

**Mutuality's Fundamental Drives: Love and Fear**

As infants grow towards parity with their parents, their growth features the interplay between what appear to be two dominant motives – love and fear. These are not so much conscious intentions or organic impulses, as they are innate drives which come to determine the dynamic structure of character. In their interplay, fear inhibits or
frustrates the positive actions that love intends, while the operation of love overcomes and drives out fearfulness. It would seem that this bipolar motivational pattern persists throughout life, generating highly diverse and complex actions — although our discrimination is often imprecise, and we often only come to attend to these motives through the emergence of emotions associated with inhibited or thwarted action. The communication and action that love and fear motivate can only be satisfied or completed by the responsive action of another person — and this responsiveness is the primary, distinctive characteristic of mutuality of the personal (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 69).

Now, this assertion should not be viewed as minimizing the place of other motives or drives in personal relationships, but in the limited space here I wish to underscore the primacy of love. Recall, at the outset of this chapter I presupposed that mutuality was deeply rooted in our need to love and be loved — and here I am arguing that our capacity to love is diminished or undermined by our socially constructed fears.

In one sense, love and fear operate, respectively, as a polarity of heterocentric and egocentric motives. In another sense, it is important to grasp the insight that fear is constitutive of and subordinate to the dominant motive of love. In the first place, fear is essentially egocentric: it is ultimately a fear for oneself, though it has its referent in others. We fear that others will fail to respond to our need and thereby frustrate our personal existence. For the potential exists that our overtures will not be met with a response — or at least the response we had hoped for. And so, our attitudes and actions become overly defensive, and concomitantly, our own perceived need tends to become the central referent for our action. Self-justification and self-concealment, resentment, anxiety, anger, and hate are among a family of negative intentions and feelings that may
emerge from egocentric fear. But these negative motivators cannot alone sustain a positive relationship since they oppose its very conditions; they presuppose a relationship but seek to frustrate or ruin it, thereby blocking mutual fulfillment. This is why Macmurray can say that such a "negative relation of persons is a practical contradiction" (p. 74). Notice, this contradiction characterizes the atomistic model of community. Recall that this model presupposes that fear underlies relationships, and it attempts to construct a social life through contractual arrangements that serve to domesticate and normalize these expressions of fear.

However, where love is the dominant motive, concern for the personal Other is seen as primary; Self concerns are no less real, but they are deliberately regarded as secondary.

Love of the other person for his or her own sake... has no purpose beyond itself. ... It is not a function of or condition for some higher goal. Simply being in loving relation to another person is fulfillment enough and can itself be the telos of human activity. (Kirkpatrick, 1986, p. 175)

Paradoxically, Other-centered love opens us up to a fuller realization of our own natures, allowing us to become more fully ourselves. Macmurray (1949) nicely captures this dual aspect of I-Thou love: it is "the capacity for self-transcendence, or the capacity to care for the other" (p. 80).

I wish to emphasize here, that this Other-directedness is very different from the relational pattern observed by both Jean Miller (1976, p. 83) and Carol Gilligan (1982/1993) in their studies of women who, in an attempt to establish and maintain affiliations, "paradoxically keep large parts of themselves out of relationship" (p. xxiv, italics mine). This was presumably because they had opted for "a socially constructed
feminine voice" (p. xvii) rather than one which resonated with their own deep values, meanings, and personhood. I would argue, though, that at its core the relational problem they identify is deeper than that of conventional expectations of relational and moral behavior. I suspect too that the problem is one that transcends gender. The root of the difficulty, I suggest, concerns the dual aspect of I-Thou love, and it inhibition by fear. Fear that love will not be reciprocated inhibits one's self-givenness in relationships. Fear also inhibits one's capacity to love and care for Self, the 'I' of the 'I-Thou' unity. Fear is by nature inhibitory, and it is fear that ultimately limits the spontaneity and expression of the Self, constraining its freedom in action.

However, as I indicated earlier a few pages back, it is important it recognize that fear may well operate as the negative and subordinate component of an emphatically positive and loving motivation. This is evident, for example, in those situations where we take prudent, caring action out of a fear that harm may come to ourselves or to another person. There are also those situations where fear functions to aid discrimination and strengthen our impulse to reflection, as when we take care to act lest we make an error or mistake. And, more importantly for our discussion here, are those situations where fear is subordinated to love when a caring or loving action is not reciprocated or responded to. While the refusal of loving mutuality serves to inhibit one's personal existence, fear and resentment need not be the inevitable response. Resentment can be subject to the control of intention, and thereby subordinated to the exercise of more complex and dominant loving motivations. And this, I want to emphasize, is so crucial in caring professions like teaching where students, for a host of reasons, may not respond to complete the circle of care. The inevitability of the potential for resentment developing is why patience,
generosity, and forgiveness are necessities of all positive personal relations – including teacher-student relations.

Margret Buchmann (1993) shares an abbreviated and adapted account from Iris Murdoch (1970) that usefully illustrates the importance of an active, positive, loving motivation in curbing resentment. At the start of the school year Miss Jacobs noticed that John’s moodiness, excitability, and overfamiliarity grated on her at times. Yet as the months passed by, she refused to attribute to John “any number of self-protective labels” (Kohl, 1967, p. 19): ‘immature’, ‘difficult’, ‘disruptive’ and the like. That is, she resisted making her aversive image of John more elaborated and fixed. Instead, she was careful to remain attentive to John’s particularities and goodness – his trusting and sensitive nature, his untutored intellect, his endearing awkwardness, and his generosity. And in the process, her nascent hostility gave way to protective and almost tender feelings towards him. By intentionally attributing to him a set of moral words with positive meaning, her perspective changed.

Buchmann stresses the importance of directing one’s attention towards students, rather than one’s own sensitivities, and seeing them “not just with accuracy but with kindness as a concrete person” (p. 171). Such responsiveness demands “setting aside self-centered feelings together with conventional and self-protective modes of classification” (p. 171), and actively exercising “skillful and well-informed exertions in the spirit of fellowship and kindness” (p. 170). Thus, through the enactment of a dominant loving intention, we see that Miss Jacobs expressed fidelity to John in her professional role, perceiving what was most excellent in him as a person, and responding
to this. Hugh Socke (1987) advocates a similar perspective, arguing that teacher professionalism must be grounded in a vocational ideal that values persons:

The service ideal rests in a teacher's commitment to growing persons, perceived as persons, and not... 'the shy,' or 'the boisterous,' or, for that matter, the 'gifted,' the 'disruptive', or the slow learner'. (p. 217, italics in original).

It would be instructive at this point to consider the perspective of Nel Noddings (2001) on this issue of unresponsiveness by the person being cared for. She articulates a caring orientation which is inherently relational and moral, however her insistence “that the reaction of the cared-for is essential in establishing a relation of one of caring” (p. 101, italics mine) would appear to be somewhat problematic. Her aim in excluding certain claims to care is surely a commendable one: many individuals have sought to excuse or justify their self-righteous, exploitive, or cruel behavior by claiming to care – despite the fact that such claims would be rejected by the cared-for. Noddings is careful to indicate that rejection of a claim to care by the cared-for does not in itself invalidate the claim, for time itself may transform an initial rejection of care into acceptance, but she wishes to emphasize that it does raise a concern calling for scrutiny. However, I want to argue that real difficulties arise when insisting that “every claim to care must eventually be grounded in the response of the cared for” (p. 102), or that: “When the cared-for recognizes our care the caring relation is complete” (p. 100). This is because the rejection of care may not be in view at all. For a variety of reasons, some students simply do not visibly acknowledge the authentically caring intentions or actions of their teachers, and these practitioners cannot necessarily be faulted for this. An inappropriate or inadequate response by the cared-for does not in itself imply a rejection of care either. I would argue, following Macmurray, that some students are unresponsive because fear
has come to be the dominant drive in their relational life, including their relationships with teachers. This fear can sustain an egocentrism that shapes a variety of negative personalities that resist relational responsiveness – from timidity and self-hate to selfishness and callous disregard. Herbert Kohl’s intriguing *I Won’t Learn From You* (1994) makes the case that ‘not-learning’ – an oppositional technique adopted by certain students to help them deal with oppressive circumstances – typically consists of “an active, ...willful rejection of even the most compassionate and well-designed teaching” (p. 2).

To be clear, Noddings does helpfully direct us to the cycle of responsiveness between carer and cared-for, which operates in loving relationships: attentive receptivity, motivational displacement, and action on the part of the carer, and a corresponding visible response in return by the cared-for (p. 100). It is evident from her earlier work (1984), that she has in mind the responsiveness of mutual relation. However, as I have pointed out, it would seem that she has not qualified mutuality sufficiently, for in concrete relationships where care is exercised, such acknowledgment is a regular, but I would argue, *not an invariable* feature of mutual relation. Responsiveness is a *gift* that is not always forthcoming, and to insist upon it is to move an ethic of relation or care into the sphere of the *ideal*. That is, while Noddings (1984) seeks to maintain that her ethic is an “attainable ideal” (p. 112), I would argue that a positive response by the cared-for is, ultimately, an idealized expectation.

Citing her at length, Noddings (2001) writes:

The carer is characterized by receptive attention and motivational displacement; the cared-for contributes by acknowledging the care, sometimes directly, sometimes in seemingly spontaneous growth that can
be easily traced (whether voiced or not) to the efforts of the carer. ...the responsive grin, a spark in the student’s eye, a spurt of growth, or a courteous gesture toward a fellow student – some sign that the caring has been completed. Without such signs, teachers become exhausted or, in today’s language, ‘burned out’. (p. 100)

Uncharacteristically, Noddings appears to have lapsed into overstatement here regarding the nature of student response, for “such signs” are not always “easily traced”; indeed as I have indicated, they may be utterly absent. Further, the connection she makes between student unresponsiveness and burnout is correct in so far as it goes. I have argued though, that when practice is conceived of as vocation, what is paramount in the student-teacher relation is the governing intention for mutuality. Its actualization and reciprocation is derivative, uncertain, subject to temporality, and is therefore, an unreliable source of sustenance, renewal or vision for the educator. Servanthood demands a subtly different stance in mutual relations. Servant-teachers would naturally prefer to have their caring actions acknowledged – for such appreciation strengthens the relation itself and speaks of moral growth on the part of the cared-for – but their service does not rest upon a positive response. And this brings me back to the point Macmurray was making, almost in passing: where a caring action is not reciprocated, mutuality is not necessarily inhibited. Unresponsiveness serves to activate fearfulness and to potentially block personal fulfillment, but this fear and frustration can be subordinated to the exercise of a firmly rooted, dominant, loving motivation. The exercise of such love is more than merely an “attitude”, as Noddings (2001) herself perceives – for it “points to something deeper and more important – a way of being in the world” (p. 99).

In love, one finds delight in the Other for his or her own sake. Therefore, I would argue, such love primarily finds fulfillment in the act of caring – even though it
anticipates a response and finds ultimate fulfillment when love is reciprocated. Importantly though, love for the Other is not expressed primarily as a avenue for self-fulfillment, for in one respect this denies the uniqueness and moral agency of the Other, and it distorts the symmetric duality of I-Thou love. In love, one is willing to sacrifice one’s own interests and needs for the Other, yet such a positive personal relation generates a fulfillment that is neither rooted in exploitation nor self-diminishing altruism. Both individuality and the intention for mutuality ideally characterize the love relation. Therefore the I-Thou relation can neither be an extension of basically egocentric wishes, nor a dissolving of individuality through the merging or fusion of selves.

Mutuality’s Rhythm of Withdrawal and Return

Following Macmurray, it is my premise that our development of cognition — our capacity to discriminate personal, organic, and material worlds — is determined by our relationships. Self has its correlate in the Other, and the knowledge and discrimination of one requires a correlative knowledge and discrimination of the other. Beginning with our mother, the personal Other is gradually differentiated in experience until it takes on the character of a community of which we are members. Discrimination of the Other is both the beginning of our knowledge and the expectation of its continuance (Macmurray, 1961/1999, pp. 76-82).

What emerges from the start in this discrimination, is a rhythm of withdrawal and return in the parent-child relationship — in tactile contact, language, and other communication — which, I would argue, is properly carried over into later learning relations including the teacher-student relation. Such rhythms or patterns no doubt establish themselves in the infant’s consciousness as expectations rooted in memory, and
therefore contribute to the beginnings of knowledge. This pattern is evident, for instance, when young children come to expect an invariant repetition of familiar aspects of a story or game. This learning to wait in expectancy revolves around the child’s recognition of the need for an adult to act on his or her behalf. In time, growing anticipation, even discomfort or anxiety, comes to be subordinated to the positive confidence in the arrival of an expected response.

But if children are to grow into independence, then they must learn to do for themselves what has always been done by the parent. Thus, the caregiver must at times, in love, intentionally refuse to demonstrate certain expressions of care. Typically, young children take this to be a breakdown in relationship since the parent does not respond as usual to their need. Suddenly, with the constants of experience withdrawn, they are cast back upon themselves, and isolation seems a threat to their existence. This serves to activate the negative pole in their motivation system: fear. Activity becomes centered on Self, for the primary concern is the immediate defense of Self in a world seemingly indifferent to their needs. Of course, this withdrawal is mitigated in various ways by the caregiver, for their overall aim is to impel the child to overcome the challenge presented, and the anxiety induced, and restore the normal dominance of the positive motive, love. Where successful, there is a certain pleasure for the child, not only in the return to relationship, but also in acquiring the capacity or skills formerly possessed only by the parent.

This dynamic of withdrawal and return constitutes, for Macmurray, a unity of personal experience: withdrawal is for the sake of return, funding individual development in a context of mutual relations (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 91). In this view,
individuality is not a given, but is an achievement – one achieved, paradoxically, through the progressive differentiation of the I-Thou unity. Both Macmurray and Gilligan (1982/1993)\textsuperscript{18} stress that the separation and attachment rhythm in development persists into adulthood – though it is Macmurray who demonstrates that this dynamic is a matter of both intention and of illusion. In the instance of the child, the parent’s intentional refusal is an illusory one, for in reality the withdrawal is an expression of continuing care and love. Its effect though, is to temporarily shift the child’s attention and interest inward, and although fearfulness may temporarily ensue, it is a necessary phase of self-conscious self-assertion for the sake of learning.\textsuperscript{19}

And yet, the fact that children do learn functional skills and capacities does not in itself reflect satisfactory moral development. This, I would argue, is because the “quality of a person” is linked to the quality of their personal relations, and this in turn centers on the nature of their persistent motive underlying those relations – whether fear or love (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 95). For it is not enough that the youngster eventually learns what the parent – through withdrawal – requires. The successful overcoming of fear, and the corresponding return to the positive motive of love and to relationship, are also vital. Fear in the child, even residual fear, that the caregiver is against them, can issue in either compliant or aggressive behavior – both are defensive and egocentric reactions that perpetuate the illusion of parental withdrawal. Either way, I would argue that the discerning caregiver is compelled to resist the child’s self-deception, for if self-interested intention were to succeed then at most only a reciprocity of cooperation would be secured in the relationship. But reciprocity falls short of mutuality, for it typifies atomistic and organic relations. The adult’s task – which is never achieved flawlessly – is to reassure
the child that their fears are illusory, and that the withdrawal is for their own sake. Of course, such reassurance is predicated upon the child’s *trust* in the caregiver, which is itself strengthened and maintained through continuing demonstrations of care and love.

Macmurray indicates that the child’s recognition that the Other was not really against them, is one which carries two implications of formal significance (p. 100). First, the understanding that the child was mistaken in his or her valuation of the Other, that the caregiver was indeed good, serves as the formal basis of *moral* experience. And second, it provides the formal basis of *intellectual* experience, for in highlighting the distinction between true and false, it provides the child with the recognition that their experience was too limited, their views too simplistic. These implications also hold for adult relationships, as Gilligan (1982/1993) recognizes: “shrinking from the truth creates distance in relationships, and separation removes part of the truth” (p. 157), and I might add, the withholding of active moral concern correspondingly creates distance in relationships, and outright isolation diminishes the universal moral community.

In the context of teacher-student relations, Dwayne Huebner (1985/1999) makes the claim that a central aim of teachers ought to be the extension of loving reassurance to students as they face the stranger, the Other. He points out that the fearfulness in students that acts to inhibit relation with the Other is a fearfulness that also extends to the non-personal Other – the strangeness of subject matter. The task of educators, he argues, is not merely that of teaching content, but of inviting students into the, oftentimes threatening, presence of the stranger and the strange. Huebner also understands, as Macmurray does, that this requires *discrimination* of the Other from Self: “We cannot recognize the invitation if we look at the other as a mirror image or extension of our own
self” (1985/1999, p. 361). Encounter with the Other entails fear for “it carries with it participation in death as we willingly or perhaps forcefully give up part of ourselves” (p. 363). To “transcend ourselves”, to “become what we are not” yet, and so to allow “education to happen” – this is threatening because it involves a death to Self, to taken-for-granted ways of thinking and being (pp. 360, 361).

How, asks Huebner, can the threat to Self – the threat of the unknown, the strange, the alien – how can this threat and fear and loss be faced? Like Macmurray, his answer is that one can find the required reassurance in love. The reassurance is found in not being alone but “in the presence of love which affirms life” (p. 363), and this is why Huebner can insist: “Those who claim to be educators must care for, indeed love, those whom they would presume to educate” (p. 364). As students struggle to transcend or reach beyond themselves, it is love that brings wholeness again. Love “heals the differences within us. It reconciles the new tensions and divergences in our life” (p. 364). Huebner elaborates upon the healing which love offers, bringing reconciliation or reintegration within three spheres: the unity of Self’s thought, feeling, and action; the integrity between past memories and future dreams; and the wholeness of the social fabric. About the first sphere he writes:

Trust, patience and conversation provided by one who cares or loves provides the time, support, and language necessary to bring discordant feelings, thoughts and actions into new unity. A relationship of love and care is a relationship of assurance – assurance that you will not be overcome by the stranger... though you are no longer what you were but have taken on new life and new membership in the world. (1985/1999, p. 364)

Notice Huebner’s normative claim: the work of educators is solidly grounded in personal relation, and out of this relation they can offer genuine reassurance – overcoming fear
with love. Their task is that of being with another, listening them into consciousness (1987/1999, p. 385), inviting them into new hopes and dreams, celebrating new life with them and new membership in a world which is a little less alien (1985/1999, p. 364).

Noddings (1984) makes remarkably similar normative claims, claims that go beyond Huebner’s:

The one-caring wants her child to refer his ethical dilemmas to the ethical ideal of caring, and she must show him how to do this. She talks with him about feeling — his own, hers, and those of others. She invites his observations because she is concerned about his developing receptive capacities. Most important of all, she listens to him, and both her listening and her advice are perceptive and creative rather than judgmental. (p. 121)

Noddings is more explicit than Huebner that the educator’s governing intention is for mutuality; apprenticing the child into an ethic or ideal of care is one vital aspect of this (see also pp. 122, 187). Her emphasis is upon the central importance of transparent dialogue in nurturing this ethical ideal — an ideal which she sees as springing from both our natural empathy for others, and from our “longing to maintain, recapture, or enhance our most caring and tender moments” (p. 104). One might recall here, the congruence between this normative ethic or working ideal and my earlier affirmation that education has its genesis in a similar relational context — a parent-child relation that is intended, delighted in, and founded upon communication. One might also add here that the heritage educators can look to in fashioning such an ethic of relation is the vast tradition of love and care which spans centuries, generations, and cultures — a tradition kept alive in communities, especially faith communities. This heritage is neither mere abstraction nor historical narrative, but it continues to be a living tradition, embodied in individuals who have themselves received love and care, and who know that without them, life
becomes hollow and meaningless (Huebner, 1985, pp. 363-364). In a later chapter, The Call of Memory and Imagination, I will explore some strands of this tradition.

I have been arguing in this section that the original and universal personal drive, which prescribes the ground pattern for behavior and habit, is the establishment and maintenance of a loving relation with the Other. In personal development, the Other becomes increasingly discriminated through a rhythm of withdrawal and return, (or separation and attachment), which is a persistent feature of the life of mutual relations. Separation is for the sake of broader transformative attachments. As a practical ideal, then, a person must attempt to build positive relations motivated by love, and exercise control over negative motives arising from fear – this is the fundamental problem in all of personal life. Gilligan (1982/1993) takes a similar view – in her study into the relational life and moral development of young adults, she perceives that to a large extent,

male and female voices speak of the importance of different truths, the former of the role of separation as it defines and empowers the self, the latter of the ongoing process of attachment that creates and sustains the human community. (Gilligan, 1982/1993, p. 156, italics mine)

It is her overarching thesis that an integration of both processes is vital if relationships are to progress toward a maturity of interdependence and mutuality. Our particular interest has been the conditions and implications of overcoming fear with love in the context of teaching as a vocation. Educators must regularly exercise this discipline themselves, as I argued in the last section. But, like parents, they are also ideally placed to encourage and support this same effort in their students. If through intention and action teachers work with students to establish a mutual relation, then in time, one would expect corresponding intentions to freely emerge from students. For the ground for morally right action, and
therefore for all community – even classroom community – lies in this unity or mutuality of intentions.

**Constituent Principles of Mutuality in Relations of Friendship**

An intention for mutuality opens up the possibility for intimacy and self-revelation, and although in a large group such as a classroom the full realization of the potentiality for mutuality is more limited, it is no less real. Earlier I made the point that in the cooperative efforts of organic relations, the vast majority of associations are functional, indirect, and impersonal. And yet, Macmurray (1949) argues, “it is very difficult to imagine a persistent cooperation of two persons for a common purpose which excluded friendship as its basis” (p. 71, italics mine). (Persistent cooperation aside, our joint humanity is evident even when, for instance, we stop and offer assistance to a stranger; our gesture is more an expression of friendship or fellowship than it is a cooperative association). Macmurray’s position, however, contrasts with the view that education is incompatible with friendship – that either educative intent or friendship operates. But I wish to argue that when vocation is conceived of as an integrated life-practice, this dichotomy loses its force.

As important as the organizational culture of classrooms is, it can only symbolize mutuality of relation; it is only in direct relations, that love and care can be realized. Therefore, I would argue with Macmurray, that to better understand mutuality within community, we must examine the constituent values or principles underlying its simplest and most fully realized expression – friendship. First of all, a friendship, unlike an organic relation, is not constituted by a common purpose since friends are primarily interested in one another, and not what they can achieve in cooperation. And second, it
follows that friendships cannot be structured or organized – therefore friendship does not find its basis or expression in functional differences or in a subordination of one person to the other. Instead, friendship

is a relationship that at one level is simply mutual delight in the presence of each to the other. …free of the complications of our other primary loves – free of guilt, fear, jealousy, resentment. (McFague, 1987, p. 160)

Expressed in positive terms, then, the constitutive principles of mutuality would appear to be equality and freedom. “It is the mutual intention to treat one another as equals and to be free in relationships” argues Macmurray, “that makes us friends” (1949, p. 74). But Macmurray also makes clear elsewhere (1961/1999, p. 188f) that friendship, like community, is also premised upon justice. Therefore, I wish to affirm that friendship necessarily has love, (or at least affection), as its motive, and equality, freedom, and justice as its minimum, primary constituent principles.

Friendship is fundamentally a relation between equals – although this does not imply that only equals can be friends. The latter view presupposes a relation defined primarily in terms of function, status, or a similarity of interests, gifts, or virtues. Hannah Arendt (1968) takes this position, worrying that attempts at equalization are “accomplished only at the cost of the teacher’s authority” (p. 180). However, personal equality need not disregard either natural and functional differences or sources of authority – it does however transcend or override them. And because such differences can be transcended, friendship is “potentially the most inclusive of our loves, for... its Other can be anyone” (McFague, 1987, p. 164). Thus, any two persons, regardless of differences in abilities, rights, or roles, can exercise the intention to acknowledge and treat each other as equals, and therefore as friends. Such equality, then, rests on an
ontological foundation, since primacy is given to a common nature and a shared personhood. Paulo Freire (1970/2001) captures something of this intention with his pedagogical image of ‘teacher with student’: “teacher-student with student-teacher” as “critical co-investigators” in a joint enterprise of dialogue and discovery and ontological becoming (pp. 80, 81; compare p. 93). In a similar vein, Herbert Kohl (1976) argues that students are the moral equals of teachers, that they possess moral rights, and therefore teachers have a duty to be sensitive and caring and to respond openly to their criticisms (pp. 84-85). By contrast, to intend unequal relations is to ignore our common human status, and to surrender to the temptation to use another person as a means to one’s own ends. It is to presume “a relation between an inferior and a superior; and such a relation excludes friendship. It is a relation of master and servant” (Macmurray, 1949, p. 73).

Personal freedom, the second constitutive principle of friendship, dictates that the relation can neither be established nor sustained through duty, utility, desire, or force of will. As such, it allows for unconstrained self-expression and self-revelation, one to the other – each “freely gives to and freely receives from the person he meets” (Huebner, 1963, p. 76). In a friendship relation, both persons can actualize their freedom as agents, for when fear for the Self is subordinated to love, then neither person feels constrained to ‘act a part’ – each is free to be fully themselves. Moreover, equality and freedom cohere – they fit into a consistent and unified whole – so that efforts to achieve one without the other in building friendship are doomed to fail. It should also be noted here, that ‘Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity’ functions as significantly more than a democratic slogan, for it captures the essential principles of friendship: to relate freely as equals is to achieve fellowship or a community of persons.20 Paradoxically, mutuality of persons lies
both within our experience and beyond us. Equality and freedom remain both constitutive principles and community ideals to be quested after – they may be fully intended, but they are probably never fully realized. And while never fully realized, it is each imperfect or partial realization that brings to life new possibilities for more extensive and deeper realization. Carini (2001) shares this sentiment:

Neither the principles of liberty, justice, equality nor an education that reciprocates those principles for all children is ever fully achievable in actuality. Yet, although unattainable, it is unthinkable that as citizens and educators we would not put those principles... as first priorities in our aims for education.... (p. 52)

How, it might be asked, does justice – the third constitutive principle – fit into this picture? The focus of my analysis so far has been two persons in isolation from all other relationships. Yet if a friendship remains exclusive to all others, then its motive is a negative (since the two friends must defend against intrusion) and this undermines the very relationship itself. In “true friendship” however, as C. S. Lewis reminds us, “Two friends delight to be joined by a third, and three by a fourth” and so one (p. 92). That is, mutuality of relation must intend in principle a universal inclusivity of persons – a community. Justice, then, serves to establish and maintain this inclusivity or equality of relation. In a sense, justice exhibits a certain moral ambiguity. On the one hand, it seems such a meager virtue, expressing the bare minimum of reciprocity we can rightfully expect of another person. When seen against moral qualities like generosity, benevolence, and mercy – qualities that involve “a positive readiness to sacrifice self-interest for the sake of others” – justice appears only to express the lower limit of required moral behavior (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 188). On the other hand though, justice appears to be the very distillation of moral action without which the higher virtues
lose their meaning. That is, without justice, the exercise of other moral virtues becomes illusory or self-deceiving. Justice functions to safeguard the inclusiveness of the moral reference, the Other. And so it is that to be merciful to some at the expense of others is to be merciful without being just. Justice maintains the inclusivity, and thereby the equality, of persons in relation.

These constitutive principles of mutuality are underscored at the conclusion of Carol Gilligan’s (1982/1993) influential feminist work in developmental psychology. She argues for the convergence of two ethics: an (Kantian) ethic of justice and equality, and an ethic of care grounded in mutual relations wherein love is the motive and the value of freedom meets the needs of both Self and Other (p. 174; see also 1988b, p. 8f). Earlier in her book, Gilligan not only affirms, (as Macmurray does), the generative place of the parent-child relation in these two ethics, she also highlights two other themes that I have stressed: the necessity of relationship for self-knowledge, and the importance of differentiation in a person’s moral growth:

The experiences of inequality and interconnection, inherent in the relation of parent and child, then give rise to the ethics of justice and care, the ideals of human relationship – the vision that self and other will be treated as of equal worth, that despite difference in power, things will be fair; the vision that everyone will be responded to and included, that no one will be left alone or hurt. These disparate visions in their tension reflect the paradoxical truths of human experience – that we know ourselves as separate only insofar as we live in connection with others, and that we experience relationship only insofar as we differentiate other from self. (Gilligan, 1982/1993, pp. 62-63)

As I noted earlier in this chapter, Gilligan’s central thesis is that what is needed is a more fully integrated conception of Self and of moral development, one which includes dominant perspectives of both sexes: neither an individualistic self-knowledge that
impedes the formation of responsive and caring relations, nor an Other-directedness and attachment that impedes the recognition and agency of Self (pp. xx, 127, 156, 163).

Morality expresses the universal intention to secure and maintain community, as the condition of agency. Actual community consists only in direct personal relations (relations with those we are actually acquainted with), and therefore in indirect relations, community must always be potential. This means that whenever we do come into direct relation with another person, we should welcome the prospect of becoming friends. That is, we must be positively motivated to intend community – to befriend. Of course, actualization of the intention to friendship is only fully achieved between those persons who care wholly for the other. In this context, justice would seem to be entirely transcended, as Thomas Green (1999, p. 93) tries to argue. But as I have sought to demonstrate in this section, justice is a constituent and subordinate aspect of the caring relation; like freedom and equality, it is for the sake of friendship. Love and care for another is moral (and just) only if it intends to preserve the freedom and equality of other moral agents.

**The Necessity of Friendship in the Moral Life**

The view that the moral life is necessarily a shared life is one of the most compelling aspects of Aristotle’s account of perfect friendship – a view shared by such contemporary moral philosophers as Martha Nussbaum (1986) and Stanley Hauerwas and Charles Pinches (1997). In the journey that is our lives, none of us travels alone – friends not only lend a hand during difficult times, they are party to our own fulfillment and happiness. In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle makes no attempt to justify friendship on the basis that it serves to fund self-development; rather he regards it as integral to any
self-contained and fully complete life (1097b1-20). His account of friendship dispels the notion that the quest towards happiness -- which is essentially an activity, not a condition or a feeling -- is either a solitary or heroic endeavor. He makes this point in the context of friendship: happiness demands both learning and practice, and the virtues required for it are learned not in private, but in communities of friends (1169b28-1170a3).

In his account, Aristotle distinguishes between three sorts of friendship: those of usefulness, of pleasure, and of virtue. Friendship grounded in usefulness or pleasure tends to be short-lived, dissolving when one partner no longer seems pleasant or useful to the other (1156a-20). By contrast, perfect friendship -- that based upon shared virtue or excellence -- wishes good to the other for the sake of the other, and this makes for an enduring relationship (1156b4-12). Aristotle goes on to say:

Friendship is equality and likeness, and especially the likeness of those who are similar in virtue. Because they are steadfast in themselves, they are also steadfast toward one another... for what characterizes good men is that they neither go wrong themselves nor let their friends do so. (1159b4-12)

Constancy or integrity is a necessary quality for friendships of character since it offers a context for mutual growth. This is significant, for if constancy is central to the life of virtue, then it serves as a corrective for the mistaken notion that virtuous persons are self-sufficient; notice here, each friend helps the other from falling into unworthy behavior. This in turn, argues Hauerwas and Pinches (1997, p. 36), serves to counter the objection that friendship requires seemingly perfect virtue and is therefore unachievable in this life. Now Aristotle acknowledges character friendship to be relatively rare, not only because mutual familiarity demands time, but also because most people seek friendship for pleasure or usefulness (1158a10-16). But, as Hauerwas and Pinches interpret his
account, if perfect friendship involves a growth in relationship and in virtue, then even friendships of pleasure or utility may well develop into perfect friendships (p. 37). Significantly, this insight parallels Macmurray's claim that relations centering on contract or functionality properly serve the greater end of relations marked by an overarching intention for mutuality of love and care. Aristotle himself offers an illustration: while some romantic relationships fade as youthful attractiveness fades, other romantic friends continue to remain constant if familiarity has led them to love each other's character (1157a6-12).

Aristotle's thesis, then, is that it is through friends that we are formed, strengthened, and sustained in life's journey -- though friendship is not to be thought of as instrumental to a flourishing life, but as constitutive of it. So then, we do not first become virtuous, establishing a sort of equality requisite for friendship, and then seek out friends. Equality may be the eventual or ultimate demand for perfect friendship, but it is not necessary from the outset. Equality emerges as friends grow toward goodness, for through the activities of friendship we acquire constancy and virtuous dispositions as we learn fidelity to Self and Other. Importantly, the lesser forms of self-serving friendship can potentially tutor or guide us in the direction of a deepening, mutual relation, if we come to see that they are subordinate to, and find their greater meaning within, the integrating whole of mutual community.

Both Green (1984, p. 19; 1999, p. 96) and Noddings (1984, p. 148f.) point out that there are contexts -- like friendship, or the care of pets, or membership -- that move us in the direction of becoming persons in which one's moral voice or conscience comes to have its own strength. In such relations, empathy becomes transformed from a latent
presence to a concrete moral exercise or practice, and ultimately, to a disposition. The acts of kindness and care within a moral friendship regularly extend beyond those of either merit or justice – they are gifts of self, if you will. And it is because these acts are primarily “other-regarding” that they are not so much self-denyingly sacrificial as they are “self-indifferent” and, ultimately, “self-fulfilling” (Green, 1999, p. 94). It is the sort of self-indifference that emerges through making oneself known to others, and overcoming the fear of possible rejection. This self-indifference matures as relationships deepen in trust and love, allowing self-revelation to hold less vulnerability and risk. It is only in relations of friendship, I would argue, that Self is most honestly and completely revealed – for there are facets of oneself known to others but unknown to oneself, and what one discovers through a friend are precisely these aspects of Self. Therefore, together with Green, I regard it as educationally significant that moral conscience is shaped and strengthened “within the practices of friendship” (1999, p. 95).

We can, of course, come to know a great deal about others without knowing them personally, in an I-Thou relation. But even within personal relations, where the Other can only be known through genuine self-revelation, at times what is communicated is not really what is thought or felt by the person at all. In the context of teacher-student relations, this highlights the value of attentive, inviting, and empathetic listening – listening for what is not being communicated by one’s students. Margret Buchmann (1993) comments that while individual students possess their own unique urgencies, one can apprehend these “only if one has felt them, somehow, oneself” (p. 163). The issue becomes a challenging and perplexing one

when other people – friends, students, patients – cannot or will not reveal what is urgent to them or what is an impelling, prompting, or constraining
force in what they think, feel, and do. So one must learn to hear secret harmonies, but one must hear them accurately and also resonate to them. (p. 163, italics mine)

Not only does learning to hear require a teachable and listening heart – one that can only be formed in caring relationships – the task itself demands a certain balance: being vitally engaged but also restrained, being inquisitive yet respectful of privacy, devoted yet sensitive to individual freedom.24

A very different disposition – one that, sadly, is all too prevalent amongst practitioners – is a sort of impersonal disengagement or clinical indifference that acts to inhibit self-revelation in students. So it is that whether we apprehend our students impersonally or personally, we still form an image or idea of them – it is just that the one is superficial and illusory, while the other is insightful and authentic. Using this same visual imagery, Max van Manen (1996) comments:

We compare the analytical and detached glance which coolly observes and judges from above as it were, with the sympathetic glance which establishes contact and searches for pedagogical understanding in a dialogical relation… [a] personal relationship. (p. 44)

Importantly then, our genuine knowledge of others is in proportion to our love for them; illusory knowledge is proportional to our fear for ourselves. It is in this distinction, Macmurray (1961/1999) argues, that the fundamental problematic of the moral life can be understood. For moral reflection will be inescapably illusory if it is rooted in the fearful defensiveness of egocentricity, but it will possess authentic potency if it is grounded in the love of heterocentricity. Carol Gilligan (1982/1993) understands this well:
intimacy becomes the critical experience that brings the self back into connection with others, making it possible to see both sides – to discover the effects of actions on others as well as their cost to the self. (p. 163)

And Gilligan goes on to emphasize that this knowledge rooted in intimacy, this knowledge vital for moral growth, is a kind of knowing whose epistemology and fundamental constructs of interpretation resembles “the Biblical conception of knowing as a process of human relationship” (p. 171). Parker Palmer (1983/1993) also stresses the significance of our knowing in relationships, for the purpose of deeper relationship (p. 53). He perceives that:

relationships... require inner understanding of the other, which comes from empathy; a sense of the other's value, which comes from love; a feel for its origins and ends, which comes from faith; and a respect for its integrity and selfhood, which comes from respecting our own. (p. 53)

The mutuality of self-revelation, then, contains an inherent paradox: I can only really know others if they are my friends, and I can only really know myself through those I love – my friends. As I emphasized in the section on ‘withdrawal and return’, this assertion has important implications for the intellectual and moral formation of students. But our interest primarily concerns the moral formation of practitioners – therefore I wish to also argue for the importance of teacher-student friendship as a basis for community in fashioning and enacting an ethic of vocation. I have two further points in this regard in concluding this section. First, the manner in which I have qualified my understanding of this friendship is such that it encompasses ‘a caring, personal relation’ – an important, though not uncommon topic in educational scholarship. However I want to suggest that what is missing from this literature is the image of teacher-student friendship. I believe that the image of friendship – its various associations and affects – is a useful and
valuable one, one that extends beyond a generic 'caring' stance. Like servanthood portrayed in the last chapter — and mentorship and covenant in succeeding ones — friendship can serve as a compelling image or metaphor for practitioners in their life's work.

Whereas some metaphors serve as little more than decorative symbols, others possess a real and vital function to energize and direct as they shape and order one's perceptions and experience, and supply an individual with imperatives to live by. They provide a meaningful and powerful internalized self-perception that defines a person's sense of the world and their agency in it — including their professional role. And as such they offer both "cognitive significance" and "corrective vision" in enacting this role (May, 2000, p. 5). The four metaphors I have suggested are by no means the only ones practitioners can look to, but I would argue that they are indispensable to clarifying and characterizing vocation because they are universal, and as May (2000) perceives, they are prototypical. They are universal in the sense that their enactment is normative virtually everywhere, at all times, and under all pedagogical conditions. They are prototypical or archetypal in that they communicate a story — a story distilled in vivid relief such that its essential features stand out. In this way these metaphors offer a sort of storyline by which practitioners can write their own unique vocation-stories. In other words, they illuminate the metaphysical setting in which educators then act out the basic script of their lives. Servanthood, friendship, mentorship, and covenantal images capture in themselves aspects of the human condition which can govern the responses of professionals who — with heart, mind, soul, and strength — freely choose to sacrifice as a servant; to love and care as a friend; to guide and model as a mentor; and to give
themselves with fidelity as a covenanter. Behind all these images lies the concept and image of teaching as vocation — vocation is the central, unifying image in which the other metaphors find their place and coherence, as well as their full power and meaning.26

My second point concerning teacher-student friendship relates to the broader field of teaching as a moral activity. David Hansen (2001b), after a thorough survey this field of scholarship, goes on to identify the topic of the moral formation of teachers in the midst of practice, as one deserving of future inquiry (pp. 852-853). Clearly, insight into the nature of the influence of student-friends on the moral life of their teacher-friends falls squarely within this topic. ‘Influence’, as Max van Manen (1991) puts it, “connotes the openness of a human being to another” (p. 16), and he suggests that pedagogues are themselves influenced in that “children show us what we are able to make of our... shared world” (p. 15). Dwayne Huebner (1966/1999) directs us to reflect upon the nature of this mutual influence: “Educational activity is ethical when the educator recognizes that he participates in his human situation of mutual influence, and when he accepts his ability to promise and to forgive” (p. 112).

As Hansen (2001) points out, this topic of moral formation is not at all tangential to student learning, for it is widely acknowledged that teachers’ perceptions, beliefs, values, and judgments profoundly influence their actions in the classroom. The intellectual and moral “qualities that teaching itself develops”, are, I would argue, grounded in large part in the nature of the teacher-student relation (p. 853, italics mine). And if this relation exhibits depth, if it takes on the character of friendship as articulated here in this chapter, then it cannot but impact the moral life of the teacher. As we have
seen, such is the argument Hauerwas and Pinches (1997) were making in a general way, via Aristotle.

It should be noted too, that what I am suggesting here is subtly different from a related research outcome by Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen (1993, pp. 288-290) into the moral life of schools. They reported that several veteran teachers had felt it necessary to assume a moral posture or presence before students – something of a moral ‘front’. And in time, these practitioners discovered that the very moral qualities that they sought to model, these qualities gradually came to solidify in good measure in their own characters. This is clearly a positive result, but I would anticipate a far greater transformation – for both teachers and for students – if those practitioners had deliberately sought to move from moral artificiality to moral authenticity, if they viewed students not as impressionable spectators but as co-participants in the moral life. Herbert Kohl (1967) affirms this same authenticity: “It is the teachers’ struggle to be moral that excites his pupils; it is honesty not rightness that moves children” (p. 26). I am urging here, then, that the very activities of virtuous friendship are what the moral life consists in. If our governing intention is for mutuality of care and love with every person we encounter, then friendships will tend to naturally develop in all of our personal relations, including those with our students.27

Young people offer adults the opportunity to shape human possibility, to influence a rising generation for the good – by fully involving them, listening to them, and addressing their questions. For students and practitioners alike, it means knowing that your life builds upon other lives, that your story is woven into the fabric of other stories, that you are not alone but that your part in the larger human story is valuable
Consider an incident in the story of Jenny's life, an elementary student in Phoenix, and how she responded to a classmate who went out of his way to relentlessly tease a girl who was new to the class. Her classmates tended to shy away from or exclude him. The more he was on the outside, the worse he acted. Jenny did something that is very hard to do. She befriended both the boy and his chief victim. She invited the boy to be her partner for projects. That is, she joined him, and persisted in that even when some adults in the school advised her that she shouldn't as he would be a bad influence. Collapsing a much longer story, when she had the privilege of asking someone to join her for a lunch date with the teacher, Jenny asked both the boy and the girl he tended to victimize to be her specially invited guests. Through Jenny's generous reaching out to both, they began to get to know each other as Jenny had got to know each of them. By making herself the bridge, Jenny softened the aggressor, reassured the victim, and opened the circle to include both. (Carini, 2001, p. 205).

Virtuous friendship works both ways – any child can teach us such lessons about the moral life, if our governing desire is for mutuality of care and love with everyone who comes our way.28

**Intending a Community Founded Upon Friendships**

In affirming the importance of teacher-student relations as a basis for community in enacting an ethic of vocation, one must reckon with the tensions and complexities of making good on that ethic within an institutional setting – even if one’s consideration is limited to that of the classroom. To some extent, I have addressed this problematic issue in the next two chapters: in the context of a practitioner’s more overt role as a mentor to students, and in the context of their more implicit role as a covenanter with them. Admittedly, at one level, a teacher-student relation is an *impersonal* one that falls short of being a moral friendship: each person treats the other according to the dictates of the role
and function within an institutional context of differing authority and responsibility and purposes. And yet at a higher level, as I have argued, such treatment is only morally justifiable if the impersonal relation is included within, but subordinated to, a personal relation: when the intent is always to respond to and care for the other as a whole person.\(^{29}\) When persons act in accord with this principle or standard, they achieve community as an inclusive moral value. A generation ago, R. S. Peters (1974) recognized “personal relationships” in teaching as “extremely important”, insisting that “the bond between teacher and taught... is one of the most potent influences in the development of knowledge, sensitivity, and skill”, and that educators, then, must “function as human beings as well as teachers” even in a time when “educational institutions are becoming larger and more impersonal” (pp. 222, 223).

This challenge is faced in various forms of human service work. For example, Marjorie DeVault (1994), a sociologist of work, points to one study of nurse’s aides whose work is so occupied with “producing vital statistics and records”, that many find they must ‘steal the time’ to be with patients (p. 240). DeVault notes that these aides “act on a logic of ‘caring for.’ as well as ‘tending’ their patients, but they operate within an organizational scheme that recognizes only physical care” (p. 240). What appears to count for the institution is what can be measured – the personal and the relational is lost in the definition of work that centers on charts, statistics, and graphs. Yet, Carini (2001) reminds us of

the incalculable value of friendly interest, of conversation. And perhaps most of all, ... of being recognized and treated as still a person – a person with wants, desires, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows. ...The recognition and valuing of persons. (p. 113)
Undeniably, the value of institutional organizations lies in their evident efficiency - their policies and procedures serve as pragmatic devices for securing a measure of order, justice, and cooperation. However, I wish to argue that what institutions can never create is community. Unlike a society, which operates as an association of members sharing a common purpose, a community consists in the sharing of a common life. Members of a community may share common purposes as well, but these express rather than constitute their association. For if, as I have argued, the I-Thou unity is the basic structure of human personality, then its correlate must be a single or universal human community. In this view, community is the instantiation of the I-Thou relation (Macmurray, 1949, pp. 56, 84). It follows therefore, that while liberty, equality, and fraternity are universal constituents of community life, as I indicated earlier, it is a mistake to suppose that they can be achieved organizationally or politically. This, then, should serve as a corrective for those who would use these pragmatic methods to promote a community of 'democratic schools' or 'democratic classrooms', for I would argue that community is only created when friendship is intended as the form of all personal relations. This is why democratic polity is ultimately made possible only by a community life grounded in mutual trust. This being so, the extent and quality of freedom that is enjoyed, depends largely upon the extent to which persons are in communion with each other (p. 105). It follows then, that the task of fashioning community is not an organizational or political one, but a moral or religious one, for it involves the transformation of the negative motives underlying our actions in our relations with others.
In large measure, the religious impulse consists in the intention to extend love and care to any person with whom we are brought into relation. Therefore community must be in principle, open to all. If we intend to subordinate fear to love, and if in practical ways we act with critical intention to be inclusive, then all persons are potentially our friends. And, as Macmurray reminds us, this love of others is not a diffuse, vague, or sentimental stance of general benevolence, but rather a deep, purposeful desire to care for each and every person on the ground they are irreducibly valuable (p. 85). The world's universal religions have sought to embed this desire for mutuality and inclusivity in a tradition – in a system of values and habits of a common life. A balance of sorts, then, must be sought in any mutual community between the reality of power relations and functional subordination, and the hope and motive for love and grace.32

Of course, in practice, enacting this vision of community is always problematic, for it is the problem of personal relations in a common life together. This common life is not a de facto unity, for community is established and sustained by the commitment of its members to intend it. Indeed, if one accepts that religion can be considered as a form of reflective activity in that it derives meaning from a reference beyond itself, it follows that the reflective aspect of communal life consists in membership which is actively intended, and through which personal meaning is derived (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 160). Merely sharing something in common does not make a community; the commonality must be acknowledged, affirmed, acted upon, and reinforced. Individuals, then, know themselves to be members ontologically – in their essential reality and being – and they act out of this knowledge with positive regard to others. It is this moral consciousness of the common life that serves to constitute a community of persons – a consciousness that, I
would argue, educators must seek both to fund in their students and inculcate in themselves. Of course, it also includes the consciousness that community may not always be realized in action, that hostility may at times displace fellowship. This inevitably occurs when personal relations shift into a negative motivation, when fear for oneself displaces a love for others. In this situation, the problem of communal life becomes the problem of overcoming fear with love, which I believe is the fundamental problem in all of personal life.

When personal conflict does arise, most of us tend to withdraw into ourselves as trust gives way to fear. We no longer experience an easy freedom with each other – each of us experiences a loss of freedom to act. To remedy the situation, without destroying the relationship, we often retreat into our scripted, functional roles (organicism) or we consent to cooperate and establish conditions that restrain hostilities (atomism). The difficulty is that the fear between us remains – only it has gone underground. This fear still inhibits action and constrains freedom, and although we may cooperate, this only secures an appearance of freedom. Any achievement between us only superficially satisfies our need of each other, but it does not deeply satisfy either of us. The profound need is to care, one for the other, and not solely for our own selves (personalism). We need to become friends, not mere functionaries or associates. The effective remedy is to exercise fidelity and become reconciled. Fidelity in action restores the original trusting confidence, it supplants the fearfulness with love, it restores the relaxed freedom with our friend – it renews community and the mutual fulfillment that accompanies it.

Patricia Carini (2001) reminds us though, that this is not easy:
the fear of caring, of strong feeling, of deep attachment — of love — is profound. By caring, by feeling deeply, by attaching, by loving, I am vulnerable. I am vulnerable through what I love. To be loved, to love is to be irrevocably and forever in relation to. ...To resist caring, to resist love, to resist the ‘in relation to’ fate is to wall the fortress. (p. 154, italics in original)

To be sure, the work of reconciliation is not without its trials, missteps, pain, and suffering. It is, however, a sacrifice that inevitably produces a harvest of enduring satisfaction and fulfillment. And therefore, in keeping with my principle of dynamic equilibrium articulated in the last chapter, I want to suggest here that our sacrifices of faithful, reconciling love will reflect the depth of relationship and corresponding fulfillment that we enjoy.

While this view of friendship — even moral friendship with students — may be a plausible one, a great many adult relationships get stalled in their progression towards the maturity of caring mutuality that I have outlined. A generation ago, Daniel Levinson’s (1978) research team concluded that although men in our culture have many amicable relationships, “friendship was largely noticeable by its absence” (p. 335). There is no reason to suppose that the situation today has improved, and while women seem to construe social reality somewhat differently from men, I would argue once again, with Gilligan (1982/1999, pp. 127, 156), that both men and women appear in need of a more fully integrated conception of personhood and moral formation. And an integrated life is precisely what the moral (or religious) life, or life in community, aspires to be! If agency is to be both moral and freely spontaneous, then it demands an integration of inner and outer lives, and therefore it demands — both individually and with friends — an ongoing acknowledgment of our fears and confession of our lovelessness. To suppress moral (or religious) reflection, then, is to suppress or deny the consciousness of the false or illusory
in ourselves. Moral reflection (or religion) can therefore have an integrating role in our lives precisely because it refuses this self-deception. While illusory religion reassures by invoking divine deliverance from one’s fears, true religion reassures by invoking divine presence – love – amidst those very same fears (Macmurray, 1961/1999, p. 171).

Membership in a community of friends requires, therefore, critical and honest insight into what is wrong in our personal relations – whether we are at fault or not – and how this can be rectified. In Dorothy Emmet’s (1958) view, the “roots of the matter lie surely in self-knowledge, humility, and love”, so that if one is “living religiously”, then one “is under an obligation to be continually learning to scrutinize his [or her] own purposes and ambitions and to be on the look-out for the corruptions of self-importance” (pp. 264, 265). Again, the crux of the problem appears to lie in a fearfulness and lovelessness that manifests itself in withdrawal from others – either passive distancing or active aggression. It has been my observation, that most of us do routinely distance ourselves from our students – we tend to become indifferent to them as persons. But when we become disengaged from their particular concerns, when we become oblivious to their urgencies, then the most we can offer them is a sort of ‘institutionalized intimacy’, not a moral friendship. When we distance ourselves, we operate without the crucial interpersonal knowledge of the Other needed to relate with love and care. Membership in a community of friends demands something very different, and this is why I argued at the start that issues of personhood and relationship are of central importance in enacting an ethic of vocation.

Coldness, disengagement, passivity and similar dispositions, then, should not have a place in our relationships, and especially not in our close associations. Such
indifference makes “the possibility of pedagogical influence far less likely and less deep” (van Manen, 1991, p. 98). Warmth, engagement, fidelity, and all those other virtues which characterize human sympathy and caring – these, I argue, ought to be normative in our relations with students. Importantly then, our own moral and spiritual formation must involve our intention to become persons whose second nature it is to reach out in friendship. Patterns of withdrawal can be unlearned, just as they were once learned; they can be repented of, just as they were once embraced. We must, in an ongoing way, come to identify and root out those elements of withdrawal that inhibit harmonious and fulfilling relationships. Withdrawal from others may be unconscious and unintentional, or simply careless oversight – as when we neglect to speak up to voice a concern, or to offer encouragement, or to provide a student with due recognition. Or withdrawal may arise from various personal weaknesses and limitations, such as the uncertainty, inattention, or fatigue which practitioners at times experience. And yet, it is often the case that these instances of withdrawal are not simply ‘out of character’, but they actually reflect patterns of thought and action that have become ingrained in us. Transforming these habits demands the sort of ‘death of Self’ that I referred to earlier – forcibly giving up a part of our selves in order that different dispositions can take hold.

While educators must take care to maintain proper boundaries with students, I am urging that in becoming moral friends we also relinquish defensiveness and pretence, and be known for who we truly are. At the very least, in its negative aspect, this means divesting ourselves of conduct that is evasive, coercive, manipulative, deceitful, or self-justifying, and this also means calm non-participation in institutional malfeasance of the same kind. The corresponding positive movement in our moral formation, then, consists
of a desire for personal transparency and integrity. As our inner life gradually becomes transformed, our outer life follows suit – so that in body and spirit we become poised for service. Dallas Willard (2002) describes such individuals this way:

They are attentive to rightness, to kindness, to helpfulness, and they are purposefully knowledgeable about life, about what people need, and about how to do what is right and good in appropriate ways. (p. 219)

Max van Manen (1996) characterizes “pedagogical fitness” in a remarkably similar way, as “a cognitive and emotional and moral and sympathetic and physical preparedness… of the whole embodied person: heart, mind and embodied being” (p. 46). It involves a “readiness of knowing just how to deal with young people and what to say or do… [in] situations or predicaments that are uncertain, unpredictable, sensitive, unique, personal” (p. 29).

If teacher-student friendship properly functions as a basis for moral community, as I have argued, then how far should our degree of involvement in exercising love and care extend? I have already indicated that in a healthy situation, self-sacrificing love properly reflects the corresponding self-fulfillment enjoyed. Willard’s (2002) advice supplements this – he suggests that directing our lives in the service of others appropriately begins with our families and moves outward from there, “proportional to our degree of life involvement with others” (p. 197). In the helping professions such as teaching, this everyday life involvement is probably more significant in reality than most practitioners recognize, and potentially more influential than they care to admit. It is precisely this life involvement, in the context of mentoring relations, which I will be exploring towards the end of the next chapter.
Summary

In this chapter I have sought to demonstrate that vocational dispositions and sensibilities, such as loving attentiveness and responsiveness, are inescapably animated by a practitioner's fundamental beliefs and understandings concerning what constitutes personhood and relationships. One's membership in a personalist community is premised upon relations of mutuality – responsive relations constitutive of personhood, commonly expressed as an 'I-Thou' relation. Thus, if we view the call of the Other on our lives as a fundamental reality of moral existence, then an ethic of vocation encompasses our responsiveness to this call. I have argued, therefore, that an educator's ultimate intention must be to foster mutual relations with students, and that this properly serves as the interpretative center of professional practice conceived as vocation. I have sketched out some theoretical underpinnings for this assertion: a brief comparison of three major models of community; a cursory examination of some moral foundations of personhood; and an analysis of mutuality's essential elements in the parent-child relation – with its innate drives of love and fear, and its rhythm of withdrawal and return. I have argued that since moral friendship grounded in an intention and motive to love is the most fully realized expression of mutual relations, teacher-student friendship can legitimately serve as the basis for both moral community and moral formation. I have claimed, therefore, that practitioners can and should view students as co-participants in the moral life. From this it follows that critical and honest insight into the nature of our personal relations with students is demanded.
CHAPTER THREE
THE CALL TO CRAFT

My sense of calling began to be informed and solidified by a sense of the need for craft.

- Herbert Kohl

Some Moral Aspects of Pedagogical Craft

Like the concept of pedagogical vocation, the notion of teaching as a craft is an imprecise one, and this is reflected in the wide range of formulations which have been articulated. For this reason, I have not attempted here anything as comprehensive as the recent survey and synthesis by Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) which centers on craft knowledge. Rather, I have sought to keep issues of personhood and relationship in the forefront while exploring particular facets of moral craft: moving from a broad sketch of conscience of craft, and technical and moral orientations, to the more specific issues of loving students as persons, pedagogical relationship and virtues, gift-giving in mentoring relations, and mentorship as an image of pedagogical relation. I argue that the moral dimension of craft is more profound than Green’s (1999) notion of caring to do skillful work and possessing the reflexive capacity to make judgments concerning this. I maintain that, unlike many professions, teaching is not characterized by widely accepted norms of practice that can be looked to for standards of excellence in performance. Pedagogical craft is more idiosyncratic; its personal and relational dimensions properly
take center stage, against a background of various knowledge bases. In this view, pedagogy demands a relational knowledge of young people – not only their attitudes and perspectives on the world, but also the inner life and uniqueness as a person. Finally, I advance the claim that the concept and image of mentoring, with its language and sensibility of gift-exchange, characteristically values these personal and relational dimensions, and is appropriate to the grade-school teacher-student context.

**Conscience of Craft**

For Thomas F. Green (1999), the conscience of craft is evident in one’s capacity and disposition “to care for doing things well” (p. 64) – and this, he suggests, is an issue of sufficient moral gravity to matter in a person’s moral formation.³ The voice of conscience, he argues, is shaped as the norms of one’s craft come to increasingly govern one’s work – whether the individual is a novice reaching towards particular standards of performance, or a master craftsperson fashioning a new vision of practice. Conscience of craft is both formed and expressed in a multitude of everyday contexts – preparing a meal, writing poetry, or playing a piano – and in various occupational roles – auto mechanic, attorney, or chartered accountant. Narrowly conceived, this may seem little more than what might be termed a ‘technical conscience’. Yet Green wishes to emphasize one’s sense of craft as exercised in reflexive judgment, which comes to be a matter of emotive importance.⁴ It is this capacity for deep self-satisfaction with one’s work that underlies all consideration of educational standards or excellence (p. 62). Thus, craft-skill can be properly evaluated by the complexity and subtlety of one’s own critical judgments of practice. This is why Green can argue that it is precisely these
reflexive judgments which reveal to others the level of expertise or mastery that one has achieved (pp. 64-65). 5

There is, I think, much of value in Green’s (1984, 1999) perspective, and other educational theorists, such as Maxine Greene (1986), James Fowler (1990), Hendrik Gideonse (1998), Hanan Alexander (2000), and Buzzelli and Johnston (2002), have built upon some of his assumptions and terminology. It should be recognized, however, that Green tends to frame his discussion of craft generically, and where he does become more specific and detailed, it is critical reflexiveness in students that he has in view (pp. 64-65), and not teaching practitioners. This recognition is important, I contend, because his generic perspective does not map unproblematically onto teaching craft – as will become evident in the course of this chapter. For instance, unlike many occupations and professions, I will argue that teaching tends not to be characterized by widely accepted norms of practice that can be looked to for standards of excellence in performance. Furthermore, my analysis suggests that the moral dimension of teaching craft is far more profound and expansive in scope than that suggested by a care for doing work skillfully, and a corresponding reflexive judgment to evaluate this.

Greene (1986) stresses repeatedly that it is how we think about teaching craft, rather than craft knowledge per se, which activates our conscience and impels us to devote ourselves with care and attention to our work with students. Such attentive care in deliberating upon particular experiences both “overcomes distancing and neutrality” (p. 14) and it also allows one to draw out meaning and fund a sense of potency in our lives. To bring our conscience to bear on our craft means to ponder our purposes, to ponder the meaning-making opportunities we structure, to ponder our relations with our students –
essentially it means to deliberate upon the value of what we are seeking to accomplish. The aim of activating and enlarging our conscience of craft is to counter the unreflective, routinized action of practitioners that tends to reduce their role to mere functionaries. Greene's examples of the substance for our social, political, and moral ruminations are suggestive:

It may be to try to justify our interventions in the lives of our students, especially those whose lived experience is markedly different from our own. It may be to reconcile our desires to free them to pursue meanings with our equally strong desires to mold them, to shape them in accord with some mainstream or 'middle-class' model of what we conceive to be personhood. How do we argue the worth of separating students from their backgrounds, what we may consider their 'enclaves'? How do we justify stimulating and encouraging certain individuals, while providing only minimal support for others? How do we justify provoking some to move beyond where they are, while approving others who just about reach their grade level in the work assigned? (p. 14)

Like Greene, Philip Jackson (1968) observes that when teachers reflect upon the wisdom of their actions,

They also worry about whether they were just or unjust in the distribution of praise and reproof, sensitive or insensitive to the nuances of events that transpired, consistent or inconsistent in the standards and regulations they enforced. ... virtues of speed, efficiency, accuracy, and economy are not uppermost in their minds. (pp. 167, 168)

For practitioners, then, who are thoughtful about their craft and the students in their care, there is no end to issues, concerns, dilemmas, and justifications one faces.

Moreover, an adequate response demands much more than simply drawing upon codified or codifiable knowledge – or “what we have “learned from the human sciences” (Greene, 1986, p. 18). *For in pursuing a craft, one must, with imagination, seek to order experience and to refine and enlarge one's skills, capacities, and dispositions against a background of knowledge, understanding, and insight* (p. 19). It follows, then, that there
is an idiosyncratic aspect to this effort – that there is no single, correct way to think about craft, or conscience of craft (p. 17).\(^6\)

This idiosyncratic endeavor should not suggest that teaching craft lacks an essential core, for as Kohl (1984, p. 57, cf. 1976, p. 30) points out, teaching craft concerns the capacity to organize content and structure time and space, as well as the sensibility to provoke and focus energy amidst differing learning styles and levels of sophistication in student thinking. Yet Greene wishes to acknowledge the very significant *particularized* influences on practitioners themselves – such as the various sources of craft in their own formative educational experiences and role models (pp. 16-17). Ultimately, to be mindful of one’s craft “is a matter of attending to our lived situations in our classrooms with the aid of what we have come to know over time” (p. 17). Such thinking is mediated by what we have come to know about such things as the way children structure their own experiences, or the ways in which various literacies were acquired at home, or the influences of socio-economic status, and so on (p. 17). In many ways, then, the pursuit of a craft demands the working of *personal and oftentimes tacit knowledge*: funding students’ sense of agency and social responsibilities, building upon their individual strengths, interests, and sensitivities, attending to their feelings and emotions, empowering their critical reflection upon the world and so on. In sum, conscience of craft calls us to “do more to imagine ourselves into the lived worlds of our students” so as to give them “the opportunity and the capacity to reach beyond, to move toward what is not yet” (pp. 22, 23).

Reaching similar conclusions, Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) see the fundamental purpose of craft as engaging the mind of every learner, and this requires that
“teachers seek to know their students, to listen and reach out to them with care and understanding” (p. 429). The understandings emerging from craft knowledge center upon the purposes of teaching, the collaborative work context of inquiry, and teachers’ sentiments about their role as facilitators of learning. These understandings inescapably “lead to an emerging moral voice” (p. 431), or more exactly, to emerging “moral, critical, and political voices” (p. 437). Moral voice finds expression through relationship and solidarity with one’s students in their quest to learn, “its syntax is existential with words such as caring, loving, nurturing, listening, empathetic understanding, and connecting” (p. 431, italics in original). Moral voice, then, is emphatically student centered — unlike professional ethics whose focus tends to be teacher centered. So it is that, practitioners of moral craft endeavor to bring to bear on all classroom action “a finely tuned conscience” (p. 431).

And yet, as any devoted parent knows and as Patricia Carini (2001) reminds us, in pedagogical work there is no promise of ultimate success. Even with a close to the bone working knowledge, a sharpened sense of possibility, and an acutely discerning conscience, the way is marked by mistakes, misunderstandings, and compromise. Yet Carini also perceives that “these labors of love and value and conviction... [these] incomplete though hopeful acts of conscience” in their very imperfection, “in some degree safeguard us in our humanness from the temptations of god-like superiority” (p. 151).

**Looking into Technical and Moral Orientations**

In what has become a very influential document, Lee Shulman (1987a/2004) has sought to explicate the knowledge base of teaching, through vivid portrayals of so-called
'expertise', with the aim of promoting professionalization and securing its enhanced status and rewards. But in giving primacy to the knowledge base, Shulman has come under fire for minimizing or obscuring other elements of practice. Hugh Sockett (1987) for example, points, first of all, to the significance of particularities in practitioners, arguing that their "personality, temperament, and style are not merely adjuncts to the knowledge base: they are the very stuff of practice" (p. 209). Second, he argues that what is the best course of action in a particular context is often not the ideal. Thus, like Green (1971, pp. 173-192), Cohen (1977, p. 17), and Tom (1984, p. 106) before him, Sockett stresses the place of judgment:

> What is best is a matter of practical judgment. At the root of teaching in practice, therefore, are not items of knowledge as discrete measurable techniques, but judgment, which is itself a form of knowledge. Tempered by growing practical understanding, that judgment emerges as wisdom. (p. 210)

Third, is Sockett’s concern that Shulman has relied upon a technical language to portray excellence in practice, and has failed to employ a moral language, framework, or vision.

Shulman (1987b) subsequently responded to Sockett’s criticisms, and I believe it would be most instructive here, to analyze the substance of his remarks. Shulman only indirectly addresses the issues of the particularities of the teacher and the place of practical judgment – claiming that he was misunderstood by Sockett – but in responding to the critique of his research language, Shulman’s defense is that his primary scholarly obligation “is to describe and explain with such clarity that my readers can render their own moral judgments” (p. 476). This response however, would appear to utterly miss Sockett’s central point: that researchers, like historians, can and should dispassionately render a moral judgment on the evidence before them.
Moreover, Shulman is not always careful to restate Sockett’s critique accurately. He comments: “I reject Sockett’s claim that the essential feature of teaching is moral, and therefore only a socio-moral framework is adequate for an account of teaching” (p. 477). In fact, Sockett never calls the moral or the sociomoral the only framework – rather he argues it is a necessary one. Shulman also lapses into similar overstatement when asserting, “what he [Sockett] characterizes as a moral language is the appropriate language for teaching” (p. 477, italics in original). Again, Sockett (1987) never makes this exclusive claim; rather his concern is with the paucity of moral language in Shulman’s analysis (p. 212). In addition, while Shulman (1987b) seems to grant that, “There is no one language that teaching itself necessarily demands”, he contends that since his prime goal was to “craft a conception of pedagogy likely to lead to improvement in the quality of reason and action”, his use of “the language of description and explanation” is eminently appropriate (p. 477).

Recognition of the importance of vocabulary or language by which we attempt to describe teaching, and the values upon which it stands, is not a recent development. One finds that Huebner (1966/1999) offers a lengthy critique of the very tradition in which Shulman stands, arguing that

the insignificance and inferior quality of much teaching today may be a result of attempts to maximize only the technical and political and perhaps scientific values without adequate attention to the esthetic and ethical values. (p. 111)

Elsewhere (1969/1999) Huebner points out that while educators may use language as

a tool of communication...[and] for facilitating learning... this hides the significance of language as a way of being with students and focuses upon something which is beyond, indeed, removed from our being with students. (p. 144. cf. Huebner, 1963/1999, pp. 81-92; 1996, pp. 268-276)
In a similar vein, Grimnett and MacKinnon (1992) contend that knowledge of teaching craft finds its validity, ultimately, when readers enter vicariously into the lived experiences of various practitioners abstracted through narrative, story, poetry, case study, film and the like (p. 396). Importantly, then, these practitioners speak on behalf of their students. Their language is not confined to aims and expectations.... They do not write about the technical aspects of teaching; rather their focus is on ways of relating with all students.... (p. 431)

Along the same lines, Robert Welker (1992) asserts that a technical understanding operates primarily with a "vocabulary of control, predictability, exclusiveness, probability, manufacture, product, power, effectiveness, autonomy, and competency" but a nontechnical understanding stresses "process, partnership, cooperation, service, flexibility, inclusiveness, participation, empowerment, and interdependence" (p. 98). In even stronger terms, Carini (2001) speaks of learning to resist, reject, and expose "the language of systems... language gutted of humanness" (p. 160, italics in original), which when unchecked, is certain to cause harm.

Ironically, in the Shulman-Sockett exchange, there would even appear to be cause for concern in Shulman's admission that: "Sockett's insistence that we more explicitly add a moral dimension to such analyses is wise and well grounded" (1987b, p. 477). For here, in Shulman's choice of words, one wonders if he has fully understood the critique of his position. Sockett is urging much more than merely adding a moral dimension to an analysis of teaching, or as Shulman puts it, striving "for a much better balance between our work on strategies, methods, and technique, and our consideration of the desired ends of teaching" (p. 477). Sockett (1987) is arguing that moral considerations pervade
teachers' work – notably their reasoning in action where moral ideals are instantiated and moral virtues are demonstrated (p. 215). Shulman appears not to appreciate that he is being taken to task for advancing a conception of pedagogy which overlooks this.

And finally here, Shulman is almost completely silent on Sockett's insistence that an ethic of service must emerge from the moral virtues of a practitioner. Shulman wishes instead to stress, as Green (1999) does, that competence in practice is itself a virtue:

I can think of no one more immoral that the practitioner whose motives are pure while his performance remains inept. ...Absent the core knowledge and skill being professed, the importance of other virtues is substantially reduced. (1987b, p. 481)

In otherwise ignoring the issue of service and virtues, Shulman goes on to express his concern over "uncaring" practitioners, and those "who teach efficiently but not ethically" (p. 481). He affirms Noddings's work, to the extent that it alerts us to "the caring functions that are so central to the moral practice" of teaching, although he urges that these functions should "not obscure the important instructional functions of teaching" (p. 482). Again, these words are most revealing. First of all, in playing off caring against instruction – rather than urging their integration – Shulman appears to be guilty of the same dichotomizing, either/or thinking which he earlier accuses Sockett of (p. 478). And secondly, it is doubtful that Noddings would herself speak narrowly of the caring function of teaching, for as we saw in Chapter 2, her work insists upon a highly developed ethic of caring relation upon which pedagogy properly rests.

Returning to the broader issue at hand, Welker (1992), following Jackson (1968, 1986), emphasizes the importance of a teacher professionalism whose strength is not primarily in a technical knowledge base. The modern professional model build upon the
notion of technical expertise is, he argues, precisely what should not characterize teacher professionalism, for professions have a more ancient history, with the attitude of service as a central element in this tradition. In taking our cultural pulse, Wendell Berry (2000) makes a similar assessment:

we seem to have replaced the ideas of responsible community... with the idea of professionalism. Professional education proceeds according to ideas of professional competence and according to professional standards, and this explains the decline in education from ideals of service and good work, citizenship and membership.... (p. 130)

An ethic of service need not be viewed as downplaying the intellectual qualities teachers must draw upon, nor should it be used as an excuse to justify lower salaries. Instead, Welker argues that in a culture which seems preoccupied with securing personal advantage rather than public obligation, an ethic of service is very much to be prized (p. 99). Moreover, Henri Nouwen (1975/1980) warns that increasing professionalization all too often becomes a way “of exercising power instead of offering service” (p. 84). He argues that practitioners “can only retain their humanity in their work when they see their professions as forms of service” (p. 86).

Daniel Lortie (1975), in his well-known sociological study, found that teachers typically understood that their own practice was largely learned and idiosyncratic – though for Lortie, this understanding ran counter to the notion of a shared technical culture which he felt was crucial to teaching developing full professional status. When describing the qualities of an excellent teacher, the practitioners Lortie interviewed consistently prized interpersonal skills over pedagogical knowledge (pp. 39-40, 76-79, 133). Moreover, Lortie also discerned a presentist or present-minded orientation in many teachers, which he felt also served to hinder the professionalization of practice. He
discerned that, for many practitioners, this orientation was linked to their motives for service — although he worried that such an ethos prevented practice from relying upon expert knowledge (pp. 109-132). It is remarkable how little Lortie valued the views of the teachers he interviewed: they consistently mentioned the importance of the teacher-student relationship and teaching’s moral consequences, while he called for greater collegiality based upon technical competence. Striking by its omission from Lortie’s catalogue of defining professional characteristics is the ethic of service. This is all the more remarkable given that early sociologists viewed service as a prominent aspect of professional character (Welker, 1992, p. 64).

In closing out this section I think it would be valuable to contrapose some key ideas of Shulman’s (1987a/2004) conception of practice, and those of other educators and theorists. Jackson (1968) observes teaching to be very much an “opportunistic process” (p. 166) with contingencies and unpredictable changes at the micro and macro levels that serve to limit the usefulness of a highly rational model for describing what the teacher does. Given the complexity of his work, the teacher must learn to tolerate a high degree of uncertainty and ambiguity. He must be content with doing not what he knows is right, but what he thinks or feels is the most appropriate action in a particular situation. In short, he must play it by ear. (p. 167)

Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) conclude that the craft of teaching is primarily learned through practical experience, and through critical reflection and analysis on this experience. It consists of a practical know-how, a feel for the work, a capacity and sensibility of judgment, which are driven by a love of students and learning, and by a disposition toward student-centered reflective inquiry (p. 437). Margret Buchmann
(1986) contends that "rules, norms, and external standards" cannot capture the moral action of practice, for this emerges from dispositions of heart and mind which accompany one's orientation to the role of teacher (p. 540). The moral quality of role relations is characterized by relationships of "warmth and selectivity of feeling... [for] the particular people put into one's charge" (p. 540). David Carr (1999) argues that the performative and authoritative aspects of teaching are ultimately best understood, not in technical terms, but "in the particularistic terms of artistic or craft engagement", and also in the "context-specific terms of moral relationship for which appropriate resources of personality and character are pivotal" (p. 211).

Shulman's (1987a/2004) emphasis is very different: "we believe that scholars and expert teachers are able to define, describe, and reproduce good teaching" (p. 233). He holds that teaching must follow other professions which "define their knowledge bases in systematic terms" (p. 242), for the need is "to educate teachers to reason soundly... to use their knowledge base to provide the grounds for choices and actions" (p. 234). It appears then, that a crucial question needs to be asked here: is the definition and operationalization of knowledge drawn from case studies of master teachers, an adequate or desired approach for teacher education and professional growth? Certainly this conception of reasoning shifts the basis of teaching performance from a behaviorist to an intellectual one (p. 242), but reasoning techniques to achieve instructional ends must, as Greene (1986, p. 19) reminded us earlier, find their place in the background of the more vital pursuit of enlarging one's moral capacities, dispositions, and imagination. Moreover, even if Shulman's long-term research agenda were possible -- to "collect, collate, and interpret the practical knowledge of teachers ...[to] codify its principles,
precedents, and parables” (p. 232) – one has to wonder if this is not a counterproductive effort, given that the transformative power of these accounts lies within the concrete, particularized details of the life-stories themselves. This very point was alluded to earlier: knowledge of teaching craft finds its full force and validity when teachers enter vicariously into the actual lived experiences of other practitioners – it is the stories we are caught up in, which have the capacity to move us (Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992, p. 396).

Most noticeable by its absence in Shulman’s vision of practice, in my view, is the personal and the relational. This omission comes into view most prominently when set against the vision of practice of an educator like Max van Manen (1996):

I would propose that the following qualities are probably essential to pedagogy: a sense of vocation, a love of and caring for children, a deep sense of responsibility, moral intuitiveness, self-critical openness, thoughtful maturity, sensitivity toward the child’s subjectivity, an interpretive intelligence, a pedagogical understanding of the child’s experiences and needs, improvisational resoluteness in dealing with young people, a passion for knowing and learning the mysteries of the world, the moral fiber to stand up for something, a certain understanding of the world, active hope in the face of prevailing crises, and, not the least, humor and vitality. (p. 46)

van Manen’s is most certainly not “a professional ethic that prizes technique as a shield against [personal] ties” (May, 2000, p. 112). Notice here, first of all, the prominence given to personhood and character of the teacher, rather than their knowledge. Notice too that these personal qualities are all ones that are exercised in relationship with students: serving, loving, and caring responsibly, hopefully, and responsively with moral insight and commitment, with openness, thoughtfulness, and sensitivity. Teaching is not only an intellectual craft, it is a moral craft, and as such it demands that attention be
devoted to pedagogical relation and pedagogical virtues. This orientation does not exclude Shulman's (1987a/2004) 'general pedagogical knowledge' and 'pedagogical content knowledge' (p. 227), but it ranges well beyond them. Pedagogical craft, I wish to argue, is much more a matter of being and becoming than knowledge and knowing. It would appear that Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) were attempting to alert us to the importance of this with their formulation of 'pedagogical learner knowledge' – a learner-focused, teaching sensibility which both generates new knowledge through disciplined, practical inquiry, and transforms one's experience (pp. 387, 393, 433). Vocational formation, then, speaks of our capacity to take the long view and things and to not only change ourselves, but also to change our own consciousness of practice – through service, love, and care.

Essentially, my argument in this section has been that teachers ought to resist the allure of full professional status in the exclusive and technical sense, since a sense of profession and vocation is formed less by one's technical competence – important as that is – than by the strength of one's character and relationships. The responsible improvement of one's practice is central to professionalism; professionalization, however, tends to be preoccupied with prestige. In any event, broad educational projects – such as Shulman's – which hold out the promise of some final solution, are typically destined to fail for they are too remote, far too generalized. They miss the human dimension – human particularities and human complexities – which resist systemization.

*Loving Students for Who They Are as Persons*

This would be an appropriate place to return to the theme of loving service – which figures prominently in this volume – and to probe it more incisively, although it is
a topic far to vast to be developed in a few pages. It seems that ‘love’ “is a term most educators probably prefer not to use. The word disrupts presumed habits of objectivity” (Huebner, 1996a, p. 269). It “conjures up images of softness, privatization and indulgence” (Huebner, 1985/1999, p. 363). Nonetheless, as Huebner recognizes, despite its ambiguity, love “is a prerequisite for moral discourse. The word implies a concern for the human being as a brother or a sister human being, equal in worth” (1996a, p. 269).

At some length, Herbert Kohl (1984) seeks to establish that loving students is qualitatively distinct from loving students as learners. He argues that all of us have only a limited amount of love at our disposal, and this love is not “cheaply won or given” (p. 64). He argues too that

love grows slowly and requires attention and effort that cannot be spread around to twenty or thirty people simultaneously. Love also engages all parts of one’s life, and teaching, for all its demands, is still just a part of one’s total life as a parent, lover, citizen, and learner. (p. 64)

Kohl is therefore mistrustful of those teachers who claim to love their students with this sort of rare and all-embracing love. And yet, he also recognizes that good teaching demands a certain type of loving, so this type of love he terms ‘loving students as learners’. Clearly here, in seeking to distinguish between the different ways a person loves, the vastness and therefore the range of the many connotations of the word becomes problematic. As van Manen (1991, p. 26) puts it, in the pedagogical context, love both says too much and too little. In many other languages this presents less of a difficulty since the various connotations of love are captured with different words – such as agape, phileo, and eros in Greek. Kohl may have been seeking after something like phileo, a tender affection characterized by constancy or fidelity.
In any case, Kohl resists defining or describing 'loving students as learners'. Instead, he offers an extended illustration of this love in an account of his work with a defiant fourteen-year-old boy as he helped him learn to read. Kohl shares that he demonstrated his own passion for learning and books, and he sought out books on subjects that interested the young man, which they read together. These efforts led the student to a new subjective awareness of himself as a learner. Kohl ends the account:

I loved to see him learning and, of course, to feel that I was some part of that process. Yet when he no longer needed my help, we parted no better friends than we began and I didn’t miss our lessons, as I sometimes do. However, I took great pleasure in seeing him focus his previously undisciplined energy and learn to read. I loved him as a learner: it is a job-related affection. That affection led me to study him carefully and build on the strengths and personal interests I could tease out of him. It required that my personal feelings about him be subordinated to my feelings about him as a learner. (1984, p. 66)

Given Kohl’s philosophy, that “good teaching consists to a large degree in being obsessed with helping others grow” (p. 6), it would appear to follow that affection for one’s students is tied to the desire to help them grow. Teachers though are not obliged to like all students equally, Kohl reasons, but they do have “an obligation to care about every student as a learner” (p. 66). It would appear, then, that in Kohl’s economy, liking or loving the person of the student is not required.

Now Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) point out that developing a teaching sensibility is central to Kohl’s pedagogy, and they chose to highlight that the sensibility of looking for and building upon students’ interests and strengths, finds expression in this notion of loving them as learners (pp. 421-422). Interestingly, when they return to this theme, later in their essay, something has changed:
Caring for students and nurturing them as persons is a theme that runs through much of the writings on teaching as a craft. Kohl crystallizes this in his phrase ‘loving students as learners.’ (p. 430)

Notice, what was absent in Kohl’s account, but what has crept in here, is the personal – loving students not simply as learners, but as persons. Loving which responds only to “intellectual development” is morally imbalanced, for it means failing to attend to the “whole person” (Huebner, 1996, p. 270).

It should be noted here also that Kohl’s view falls considerably short of the one articulated by Margret Buchmann (1993), which was considered in the last chapter. Recall, she stresses the importance of seeing each student with an active, positive, loving intent, and the necessity of setting aside one’s own self-centered feelings of dislike (pp. 170-171). What I find troubling in Kohl’s account is the impersonal nature of the relationship being characterized – there is certainly no hint of establishing any sort of moral friendship. Kohl claims to have found job-related satisfaction, *not in the relationship itself*, but in assisting the student acquire certain skills. Such a view, I would argue, is too narrow and impoverished. To illustrate why, consider for a moment the efforts of someone who works, not with people, but animals – say, an animal trainer. A trainer works to focus the animal’s energy and attention on developing and strengthening new skills. And if the animal is loved as a learner or performer, and not a personal pet, then the pleasure the trainer derives is tied up with their love of the process and product of this work, rather than from an attachment or relationship with the animal itself. The resemblance here to Kohl’s description is, I think, clear enough.

Perhaps Kohl’s intent is to utterly distance himself from a feel-good, sentimental sort of love that can be self-deceiving and ineffectual. Perhaps too, he wishes to
communicate to other practitioners that to love a student as a learner is a necessary minimum, and although he does not suggest it, this might in time serve as an entry point into a richer and even more satisfying relationship with students. Curiously, the way in which Kohl circumscribes the nature of love for students in his account belies the much deeper relationships he displays with his students, as documented elsewhere. In fact, one finds a most revealing statement at the conclusion of his volume: “The prime reason to teach is wanting to be with young people and help them grow” (1984, p. 162, italics mine). Notice here, ‘wanting to be with’ speaks of the desire and intention to enter into personal relationship – a pedagogical relationship. Moreover, Kohl himself speaks fondly of former teachers who clearly touched him at a personal level: they “conveyed a sense of my worth and creativity” (p. 162, italics mine). Worth or value, argues Sallie McFague (1987) is the critical issue in the matter of love:

[Love] is finding someone else valuable and being found valuable. ...[Such persons] love each other for no reason or beyond all reasons; they find each other valuable just because the other person is who he or she is. Being found valuable in this way is the most complete affirmation possible. ... In the eyes of the [other], one sees a different image of oneself: one sees a valuable person. (p. 128)

Margret Buchmann’s (1993) emphasis upon pedagogical attentiveness and insight is shared by Patricia Carini (2001), who offers a lengthy and compelling argument that practitioners achieve this depth of observation to the degree that they are in relation to what is observed – notably students. The degree and level of attachment to what is observed, is what it means “to love what is there” and to apprehend it in it full complexity (p. 141, italics in original). In the richly textured, diverse world of the classroom, where the influences are local and often unpredictable, everything has a human context. Here
the strong human urge to create and regenerate what is of value in humanness, is ever in
the making – freedom, justice, love, hope. Carini calls attention to

how a value such as respect or kindness or caring can acquire new life and
animating power – and how in all these acts, small and large, humanness
and human value are rebirthed. (2001, p. 152)

Although such regular acts of loving concern closely resemble what education is all
about, Carini notes that it is altogether uncommon for a continuous, disciplined
attentiveness to children or to teaching to be given a high priority in schools. It is at this
point in her argument that she poses a searching question. She asks,

with all this energy, all this growth, all this in-the-making possibility, what
is it that is resisted when in schools there is resistance to looking at
children or their works, or the work of teaching? (p. 153)

What is it, she wonders, that lies at the root of this resistance in teachers to bring their full
loving attention to bear:

Isn’t what is being resisted when the child is resisted the necessity of
getting to know her? To get to know her so that the school is confronted
with her humanness: what she cares about, what she most desires, what
gives her utmost satisfaction? To get to know her so the school [and
practitioner] is brought face to face with her actual, imperfect, and
altogether remarkable capacities and possibilities, not through an abstract
lens of school-approved behaviors, attitudes, and skills, but as she is? (pp.
154-155)

We resist the person of the student, and the call of this person on our lives. Carini traces
the source of our resistance to our fearfulness. We resist because we fear the demands
entailed in a fully personal, embracing response – one not reducible to ranking or
assessing the child, or measuring against some standard or idealized image of excellence.
We resist the call of the Other, and shy away from embracing them with an open heart.
Such engagement exposes a kind of vulnerability of being inadequate and overwhelmed
by the totality of the call, and so we draw back in fear. Freire (1997, p.317) likewise identifies fearfulness as that which keeps us from a “commitment to meaningful and lasting solidarity” with our students.

Fear, Carini argues, diminishes our humanness. When tied to perfection, fear narrows the vision of human possibility – for there is no such thing as a perfect child, or relationship, or school, or society. Such images, she suggests, are both too abstract and narrow, for compared to life itself, what is perfectible is puny. What perfection does is to privilege virtuosity and the solo performance – the brief, shining moment of success. However, as Carini (2001) points out, this misses humanness – the daily labor of fashioning and refashioning, the missteps and frustration, the sacrifice and sorrow, the longing and desire. For practitioners, perfection may divert us “from what is there to work with – all that the child is, all that the child brings, all that the family is doing” (p. 157). Our task is to love the things we love for what they are – and not for what we might wish them to be.

To resist fear is to affirm human capacity and to rebirth human possibility (p. 157). To confront fear, as we argued in the last chapter, love is primary – loving attentiveness, loving discernment, loving courage – love enacted for the Other. Fear is dispelled when we engage in the disciplined work of attending with care and caringly to what is of value in the child and in their work – not to uncover what is lacking or faulty. Carini points to a number of implications. First, fear can be faced and defused with one’s nuanced, particularized knowledge of the child and their work, of where the child is moving to, and of what capacities the child possesses (p. 158; cf. Perrone, 1989, p. 49).16

Thus, the usual language of practice whose currency is that of ‘failed’ or ‘deficient’ or
‘does not meet’, is language that can be exposed, challenged, and countered. Fear is also faced and countered whenever we set aside idealization and harsh critique. This, in turn, calls for an openheartedness and generosity:

I face fear with the human capacity to be fully ‘in relation to – which means to love what is there and to love it in its imperfection, confident that although imperfect what is there is humanly sufficient. (Carini, 2001, p. 159, italics in original)

This, Carini urges, demands vulnerability and vigilance on the part of the educator, and a confidence that small changes can be made, “by looking closely, attentively, lovingly” (p. 159). Vulnerable does not mean passive, and small does not mean easy. To the contrary, this is the pathway of difficult, recursive, courageous work with missteps and setbacks. It is not a heroic sort of courage, welling up in the heat of the moment or born of absolute certainty. Rather, this courage is like love itself, it must ever be in the making and ever being learned more deeply.

**Pedagogical Relation**

When one is willing to listen closely, one finds that student anecdotes are often a source of significant meaning – even illuminating the nature and importance of the pedagogical relations between student and teacher:

The new grade eight math teacher took over three months into the school year. By that time I had already developed a serious case of math anxiety. Math was a subject that seemed not coded into my genes. I distinctly remember our second class with this new teacher. She called on several students to solve the math that she had explained the previous day. But her prodding soon led to much confusion and frustration. Then she said something that I still remember after all this time. This is what she said: “I am sorry, I must not have explained it very well. Let us go over it again. We’ll do it a different way.” Then we did go over it again. She knew how to reach each one of us. And after school she prompted kids to come to her drop-in math class. Now, two years later, it has become clear to me
that with this teacher I turned unbelievably smart overnight. (van Manen, 1994, p. 136)

Of course, this student did not become math-smart overnight; it was the new teacher’s humility, persistence, and positive, encouraging relation with students that made all the difference. I wish to argue then, following van Manen, that teachers must devote serious, disciplined attention to the pedagogical relationships they enter into, and the pedagogical virtues that underlie them. I wish to make the case that these are critical dimensions of teaching as a moral (and intellectual) craft, which deserve more attention from educators and educational theorists alike.

Teachers all too often take a narrow view of their vocation and fail to grasp the full scope of the pedagogical responsibilities that accompanies their status as in loco parentis, (literally ‘in place of parents’). This legal responsibility compels practitioners to provide a safe and protective environment which supports the development of self-responsible maturity in youngsters, which protects them from the risks of neglect and abuse from others, and which prepares them for full participation in the wider world (van Manen, 1996, p. 33). Without alluding to the legal term, Carini (2001) describes this responsibility exactly in urging a reinvention of schools with a focus on humanness: “From this perspective, support, caring, and the benefit of the child name the positive primary moral obligations of the teacher” (p. 95, italics in original). Reinventing schools, then, is centrally personal and relational work: protection, nurturance, and crafting an educative surrounding that “will sustain the children’s possibility, their wonder, their enchantment with the world” (p. 96). The teacher’s responsibilities to protect and nurture demand both self-expenditure and compassion – key moral sensibilities of pedagogical relation (May, 2000, p. 31). These qualities are vital given
the imbalance in knowledge and power that exists in the relation. While self-expenditure defines the pedagogue primarily as giver, he or she does not give as a benefactor or philanthropist – out of their surplus. Rather, they receive a portion of their identity from the relation itself – for when compassion marks the relation they ‘suffer with’ students, through identifying deeply with their urgencies.

van Manen is one of the few educators who takes the in loco parentis relation as the starting point for exploring pedagogical understandings that reflect a holistic perspective on the shared life of teachers and students. In this view, educators must seek to support parents – for the primary pedagogical responsibilities lie with them – and they must reflect more deeply upon what it means to have young people as part of their own lives. Even though an educator lacks the fuller understanding of a parent into a child’s life history, “formative pedagogical understanding is what children need from significant adults in their lives if they are to receive good guidance and support when it matters” (1991, p. 95). Too few educators, observes van Manen (1991), draw close enough “to make a real emotional and intellectual investment in the child’s highest possibilities” (p. 96).

Pedagogy, it seems, is understood somewhat differently by North Americans and by Western Europeans. On this side of the Atlantic, the word broadly connotes the instruction of children, whereas in Europe, to have a sense pedagogy is to demonstrate a capacity for perceptive “insights into the child’s being or character”, particularly as one goes about distinguishing between “good or bad, right or wrong, suitable or less suitable for children” (van Manen, 1994, p. 139). As a form of inquiry, pedagogy presumes that one possesses a relational knowledge of young people – not only how they might think or
view the world, but also their inner life and uniqueness as a person. A pedagogue, then, is one “who feels addressed by children, who understands children in a caring way, and who has a personal commitment and interest in... their growth toward mature adulthood” (p. 139).

van Manen shares (and translates) some of the experiential and interpretive accounts of the concept of pedagogical relation found in European educational theory. Writing in Germany in the 1930s, Nohl (1982) characterized the pedagogical relation as an intensely experienced one that is personal, intentional, and interpretive. It is

a very personal relation animated by a special quality that spontaneously emerges between adult and child and that can be neither managed or trained, nor reduced to any other human interaction. (Nohl, 1982, cited in van Manen, 1994, p. 143, italics mine)

It as also an intentional relation, with the teacher caring for the child, and for what he or she may become: interpreting the present context of the child and anticipating the development of fuller self-responsibility. However, Nohl (1982) emphasizes that the pedagogical relation is not merely a means to an end (maturity), since

the relation is a life experience that has significance in and of itself. Our relation to a real teacher — someone in whose presence we experience a heightened sense of self and real growth and personal development — is possibly more profound and more consequential than the experience of relations of friendship, love and so forth. In the pedagogical relation, in the experience of being a father, a mother, a teacher, a part of our life finds its fulfillment. ... Similarly, for the child the pedagogical relation is part of life itself, and not merely a means for growing up. ... Among... relationships... perhaps the relationship to a real teacher is the most basic one, one which fulfills and shapes our being most strongly. (Nohl, p. 132, trans. van Manen, 1994, p. 143)

Citing Jackson (1968, p. 141), van Manen (1994) confirms that many teachers experience a deep feeling of satisfaction from the pedagogical relation. Often we can feel an
enduring debt of gratitude for our past teachers, even though the particulars we learned have lost their currency. In good part

this may be due to the fact that what we ‘received’...is less a particular body of knowledge or set of skills than the way in which this subject matter was represented or embodied in the person of this teacher: his or her enthusiasm, self-discipline, dedication, personal power, commitment, and so forth. (van Manen, 1994, pp. 143-144)

This pedagogical relation appears to emerge naturally and spontaneously, and its personal, intentional, and interpretative qualities, as well as its normative features cannot be captured by a technicist conceptualization alone. Although teachers may be compelled to cover an often over-prescribed external curriculum, van Manen (1994) notes that they often interpret and adapt this curriculum in a way that reflects their own personality and philosophy, as well as the character, needs, and the influences of the members of the class (p. 150). Fenstermacher (1990) takes a similar view:

Teachers... cannot both teach well and ignore the many dimensions of the lives of their students. Teaching well requires as broad and deep an understanding of the learner as possible... and a willingness to engage the learner in the context of the learner’s own intentions, interests, and desires. (p. 137)

van Manen (1994) offers a number of additional insights into the nature of the pedagogical relation. First, he suggests that the personal and relational aspects of teaching, rather than being accidental or interfering, are in fact integral to the process. Pedagogical craft is improvisationally worked across a background of rational and instrumental features — such as routines, lesson plans, and particular subject matter methodologies — which provide a necessary order and efficiency (p. 150). Importantly then, these necessities are adjuncts to the teacher’s “dedicated diligence, patience, trust,
and pedagogical tact... [and] do not override the teacher’s thoughtful understanding of the child’s experience” (1994, p. 150).

Second, the current dominance of technical rationality makes it imperative that educators remember that teaching is at its core “a pedagogical (virtuous normative) practice” (p. 151). To promote the programmatic or managerial aspects of the craft, risks eroding both “teachers’ personal pedagogical sensibilities,” as well as their insight into “the uniqueness and possibilities of the individual child” (p. 151). The demands of teaching arise not only from complex knowledge bases, but because teaching is fundamentally a normative pedagogical activity. That is, in the ever-changing flow of practical work, practitioners must instantly and thoughtfully distinguish between what is appropriate from what is less appropriate.

Not surprisingly, then, van Manen (1994) suggests that Shulman’s exposition of this knowledge base may be unduly

intellectualistic and rationalistic... [and] his notion of pedagogical reasoning and thinking appears unfortunately indifferent to the personalistic and normative (moral or ethical) nature of pedagogy. (p. 142)

Parker Palmer (1983/1993) takes a similar position in his articulation of education as a spiritual journey:

[our] nature is not simply to know, but to know in relationship, as a means to relationship. ...As our relatedness is called out, we find ourselves knowing reality more deeply and roundly than the [objective] observer ever can. ...The deepest calling in our quest for knowledge is not to observe and analyze and alter things. Instead, it is personal participation... in the network of caring and accountability.... (pp. 53-53)

Pedagogical interaction, then, requires a working understanding of a knowledge base, “but also an improvisational immediacy, a virtuelike normativity, and a pedagogical
thoughtfulness that differs from the reflective wisdom (phrēnēsis) of other practitioners” (van Manen, 1994, p. 139). Moreover, even as we have seen in recent debate, relational images of epistemology being reclaimed, it is not surprising that relational images of pedagogy are correspondingly being recovered (Palmer, 1983/1993, p. xvii) and proposed – images such as servant, friend, mentor, and covenanter.

**Pedagogical Virtues**

To begin, I concur with Sockett (1987) that teaching’s “moral character demands an account of the teaching virtues as fundamental to understanding what good teaching is” (p. 217). Such an accounting, Sockett argues, does not mean that those seeking to enact a vocational ideal will be ‘moral clones’, for these teachers “will manifest different virtues, which may or may not be nurtured by the climates, contexts, and traditions of schools” (p. 217). Where Sockett’s analysis differs from mine is that he wishes to stress how these virtues become institutionalized, while I have sought to stress the importance of their formation in persons. He writes:

> We need to understand how far these virtues are institutionalized in the ethos of different schools, in the occupational habits of teachers as colleagues, and in classroom practice. (p. 217)

Perhaps, like Green (1999), Sockett thinks “aiming to form a conscience from conduct in the skills of public life is more likely to produce a conscience suited to private life” than the other way around (p. 71). While it is true that in the rough and tumble of public life the lessons and judgments drawn from one’s own experience are tested against the judgments of others (p. 71), virtues center upon persons and personal relations, and therefore I am not persuaded that the primary need is for insight into how they are
institutionalized. The need rather, as Greene (1986, p. 17) suggests, is for interest and personal engagement on the part of practitioners in their own moral formation – for it is out of virtuous character in educators that one can most effectively work to build moral institutions, not the other way around. In my experience, teaching increasingly tends not to be characterized by widely accepted norms of virtuous practice, and consequently one cannot straightforwardly look to institutional life to find standards for one’s own moral formation.

There would appear something of value, then, in the view that the virtue-like qualities of teachers are best understood in relational terms. That is, the pedagogical relation itself offers us insight into desirable teacherly qualities or virtues, and vice versa (van Manen, 1994, p. 142). van Manen looks to the ancient conception of virtues which conveyed a strength of personality or character, acquired, as Aristotle would have it, through the formation of good habits. Becoming virtuous can be viewed as a long initiation into the process of becoming a person of substance or character. This conception, argues van Manen, offers a more compelling portrayal of teaching excellence than either the rational principled or the moral principled ones. The contemporary notion of virtue as understood by most virtue ethicists, also explicates the enabling practice of personal agency that virtuous action requires (p. 155).

Relating this, then, to the craft of teaching, the notion of virtuous character is one that contributes to our image of an excellent pedagogue. Teaching, van Manen argues, relies on unique and particular qualities consisting of “internalized values, embodied qualities, [and] thoughtful habits” (p. 155). These “are the ‘learned’ and ‘evoked’ pedagogical qualities” which are necessary both “for the human vocation of bringing up
and educating children”, and which also make pedagogical reflection possible in the first place (p. 155).

While the various sorts of cognitive competencies funded in most teacher education programs are valuable, these often bear little connection to pedagogically charged demands of the classroom situation. Teachers continually face situations that are in some respects novel and which demand on-the-spot decisions. And it is in the thick of practice that improvisational readiness is required – the capacity and sensibility to know what is the most appropriate word or action. It is not only the ends, but also the countless concrete details of the means and methods that have normative or moral significance. Thus, for van Manen, the formation of one’s pedagogical identity [sensibilities] is not only dependent on integrating fragmented shards of expert knowledge, skills, and certain artistry as taught in teacher education programs; it is dependent even more on the evocation of virtue-like qualities of pedagogy that each teacher must personally learn to interpret and embody into a form of knowing that contributes to one’s pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact. (1994, p. 157)

The work of “striving for pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact”22 – essentially a sensibility of craft – is a “process of integration and personality formation” – wherein a teacher may view “his or her own pedagogical life as a reflection of a personal identity that can only develop in time” (p. 157).

van Manen (1994) proposes a number of qualities possessed by good teachers, arguing that these may be regarded as teacherly virtues because in their absence the practitioner would be a less effective educator. He includes
patience, trust, humor, diligence, believing in children, having special
knowledge, and the ability to understand the meaning and significance of
difficulty, discipline, interest, and other aspects of learning. (p. 156)

This list may seem a bit thin, particularly when compared to the more expansive
summary of “qualities… essential to pedagogy” he proposes just two years later (1996, p.
46, cited above, page 133). These lists overlap with the “relational qualities” which he
mentions even more recently: “inventiveness, humor, resoluteness, energy, warmth, and
engagement” (1999, p. 3). Interestingly, Paulo Freire elaborates upon a very similar
range of “qualities” or “virtues” – highlighting “humility, lovingness, courage, tolerance,
decisiveness, and patient impatience” in one volume (1998b, p. 45), and “a generous
loving heart, respect for others, tolerance, humility, joyful[ness]…, perseverance…, hope,
and openness to justice” in another (1998a, p. 108). These virtuous qualities may seem
somewhat less directly pedagogical, when compared with van Manen’s (1994, 1996), and
this no doubt reflects Freire’s insistence that education for democracy not only entails the
formation of persons (teacher and student alike), but that such formation is impossible
without ethics, and therefore the broad classical ideals of goodness, truth, and beauty
must be interwoven into one’s teaching practice (1998a, pp. 32, 38; 1997, p. 313).

Moreover, Freire contends that if educators are to respect the “dignity, autonomy, and
identity” of students, they must develop in themselves “coherent attitudes and virtues in
regard to such practice” (1998a, pp. 61, 63). Such virtues not only serve to create “just,
serious, humble, and generous relationships” (p. 86), they also emerge out of the
demands of the practice itself (p. 108; cf. Hansen, 2001, p. 18), and they serve as a
standard against which educators can evaluate their pedagogy (Freire, 1998a, p. 63).
Regardless whether one looks to broad moral values and ideals or more particularized pedagogical qualities and virtues – or to both as Margret Buchmann (1993) does – it is in one’s active relations with students that an educator expresses all the virtuous qualities that constitute the ethical domain of practice. The embodiment of such virtues, van Manen (1994) argues, is determined by two moments: (1) the readiness to exercise pedagogical fitness (tact) in various changing teaching-learning contexts and, (2) the authenticity of the virtues that one exercises. He argues that it is when we feel addressed by the child, or called upon to embody a virtue, that we find in our pedagogical nature the strength to demonstrate this quality. But, if the virtues are not fixed in our character, if we do not live in and through them – if they “do not touch us, and do not constitute the soundboard of our emotional life” – then they are not the genuine motives of our personal actions (p. 161). van Manen suggests it is a mistake to suppose that we can straightforwardly learn these pedagogical sensibilities as some sort of propositional knowledge applied to our outward behavior. Moreover, if the virtues are not rooted in our character, then we cannot really be impacted by the child’s situation, their urgencies, or their potential.

In what I believe is a significant insight, van Manen (1994) wishes to distinguish virtues from broader moral values – arguing that questions of how to spontaneously act in particular situations are not typically answerable through abstract moral reasoning. He contends that the particularities of pedagogical choices “rarely can be derived from… abstract ethical concepts or political ends”, “larger moral and critical social issues”, or “traditional moral concepts such as The Good, Equality, Justice, Dignity and the political
ideals of Democracy", since these all tend to be removed from the daily interactions of classroom life (p. 153). He therefore suggests that educators need to look to richer and more concrete norms such as acting in ways that are thoughtful, tactful, and sensitive to the child's experience, understanding a learner's difficulties, knowing how to listen, seeing each child as unique and different, understanding fears and vulnerabilities, encouraging success, remaining patient and supportive, and being reliable, trusted by, and available to children. (1994, p. 154)

That is, he is drawing attention to the thoughtful enactment of normative virtues and sensibilities demanded by a vital pedagogical relationship. It is just here that an important connection needs to be made to one of my central theses: the images of pedagogical relationship which I am proposing — servant, friend, mentor, and covenanter — all concretely portray the distinct and overlapping features of these normative pedagogical virtues and sensibilities. Moreover, these multidimensional images do their work in the imagination in a powerful, vocationally formative way. They are evocative and compelling in a way that a catalogue of virtues can never be. They move us to reflect ever more deeply and honestly upon our self-image as a teacher and the nature of our response to the call of our students.

The normative, relational sensibility of teaching craft is essentially captured by van Manen's term pedagogical tact, and in closing this section I believe it would be instructive to briefly examine a summative statement on tact, for it corresponds rather well to several of the pedagogical images I am proposing. van Manen (1996) elaborates upon four central capacities or sensibilities, and notice here how the first two bring to mind the image of a devoted servant or a sensitive friend:

First, ...the sensitive ability to interpret inner thoughts, understandings, feelings, and desires from indirect clues such as gestures, demeanor,
expression, and body language. ...Second,... the ability to interpret the psychological and social significance of the features of this inner life. Thus [one] knows how to interpret, for example, the deeper significance of shyness, frustration, interest, difficulty, tenderness, humor, discipline in concrete situations with particular children or groups of children. (p. 41)

Of course, there is a degree of overlap with all these images, and as I noted in the last chapter, these are not the only images of vocation that practitioners might look to. Notice here how the third capacity resonates with certain aspects of the work of a mentor:

Third, an educator [mentor] appears to have a fine sense of standards, limits, and balance that makes it possible to know almost automatically how far to enter into a situation and what distance to keep in individual circumstances. ...paradoxically...[it is] the ability of knowing how much to expect and expecting too much. (p. 41)

Lastly, van Manen selects the overarching capacity of moral insight, which is precisely what an ethic of pedagogical vocation ultimately pursues. And vocation, as I proposed in the last chapter provides "the central, unifying image in which the other metaphors find their place and coherence, as well as their full power and meaning":

Finally, tact seems characterized by moral intuitiveness: A tactful teacher seems to have the ability of instantly sensing what is the right or good thing to do on the basis of perceptive pedagogical understanding of children’s nature and circumstances. (p. 42, italics mine)

‘An ethic’ is a working set of guidelines concerning what is right and good (Gill, 2000, p. 12), but if it is to move us, an ethic must be more than guidelines – it must, I am arguing, also be captured in rich, complex images that are meaningful and enduring.

**Gift-Giving and the Mentoring Relation**

The largely untapped potential of mentoring relationships in teacher education (Gehrke, 1988), and in college and university life generally (Garber, 1996), has been
recognized for some time, yet the analyses in this growing literature typically stress the programmatic or functional aspects to the exclusion of the personal and relational. It is my thesis that the concept and image of mentoring has application in the grade-school teacher-student context, and I will explore this through the lens of gift-giving. I will argue that the language and sensibility of a gift economy is more adequate to the personal and relational perspective of mentoring than the metaphors and concepts of market economy that characterize atomistic or organicist ways of association.

A gift naturally possesses the power to delight us, to move us, to revive our souls, even to redeem us. Gifts are never acquired through our own efforts, willpower, or purchasing power, nor can we demand them or barter for them. They are always bestowed upon us. Moreover, the spirit of a gift retains its power and vitality, often long after being given, through the memories of generosity that lie behind it — even in the regular rituals and traditions of gift-exchange. In certain cultures, gift-giving is a pervasive social phenomenon, not primarily because gifts represent a primitive form of property, but rather because freewill giving tends to characterize the economies of smaller, more tightly knit groups: tribes, clans, families — and I would urge, classrooms.

By contrast, in a market economy, as we saw in the last chapter, exchange is typically self-interested or instrumental, and impersonal — it lacks the emotion and personal relation of gift exchange, hence it offers little enduring fulfillment or nourishment. I want to argue that it is precisely because gift exchange does satisfy deep needs, that there will always be a motivation for relationships to move beyond the merely transactional. So, in an age where the market mindset has come to predominate, gift exchange serves a necessary corrective to countering fragmentation and the loss of social
feeling and vitality. It is when gifts circulate more widely than an exchange between two
friends that communal bonds of gratitude and fidelity become established — and so it is
that communities maintain their coherence and stability through the circulation of gifts.26
Lewis Hyde (1979) contends that when we fail to sponsor institutions of positive
reciprocity, we become

unable to enter gracefully into nature, unable to draw community out of
the mass, and, finally, unable to receive, contribute toward, and pass along
the collective treasures we refer to as culture and tradition. (pp. 38-39)

Strictly speaking, gift giving differs from reciprocity, for although something may come
back to the giver, this cannot be a condition of the gift, for then it would cease to be a
gift. In a sense, ‘a gift given is a gift sacrificed’, since the giver no longer controls the
gift, or its repayment. Paradoxically then, when a gift is given or used, it is not used up,
for the spirit in which it was given is remembered and thus it remains vital and
generative.

One general type of gift that Hyde elaborates upon, which has significance for
pedagogical relations, is the threshold gift. These gifts mark the passage from one state
or place into another, and they often accompany episodes of transition or incorporation.
They may also serve as the agent or catalyst of individual transformation. That is,
identity is tied to the gift, and acceptance of the gift corresponds to the incorporation into
a new, fuller identity. Interestingly, Hyde (1979) uses examples of teaching gifts as his
primary illustration of such transformative gifts, though he does not have in mind
“schoolbook lessons” but rather those “lessons in living” that change or even save our
lives (p. 45). Similarly, Rachael Kessler (2000) understands the rite of passage of
students as
a structured process guided by adults in which young people are helped to become conscious about the irrevocable transition they're in, given tools for making transitions and separations, initiated into the new capacities required for their next step, and acknowledged by the community of adults, as well as their peers, for their courage and strength in taking that step. (p. 140, italics in original)

As a one-time counselor with Alcoholics Anonymous, Hyde uses AA's program of recovery as one example of this gift of teaching. AA groups enjoy local autonomy, and significantly, the program is free – expenses are covered by members' donations. Hyde argues that if the program were delivered through a market model, the spirit underlying the lessons would be obscured: not only is the recovery process itself voluntary, the charging of fees would greatly diminish the motivating power of the gratitude involved. The teachings and sharing of life-experiences are free – a gift. Newcomers may receive this gift, and even recognize its power, but recovery may take a considerable time. The AA program can be summarized as a twelve-step program to recovery, and most significantly, the final step is an act of gratitude: to reach out to other alcoholics when called upon to do so. Thus, the gift which was once received, and which effected a transformation, can now be authentically passed on.

Hyde argues that in a similar way, the gift of mentorship is given, received, appropriated over time, and then passed along to others. In both these examples of transformative gifts, it is when the instruction begins to take effect that recipients begin to apprehend their good fortune and feel gratitude. This gratitude is central, not only to the transformative efforts in appropriating the gift, but also to the subsequent labor involved in passing the gift on to others. As a mentoring relationship is established, a protégé or learner can, at some level, be stirred or awakened by an initial offer. The awakening only initiates the gift exchange; it must be followed by the generative, identity-shaping phase
of laboring. The proffered future must be felt and embraced, and years of labor may be required before the gift is received as a true possession — before learning has wrought its inner transformation. Hyde (1979) notes that there is a certain reciprocity involved in this transformation: the gift will continue to energize, so long as the learner attends to its development with gratitude. Hyde refers to this middle phase in the passage of the gift as “the labor of gratitude” (p. 51), and those who fail to respond with gratitude, never really come to possess their gifts. The labor is not so much dutiful obligation as it is a responsive effort in gratitude for the gift given. It is an inventive labor that reflects the desire to achieve, to become, and so to fulfill these possibilities affirmed by the mentor.

The value of a teacher-mentor’s gift rests upon its ability to alter lives — to provide a new way of seeing things and life — regardless of the student’s age (Garber, 1980, p. 135). Carol Zaleski (1995) gives us a glimpse into such a gift, in her account of meeting with her teacher, Richard R. Niebuhr:

I climb the stairs to his office… clutching a long list of ideas for us to discuss. He listens patiently as always; indeed he pays such close attention to the first item as to call everything that follows into question. What do I mean by ‘experience’? by ‘individual’? by ‘consciousness’? We never get very far down the list. No matter. I have been shown a new landscape; or, better, I have been shown how to look at the landscape that is right in front of me in such a way that its distinctive and surprising features come into clearer view. Two hours later, I leave. What must it have cost him to be so generous with his time? But this kind of exchange takes time; no wonder it is so rare. (p. 127)

Of course, teacher-mentors serve in a variety of roles — tutor, sponsor, role model, motivator and the like (Evans, 2000, p. 246) — but Nathalie Gehrke (1988) highlights their primary gift: the gift of wisdom that comes with having lived and thought profoundly about life. This is a wisdom or philosophy which permeates one’s conduct; it
is wisdom given by virtue of being embodied: "Through the gift of self as philosopher, the receiver, the protégé, is awakened" (p. 192). Notice here, this gift of wisdom which issues from the gift of self, is very different in spirit and substance from Shulman's wisdom of practice which is essentially instrumental knowledge that a practitioner seeks to acquire. Notice too, a mentor's gift does not dominate, but liberates: "the mentor refuses to take control of the life, dreams, and aspirations of the mentee" (Freire, 1997, p. 324; cf. May, 2000, p. 33). The issue for mentors, affirms Laurent Daloz (1999), goes deeper than how we influence students, "It is a question about a relationship: Where are our students going, and who are we for them in their journey?" (p. 5, italics in original). Mentoring is about freely giving and receiving; it is not an obligation that one owes to the other, for this would destroy the freedom characteristic of mutualism.

A gift that possesses the power to transform us must always touch us at a deep level, however we cannot appropriate a gift until we meet it on its own terms. And so, we must surrender, out of gratitude, to the sacrifice and labor of becoming adequate to the gift – to becoming sufficiently empowered to hold it. The end, or fruit, of a labor of gratitude is a similarity with either the gift or its giver, or both. Moreover, it is only when the gift has done its work in us – only when we have, through labor, been transformed – that we can then pass it along to others. Freely bestowing the gift upon others, which was once given to us, brings to completion or fulfillment the labor of gratitude, and confirms the genuine acceptance of the original gift.31 Passing on the gift, writes Geherke (1988), "completes the gift cycle socially and psychologically" (p. 192). There is fulfillment both in the labor through which gratefulness is expressed to the originator of the gift, and
also in passing it on in new relationships and thereby knitting together a growing community of those who have labored out of gratitude.

A gift establishes or maintains a social tie, a feeling-bond between people, which an instrumental transaction can never accomplish. In a teaching or mentoring relation, there are many opportunities for simple gestures of goodwill to strengthen social bonds, from overtures of attention and concern – a pause, a look of approval, a smile – to informal and relaxed conversation. Interestingly, Huebner (1963/1999) locates conversation squarely in the realm of gift-giving:

The requirements of love, that a person freely give, freely receive, internalize that which has been received, and give once again from the newness of one’s self, are... the requirements of true conversation. (p. 78)

Simple everyday gestures and conversation, argues Hyde (1979), offer a model that may be extended to more profound relationships and unions, which are established and strengthened through gifts of incorporation (p. 57). It is when we are stirred by someone’s gift, he comments, “that we are brought close, and what moves us, beyond the gift itself, is the promise (or the fact:) of transformation, friendship, and love” (p. 68). Bruce Thomas (1990), drawing upon a case study, relates the observations of one history teacher:

I am continually impressed by the needs that high school kids have to find adults they can talk to; who they can trust with the issues that are immediate and live to them, with the situations they get into. ...It seems to me that the possibilities of being a good advisor, a good counselor, those possibilities are born in the classroom. We’re the ones with the kids all the time. (p. 274)

Sharing the gift of self means moving out of the oftentimes impersonal, scripted role of a practitioner, and being seen by students “as real people who care, have strong beliefs,
[and] live fully in the world" (Perrone, 1991, p. 31, italics in original). Too often, writes Greene (1996), “The teacher is frequently addressed as if he or she had no life of his or her own, no... inwardness. ... [their] personal biography is overlooked” (p. 195). Students at my own school were surprised to find that many of their teachers were skilled musicians, composers, and vocalists — and were delighted to cheer them on in several noon-hour performances. Making such connections with students through one’s interests and avocations, then, can serve as another means of gift-giving, and can in turn fund student engagement and deeper relations (Perrone, p. 31).

Unlike commodities, gifts have a worth that is impossible to put a price on. Thus, the gift of mentorship — or servanthood, or friendship, or covenant — has no exchange value because worth resides in the personal relationship. When we try to assign a market value to something — even if it is our own pedagogical work — the process of valuation requires that we detach ourselves from what we are pricing. In fact, we must be able to stand apart, because we must be able to imagine parting with something before we can assign it a price. But if we are personally tied to these things, if they are things that we love, then we sense, quite rightly, that it is inappropriate to be asked to evaluate them. Pedagogical vocation, I am arguing, involves labor not calculated by an hourly rate, for it is labor of loving service in which the worth of one’s actions is judged in terms of persons and relationships.

One might say, then, that whereas “the ethics of the market... [is] an ethic of greed” (Freire, 1997, p. 313), an ethic of gift-giving is an ethic of generosity. Thus, one does not operate in a market economy when desiring to establish or preserve bonds of caring. Situations calling for gifts are precisely those in which detached, analytic
deliberation seems out of place. Indeed, for individuals who are practiced in gift giving, analysis may not even occur to them — giving is simply their second nature. What Hyde (1979) refers to as their ‘unquestioning emotional connection’, speaks of a vibrant moral life:

As an expression of social emotion, gifts make one body of many... and when a person comes before us who is in need and to whom we feel an unquestioning emotional connection, we respond as reflexively as we would were our own body in need. (p. 66)

As we endeavor to treat everyone as potential moral friends, our ‘unquestioning emotional connection’ will no doubt become more passionate and expansive in scope. This, of course, is the central message of the well-known parable of the Good Samaritan. Samaritans and Jews at that time did not normally associate, but one particular Samaritan who came upon a wounded Jew felt an emotional connection — compassion — and he instantly and instinctively offered the gift of his aid. He tended the wounds, sought out ‘hospitalization’, and paid for it out of his own pocket. Emotional connection with one’s students, then, need not be blind or unreflective, but, I am urging, it does tend to preclude quantitative or instrumental valuation.

The quality of giftedness in personal relations that I have stressed throughout this section, is vividly portrayed by Erich Fromm (1956) in his compelling image of a mentor:

What does one person give to another? He gives of himself, of the most precious he has, he gives of his life.... He gives him of that which is alive to him; he gives him of his joy, of his interest, of his understanding, of his knowledge, of his humor, of his sadness — of all expressions and manifestations of that which is alive in him. In thus giving of his life, he enriches the other person, he enhances the other’s sense of aliveness. He does not give in order to receive; giving is in itself exquisite joy. But in giving he cannot help bringing something to life in the other person, and this which is brought to life reflects back to him; in truly giving, he cannot help receiving that which is given back to him.... In the act of giving,
something is born, and both persons involved are grateful for the life that
is born for the both of them. (pp. 24-25)

Mentorship as an Image of Pedagogical Relation

The pedagogical relation as an in loco parentis relation (van Manen, 1991, 1996)
finds strong associations in the mentoring relation. In fact, the word ‘mentor’ comes to
us from Homer’s Odyssey – Mentor was the friend whom Odysseus called upon to act as
a surrogate father to his son Telemachus as he prepared to leave on an extended journey.
Of course, mentoring relationships were not exclusive to ancient Greece – in fact, at one
time ours was very much a mentoring though it appears that one contributing
factor to the current difficult state of public education has been a diminishment in the
number of caring, involved adults in youngster’s lives (Evans, 2000; Yamamoto, 1988).
It would be instructive, then, before concluding this chapter, to consider a few brief
accounts of mentoring in the grade-school context and to reflect upon the value of this
image and concept for vocational formation.

Recall, at the outset of this chapter, Maxine Greene (1986) urges us to reach back
into our life stories – to our own learning experiences and teacher-models – “to find the
sources of our craft” (p. 16). Similarly, in his volume, Untaught Lessons (1992), it is
Philip Jackson’s intent to demonstrate the value of one’s personal recollections of
teacher-mentors as a source of insight into the craft of teaching. He suspects, however,
that because a teacher’s influence is often intangible and hard to pinpoint, practitioners
often remain silent, even unreflective, on the subject. Yet he wishes to argue that
although “what those nameless mentors may have done” (p. 8) cannot be easily
articulated, it is nevertheless real enough and potentially formative in terms of one’s own
character (p. 43) and vocational sensibilities (p. 55).
Jackson draws upon his memories of Mrs. Theresa Henzi, his high school algebra teacher in 1942. He recalls her habit of calling several students up to the board to work out assigned lessons, as she observed and commented from the side of the room. If the work was correct, she would send the student back to their desk with a nod or a word of praise. If not, she would encourage the student to take a closer look at what their mistake might be – and if necessary, she would call upon others to help out. As vivid as these images are, Jackson is at a loss to identify precisely why Mrs. Henzi continued to evoke powerful and fond memories. He suspects that part of reason related to his own mastery of the subject matter, for it was in her class he learned the importance of seriousness and lack of pretense in study, and the value of building skills toward ever more challenging problems. Nonetheless, Jackson (1992) suspects “that what I learned in her class was by no means restricted to algebra” (p. 5) – though he finds it difficult to put into words just what this extra influence consisted of.

In reflecting upon the influence of teacher-mentors like Mrs. Henzi, Jackson rejects the criticism that he is exercising little more than delusional sentimentality. He also rejects the criticism of those skeptics who insist upon certainty in knowing and are not content to rely on tacit knowledge or belief. The call for hardnosed evidence of a mentor’s influence is, in his view, entirely out of place and can have pernicious effects (p. 14). Instead, and this is significant given our previous argument, Jackson (1992) wishes to emphasize that when pondering another’s influence, a practitioner’s “orienting attitude” is best “one of gratitude and affection” (p. 16, italics mine). He recognizes here the risk of slipping into sentimentality, but he considers the far “greater costs of more negative consequences in both psychological and social terms” of resisting such efforts.
Jackson suspects that his own experience is not uncommon: all of us are convinced that the pedagogical relation is one which often makes “a huge difference in students’ lives” yet “we seem to forget what we know from personal experience and we wind up relying on evidence, such as achievement test scores” and the like (p. 19).

In Jackson’s (1992) account, one can discern the same insistence on a moral epistemology of practice, as one finds say in Sockett (1987, p. 217), or Palmer (1983/1993). The particular context of Jackson’s remarks concerns the nature of our knowledge of a mentor’s influence – which Jackson contends is emphatically relational (p. 12). This perspective, he contends, “encourages me to trust in what I believe, to accept my feelings of indebtedness to Mrs. Henzi and to acknowledge them….,” (p. 14). And how, exactly? The foremost way, in Jackson’s (1992) view, is by continuing to ponder and ruminate upon the nature of his mentor’s gift, and acting responsibly on this, “committing myself to trying to be a positive influence in the lives of my own students” (p. 14). The resemblance to the cycle of gift-giving we elaborated upon earlier is unmistakable here: Jackson draws explicit attention to passing on the gift which he had once received, and which had effected a transformation in himself.35

Herbert Kohl (1984) is another teacher educator who also recognizes the formative value of reflecting upon one’s past pedagogical relationships. He recalls the impact that some of his own teachers made on him – Mrs. Cooper in kindergarten and Mrs. Lennon in fifth grade – their affection and positive influence on students led him to believe that a teacher’s work could be both honorable and exciting. He has vivid memories of occasionally meeting Mrs. Cooper in the neighbourhood during his elementary and junior high school days, and chatting about his former classmates and
their siblings. It seems she never forgot a student, though she was far more interested in what her students went on to become, than how well they had once performed in her class.

She was a repository of the neighbourhood's memory and helped arrange class reunions, connect people with jobs, and provide information about marriages and births and deaths. She had only good to say about her former pupils. ... Mrs. Cooper was respected by everyone in the neighbourhood and welcome in every home. She was a model of kindness and generosity in the midst of a harsh, sometimes violent environment. (Kohl, 1984, p. 8)

Notice here, what it was that made a lasting impact on Kohl: Mrs. Cooper’s strength of character and the vitality of her relationships.

Later, it was Mrs. Lennon who opened up for Kohl a world outside the Bronx, as she drew upon her various travels and experiences. Daily, her students listened to classical music and observed classical or modern paintings. The day opened with a selection from a novel, and closed with the reading of a poem. She was alive to art, literature, and music and fascinated about how different people lived; Kohl comments that while he often did not understand or fully appreciate what was presented, “I didn’t resist it since I could see that she put her whole being into her presentations” (p. 9). Mrs. Lennon even advised her students not try to like or understand everything, but to observe – for she understood that seeds were being planted that would, in time, grow. It was not only her vitality and mastery of pedagogical craft that continued to impress Kohl – it was also “her obvious love of the thirty-nine eleven-year-olds she shared her experiences with” (p. 9).

Erich Fromm (1956) not only reminds us of the importance of teacher-mentors, but of a time when a mentoring society was the norm:
While we teach knowledge, we are losing that teaching which is the most important one for human development: the teaching which can only be given by the simple presence of a mature, loving person. In previous epochs... the teacher was not only, or even primarily, a source of information, but his function was to convey certain human attitudes. (p. 117)

Teacher-mentors, I have argued, operate as critically significant adults in the life of learners. Clark Moustakas (1966) contends that their very presence helps to evolve awareness and beauty, stimulates and challenges potentialities, and provides an opportunity for expansion of self in the aesthetic and spiritual realm, as well as intellectual pursuits. ...To the extent that this presence fits, it will have a bearing on the emerging feelings and values of the child. (pp. 14-15)

This same 'expansion of the self,' is alluded to by Richard Morrill (1980) as he sums up his analysis of the mentoring relationship:

One learns... values... patience, tolerance, rigor, fairness, precision – by seeing them in action, by experiencing their authority in and through another person. But we would like to emphasize another potential feature of the relationship, the claim that the self experiences to strive for its own fulfillment, to reach its utmost possibilities. (p. 115)

As I indicated in the last chapter, the need to be affirmed and valued by other persons is crucial not just in infancy – it is essential throughout one’s life. Each of us longs to be known and understood, not only for who we are, but also, and probably more importantly, for the person we can become – the emergent self. What each one of us seeks, insists Kaoru Yamamoto (1988, p. 184), is "an acknowledgement of one’s personhood as well as trust in what is and is to come" – and as I have argued, this "human development and personal becoming are only possible in a pedagogical relation" (Spiecker (1982, p. 112, cited in van Manen, 1994, p. 145).
A loving, Other-directed disposition is always generative. To anticipate new life in one’s students is to ‘see’ what is not yet in view – it is to anticipate their becoming with hope – pedagogical hope. The experience of knowing and being known, as we emphasized in the last chapter, is basic to both this love and this hope. Moreover, Erikson (1964) posits that, “hope is the ontogenetic basis of faith, and is nourished by the adult faith which pervades patterns of care” (p. 118). Teacher-mentors, then, characteristically offer this gift of faith, hope, and love by knowing and believing in those under their care, and by rigorously guiding and supporting them in pursuing their interests and their aspirations. They offer this gift, essentially, by initiating learners into this faithful, hopeful, loving way of life that they incarnate. 37

Summary

In this chapter I have argued that the moral dimension of craft is far more profound than Green’s (1999) emphasis upon the emotive importance of doing work skillfully and one’s own reflexive capacity to make judgments concerning this. It is my claim that, unlike many professions, teaching is not characterized by widely accepted norms of practice that can be looked to for standards of excellence in performance. Rather, pedagogical craft is more contextual – its personal and relational dimensions properly take center stage against a background of various complex and often elusive knowledge bases. Thus, I have affirmed that teaching as vocation is at heart a virtuous-normative pedagogical activity, and while technical language is not unimportant, “teachers also need ways of speaking that make the technical a subset of the moral” (Huebner, 1996a, pp. 267-268).
Following van Manen (1996), I have argued that educators must take their in loco parentis responsibilities as the vital focal point for reflecting upon the nature of the pedagogical virtues to be inculcated and the pedagogical relations to be established. I have urged that these critical dimensions of moral craft are rooted in a love for students – not only as learners (Kohl, 1984), but also as persons. Love is both the chief motive for gift-giving which properly characterizes personal relations, and the preeminent, overarching, and unifying virtue of pedagogical vocation. I have contended that attentiveness and insight are a function of the degree of attachment to what is observed – for ‘to love what is there’ is to apprehend it in its full complexity. Often though, practitioners resist the person of the student and their call on our lives, fearing the vulnerability and demands of a fully personal, embracing response. However, I have argued that this fear can be faced and moderated through the recursive work of love – more specifically through one’s attentive, nuanced, loving knowledge of the young person and their work (Carini, 2001).

Thus, how we think about our craft (Greene, 1986) is intimately tied to how we think about our students and ourselves, or more particularly, how we envision this relationship. I have claimed that the concept and image of mentoring, with its language and sensibility of gift-exchange, characteristically values these personal and relational dimensions, and is appropriate to the grade-school teacher-student context. I have emphasized that the image of a caring mentoring relation implies and evokes a rich, interrelated set of identity-shaping pedagogical virtues and sensibilities which practitioners can ever seek to inculcate in themselves – and so endeavor to “maintain and perfect their singularly vibrant craft and themselves” (Buchmann, 1993, p.173).
CHAPTER FOUR
THE CALL OF MEMORY & IMAGINATION

The sense of tradition keeps teachers tethered to the terms of the practice, just as their efforts keep tradition tethered to human creativity, insight, imagination, and hope.

- David Hansen

In Thomas Green’s (1999) formulation of moral formation, the voices of sacrifice, membership, and craft are conceived as standing side by side – in spite of the degree of overlap and tension that exists between them. The conscience of memory and imagination are seen differently. These cut across the other three; essentially they offer their own distinctive voice within the other domains. In this view, then, civic and professional life – within which sacrifice, membership, and craft operate – cannot exist except by being “embodied in some tradition, modeled by exemplars, and recovered through memory and imagination” (p. 103). Thus, the formation of moral sensibilities, or professional conscience, is largely a project in the self-conscious reception and reshaping of moral traditions upon which critical imagination is brought to bear. Of course, these are vast and diverse topics, and even though they have been considered implicitly in some of my analysis already, particular aspects will be dealt with more directly, albeit briefly, in this chapter.

First, I pick up the theme of gift-giving in pedagogical relations and set it within the wider and vitally important framework of covenantal relations and covenantal
traditions. Next, I examine hospitality as a metaphor for fashioning covenanted classrooms. I then go on to argue that professional codes and contracts are subordinate to and find their higher purposes and meaning within covenants – an argument, incidentally, which parallels the one made in chapter 2 which saw contractual and functional forms of community as relating to personalist community in the same way. In the second half of the chapter, I present a more thoroughgoing case for the formative value of pedagogical images in shaping the moral imagination of practitioners. Next, I go on to argue that a sense of vocation cannot be restricted to the classroom context, but demands imaginative social critique – and prophetic traditions offer valuable resources for this endeavor. Finally, I highlight the place of imagination in the quest for self-transcendence – which, writ large, is what the pursuit of vocation in one’s life can be considered to be.

The Voice of Memory or Tradition

Covenantal Ethics and Covenantal Traditions

Personal ties are central to covenants. These covenantal ties, I want to argue, include the bonds in pedagogical relations, which I have emphasized throughout this volume. But what does a covenant consist of, and what is the significance of covenantal ethics, relations, and traditions for funding vocational formation?

A covenant in some respects resembles a contract, for it contains a promissory element between individuals, and therefore certain duties or obligations are involved. But a covenant cuts deeper than a contract for it is a promissory event that touches one’s identity or being, and shapes one’s future personally and morally. Although a covenant centers on a promise, it does not begin with a promise – it begins with a gift, and it is the responsiveness to a gift that, in a unique and profound way, characterizes a covenant.
Covenantal ethics and relations have a history spanning millennia. Covenant is a central feature of the Hippocratic Oath, dating from classical times. Covenant was also central to the life of ancient Israel: covenants of friendship, covenant of marriage, covenants between nations, covenantal duties to sojourners in the land, and of course, their primary covenant with God. Even today, through the stories and novels of authors like Wendell Berry and William Faulkner, one can imaginatively enter into a covenanted world with ties of marriage, family, and community, the bond across the generations, and the essential tie to the land.

Briefly, a (biblical) covenantal ethic has three central features. First, an original gift is extended between potential covenant partners; second, a commitment or promise is made out of a heartfelt responsiveness to this gift; and third, covenant partners accept an inclusive array of moral (and ritual) obligations by which to live — thus fidelity to the promise comes to define their subsequent relation (May, 2000, p. 115; Campbell, 1994, p. 191). Unlike a contract, a covenant enjoins "a comprehensive fidelity that extends beyond particulars to unforeseen and unforeseeable contingencies" (May, p. 113). And significantly, fidelity emerges out of a sense of indebtedness — a sense of grateful response to a gift, and this constitutes the key reason for employing the term 'covenant' rather than 'contract'. Fidelity, writes Leslie Dewart (1966) "is a relation towards another which one owes to oneself by reason of one's own nature", thus, while the conformity of contract "obligates from the outside. Fidelity... obligates from within" (p. 96). A covenantal paradigm, then, assumes both a supporting ethic of gift-response (rather than command-obedience) as well as a historical narrative of gift-giving and grateful response (Campbell, pp. 191, 193).
Themes of gift, commitment, and fidelity are evident in earlier chapters, so I have already offered substantial insights into how a covenantal ethic might get worked out in a professional setting. I have argued, for instance, that the self-giving love of servanthood, grounded in a commitment to mutuality, properly serves as the interpretive center of teaching practice. I have stressed that gift-giving by teacher-mentors is not a one-sided affair, for it initiates a cycle of giving and receiving in relationships which multiplies over time. Yet the image and concept of covenant, and teacher as covenanter, more explicitly brings these themes together. *A covenantal ethic assists us in acknowledging the context of mutual need, gift, and indebtedness in which practitioners undertake their work* (May, 2000, p. 123).

Patricia Carini (2001) takes the broad view that young people regularly offer their elders two gifts: both forgiveness for the mistakes of their generation, and the gift of rebirthing “human possibility” – of impacting a new generation for the good (p. 199). William Carlos Williams, the doctor-poet, understood mutuality of need and indebtedness more personally, as he went about his house calls to various poor families in New Jersey:

I don’t know what I’d do without those patients! Everyone thinks doctors are good people because they help other people who are sick. But if you ask me, the people who are sick are helping us all the time – if we’ll let them help us. How many times I’ve gotten up and felt lousy; I’ve felt lousy driving over there, and then I’ll knock on the door, and someone opens it, and it’s a mother or a father, and they want me to go right to their kid, or they have ‘pains’ themselves, and you know what, the next thing with me is that I’ve forgotten myself – isn’t that an achievement! – because I’m all tied up with someone else. ... [I’m] sprung right out of my own damn self-preoccupations. (Coles, 1989, p. 104)

Williams’s patients did more than pull him out of himself. He recognized that as a busy, burdened professional, he could be abrupt and irritable with patients – delivering a
correct diagnosis and prescription but in the wrong spirit. But he also understood that often it was his patients who would bring out in him "a warm empathy, a considerateness towards others, a willingness, even, to let them become one's teacher's, however humble or troubled their lives" (p. 107). As William May (2000) points out, the manifold acts of giving and receiving – the acts of care and generosity on the one hand, and gratefulness and obligation on the other – serve to nourish the professional relationship, including the pedagogical relationship:

students need a teacher, but the teacher also needs students. They provide the teacher with a regular occasion and forum in which to work out what he or she has to say and to rediscover the subjects afresh through the discipline of sharing it with others. (p. 123)

Moreover, the professional incurs a substantial prior indebtedness to the community – to their own teachers, to others who serve in educational institutions, and to the wider society for the privilege of practice and financial rewards. Importantly, then, a covenant serves to correct the misconception some practitioners may have to view their work as a gratuitous act rather than a responsive act (p. 124).

As I have already hinted, professionals can look outside their fields for insight into how covenantal relations and covenantal ethics might appear in practice: in marriage, in family relations, in faith communities. Consider a selection from Garret Keizer's volume on vocation in a rural community:

For a number of years, Harriet was cook at an elementary school in the Northeast Kingdom [Vermont]. She didn't make much money. If she was sick, it was her responsibility to find – and pay – her own substitute. ...Harriet's reputation as a homestyle cook reached me through other sources [than my wife]. I taught high school seniors who remembered her cooking fondly, though they had last tasted it in fourth grade. Most of what Harriet had to work with was the same government-issue stocks that come to other schools, but apparently she exercised some alchemical
power over them. I do know that she often used vegetables from her own home garden. I have not been able to discover how her turkey came off a bird, while turkey at many schools and some restaurants comes off something called a ‘loaf,’ which if I were a turkey I’d sue for defamation of character. At snack time, Harriet set out individual trays, each marked with a student’s name; on special occasions students received personalized gingerbread men. Once the school was without electricity for three days. Whether Harriet liked a challenge or simply disliked cold sandwiches, I don’t know, but during the blackout she took home cooking to extremes – by taking it home, all of it, and driving it back to the school hot and on time for lunch.

It was not simply Harriet’s cooking that was so uncompromisingly home-style, but the whole atmosphere of her kitchen. I have heard from those who visited the school that it was not uncommon to find a student seated on a countertop amid mixing bowls and aluminum foil and reading aloud while Harriet corrected mispronunciations and deftly as she peeled potatoes. She was cook, tutor, and a living rewards system as well. A colleague recalls an underachiever succeeding at last in the form of a good test grade; when class was over, the boy rushed out clutching his paper – and made straight for the kitchen door.

People like Harriet present special difficulties when we begin to talk about things like jobs and pay. ...if politicians suddenly discovered that hot lunch could be hot politics, they too would cite Harriet as the raison d’etre for a scheme like merit pay. ...the truth is, Harriet will exist or not exist irrespective of anybody’s money. None of us wants to admit that, for if true, it means that the universe, or at least that part of the universe in which Harriet baked her muffins, is somewhat beyond our understanding; worse, yet, beyond our control; and worst of all, beyond our opportunism. It is likely that we do lose a Harriet now and then by failing to pay her what she needs to survive. It is less likely that we attract a Harriet by money. It is unlikely to impossible that we create one that way. (Keizer, 1988/1996, pp. 119-121)

I have included Keizer’s account, not to offer an idealized portrait of service, but rather, to remind us of those individuals who are well-practiced in gift-giving. All of us have had the pleasure of knowing of a Harriet or two at some time – people who are eager to serve, and whose work is really an extension of who they are. Harriet not only offered the gift of her superior cooking talents, she offered the gift of self – by entering fully into the life of the school, acknowledging students by name, personalizing their
treats, assisting in their progress, and celebrating their achievements. While all of these gestures are not expected of school support staff, it seems Harriet did not take any notice of this. Her kitchen was not ‘off limits’ to students; rather it was warmed by her generosity of spirit and hospitality to all. Her motives and actions are better captured with relational words like ‘commitment,’ ‘fidelity,’ ‘vocation,’ and ‘coovenant’ than with the more usual though less personal language of ‘standards,’ ‘ethical codes,’ ‘career,’ and ‘contract’. And although this account of Harriet is only a brief one, it is sufficient to illustrate that her life and work in the school community could readily be communicated with images of ‘servant,’ ‘friend,’ ‘mentor,’ and ‘coovenanter’ – she was a “living reward system”, a gift to the community, who built community as she went about her everyday tasks.

Memories of such people in our own experience can influential – in particular, they can be formative vocationally, as we saw in the last chapter. More than this though, these memories knit into a much broader weave of exemplary and loving service across the ages – a moral tradition. Tradition is influence that endures over time, spanning generations. A sense of tradition, argues David Hansen (2001a), can strengthen and sustain a practitioner’s vocational commitment by leading them to reflect upon the terms of teaching practice across time (p. 140). A sense of tradition enables us to live continuously in past, present, and future, and to see our work expansively, as oriented to broader hopes for human meaning and flourishing. Such a perspective Hansen argues, directs attention and emotion, it unifies pedagogical knowledge and personal commitment, it encourages and outward-looking, imaginative stance, it funds our moral sensibilities and thereby our personal transformation and that of our students (pp. 123-
Extending Hansen's analysis, then, I want to argue that cultivating a sense of tradition activates and enlivens our consciousness to pass on the gift of self that mentors and exemplars once passed on to us, or more broadly, to perpetuate a memory and tradition of covenantal relations.

Both Hansen (2001a, p. 144f) and Green (1999, p. 103f) recognize that traditions imply more than a community of practice, for if they are to be vital they must also encourage an ongoing critical conversation. The moral sources of traditions contribute to the broader backdrop and critical distance which teachers need not only to resist current pressures to instrumentalize education, but also to question current assumptions, customs, and policies (Hansen, 1999, pp. 217, 223). Such critical traditions are self-renewing—both looking to the past while building upon it for the future.

Tradition comprises a background set of commitments, activities, questions, concerns, and aspirations that continuously evolve as individuals in one generation respond to the efforts and projects of those who preceded them in a particular practice. (Hansen, 2001a, p. 121)

A sense of tradition, then, involves faithfulness to what we have received, but also the courage to respond to challenges to those traditions. It involves both reception and resistance; imitation and innovation. It “is a blend of listening to and questioning the voice of tradition” (Hansen, 2001a, p. 150).

Engaging the voice of tradition need not mean embracing conservatism, and its set of oftentimes inert, fixed, and uncritical assumptions, activities, and purposes. Nor should it mean a retreat from the forward-looking hopes of progressive and reformed educators. A sense of tradition, is not a particular approach or version of pedagogy, rather, as Hansen (2001a) argues, it refers to an orientation or outlook on practice which
encourages a teacher to see themselves as “ensuring that things of value – knowledge, understanding, outlooks – endure in a dynamic way for future generations” (p. 115). Significantly, the personhood and sensibilities of teachers find their intellectual and moral warrant in such living traditions (p. 116).

But I also wish to argue that covenantal traditions necessarily involve local memories as well, and not only the broad view of educational traditions found in Hansen’s analysis. Simone Weil (1952/1979) contends that our rootedness is by virtue of our real, active, and natural participation in the life of a community, which preserves in living shape certain particular treasures of the past and certain particular expectations for the future. (p. 43, italics mine)

Inasmuch as a gift is a “relation-creating or relation-sustaining act,” it is important, then, to see covenantal relations and traditions in the context of community (Campbell, 1994, p. 182). And if a covenantal community is to endure, then it “must exert sort of a centripetal force, holding… local memory in place” (Berry, 1990, p. 155). Take Harriet, for example. It is the memory of her generous and dedicated work, recounted and celebrated in story and anecdote, which would contribute to keeping a covenantal ethic alive and vibrant in her school community – even many years after her departure. Stories like hers have a “pluralizing and publicizing function” – they link teller and hearers with shared personal memory (Carini, 2001, p. 2). But one must recognize that local memory is tied to local community, and as Wendell Berry (1990) points out, the loss of one spells the loss of the other – and I might add, the loss of covenantal traditions:

As local community decays… a vast amnesia settles over the countryside… local knowledge and local memory move away to the cities or are forgotten under the influence of homogenized sales-talk,
entertainment, and education. ... when a community loses its memory, its members no longer know one another. How can they know one another if they have forgotten or have never learned one another’s stories? If they do not know one another’s stories, how can they know whether or not to trust one another? People who do not trust one another do not help one another, and moreover they fear one another. And this is our predicament now. Because of a general distrust and suspicion, we ... lose one another’s help and companionship. (p. 157)

Robert Bellah (1990) refers to a community constituted by a local memory a ‘community of memory’. Such a community regularly retells stories of its past, and in so doing, “it offers examples of men and women who have embodied and exemplified the meaning of community” (p. 153) – individuals such as Harriet. These are stories that “contain conceptions of character, of what a good person is like, and of the virtues that define such character” (p. 153). For individuals with a sense of vocation, then, a meaningful life is tied to the vital connection between our purposes, actions, and relationships which find coherence and direction in the traditions of covenantal community:

This is what the covenantal tradition means by calling or vocation, the sense of purpose motivated by gratitude that develops a personal character disposed toward service and stewardship.... (Langerak, 1994, p. 99)

That is, a covenantal tradition contends that the central task of ethics is to offer a foundation for a sense of vocation within a moral community (p. 106).

*Hospitality and Covenanted Classrooms*

If the traditions of local covenantal community are to be passed on, then it follows that education is fundamentally a gift of hospitality – a response to the young stranger in our midst (Huebner, 1999; Palmer, 1983/1993; Nouwen, 1975/1980). Through this gift, its underlying commitment, and the fidelity that it demonstrates and evokes, young people
are invited into the life of a covenant community and its traditions. Young people are strangers, not yet part of the community, in that they do not yet share a set of common understandings and experience. To invite them into community life is to be hospitable – it is to open a space for joint meanings and jointly constructing ways of being community (Huebner, 1999, p. 337). But too often today, in the world of our classrooms and schools:

Education has become a thing, a process removed from the ordinary ways of living in community. Lost is the awareness that education is the dialectic between individual and community life... that educational content is an aspect of community life. ...To invite the young stranger to participate in the life of the [community] is to be hospitable, to make room for joint activity and joint meanings, and to jointly construct ways of being community. (Huebner, 1999, pp. 328, 337)

Hospitable places “are where we are warmed in both body and soul, and made comfortable, and tend to linger. [They] invite pause, reflection, and conversation” (Parks, 2000, p. 154). They are also places where “we learn to share, to wait, to accommodate, to be grateful”, where “we learn delayed gratification, belonging, commitment, and ritual” (p. 156). The concentrated and thoughtful work of extending hospitality and creating space can be expressed in a multitude of ways in the classroom. But I wish to argue that this work must centrally involve the experience of the students themselves. To feel a sense of belonging, students must feel seen and heard and understood for the persons they really are. Hospitality, as Henri Nouwen (1975/1980) puts it, “is not a subtle invitation to adopt the lifestyle of the host, but the gift of a chance for the guest to find his own” (p. 69, italics mine):

Our relationship with our students is first of all a relationship in which we offer ourselves to our searching students, to help them develop some clarity in the many impressions of their mind and heart and discover
patterns of thoughts and feelings on which they can build their own life. 
... As teachers we have to encourage our students to reflection which 
leads to vision – theirs, not ours. (Nouwen, 1975/1980, p. 84)

“Freedom in education,” asserts Buber (1949) is not “compulsion”, but rather it “is the 
possibility of communion...[which] means being opened up and drawn in” (p. 91).

Students, then, must have the opportunity to allow their real questions to emerge 
from within. But, of course, this is to be vulnerable, and so it demands mutual trust and a 
desire for each to become present to each other. Yet trust is not easily or quickly won – it 
“is the most inward achievement of relation in education” (Buber, 1949, p. 98). Thus 
teaching demands first of all, the sort of personalist community described in chapter 2:

the creation of a space where students and teachers can enter into a 
fearless communication with each other and allow their respective life 
experiences to be their primary and most valuable resource of growth and maturation. (Nouwen, 1975/1980, p. 80)

Nouwen calls attention to two aspects of this task: revealing and affirming. Students 
have been in the receiving mode so often that many can hardly imagine that they have 
something valuable to offer. Some are plagued with self-doubt, others suffer from little 
sense of self. Thus, as a receptive host, the teacher has to reveal – to remove this 
misconception – and help students see “that their own life experiences, their own insights 
and convictions, their own intuitions and formulations are worth serious attention” (p. 
81). As Huebner (1987/1999) puts it, the student needs to be encouraged “by a gracious 
host or hostess to bring feelings, memories, and hopes to the present in a personal story” 
(p. 383). This, then, spotlights the important task of ‘listening’ a “young person into an 
articulate consciousness,” through having the narrative capacity enter into the young 
person’s story line (Huebner, 1987/1999, p. 383). Few of us are capable of believing

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“that we have anything to give unless there is someone who is able to receive. Indeed, we discover our gifts in the eyes of the receiver” (Nouwen, 1975/1980, p. 81).

A good host is one who presumes that their guests are full of promise, and sees that they carry about a gift of self to be revealed to anyone who offers genuine interest – “it is in receptivity that gifts become visible” (p. 81). Teacher-covenanters, then, do not fulfill their role in the formation of young people unless they recognize their gifts, and welcome their emerging competence – that is, unless they recognize young persons for who they really are, and for who they are becoming. It is easy enough to impress students with what they do not know, but it is much more challenging to be receptive, and to help students distinguish between what is good and what is less worthy in their own lives. A mentor and covenanter, when open to the potential of a young life, “works to develop within [them] the capacity for discerning what is true, worthy, and life-bearing” (Parks, 2000, p. 132).

What is revealed as good and worthwhile, or a valuable contribution, then, needs to be encouraged and affirmed. A receptive host not only brings hidden talents into view, he or she must also be capable of helping others develop and strengthen these talents and move on with renewed self-confidence. Of course, affirmation can take a variety of forms – a smile of approval or surprise, a word of encouragement, a gesture of delight or thanks. It might be more concrete, such as a letter of recommendation, or a referral to particular resources or persons. It even extends to pedagogical purposes: affirming students’ innate desires and interests, their creative impulse and capacity, their playfulness in knowledge-making. Whatever form it takes, affirmation “always includes
the inner conviction that a precious gift merits attention and continuing care” (Nouwen, 1975/1980, p. 82).

Acts of revelation and affirmation demonstrate to students that they are not deficient and ignorant, but that they are guests to the classroom community who belong, who have a contribution to make, and who have a story to tell. A covenanted classroom is not one that compels everyone to abide by certain rules, but a community of people invited to find a place, to discover gifts to share, and to author a new story together. Rachel Kessler (2000) confirms this view:

Authentic intimacy – a deep caring, mutual, respectful relationship with one other person – can be a source of deep connection for young people. The stories they tell are usually about close connections with a friend, mentor, or parent, rather than romantic forms of intimacy. (p. 20)

Teachers covenant with students when, through their own gift of hospitality, and commitment and fidelity in this work, they invite students to respond in kind. The gifts of a covenant community are mediated through practices such as reception and affirmation, but also through challenge, confrontation, and a multitude of other ways “that people do with and for each other to make and keep life human” (Parks, 2000, p. 154). Community, then, must seek to balance two yearnings: the exercise of one’s unique agency and self-transcendence, and the urge for relationship and belonging. It is the recognition, care, presence, and trust of others in the community that allows boundaries of awareness to expand, and mutual responsibilities to deepen. Such classroom community provides “hospitality to the potential of the emerging self, and it offers access to worthy dreams of self and world” (Parks, 2000, p. 93).
I find it both interesting and instructive that Dwayne Huebner (1993b) articulates the vocational responsibilities of teachers — responsibilities to intellectual tradition, to students, and to educational institution — *in the language of covenant*: "gift, "promise", and an implicit fidelity or "renewal" of covenant (p. 428-429). He views responsibility to an intellectual tradition as dual in nature: scholarship serves to ensure its warranted truthfulness, and teaching maintains its serviceability. Huebner has in mind a critical, enlivening sort of scholarship that does not make an idol of an intellectual heritage, and a serviceability that emerges from the commitment to make it accessible — to present it as a gift and a trust to the student. The second obligation of giftedness is attending to the reception of the intellectual tradition in the life of the student — opening the student to its transformative value. Our failure to fully appreciate this obligation, in my view, lies at the center of our general unwillingness to recognize teaching as vocation. It would seem that the root of this failure lies in an impoverished relationship. Without the necessary depth of trust and care that comes with relationship, students fail to fully receive the promised assurance they need in order to experience the freeing power of education as their past and present perspectives are critiqued, redeemed, and transformed. This failure amounts to infidelity to our students: "To lay before the student the promise [of new life] without attention to its fulfillment is a breakdown in the vocation of teaching" (Huebner, 1993b, p. 429).

Fidelity, affirms William May (2000), would appear to be "the defining professional virtue" (p. 148). He urges that its exercise not only be discerning, but also transformational. Thus teachers must not respond merely to what students *reveal* as their self-perceived needs, but also to their *deeper* needs. A teacher, for example, may notice a
capable student experiencing some difficulty with their assignments. When questioned, the student may request more individualized instruction or help outside of class. Yet it may turn out that the extra help and attention only offers an intermittent and inadequate solution, since deeper needs are not being addressed. Further open and empathetic conversation with the student may reveal that particular concerns with peers or with family are at the root of the difficulty, and often the means to alleviate such problems can be readily found with the help of counselors or administrators or others outside the school.10

To close out this section on covenanted classrooms, I offer another example of transformational fidelity - that found in the everyday habits of Mrs. Elaine Martin in looking, listening, and responding to her first grade students at Howe School in Chicago. Philip Jackson (1992), who observed her work, recounts that whenever he crossed the threshold into her room, he was grateful that he had come: “The effect was instantaneous and surprising ...one step inside the vitality of the classroom washed over and filled me” (p. 43). The appealing atmosphere that Mrs. Martin created had to do with her manner and interaction with the children, “her directness and candor” (p. 44). For instance, after recess when children would often share about schoolyard injustices, she would deal with them seriously, though not privately. So that even when bending down to comfort a child, her voice could be distinctly heard by all. Jackson perceived that the semipublic nature of this exchange not only calmed and reassured the student involved, it also addressed wider needs, for it announced to every child that topics of concern could be voiced openly. Moreover, such exchanges impelled others to draw their own conclusions concerning what was being said in light of their own prior assumptions and judgments.
In addition, the effect over time created an atmosphere in which students felt they could seek out the teacher in a time of need. So we see in this brief account, that through the teacher’s intentional indirection, fidelity to one child became potentially transformative for each person in the classroom community.

**Contracts, Codes, Creeds and Covenanted Institutions**

If the task of fashioning covenanted classrooms seems a challenging one, then the work of joining others in creating covenanted institutions might well appear daunting. There are a multitude of reasons for this apprehension: entrenched bureaucracy, hierarchical organization, lack of public support, resistance from teachers’ unions, and a number of other seemingly systemic and intractable problems. My approach here is not to wade into this complexity and offer simplistic solutions – for I think, like Carini (2001) that it is not school *reform* that is needed, but their *reinvention*. In this limited space, then, I believe it would be instructive to briefly critique the recent *theoretical* initiatives proposed by Sockett (1990) and Fenstermacher (1990), which, being predicated upon trusting relations take us part way to covenanted institutions, and then to examine the *concrete* alternatives found in the Coalition of Essential Schools and in the experience of the Eight Year Study.

Fenstermacher (1990) presents a compelling case for the need for “teachers who are enlightened moral agents” to maintain a “close, caring, connected association” with students (pp. 146, 147). He worries though that career paths for the best and brightest in the profession take them out of classrooms, and away from students. His response to this challenge, then, is *policy trust agreements*. Rather than itemizing job performance rules as a labor contract would, these locally developed planning agreements between teachers
and administrators would spell out common goals, resource allocation guidelines, and provision for revision of terms as progress is made. Following Mitchell (1986) and Kerchner (1986), Fenstermacher argues that because teaching involves elements of industrial labor, skilled craft, artistic performance, and professional practice, a policy trust agreement, unlike a labor contract, better supports all these elements and it permits treatment of teachers as autonomous agents without various teacher promotion and evaluation systems (p. 145).  

Upon examination, it would appear that both the normative conception of a “shared resource” (p. 148) of professional expertise among staff members, and the centrality, at least in principle, of ‘trust’ in formulating policy trust agreements, move us in the direction of covenantal relations. But, even if union and management would be open to initiating a policy trust arrangement, such an agreement comes up well short of covenantal ethics. I would argue that practitioners – and the wider school community – must view what they bring to their students more as a ‘gift offered’ than a ‘resource shared’. In addition, the notion of parity is a rather weak instrument to build covenantal communities. What is required, rather, is the normative acceptance of an ethic of service and relationship. Moreover, in recasting the professionalization agenda in terms of teacher competence and parity, Fenstermacher (1990) seems to let the issues of teacher character and relationships – which were central to the first half of his essay – drop entirely from view. I would argue that the “goal” fundamentally, is not that “teaching must be conceived as an egalitarian, nonelitist occupation” (p. 148), rather, the need is for it to be conceived as a vocation.
Turning now to Sockett’s (1990) initiative, he argues that educational reform requires a practical model of professional accountability, one built upon elements of trust, public-professional partnership, and teachers’ moral agency. This trust, he urges, must be understood as a relational and not merely a functional condition, and grounded in constituent virtues of “fidelity, veracity (honesty and an absence of deception), friendliness, and care” (p. 233). Sockett is very much aware that such trust is not easily built, but that it is crucial to the partnership of an accountability system. Significantly, he contends that this system, “while recognizing human weakness, assumes professional integrity, rather than the other way round” (p. 235). Such a system must meet several criteria: 1) it must embody a common base of moral principles, 2) it must offer a means for stakeholders to render judgments, 3) it must have a local focus, and 4) it must be structured to encourage teachers to participate in maintaining its integrity. Interestingly, these criteria are evident in the operation of the experimental schools in the Eight Year Study and those of the Coalition of Essential Schools, but Sockett unfortunately limits their range to a locally developed professional code of ethics – even while acknowledging that such codes have a history of uneven influence, and often requiring policing!

Sockett (1990) is hopeful that as moral agents, teachers will view these codes as “codes of practical ethics”, able to embody professional aspirations, and capable of forming the basis for a profession-wide code of ethics (pp. 236-237). As in Fenstermacher’s (1990) model, the individual school becomes the locus of accountability – its traditions and innovations can be assessed and negotiated on the basis of a publicly accessible code, “which operates alongside more traditional forms of accountability”
These codes of best practice would be formulated with parent, public, and teacher input, thereby serving as the "vehicle of a much richer partnership of trust between schools and parents" (p. 248). Their sanctions would provide 1) pressure to adhere to a guiding set of rules or norms for conduct, and 2) confidence that competence, standards and results could be measured because of opportunity for public redress (p. 239).

Sockett's intention of strengthening parent-teacher relations and vitalizing professional accountability are certainly laudable. However the device of a detailed code seems cumbersome to formulate and operate. Moreover, it smacks of hammering out a contract rather than offering a gift of service integral to a covenant. In addition, I would suggest that parents are not well-placed to articulate what best practice entails. Even between professionals, I would argue that there is not the broad agreement that Sockett presumes "in formal instructional settings and informal contexts with students", or in their collegial, parental, and management relations, or in what "wisdom and virtue" are (p. 240).

In my view, a somewhat more workable school-wide vehicle in use today, which has covenant potential, is the one employed by the Coalition of Essential Schools. Its essential principles, and a summary of common pedagogical principles, are as follows:

Personalized instruction to address individual needs and interests; small schools and classrooms, where teachers and student know each other well and work in an atmosphere of trust and high expectations; multiple assessments based on performance of authentic tasks; democratic and equitable school policies and practice; close partnerships with the school's community.

1. Learning to use one's mind well 2. Less is More, depth over coverage 3. Goals apply to all students 4. Personalization 5. Student-as-worker,

These principles, I would argue, foster the openness and accountability of relationship and community. Notice here also that commitments of both educators and students-families interweave. Moreover, they are not the detailed “set of rules” of Sockett’s (1990, p. 237, italics in original) proposed code, rather they are principles, convictions, and aspirations – much like a mission statement – but worked out in much more fine-grained detail for practice contexts. That is, these principles are both specific enough to make obligations of the student and the teacher concrete, yet summary enough to require fidelity to the intent as well as to the particulars. Significantly, as William May (2000) points out, this integrated structure of general and particular obligations can be found in many of the biblical covenants (p. 115).

I suggested earlier, however, that this vehicle merely has the makings of a covenant. This is because so much depends upon an acknowledgment and understanding of giftedness involved. Even Thomas Sergiovanni (1992), who promotes “school covenants,” misses this essential element: he conceives them much as Fenstermacher and Sockett do, as a “publicly stated moral code”, a “social contract” which provides “the kind of morally based contractual relationship that can bind people together” (pp. 102, 109).13 I have been arguing that only when teacher and student, school and family, first come to view what they bring to the other as a gift can a covenant be established and sustained. The subsequent commitment to codes or principles – lived out with fidelity – must always be predicated upon this lively sense of gift-giving. Without the sense of giftedness, covenant degenerates into contract: commitment and fidelity can seem
burdensome to all the parties involved, the principles can read more like rules to be obeyed rather than freely and enthusiastically embraced, and the inevitable breakdown in mutual obligations can lead to policing and calls for accountability.

Interestingly, one finds that the various creeds written by educators typically contain this same array of principles, convictions, values, and aspirations as in the Coalition of Essential Schools document. John Dewey (1897), and more recently David Purpel (1989, pp. 113-120) and David Hansen (2001a, pp. x-xi), all offer up what is a somewhat personal vision for public discussion and reflection. Purpel centers his creed upon our joint responsibilities in the social sphere – justice, compassion, peace, community, democracy – while Dewey and Hansen focus largely upon the work and responsibilities of teachers and schools. None of these educators presumes that theirs is the last word on the topic, but all appear to recognize a creed’s value in clarifying understandings, evoking ideals, guiding endeavors, and strengthening one’s sense of purpose and commitment. Another value of such creeds, I would argue, is that by being adopted and adapted, they can serve as the starting point and catalyst for school communities that are intent upon fashioning covenantal institutions. But again, I want to stress here, it is not enough to start with the creed’s set of principles and commitments, or even an accompanying sense of moral responsibility, agency, and fidelity. One must start with a deep and enduring awareness of the gift of self that we bring to each other.

A glance at the extraordinary Eight-Year Study in the 1930s reveals the significance of moral agency when, institution-wide, teacher autonomy is genuine and vital, and student involvement in developing curriculum and instruction is real and valued. Initially, several hundred American educators, administrators, and parents
gathered in Washington, seeking how they might better serve the nation’s youth. The meeting gave rise to a commission of educators, who embarked on a profound initiative and massive study, as they sought to act upon what they viewed as their obligation to understand their schools as moral learning communities. Meeting at their own expense, they clarified their central purpose as teaching democracy. This required that individual schools be reconstituted into democratic polities, that every student and teacher appreciate their responsibilities of moral agency, and that the schools be freed from constraints of college entrance requirements.14

In 1933, about thirty schools were granted the freedom and responsibility to initiate the exciting but difficult and frustrating work of reconstruction, with representatives from each school regularly meeting to develop guidelines and share insights. Two guidelines emerged: 1) school life should conform to ways in which persons learn and grow, and 2) high schools must re-discover their chief purpose. In time, each school came to recognize this central purpose as embodied in the democratic ideal. The results of reconstruction were striking. Student performance was tracked through college and compared with control groups, and the experimental schools consistently ranked higher – in fact the more radical the reconstruction, the greater the differences in favor of the experimental group.15

Both Bruce Thomas (1990, p. 279) and Herbert Thelen (1972, p. 215) highlight the crucial importance of democratic participation and agency in this effort – that democratic school life was the optimal way of learning democracy. Schoolwide, teachers and students were expected to act as moral agents: students were given a central role in deciding what would be learned, in what way, and in what sequence. But individuals did
not act as isolated moral agents: the school communities themselves “became fellowships of reconciliation” (Thomas, p. 280) in this work. Teachers together with students and with other colleagues, were forced “to honestly and perserveringly grapple with and define purposes and then openly search for means of reconciling the conflicts” (p. 281). In this moral context, schools sought to nurture the formation of both teachers and students – for, as Thomas (1990) puts it, “teacher growth must parallel student growth”, and “the best way to teach moral autonomy [to students] is to embody it in teacher practice” (p. 286).

Thomas (1990) notes that when “the competence born of care, commitment, imagination, and sheer hard work” in individual practitioners runs into the dominant culture of most institutions, it is seen as a threat, and is “dealt with, usually in abrasive ways” (p. 282). But in the experimental schools, the teacher was viewed as the central figure in the school, and in order to allow their action to be morally autonomous and meaningful, the institution transformed itself to nurture and support such action. Individually and collectively, teachers let themselves be disciplined by democratic purposes and methods. Interestingly, William May (2000) likewise perceives that a “covenantal tradition ...would define the primary purpose of... institutions” and let other goals “remain contributory, instrumental, incidental, and subordinate to the primary goal” (p. 186, italics mine).

The experimental schools were allowed to reinvent themselves, and it is in the contrast between their communal life and the life of our public schools today that lessons are to be found for fashioning covenanted institutions. It would appear that while external guidelines and mandates may be intended to secure professional competence and
accountability, in the long run their effects are counterproductive since they both dampen enthusiasm and creativity, and erode a personal and communal sense of agency and vitality.\textsuperscript{16} And, I would argue, in eliminating the need for jointly deciding fundamental ends and means, not only is community diminished, but individual gifts lie dormant and unrecognized, and as a result, responsive gratefulness cannot be exercised. Moreover, commitments remain flaccid because they are externally compelled, and as a consequence, mutual fidelity remains weak, diffuse, and largely unrealized. All too often, educational institutions operate as though they are shorn of values and moral purpose and in so doing they hinder the work of practitioners seeking moral coherence. The achievement of the Eight Year Study was to demonstrate the viability of on-going self-renewal, self-assessment and accountability in school communities free to be democratically and morally responsible.\textsuperscript{17}

A number of other implications emerge from this section as well. When practitioners and other staff members are animated by an ethic of service, the issues of pay, status, career advancement, contract language, and the like become secondary to the students themselves. Moreover, the need for systems of professional accountability is diminished, since accountability is largely driven by an internal motive of commitment and fidelity. A sense of covenantal responsibility ranges beyond minimalist conceptions of contractual accountability – which all too often degenerates into accounting and finger-pointing anyways –, but responsibility concerns “our ability and willingness to respond to our covenants” (Purpel, 1999, p. 184). Covenantal ethics, then, cannot be straightforwardly taught in a course to budding professionals, since, I would argue, covenantal thinking demands personal commitment emerging out of a sense of
gratefulness, and it demands initiation through story into a covenantal tradition. It seems William Carlos Williams understood this, for he did not place much faith in traditional ethics courses for professionals. His proposal was for a curriculum "that pushed us to take a hard look at ourselves", one that encouraged us "have some heart-to-heart stories to tell each other, the folks who teach medicine [or education] and the folks learning it" (Coles, 1989, pp. 116, 118).

In this section I have argued that a covenantal ethic illuminates the context of mutual need, gift, entrustment, and indebtedness that exists in educational institutions. This gratuitous, self-transcendent aspect of covenantal ethics highlights the value of ontological change and personal relationships – thus, like a sense of vocation, a sense of covenant both draws upon and forms personal identity. My appeal to covenantal responsibilities – to one’s school community and the profession more broadly – ultimately may fall short of displacing some of the values long symbolized by contracts and codes. Contracts, for instance, do stress values of mutual agreement and informed consent – but then so do covenants. Unlike a covenant, a contract has the advantage of providing for legal enforcement of its terms – yet, I would argue, this diminishes the vital element of gift in human relationships. There are other downsides to contract, as William May (2000, pp. 126-132) points out: relationships become legalized, self-interest tends to be activated, and performance can become calculating and lacking spontaneity as thinking is narrowed to minimal obligations and not necessarily to what is just or best. This last item is also a drawback of professional codes. Neither code nor contract can honor the full scope of the professional obligation – especially in the helping professions such as teaching. These practitioners attend to unpredictable needs that cannot be easily
captured in the generalized language of codes, or exhaustively specified in contract wording. Covenants involve a personal, identity-shaping responsiveness and fidelity to others that cannot be fully spelled out in advance (Langerak, 1994, p. 97). So then, while contracts and codes appear to be here to stay – just like atomistic/contractual and organicist/functional models of community – I am arguing that these are *subordinate to and find their higher purposes and meaning within covenants*. A covenantal ethic, then, does not deny a role for contractual relations – it simply contends that most of our moral thinking cannot be reduced to contractualism.

**The Voice of Imagination**

*Imagination and Images of Pedagogical Vocation*

Regardless of the endeavor, the extent and depth of our thinking and knowing is shaped and enriched by our imagination, by the metaphors we choose to dwell in. The metaphors we look to in thinking about teaching practice, either constrain or expand our capacities to perceive and attend to what is there. As Sallie McFague (1987) puts it, “though language does not exhaust human reality, it qualifies it in profound ways” (p. 3). Lacking the appropriate language, our perception and attention is diminished or incapacitated. Thus, “it is the vocation of the teacher to give flesh to language and to make metaphor incarnate” (Harris, 1987, p. 20).

Mark Johnson (1993) makes the case that we “live and reason by means of deep metaphoric systems of meaning... that make up the fabric of our ordinary moral experience” (pp. 52-53, italics in original). He claims that this metaphoric understanding operates both on the level of *basic conceptions*, such as intention, duties, and action, as well as our *conceptual frames* by which we structure and render meaningful concrete
situations, such a marriage – or, I would suggest, pedagogical practice (p. 61). Given his premise that metaphor is the chief imaginative dimension of moral understanding (p. 193), the central thesis in Johnson’s volume is that a critical and exploratory moral imagination ought to be the basis for our moral deliberation and self-understanding. Ideally, moral imagination would provide the means for understanding (of self, others, institutions, cultures), for reflective criticism, and for modest transformation, which together are the basis for moral growth. (p. 187)

It is this imaginative insight via specific metaphors that structure and define the conceptual frames of vocational practice that this section addresses.

It has been my premise that the metaphorical images of vocation considered in this volume – devoted-servant, moral-friend, generous-mentor, and faithful-covenanter – all have sufficient depth and complexity to be powerfully formative. They illuminate, in part, the nature of pedagogical work we are called to do. ‘Image’, of course, evokes a variety of overlapping meanings, and the notion here is not simply that of a conservative, socially expected role or mode. Rather, the images I have proposed must be personally and critically engaged and appropriated, in an ongoing way. It is then that they can do their work in our imagination – operating as a powerful internalized self-perception, enlivening and releasing, shaping and ordering the way we envision ourselves as practitioners. Dwayne Huebner (1993a/1999) highlights the importance of images in pedagogical practice – although he does not have in mind any specific normative images:

Different images of the same landscape enable us to see different possibilities, different relationships, and perhaps enable us to imagine new phenomena in that educational landscape. ...once inside that image, the educational landscape should appear differently, showing limitations in current educational practices and perhaps opening up new options for action. (p. 404)
Primary or “basic images are the lifeblood of interpretation and... greatly influence people’s perceptions and behavior” (McFague, 1987, p. xi).

The images that underlie our conceptual systems regularly function to link us to both past and future – both to what we have already achieved, as well as to what we seek to bring into being.

Image draws both the past and the future into a personally meaningful nexus of experience focused on the immediate situation that called it forth. It reaches into the past, gathering up experiential threads meaningfully connected to the present. And it reaches intentionally into the future and creates new meaningfully connected threads as situations are experienced and new situations anticipated from the perspective of the image. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1985, p. 198, cited in Jagla, 1992, p. 69)

A practice with a long intellectual and moral tradition such as teaching has, can be accessed to some degree with the help of images, for images allow us to ‘live into’ or ‘make present’ what is not yet. They present us with imperatives to live by. They do this by activating and enlarging our moral imagination, and our perception. And with depth of perception and insight and vision comes a new way of being – new virtues, new dispositions, new sensibilities.

William May (2000) demonstrates the moral power of images to mold the convictions and identities of physicians, and to order their daily professional practice. Building upon May’s insights, I have drawn upon a different set of images in the context of teaching practice where, surprisingly, metaphorical images are seldom used by either practitioners or by theorists. In the remainder of this section I will briefly make the case for a stronger connection between images of practice and professional ethics; I will reflect upon why it is necessary to critique these images, as I illustrate several critical
approaches; and finally I will elaborate upon their universal and prototypical features with a view to proposing new images of pedagogical vocation.

As a guide or exemplar for practice, images operate somewhat differently from moral principles – they offer a different perspective on moral authority and agency. Philosophical ethics tends to be oriented to principles. It is often directed to the more exceptional moral dilemmas rather than to the everyday, spontaneous moral judgments required in practice.\(^{19}\) But if we want to transform our way of life, embracing a fitting image is far more powerful than diligently exercising willpower to conform to a principle (Peterson, 1992, p. 6; Hauerwas, 1974, p. 2; Ricoeur cited in Huebner 1999). In a similar way, Walter Brueggemann (1993) argues that,

\[
\text{in a conversation wherein... argument and moral suasion are operative, people in fact change by the offer of new models, images, and pictures of how the pieces of life fit together - models, images, and pictures that characteristically have the particularity of narrative to carry them. (p. 24)}
\]

Images have the capacity to offer a full and compelling picture of the world and one’s place in it. Images, writes William May (2000):

\[
\text{provide a comprehensive ordering of life - an interpretation of role, metaphysical setting, and institutional context - that makes moral behavior seem more like a rite repeated than a puzzle solved. (p. 9)}
\]

In anchoring, expressing, and giving shape to reality as a coherent whole, images can be viewed as operating religiously:

\[
\text{images function religiously when they serve as symbols orienting us to the whole of life. Religion, at its best, provides a dynamic distillation of images... powerful enough to name a community's conviction of the character of the whole of reality that its members experience.... (Parks, 2000, p. 118)}
\]
As I mentioned in chapter 2, the role of ethics in the professional sphere is expand our perspective, to correct and qualify our perceptions of practice, and thereby to enlarge our capacity for insight, decision, and action. Images of moral practice, I would argue, are central to this effort – both in *moral reflection*, which seeks a revisioning of the world of practice, and in *moral formation*, which seeks to fund the enactment of this vision. Images carry cognitive weight, but also provide corrective vision – for metaphor and concept are inescapably and symbiotically related (McFague, 1987, p. 32).

Valuable images are those that offer a standard or exemplar for illuminating inadequate or defective versions of practice. The image of a teacher-servant, for example, suggests a certain readiness to expend oneself for others. Thus the self-given life should characterize educators who interpret the normative task of teaching as servanthood, and this standard offers a corrective for those educators whose service tends to be self-interested. A credible ethic of vocation, then, necessarily involves a critical, imaginative endeavor: it must be sensitive to the metaphors consonant with practice and recognize in a coherent way the implications and possibilities of these images for practice.

While funding certain self-understandings, metaphors or images do, however, have the potential to be misleading, possibly deceptive. In part, this is because a metaphor is a word or phrase used somewhat inappropriately, since it is imported from one context into another. Thus it has the character of being true, but not entirely so. In many cases it operates to defamiliarize the familiar, or to offer insight into what we do not know in terms of what we do understand. In so doing, it both disorients, and reorients. With respect to the misleading or inadequate nature of pedagogical images,
then, two comments are in order. In the first place, an image may draw attention to vital aspects of practice while obscuring others. The image of teacher-friend, for example, highlights the importance of intending mutuality of relations, yet it communicates little about the self-sacrificial ethic of service embodied by the image of a teacher-servant. So it is that some aspects of practice shine forth more brightly through one particular image, but these recede in to the background as other images cause different features to stand out more vividly. What is demanded then, and what I have sought to offer, is a multiplicity of images to better capture the multidimensional character of pedagogical practice. No multiplicity of images will ever be perfectly harmonious (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 10), or complete. But if each image is legitimate then they will supplement more than they contradict, and faithfully represent aspects of reality while never completely embodying it. The overall coherence or harmony, then, is more the result of counterpoint than synthesis. The four images that I have offered are certainly not the only ones, though I believe they are central ones and they support each other a unified pattern. This comprehensive pattern, you may recall from chapter 2, is the image of vocation itself – an overarching, integrating image of meaning in which the other metaphors find their proper place and their warrant.

Secondly, productive moral reflection demands criticism of the image itself. Criticism of metaphors guards against their becoming fixed, canonical, or binding, and therefore sterile, authoritarian, or idolatrous. Simply embracing a metaphor or image can often tend to exclude rational and moral criticism, rather than to promote it. This is why, for example, I judged it necessary to inquire more closely into the nature of teacher-student friendship in chapter 2. Recall, a central outcome of this critical inquiry was that
this friendship was primarily a moral one, thus the image of moral-friend more adequately and precisely conveys the relational stance of a teacher towards a student. Recall too, that in this inquiry, I looked into our cultural traditions, seeking out Aristotle’s perspective on moral friendship. Thus, as Green (1999) observes: “No enduring tradition is altogether without its resources for rational self-criticism nor does any rational criticism draw its strength except from within some tradition” (p. 103, italics in original). So then, as I suggested at the outset of the chapter, no moral system can remain vital except when embodied in some critical tradition, modeled by exemplars or images, and recovered and renewed through memory and imagination.

The best metaphorical images, the ones indispensable to clarifying and characterizing vocation are not only prototypical, as May (2000) perceives, they are also universal. As I mentioned in chapter 2, they are universal in the sense that their enactment is normative virtually everywhere, in all times and places, and under all pedagogical conditions. They are prototypical in that they convey a story – an archetypal story, one sketched in vivid relief such that its essential features stand out. A prototypical metaphor, through illuminating a metaphysical setting, offers a script of sorts by which practitioners can author their own unique vocation-stories. And so, I would argue that as new pedagogical images are proposed, they must be both prototypical and universal – they must capture in themselves aspects of the human condition which call upon the responses of professionals who seek to enact a personal ethic of service. Fundamentally, then, the task of vocational formation requires that we

cultivate moral imagination by sharpening our powers of discrimination, exercising our capacity for envisioning new possibilities, and imaginatively tracing out the implications of our metaphors, prototypes, and narratives. (Johnson, 1993, p. 198)
Searching for adequate, fitting, and vitalizing images, then, is a useful way of thinking about the formation of moral sensibilities (Parks, 2000, p. 124). Jackson (1992) stresses the importance of this sort of work: "It is that conversion from the imaginary or fictitious to the actual, that causing 'to seem real,' that strikes me as being the crux of the matter" (p. 15). How, then, does one go about the process of searching out new images of vocation? Probably there are many ways, but I believe it is significant that the images which I have proposed grew out of my own prolonged reflection upon the various voices of conscience in the context of pedagogy, which, following Green (1999), I took to be central to the moral formation of educators. Jackson (1990) refers to this work of reflection as a "kind of pondering" or "rumination" which is "more like coming to appreciate something, coming to realize its significance" (p. 15). So then, one might say that the images of practice are recognized and characterized in good measure by the demands and problems that particularized, local work leads to and reveals: "Image emerges from the imaginative process by which meaningful and useful patterns are generated in minded practice" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1985, p. 198, cited in Jagla, 1992, p. 69). And over time, the daily work and its possibilities will gradually alter one's vision and images of practice. Wendell Berry (1983) offers a coherent and elegant insight into this:

...if one's sight is clear and if one stays on and works well, one's love gradually responds to the place as it really is, and one's visions gradually image possibilities that are really in it. Vision, possibility, work, and life – all have changed by mutual correction. (p. 70, italics in original)

Interestingly, this approach is congruent with Hansen's (1995) insistence that the language, concepts, and values – and I would add images – of vocation emerge from the demands of pedagogical practice itself (pp. 147, 151, 156; 1999, p. 224). That is,
teachers themselves "have grown through the use of their own imagination and effort, and through accepting the responsibilities and obligations that accompany the work" (p. 158, italics mine). Correspondingly, I am suggesting that this activation of imagination includes the formative work of formulating and interiorizing images of vocation. Sharon Parks (2000) elaborates on this view:

Images become fitting forms when they are resonant with the experience and spirit of the one who imagines. ... If an image is going to anchor the composing of a new reality, it must resonate in the feelings, history, and anticipated future of the [individual]; it must have the capacity to affect, to touch, and finally to lock into the being of the person. (p. 169)

I am arguing, then, that in the dynamism and complexity of such metaphors as servant, friend, mentor, and covenanter, one finds images of practice that nourish the imagination with possibilities – these become, if you will, the soil in which the seed of vocation may grow. Fleshing out these metaphorical images sufficiently in order to see their possibilities and implications for practice is, I would urge, a task that must be attempted in an ongoing way by educators. Furthermore, given that the voices which form moral conscience are various and at times in tension or conflict with one another, it should not be surprising that the four images which I have derived from them are not always in agreement. If our aim is not to resolve the discordant voices of conscience, but "to encourage their enlargement and elaboration," as Green (1999, p. 61) suggests, then correspondingly, I would argue that our aim in seeking out metaphorical images for practice is to make them more expansive, more discerning, and more passionate in scope as well. Ultimately, though, images of practice operate as ethical tools to orient us to the most important moral landforms – they do not specify the concrete details of the journey or the challenges to be encountered.
Given that vocation centers on personal fulfillment and service to others, it should not be surprising that the images I have sought out are directed towards the personal and the relational aspects of normative practice. It is beyond the scope of this volume to elaborate upon other images that might provide a fuller picture of pedagogical practice. There is one though worth mentioning briefly here, for it conveys the sensibilities and imperatives of creativity, technical skill and judgment, as well as insight into life’s meaning, beauty, and wonders. It is the teacher-artist. This image is not a new one—both Herman Horne (1917) and Dwayne Huebner (1962/1999) explicitly explored it at some length several generations ago—but it is one that I would suggest deserves revitalization. Artistry fills in many of those aspects of pedagogical craft considered in chapter 3 which mentoring leaves out. That is, while teacher-mentor suggests the relational side of craft and the initiation or apprenticeship of others into the wisdom of one’s discipline and life-story, teacher-artist is more suggestive of personal expressiveness, creativity, and innovation of craft and the technical skill, knowledge, and judgments that this work involves.

Prophetic Imagination and Vocation

Following Maxine Greene (1986, p. 19), I have argued (in the last chapter) that in pursuing pedagogical craft, one must, with moral imagination, seek to order experience and refine and enlarge one’s skills, capacities, and dispositions against a background of knowledge, understanding, and insight. Similarly, Huebner (1996a) contends that the formative work of vocation—both private and public—is necessarily grounded in our moral imagination. He insists that reinventing schools demands
informed consideration about what is good and desirable, about what it means to be a human being. It is conversation about human value—what some would call ultimate value, perhaps even sacred value. (Huebner, 1996a, p. 272)

Centrally, this work involves imagining the future of particular young people in our care. Yet, as I indicated earlier, our very capacity to imagine this future is restricted by how our educational and social institutions imagine it—which is principally in the form of instrumental educational objectives and goals, which fail to do justice to the vastness of human possibility. Huebner likewise perceives that the very design of the contemporary public “school environment models a social system21 inherently disrespectful of important moral concerns, namely the concern for individual persons in their totality” (p. 275).22 He urges, therefore, that practitioners resist those external mandates which act to narrow their vision of human possibility—mandates which impoverish their critical moral imagination and thereby enfeeble their moral agency and their potential to be exemplars of moral authority and responsibility for students. Reinvention of covenantal institutions, then, is an ongoing work of seeking out more adequate images and translating or incarnating these concretely. As Huebner (1996a) stresses, this necessarily involves conflict and struggle over whose images will prevail, and thus it demands both rhetorical and political skill on the part of practitioners (p. 274). It should be stressed though, values must first be imagined and committed to, before they can be publicly articulated and enacted.

I want to argue, then, that educators in the prophetic tradition are called to a formidable task: to name, expose, and resist that which devalues persons and their humanity. Patricia Carini terms this devaluing the “unmaking of humanness” (2001, p. 151, italics in original). Like Huebner, she argues that each school must come to see
itself as 'a work in the making', the source of its own renewal through ongoing imaginative inquiry. Carini, however, is sensitive to the fact that this work of regeneration is curtailed by the narrow economic framing of work offered by a social vision widely promoting economic advantage (pp. 8-10). Consequently, she urges that practitioners sustain a critical imagination – one that values personhood, creativity, and relationships as a context for valuing work.

In this effort, it would appear that Carini – like Maxine Greene – often turns to literary works to enhance perceptions, to access suppressed feelings, and to provoke a re-visioning of practice and society. Poets, of course, are masters at engaging our imaginations. They “try to sharpen the sight, to nurture language carefully in the hope of calling upon it for an understanding of what is happening” (Coles, 1989, p. 101). Typically, their aim is not to offer a solution or resolution, rather their purpose lies in a “broadening and even a heightening of our struggles ...with new sources of concern or apprehension or hope” (p. 101). Clearly, imaginative literature can only do this work in us when it is engaged at a deep personal level – “when it is grasped by a reflective..., perceptual..., imaginative consciousness thrusting into the world” (Greene, 1999, p. 377). In this spirit, then, consider a poetic fragment by Karen Brodine (1980):

*its like being sick all the time, I think, coming home from work, sick in that low-grade continuous way that makes you forget what it’s like to feel well, we have never in our lives known what it is to be well. What if I were coming home, I think, from doing work that I loved and that was for us all, what if I looked at the houses and the air and the streets, knowing they were in accord, not set against us, what if we knew the powers of this country moved to provide for us, and for all people – how would that be – how would we feel and think and what would we create?* (p. 58, italics in original)
Notice here, first of all, that Brodine exactly captures the essence of vocation: it is ‘doing work that I loved and that was for us all’. Frederick Buechner (1993) offers a similar poetic description, “vocation is the place where our heart’s deep gladness meets the world’s great need” (p. 119). But, tragically, vocation is not a common experience in Brodine’s world – the work-life she reflects upon is one more akin to suffering from a chronic illness. So oppressive and encompassing is the dis-ease of such work, that the memories of anything different eventually seem to fade altogether. Notice though, having named the reality of this malaise, Brodine resists it, and she allows her imagination to conceive a very different world. ‘What if’, she imagines with a glimmer of hopefulness, what if at the end of the day we returned home from a workplace spent doing work that we loved, work that contributed to the common good? How different would be our feelings, our thoughts, and our joint creations! There is an invitation here to wonder, to visualize, and aspire to a new vision: “To have work that I love; for all of us to have work we love; for all of us to have loved work that contributes to and benefits all” (Carini, 2001, p. 110, italics in original). And yet, Brodine also names some fundamental obstacles to achieving this vision – or if not obstacles, then at least related diseased aspects of our culture. There is a threatening discord in our homes and in our communities, and those in positions of power evade their responsibilities to work in the best interests of all citizens. In spite of this bleakness though, there is in the poem a feeling after hopefulness, a longing for a different sort of work, and community, and society.²⁴

Karen Brodine’s yearnings barely scratch the surface of an enormous literature of critical social commentary – detailing a profoundly complex and worrisome state of
affairs. Now whether one leans toward incremental reform or to radical reinvention, the significant social service which teaching vocation offers is, in Dewey’s words, ‘about the making of a world.’ Educational institutions, typically conservative in nature, would appear to be unlikely instruments for shaping social structures and cultural consciousness. Nonetheless, vocation demands that we attend to the moral significance of our work for the greater common good. So the issue, I believe, is not whether we go about this task, but how.

David Purpel (1999) is probably the only theorist who grounds his entire analysis of vocation in the social domain, arguing that education is profoundly social in both its foundation and its effects (p. 71). Being an astute cultural observer, Purpel notes with some alarm that our social and political ideals are becoming increasingly removed from the reality of our lived world: equality, human dignity, love, justice, and compassion on the one hand, and our experience of self-advancement, elitism, privilege, pride, materialism, division, and violence on the other (pp. 73-75). Vocation, he urges, therefore demands responsible participation “in the struggle for a just and loving community” (p. 77). What marks Purpel as a radical is his insistence that educators articulate and commit to integrating educational policy and practice with an alternative moral vision of society (pp. 73, 77). Significantly, he is one of the few radical theorists of education whose critique of and alternative to the dominant culture directs us to the social visions found in religious and spiritual traditions. These traditions encourage us to seek out what is of ultimate meaning – or as Huebner put it, “ultimate value” – and it is from this vantage point, Purpel argues, that we can productively reflect upon the ramifications for education (p. 77).\textsuperscript{25}
One implication Purpel highlights is that individually and as a profession, we are obliged to be [moral] models and to affirm models for ourselves. The greatest models of teachers have been religious figures ... who have inspired millions upon millions to be guided in their lives by a vision that provides light, warmth, and transcendence. (Purpel, 1999, pp. 78-79)

As we imaginatively ‘live into’ the lives of moral exemplars, we obtain a better sense of the moral formation required in our own lives. Huebner also points to this work:

Teachers can be exemplars of moral agency if they can express feelings; identify contextual problems causing the bad fit among teachers, students, and the arranged environment; and begin to correct some of the malformations. As teachers become moral exemplars, students will have images or models of what it means to be moral and ethical... Exemplars of moral agency are necessary if moral values are to be honed. (1996a, p. 272)

This obligation of both being and affirming moral exemplars is, in fact, part of a larger imaginative moral vision in Purpel’s work, for together with Walter Brueggemann (1993, p. 23), he conceives that we can look to religion to supply some of the resources to fund a alternatively imagined world (Purpel, 1999, p. 161). Like Brueggemann and Huebner (1991/1999; 1993/1999), Purpel (1989, pp. 100f; 1999, pp. 39f, 109f) calls attention to the primary confessional and prophetic responses that all of us are called to engage in.

Brueggemann (1993) stresses that prophetic acts of imagination must be modest and local, for to propose a comprehensive, ordered alternative world would be imperialistic. He conceives that freshly voiced religious traditions might provide some of the pieces and materials “that will feed, nurture, nourish, legitimate, and authorize a counterimagination of the world” (p. 20, italics in original). Such traditions offer us “memories and narratives and visions and images and metaphors that are not easily
domesticated or co-opted” by a politics and morality of the conventional (p. 22). In this
view, personal and social transformation consists of the long, steady process of being
invited into this counterstory about self, Other, and the world, and disengaging from the
taken-for-granted story we perceive no longer to be credible (p. 24).

Prophetic imagination, then, exercises discernment around the claims of mass
culture, it evokes a perception and consciousness that is often at odds with this culture.
This critical and energizing work is often carried on in sub-communities, or more exactly
in “historicizing communities”, “with practices of memory, hope, and pain that keep
healthy life available in the face of all the ‘virtual reality’... in the dominant culture”
(Brueggemann, 1978/2001, pp. 19, xvii). Prophetic criticism, argues Brueggemann,
consists not so much in denunciation as it does in asserting fraudulent claims to authority
and power (p. 11). But for this criticism to impact wider society, these communities of
memory, hope, and suffering must be able to claim sufficient space in which to practice
their counterstory, and resist the subtle and not so subtle forces of seduction and coercion
in culture at large (p. xvii). Maxine Greene (1999) addresses this very issue. She asks
how can “an ethic of love... and the community it brings into being possibly be enough
to overcome” all the manipulation, domination, and ruin of our world – it would appear
that “there remains the need for critical consciousness, marches, struggle, and the
capacity to name what has happened and what might happen” (p. 379).

Significantly, Brueggemann perceives that social criticism must begin in the
capacity to grieve. Grieving is that singular emotional and visceral expression of
injustice (p. 13). The purpose of prophetic criticism is to shape the lament into an
empowering complaint – to mobilize moral agency through an outcry that anticipates a
response. In turn, *prophetic imagination* energizes through a sense of passionate hopefulness that an alternative notion of human justice and compassion *can* emerge – that a different sort of work, and community, and society *can* be fashioned. This transforming hope for a different future operates to counter the “urgent now or … eternal now” which typifies our culture (p. 1). Interestingly, these two elements of critical prophetic imagination, lament and hopefulness, are integral to Karen Brodine’s poetic fragment that we examined earlier.

The vocation which “prophet-educators” (Purpel, 1989) are called to, then, is the work of countering the prevailing consciousness that devalues persons and their humanity. And yet, given that we are all products to some degree of this dominant social consciousness, we must ask ourselves, ‘Do we have the freedom and capacity to imagine and articulate a counterstory in our situation?’ Do we have the strength and passionate desire to freely imagine alternative futures for our students, our communities, our society?’ And if perhaps we do, then, ‘Do we have the moral courage to question our own caughtness in social structures and procedures which devalue persons?’

Immersed as we are in a politics of oppression, or what Huebner terms “the myth of redemptive violence” (1993/1999, p. 407), we tend to become insensitive to the cries of others. Huebner points out that schools themselves are

> a major source for teaching the myth of redemptive violence – that the world can be corrected and redeemed through power (including the power of knowledge) and might, but not through love. (p. 407)

As Brueggemann (1978/2001) sees it, the mythos of the dominant social consciousness with its program of self-satisfaction, “has redefined our notions of humanness” – it “annuls the neighbour as a life-giver” and imagines that we can live as self-made
individuals (p. 37). By contrast – and this is significant given our earlier discussion – a prophetic consciousness is one which is "devoted to the pathos and passion of covenancing" (p. 37), for it brings under criticism our self made world.

Such social criticism can even emerge in covenanted classrooms, as Robert Coles (2000) demonstrates in his real-life portrayal of Elaine Vogel – a young, white, affluent grade 5 teacher working in the segregated South of 1960. We see, as she grapples with the American history unit, Ms. Vogel’s sense of flexibility and openness in curriculum design, her ability to uncover for her students the dehumanizing effects of slavery on both sides. At home in the evening, she would revisit her classroom, reflecting upon her successes and failures “of imagination, of will, of ingenuity and improvisation” (p. 91).

One day, having prompted her students to reflect upon her curriculum theme of 'moral leadership,' she had hesitated to connect it with the touchy issue of desegregation. She recognized in this hesitation her own desire for coherence – for congruence of values and actions – which was compelling her to become more open about her political values and race-connected concerns. Yet at the same time, she remembered how the year before – when she had insisted her students refer to non-Whites respectfully as ‘Negros,’ and when she had shown slavery’s contribution to nation-building and its evolution into segregation – many white parents had become very uncomfortable with her morally thoughtful historical approach. By the next day she had achieved clarity about how to proceed with greater integrity: she continued to provide a space for serious discussion about moral leaders, but she also began to emphasize the importance of being moral student-leaders – leaders whose influence for the good could make history here and now. And taking as a focus one student’s comment about, “Learning what’s wrong in
Louisiana” (p. 95), she shifted the classroom ethos towards one which was more inquiry-oriented, relevant, ethically-minded, and supportive of agency.

In this section I have argued that, while there is a fundamental personal dimension to vocational formation in the context of classroom, there is also an important societal dimension to pursuing a vocational ethic. The struggle for social transformation properly begins with our schools, and broadens outward into our communities and society. Central to this struggle is cultivating a critical prophetic imagination: naming, exposing, lamenting, and resisting that which devalues persons, and covenanting in communities of memory, hope, and suffering to nurture and enact a counterstory about self, Other and the world.

**Imagination and the Quest for Self-Transcendence**

I wish to argue that the moral formation that attends the life of vocation is ultimately caught up in the broader journey of human formation or self-transcendence. Self-transcendence concerns our becoming. It is that limitless striving beyond current realizations of being; it is that universal appeal of ever wider possibilities and deeper associations:

> The urge for transcendence describes the desire of... people to go beyond their perceived limits. It includes not only the mystical realm, but experiences of the extraordinary in the arts, athletics, academics, or human relations. (Kessler, 2000, p. 17)

Personal transformation requires a kind of openness towards the world, and this in turn demands that man (sic) recognize that he (sic) is never a completed ‘being’ but is always in the process of ‘becoming,’ and hence is willing to find the new, the unexpected, the awe and wonder in that which he repeatedly faces or which he partially knows. (Huebner, 1963/1999, p. 78)
Paulo Freire (1997/2000) regards transcendence as an existential reality: our “permanent search for being more” (p. 100, italics in original) – a search which might, for example, provoke a “person’s capacity for physical or moral perfection, for intellectual growth, for overcoming obstacles, [or] for beautifying and ennobling the world” (1998a, p. 93). Our consciousness of being “unfinished” and on a search marks us out as historical, social, and ethical beings (1997/2000, p. 93).

Maxine Greene (2001) casts teaching vocation in the form of a search and a project – an ontological-epistemological quest for self-transcendence. Being on a search suggests that one is not numbed by the everydayness of life, but rather is wideawake and active in the world. A search provokes both self and students to attend to the particularities of the world “perceiving, believing, imagining, and conceptualizing” with a view to “becoming, projecting, or striving toward what is not yet” (p. 86). Picking up on Sartre, Greene advises educators, as agents of their own becoming, to conceive their vocation in terms of a project, since a project suggests one’s intention not to be passively molded by outside influences (p. 84). Moreover, a project in continuous self-formation suggests that choices and action emerge out of a rich storehouse of passionately felt interests (p. 85).

While Kessler, Huebner, Freire, and Greene may have an express interest in self-transcendence, it was an earlier educational theorist – Philip Phenix (1971) – who sought to place it near the center of his educational philosophy. But it is not Phenix’s work that I have looked to in the remainder of this section, but rather the more substantial conceptualization of (cognitive and) moral self-transcendence formulated by Bernard Lonergan. I will very briefly sketch out the essence of Lonergan’s perspective, its
affective aspect, its grounding in moral conversion, the role of love in this conversion, and finally some implications for pedagogical vocation.

Lonergan (1972) contends that our operations of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding are directed not only to knowing reality but also, in a sense, to creating it and creating ourselves in the process (p. 35). This search for meaning also reveals itself at the level of moral consciousness as a radical quest for value and for self-consistency in knowing and acting. Lonergan terms the basic orientations of our conscience, (or moral consciousness), to the intelligible, the true, and the good, transcendental notions since they apply to all spheres of life. Transcendental notions can be viewed as the unfolding stages which move us toward fuller consciousness, and in the process, open us up to a fuller knowledge of reality and a greater realization of the good (Conn, 1988, pp. 36-39).

Lonergan stresses that operationally, the drive for authenticity through self-transcendence is a dynamism of the whole person, and is affective at its very core. He perceives that our feelings – fears and desires, joys and sorrows – give our intentional consciousness its drive and momentum. Through these and other feelings, meaning and value is apprehended. Thus, value is perceived or imagined in our intentional responses of feeling, affirmed in our judgments, chosen in our decisions, and realized in our actions. And yet, feelings are not consistently or unambiguously tied to what is of value, for what is of value may at first seem disagreeable. And so, like Green (1999) who also stresses
the centrality of self-assessment in moral consciousness, Lonergan emphasizes that the
task of either pruning back or enriching feelings lies at the heart of moral formation.\textsuperscript{32}
To sum, then, conscience can be viewed as the morally conscious self evaluating,
reflecting, and deciding in response to the affective drive for self-transcendence in the
realization of \textit{value}. Thus several elements merge in apprehending value: knowledge of
reality; sensitivity to value in feelings; and judgment that moves us toward decision and
action. Huebner’s understanding of \textit{vocation} is remarkably similar – it is “an invitation
to think and feel again what is of value and what we are called to do and be”; it is “an
invitation to remain open… to occasions to re-shape and re-compose the story of our life”

In Lonergan’s terms, \textit{conversion} – intellectual, moral or religious – represents the
point in our lives when we come to the realization that we recognize ourselves as the
originators of value who create ourselves in and through our decisions and actions. Thus,
moral conversion is the existential moment when we embrace a radically different mode
of moral existence: we deliberately choose value as the criterion for decision-making and
choose to view ourselves as free and responsible agents (Lonergan, 1967, p. 242). Moral
formation, then, is to a significant degree a work of moral imagination and self-creation,
or what Lonergan terms ‘self-appropriation’. Thus, self-appropriation is first and
foremost the reflective self-possession of oneself as a knower and doer; it is the
development of critical self-insight in the widest possible range of moral (and cognitive)
engagements. To the extent that our living is a response to what is of value, we achieve a
moral self-transcendence. That is, we move beyond ourselves in a real way, as we freely
establish and broaden our moral horizons – what we have come to value or care about in a concrete way.\textsuperscript{33}

In fact, Lonergan speaks of the process in which horizons move back to embrace elements that previously were beyond our imagining, as conversions (Melchin, 1998, p. 30). This is not to suggest that we begin imagining new things as objects of our care and concern, but rather that these objects come to reorder our moral landscape. And so, as we discover and embrace new values, certain memories and events take on deeper meaning, while other events and actions retreat in importance. Thus, a conversion is more a beginning than an end, for conversion must be ongoing. Typically such transformations do not result in a wholesale restructuring of our lives. Instead, they tend to be partial and gradual, though they necessarily involve much struggle, and at times considerable pain or suffering.

To contemplate a radical change in our value systems invites apprehension and resistance. So it is that conversion to a new horizon is accomplished – not primarily through logically means – but “by symbols which tunnel under the logical defenses to reach our horizon’s imaginative and affective center, our hearts” (Conn, 1978, p. 52). Affective conversion, then, accompanies the personal transformation that actualizes the possibility of moral conversion; it takes the recognition of a new direction in life and enables its execution over the long haul. A person is affectively self-transcendent, Lonergan points out, when they respond spontaneously for the good of self and Other; their love is embodied not only in action, but in a dynamic state of being-in-love (Conn, 1978, p. 52). Affective conversion, therefore involves both passion and commitment. That is, the reorientation of the deep desires of our affective life, coaxed by symbols, and
guided by critical reflection, ultimately needs to be thoroughly personalized in the decision of commitment to love.

Such commitment is powerful when it crystallizes the other-centered reorientation of feeling. Still, loving commitment is directed towards service; the criterion, then, for passionate commitment to others, for authentic affective conversion, lies in action. (Conn, 1978, p. 53).

Conversion, then, is a matter of insight, decision, desire, and love to respond to the call and joy of responsible freedom and the greater realization of value in one’s life.³⁴

Just as each insight into the moral life involves some differentiation, or grasp of a morally significant distinction, so, I would argue, the formulation of images of vocation results from a refinement of moral insights that more accurately reflect our experiences and our urge to transcend self. At the same time, as I pointed out earlier in this chapter, images also function *heuristically*. They point practitioners in the direction where discoveries await, and inquiries will bear fruit. They shape our professional identities, as they beckon us to reorder our moral horizons. They inform and renew the trajectory of our commitment to moral self-transcendence – personally, professionally, in society, and in history.³⁵ Thus, images are the fruit of one’s inquiry into matters of pedagogical practice, and they also exercise a heuristic force in one’s professional development.³⁶

As I suggested at the outset of this section, vocational sensibilities and their associated images can be seen as part of one’s broader quest for value and self-consistency in knowing and acting. Ultimately, it is not just our students we are called to serve, to befriend, or to offer our gift of self in mentorship and in covenantal fidelity – *but everyone*. In fact, I would argue that a ‘professional conscience’ cannot be authentically formed apart from this broader formation of the moral self. And as we do
take on the task of shaping who we are becoming, our character becomes much more a
matter of our own making, and less a matter of social environment. Moreover, I would
argue, together with Kenneth Melchin (1998), that our fundamental moral obligation
must be that of strengthening ourselves or developing our character, through our moral
actions (p. 78). This is not a circular argument because our existing sensibilities and
virtues can be turned to new endeavors, thus developing new sensibilities and virtues, and
so on. Melchin argues:

Because our capacities, skills, and virtues draw the limit or horizon for our
moral knowing and doing, our fundamental obligation is to take
responsibility for our capacities, skills, and virtues, and to push back this
horizon. We must attend to the hidden side of moral action, that is, its
self-constituting thrust, bring it into the foreground of our lives, and make
it a chief concern in our decision-making. (p. 78)

This obligation, I am arguing, ranges beyond formation of personal virtue, or even
pedagogical virtue (van Manen, 1994). Our obligation to activate our moral imagination
and extend our horizons contributes to a transformation of patterns of moral identity and
valuation in the wider culture, over the long term.

In this section I have argued that (1) moral responsibility emerges as a feeling-
charged dynamic arising from within ourselves, which directs our concern and care
outward – especially to persons. This inner urgency for transcendence sets in motion the
operations of moral meaning or valuation (reflection, judgment, and decision-making);
(2) it is through responding to these urgencies or transcendent lures that we develop an
increasingly broad range of capacities for responsible moral action; (3) fields of moral
meaning have boundaries or horizons, which expand as we begin to care about things
previously ignored or screened out. This transformative process can be encouraged or
cultivated so that we come to live in anticipation of ever-expanding moral horizons, in our professional practice as in our personal life.

**Summary**

In this chapter I have further developed the theme (from the last chapter) of gift-giving in pedagogical relations, arguing that giftedness can be located within the broader and vitally important framework of covenantal relations and covenantal traditions. Covenantal obligations in the biblical tradition emerge from a *gift* extended between covenantal partners – one that solidifies into a *commitment* based upon grateful responsiveness to this gift, enacted with *fidelity* over the long haul. These elemental features of covenant are congruent with the personalist philosophy from chapter 2: not only is mutuality presupposed, covenantal ethics rests upon a responsiveness to the gift of self which others offer, and its promissory aspect impacts one’s vocational identity thus shaping one’s future personally and morally.

I have also explored *hospitality* as a metaphor for fashioning covenanted classrooms, drawing attention to its work of revealing and affirming what is good and worthwhile in the lives of each student. Teachers covenant with students when, through their own gift of hospitality, and their commitment and fidelity in this work, they invite students to respond in kind. I have also argued that professional codes and contracts are subordinate to and find their higher purposes and meaning within covenantal arrangements, in the same way that contractual and functional forms of community must remain subordinate to the mutual relations of a personalist community.
In the second half of this chapter I have presented a more thoroughgoing case for the formative value of pedagogical images in activating and shaping the moral imagination of practitioners who seek to enact a vocational ethic. I have argued that when critically engaged and appropriated in an ongoing way, a multiplicity of images provides order and meaning to one’s perceptions and it supplies imperatives for practice. I have also argued that a sense of vocation cannot be restricted to the classroom context, for it demands imaginative social critique – and prophetic traditions offer valuable resources for this endeavor. Finally, drawing upon the work of Bernard Lonergan, I have highlighted the place of imagination in broadening and reordering our moral landscape, or what might be viewed as our quest for self-transcendence. Ultimately, this quest is what the pursuit of vocation in one’s life can be considered to be.
CONCLUSIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Throughout my inquiry into the moral formation that accompanies pedagogical vocation, a number of implications and conclusions have emerged. I have chosen to present these in the context of the contributions that I have made along the way. The literature and analysis presented in the preceding pages combine to create both a theoretical contribution and a pedagogical contribution within which my central thesis is supported. Of course, theory and practice intimately intertwine, but for expository purposes it seemed useful to consider these contributions more or less separately. The discussion in these two sections will move from a more global, thesis-wide perspective, to one that considers some of the particular assertions made in each chapter.

Theoretical Contribution

In what is the most substantial and comprehensive analysis of pedagogical vocation to date, David Hansen (1995, 2001) probes the formation of moral dispositions and sensibilities in practitioners as they respond to the vocational demands of craft and tradition. With respect to Hansen's work, my essential contribution has been fourfold: 1) to build upon his insights into these two moral spheres, and to expand his analysis (via Green, 1999) into the spheres of self-sacrifice, membership or community, and imagination; 2) to indicate how love, rather than tenacious humility, is the more appropriate and preeminent pedagogical virtue; 3) to extend his conception of the mutuality of sacrifice-fulfillment in vocation to reveal its fundamental dynamic and proportional character; and 4) to expand his sense of tradition in teaching to include
perpetuating a memory of covenantal traditions which necessarily involve local memories and narratives of moral community.

Recognizing the value of normative images for practitioners in medical ethics (May, 2000), I have proposed four metaphorical images with sufficient depth, complexity, and tradition to be powerfully formative for educators seeking to enact an ethic of vocation: servanthood, friendship, mentorship, and covenant. I have demonstrated that when personally and critically engaged and appropriated, these pedagogical images activate our moral imagination, they direct and order our perceptions, they provide us with imperatives to live by, and they help shape our identities as new vision and purpose solidifies into new virtues, and sensibilities, and dispositions. Of course, as tools of ethics, conceptual metaphors need to be used with thoughtful discipline by the practitioner, and facility in moral action requires long periods for its nurturance and cultivation in the daily round of relations with students. Nonetheless, as exemplars for practice, a coherent set of virtuous-normative images can orient us to vocational life and provide a compelling picture of this world and our place in it – they expand, correct, and qualify our perceptions of practice, and thus strengthen our capacity for insight, decision, and action. By implication then, our aim in building upon these images – or in seeking out new images – is to make the metaphorical landscape of practice more vivid, more critical, and more passionate. One promising route for this search would appear to be prolonged reflection upon the various ‘voices’ of moral conscience (Green, 1999) in the context of pedagogy. To this end, I have suggested that images of the teacher-artist (Horne, 1917; Huebner, 1962/1999), and prophet-teacher (Purpel, 1989) be revitalized and expanded upon.
In chapter 1, I have extended the view that social service linked with personal fulfillment operate as the fundamental constituents of vocation by developing the thesis that self-sacrifice and self-fulfillment must dynamically balance each other in the life of an individual. Formulated as a guiding principle for practitioners, this thesis asserts that as long as the measure of one’s self-expenditure corresponds to the fulfillment garnered, vocation remains vital and free of pathological tendencies – regardless of the particular level of service rendered. In this view, a vocational ethic demands not only critical reflexiveness, it requires that one understand teaching practice as an intrinsically valued way of life, within which one lives out full and meaningful relationships. Moreover, the self-discipline entailed in the servant-orientation of committed work must be set within one’s larger search for deeper integrating values, meanings, and ideals – one’s own personal formation. Central to this self-discipline, then, is the cultivation of a contemplative stance in normative practice, since this disciplines us into attending lovingly and responsively to the particularities of the persons and tasks around us, while also freeing up a space that allows us to become detached from self-aggrandizing impulses.

It is because vocation centers upon issues of character and relationship that I have proposed, in chapter 2, that a personalist (or mutualistic) model of community with students is the vocational ideal. Although a philosophy of mutual relations is not unknown in educational circles, the personalist philosophy of John Macmurry has not been engaged to the degree that I have considered it in this volume. Moreover, it would appear that no theorists of vocation have grounded their work in mutuality of relations. I have, however, advanced the claim that, by virtue of being inherently oriented to serving
persons, vocation is properly rooted in an overarching intention to foster mutuality. And since moral friendship is mutuality’s most fully realized expression, it follows that teacher-student friendship ideally serves as the basis for both moral community and moral formation. This has profound implications for pedagogical practice, as I will briefly indicate in the next section.

In the third chapter, I have argued that, unlike many other professions, teaching is not characterized by widely accepted norms of practice that can be looked to for standards of excellence in performance. Instead, pedagogical craft is more idiosyncratic and improvisational – its personal and relational dimensions properly take center stage, against a background of various knowledge bases. As a moral craft, it must be predicated upon the ascendancy of being and becoming, rather than knowledge and knowing. It follows, then, that pedagogy demands a range of character virtues, as well as a relational insight into young people – not only their attitudes and perspectives on the world, but also the inner life and uniqueness as a person. Therefore, I have claimed that the concept and image of mentoring, with its language and sensibility of gift-exchange, characteristically values these personal and relational dimensions, and is appropriate to the grade-school teacher-student context.

In chapter 4, I have expanded upon the theme of gift-giving in pedagogical relations and set it within the wider framework of covenantal relations and traditions. With its elemental features of gift-giving, promise, and fidelity, the biblical conception of covenant is impressively congruent with a personalist philosophy: not only is mutuality presupposed, covenantal ethics rests upon a fundamental responsiveness to the gift of self which others offer, and its promissory event touches one’s identity thus shaping one’s
future personally and morally. In addition, I have made the claim that professional codes and contracts are subordinate to and find their higher purposes and meaning within covenantal arrangements. I have also indicated in this chapter that a sense of vocation cannot be restricted to the classroom context, for it demands imaginative *social critique* – and prophetic traditions offer valuable resources for this endeavor. I have also stressed the importance of moral imagination in the *quest for self-transcendence* – which I take to be the pursuit of vocation writ large.

**Pedagogical Contribution**

In framing my dissertation, I have adapted Thomas Green’s (1999) broad treatise on the educational formation of conscience, to the specific context of moral formation in practitioners seeking to enact an ethic of vocation. In this section, I will begin by briefly sketching out Green’s essential claims before indicating how I have extended or departed from them, and what some of the implications are for pedagogy. Then I will turn to some of the specific assertions made in each chapter, before making a few final comments.

Green holds that moral formation fundamentally concerns the formation of *conscience*: the particularized reflexive judgments of approval or disapproval – with their associated emotions of self-assessment – concerning things that matter (p. 21).² His thesis: conscience formation largely consists in the acquisition of broad norms, (including social and professional norms), and is both “self-given and authoritative” – its voice has an immanent quality, yet also comes to us as the impartial perspective of a third party (p. 22). Norm acquisition involves the authoritative internalization of a “rule of conduct,” “ideal,” or “exemplar,” (p. 32) – not by mere ascent or obedience, but as critical standards of care and judgment are “impressed upon us,” or “built into us” (p. 42).
With respect to *craft*, Green (1999) structures his discussion generically, and where he does become more specific, he clearly has critical reflexiveness in students in view (pp. 64-65), and not teaching practitioners. I have argued that this recognition is important because his generic perspective does not map unproblematically onto teaching craft. My analysis suggests that the moral dimension of pedagogical craft is far more profound and expansive in scope than what Green suggests as the capacity and disposition to care for doing work skillfully, and the corresponding reflexive judgment to evaluate this work (p. 64) – as important as this is. Moreover, as I mentioned earlier, pedagogical craft is *not* straightforwardly characterized by widely accepted norms of practice which serve as standards of excellence in performance – its personal and relational dimensions make craft much more idiosyncratic.

But there is perhaps a more important point to be made in terms of Green’s basic thesis as it relates to pedagogy. My dissertation has been intentionally directed to individual practitioners serious about their own vocational formation, since *unlike* Green, I am not persuaded that practitioners can look to social institutions – either teacher colleges or public schools – for insight into the norms of vocational service. This is not to say that my thesis lacks important implications for both teacher education and for professional development in schools – but it means that engaging its assumptions and values would necessarily entail a radical shift in pedagogy in these institutions. It would mean, first of all, acknowledging professional education as a deeply moral enterprise, requiring an array of moral sensibilities and dispositions. It would mean placing persons and personal formation at the center of all valuation in the institution. It would mean that those charged with leading teacher education or development would lead by their own
moral example – by a gift-giving economy of mentoring relations rather than a market economy of functional relations. Only after such a paradigm shift, would it make sense to consider the aims of professional growth – aims such as endeavoring to foster the development of a multi-vocal professional conscience attuned to the norms of sacrifice, membership, craft, memory, and imagination; or endeavoring to plumb the depths of virtuous-normative metaphors which serve as potentially powerful exemplars for vocational practice. One can hardly expect conscience and moral imagination to be nurtured in teachers and student teachers in an institutional environment where these are not intentionally and routinely manifest. Pedagogy for a vocational conscience would, therefore, appear to require the reinvention of schools and schools of education – the sort of reinvention demonstrated in the experimental schools of the Eight Year Study, or in the work of Patricia Carini (2001) and her colleagues at Prospect School.

In chapter 1, I have asserted that vocation is misconstrued as moral heroism, joyless, self-denial, or self-diminishing sacrifice – for these characterize the sort of work that inevitably leads to various pathologies. In genuine vocation, individuals fulfill their social obligations and secure a sense of identity and fulfillment through their urge to creatively venture and devote themselves in serving others (Emmet, 1958). A vocational ethic emerges from a desire to be fully present in one’s work and to integrate the various dimensions of one’s life; thus the work of vocation draws upon a range of dispositions, qualities, and moral sensibilities which emerge from the core of one’s character (Hansen, 1995). Extending Emmet’s and Hansen’s analyses, I have highlighted the importance of developing self-discipline in moral formation – specifically the discipline entailed in a contemplative stance in pedagogy. Contemplation creates a necessary self-indifference
or detachment from self-interest, and a corresponding attachment to the objects that properly demand our attention, notably the particularities of our students and their work, and the ideals of practice (Buchmann, 1993). This quality of receptive attention enables practitioners 1) to relate and respond with congruence and fidelity to the needs, values, and aims of persons and tasks before them; 2) to bring an interpretive orientation to bear which probes beneath the surface to reveal hidden complexity and meaning; and 3) to devote themselves with characteristically just and loving sensibilities.

In the second chapter, I have argued that teacher-student moral friendship properly serves as the basis for joint moral formation and for moral classroom communities. It is pedagogically significant that within the practices of virtuous friendship 1) moral conscience and voice are shaped and strengthened; 2) empathy is transformed from a latent presence to a moral exercise and, in time, to a disposition; 3) acts of care and kindness function as gifts of self which tends to be Other-regarding and self-indifferent; and 4) a context of mutual influence and transformation is established. When students are viewed as co-participants in the moral life, practitioners are called to reflect ever more critically and honestly upon the nature of their personal relations – for, as R. S. Peters (1974, p. 222) understood, this personal relation is one of the most powerful influences in the development of student knowledge, sensitivity, and skill.

Central to chapter 3, is my contention that teaching is at its heart a virtuous-normative pedagogical activity. Following van Manen (1994, 1996), I have argued that educators must take their in loco parentis responsibilities as the vital focal point for reflecting upon the nature of the pedagogical virtues to be inculcated and the pedagogical relations to be established. These critical dimensions of moral craft are rooted, I
maintain, in a love for students – not only as learners (Kohl, 1984), but as persons. As a regulative ideal, self-transcending love is the preeminent, overarching, and unifying virtue that properly characterizes personal relations. In concrete terms, valuing students entails seeing each one with a positive, loving intent, and setting aside any self-centered feelings of natural dislike. Pedagogical attentiveness and insight, I contend, are a function of the degree of attachment to what is observed – for ‘to love what is there’ is to apprehend it in its full complexity. Often though, teachers tend to resist the person of the student and their call on our lives, fearing the demands and the vulnerability entailed in a fully personal, embracing response. This fear, however, can be faced and defused through the thoughtful, strenuous, recursive work of love – more specifically through one’s attentive, nuanced, loving knowledge of the young person and their work (Carini, 2001).

In chapter 4, I have demonstrated that the gift of hospitality offered to students serves as a valuable metaphor for fashioning covenanted classroom communities. In a sense, young people are strangers to the various intellectual traditions for they do not yet share a common set of understandings, so to invite them into community life is to be hospitable. A ‘pedagogy of hospitality’ has two moments: revealing and affirming (Nouwen, 1975). A good host must reveal or help students see that their own life experiences and understandings are worth sharing – for a sense of belonging requires that individuals feel they are seen, heard, and understood for the persons they really are. Teacher-covenanters must not only be receptive to the diverse gifts and emerging competence of young people, they must also be capable of affirming what is revealed as good or worthwhile. Teachers covenant with students, then, through their own gift of
hospitality and their subsequent commitment and fidelity in this work. Moreover, covenantal fidelity becomes transformational (May, 2000) when teachers respond to students’ deeper needs, and not simply their self-perceived needs.

What, then, do the conclusions and contributions outlined here mean for practice and for further theorizing? What implications do they point to for practitioners and theorists of education? Ultimately, only the individual reader can answer these questions, since each one of us is presented with the privilege and responsibility of authoring our own vocation-stories. For those readers who have come to look at themselves and their work critically, humbly, and unflinchingly, I expect that a number of implications will have already begun to emerge. Thus, while I believe that the manifold implications of this dissertation are potentially far-reaching for both individuals and institutions, these implications are very much personal and contextual – they demand a searching out and questioning of one’s deepest values, beliefs, and assumptions as well as one’s chief desires, purposes, and commitments in one’s life situation.

Having affirmed this much, let me take the liberty of very briefly highlighting just a few interrelated implications which would appear to have broad relevance for us today. As I mentioned in the Introduction, endeavoring to fund an ethic of vocation in teachers and aspiring teachers may be the single most significant force in recovering a sense of a profession’s deep moral and public obligation – a professional conscience. In my view, this is centrally because a sense of vocation operates to counter the commonplace tendencies of careerist self-drivenness or job routinization which, ironically, have been largely brought on by external mandates and policies designed to secure practitioner competence and accountability. But a professional conscience can neither be mandated
nor created by policy. Rather, it emerges with the intentional, ongoing cultivation of an array of moral sensibilities and dispositions as practitioners seek to apprehend and respond to the moral obligations inherent in the norms and ideals of teaching practice. Today, however, the urge to fund a professional conscience does not appear to vitally animate the ethos of our schools of education or our programs for professional development. Thus a radical change is called for. I alluded to this earlier as a paradigm shift, though one might also view it as a conversion. For what is demanded is individuals with the moral courage to engage in the strenuous work of critical reflexiveness and repentance, which leads to a change of heart and mind. Then we need these individuals to stretch colleagues’ moral imagination of what is possible as they lead by example in the reinvention of our institutions.

However remote the prospect of this institutional change, I remain hopeful about the future of pedagogical vocation. I am hopeful that there will always be practitioners who seek a meaningful integration of work and life – practitioners who see their work-lives as an arena for personal transformation, and so respond faithfully to the call of sacrifice, membership, craft, tradition, and imagination.
Afterword

There is not good inherent in man that he should be able to eat, drink, or get satisfaction from his work. Even this, I realized, was from the hand of God. Apart from Him, who can... have enjoyment? For to the man who pleases Him, He gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy...

- Ecclesiastes 2:24-25

The moral formation involved in the loved work of vocation is inescapably caught up in the broader dimension of one’s spiritual formation (Huebner, 1993/1999, p. 411). Hanan Alexander (2000) makes this case as well. Building upon Green’s (1999) argument that moral formation involves the acquisition of social norms (through the stories, traditions, and rituals of a community’s collective notion of the good), Alexander argues that, “the idea of sacredness – both immanent and transcendent – is not only necessary but also central to the acquisition of norms” (p. 400). My own faith commitments are Christian, and in closing here I would like to briefly hint at how the work of this thesis is properly situated within this all-encompassing dimension of life.

The wisdom literature of Scripture affirms that life is a gift to be enjoyed – our work too is to be a source of joy. Yet this is by no means the whole story, for we are also taught that happiness is not inherently within our reach – we mortals lack the capacity to extract this enjoyment on our own, apart from God. While this view is simply too radical for some individuals, it is precisely the conclusion reached by The Teacher, probably Solomon, at the end of the first section of Ecclesiastes. He directs us to the satisfactions
found in the ordinary round of daily life, like our work, which come from pleasing God –
from serving Him. To walk with God is to understand that He supplies us with the
knowledge of His ways, with the wisdom to conduct our lives aright, and consequently
the joy of fulfillment in the midst of life’s difficulties and sacrifices. There are no
substitutes for the source of joy disclosed here in the Bible – neither some locus of
goodness within us, nor money, sex, power or other goods external to us.

In acknowledging this biblical perspective on work and its satisfactions, I wish to
affirm that the sacrifice-fulfillment proportionality and dynamic, explored in Chapter 1, is
properly situated within this more expansive perspective on work and life. In serving
others, we serve God. Ultimately, then, we derive lasting fulfillment in our vocations
because, whether we realize it or not, we are serving Him. A fundamental reason many
individuals find their work to be unsatisfying, is that from the start their efforts are not
animated by a desire to serve others. Lacking a vocational ethic, even modest sacrifices
will fail to yield modest fulfillment.

Moreover, I have attempted to demonstrate (in chapter 2) that a vocational ethic is
necessarily rooted in a relational ethic – a desire for mutuality of relations or moral
friendships. Such an ethic, I have argued (in chapters 3 and 4), ought to stand at the
center of our pedagogical craft, the center of the covenantal traditions we draw strength
from, and the center of our own moral imaginations in our quest for self-transcendence.
Yet, it needs to be highlighted that the call to a relational ethic finds its original
authorship and voice in God. He calls us to love – to love our neighbours, and to love
Him. He calls us to love with heart, mind, soul, and strength – with all of our passion,
intelligence, being, and energy. This call is the foundation of all biblical ethics. It has
also served, implicitly, as the foundation of my exploration into ethical formation in the vocation of teaching here in this volume.

I would like to conclude here by drawing your attention to the quotation found at the beginning of this volume (p. vi). In both of these poems, Wendell Berry, like Solomon, directs us to reflect upon the joyful vision that properly underlies our work – a vision and joy that finds its ultimate source in God. In the first poem, Berry does not shrink from the reality of self-sacrifice that attends our labors: the aching hand and the sweating face. Yet he wishes to remind us of the even greater, unseen work accomplished by the Creator. While we may work diligently in the fields, and toil to reap the harvest, the produce itself quietly grows and ripens through the mysterious and miraculous work of God. And so it is in pedagogical work, as He works unobtrusively to bring about growth, maturity, and virtue in both in our students and in ourselves. To be attentive to this creative grace in our work-lives, then, is what it means to “work well”. It is to have our vocational life bathed in a “Sabbath-mood” – a sensibility of resting in the confidence and joy of serving as co-creators with God.

With its refrain of “harmony,” Berry’s second poem more explicitly directs us to consider the joy, and blessing, and peace that emerge as our own work moves in step with God’s work. Its imagery evokes a vision of loving stewardship: our “fields” cultivated in harmony with the neighboring “wood-land” of His creation. The logic, and the call, is inescapable. Gift begets gift. Given that the world itself is His gift of love to humanity, our only fitting response ought to be analogous: the gift of “loving work” lavished upon our children – which, however imperfect, heals, nurtures and protects.
Appendix

Major Educational Conceptions of Vocation in Outline

Dwayne Huebner

Huebner (1987/1999) broadly views vocation as the continuous search for deeper, integrating "values and meanings" in our academic disciplines, our cultural traditions, and our wider world – a search undertaken with students, their families, and colleagues (p. 387). The school community, then, becomes the world in which we "live our values" "responsibly", "intentionally" and, with openness to the risk of vulnerability as we acknowledge our "fallibility and insecurity" (pp. 386, 380, 384). This call can be conceived metaphorically as a journey or story in which we remain "fully present" to our students, "participating in the formation of their story" (p. 382).

Huebner warns that a teacher’s call is often drowned out by the “technical-bureaucratic” voices of ‘the powers that be’ in schools and society, who seek to control rather than to serve (p. 383). The remedy is to develop facility with a language of “image or vision” which – being more poetic and personal – is more amenable to bringing “feelings, memories and hopes to the present in a personal story” (p. 383). Teachers must become attentive listeners, able “to listen’ students into consciousness” – inter-relating the tradition of the disciplines with a young person’s past, present and future story. This tradition is not merely subject content, it is a tradition of embodied “communal recollections and hopes” which provides structure, value, and meaning in our lives (p. 381). Teachers are called to be “trustees” of these dynamic traditions – traditions which have their own resources for self-criticism and which stand as life-giving “sources of beauty, truth, and freedom” (p. 381).

Vocation integrates work and life, yet for many teachers the call wears thin because, in Huebner’s estimation, schools tend not to be designed “to support the living that teaching is” (p. 379). Schools, therefore, need to be socially reconstructed around collegial and community norms – norms that recognize teacher learning and transformation and which prize conversation through which values and meanings are evaluated and reconstituted (p. 386). Schools need to become communities of “care and support” where the vulnerability that accompanies being fully present can be assumed, and where members can “take time for telling and listening to the stories of each other’s journeys” (p. 385).
William Ayers

Ayers (1993), like Huebner, appears to be drawn to the idiom of vocation by virtue of its relational and moral emphases, and he employs the concept broadly, virtually equating it with the general demands of practice. Teaching stands as "a powerful calling" and a "gift of oneself to others" for timeless reasons — both individual and social (p. 8). Youngsters will always need the attention of "a thoughtful, caring adult" to nurture them, to guide, coach, and challenge them — in a word, to "love" them, amidst the "injustices and deficiencies" in the world which always call out for repair (p. 8). Paradoxically, through enabling others to become more competent and powerful, teachers themselves are transformed in a multitude of ways that impel them to "become their best selves" (p. 8). Since vocation calls a person to be "thoughtful, caring and committed", the capacity to exercise "sustained interest in and deep knowledge of another person" is foundational (p. 18). Conversely, teachers demonstrate a "degraded sense" of calling in allowing "moral considerations" to become secondary — as when they allow bureaucratized school structures or the received curriculum to depersonalize or deskill (p. 19).

For Ayers, matters of moral choice are central to his conception of teaching as vocation — matters involving "preference and value, obligation and choice, trust and care, commitment and justification" (p. 20). When teachers become unreflective, disconnected, and passionless, when they separate means from ends, they are "evading" their "deepest responsibility" — their moral one (p. 19). Moral considerations operate at several levels: individual students, social transformation, and curriculum development. At the level of the individual, the matter of moral choice can be "aided" by an ethic of caring which centers upon the quality of relation rather than simply the exercise of moral duty or principle (p. 22). Instructional skills and academic rigor are not minimized, but oriented to attending to the formation of "the whole person" (p. 23). Thus, teaching in a "humane", person-centered way demands "intelligence, reflection, justification, and commitment", and requires the involvement of the wider world of "families, communities, and... society" (p. 132).

As a neo-Marxist critical theorist, Ayers argues that because education involves social reproduction, if teachers cannot morally warrant particular values or goals of their society, then they are obliged to struggle towards alternate ways to respond or resist. This resistance can be sustained both through adherence to ideals and joining other like-minded citizens and colleagues — in better schools a core set of values is both explicit and embodied (pp. 133-134). Although society may be indifferent to or dismissive of such ethical reflection — particularly as it opts for an agenda of increasing "efficiency and control" — the challenge for teachers is to ponder what they value. This social connection is integral to Ayer’s formulation of calling: "In a vocation like teaching there is a vital link between private and public worlds, between personal fulfillment and social responsibility" (p. 23, italics mine; compare Hansen, 1994, p. 2; 1995, p. 2). This responsibility on teachers is mounting, particularly with the growing "upheaval" in the world, and with society’s changing and conflicting expectations of schools (p. 21). It calls upon teachers in "an heroic quest" to be "wide-awake and fully present" in their work, to devote sustained attention to "big transformative ideas" (pp. 10, 21, 133, 10).

It is Ayers’ contention that moral considerations must be foremost in developing curriculum and instruction, not only because of the innumerable possible courses of action to follow but also because of the enormous diversity of "experience and capacity"
in students (p. 21). Teaching, therefore, is "the vocation of vocations" in the sense that it is "a calling that shepherds a multitude of other callings" – it empowers others to choose well (p. 127). It strengthens the skills, tools, and dispositions necessary for broad choices, and the capacities for individual and collective action (p. 22), but it demands that teachers first reflect upon "what ought to be and what ought not to be" before they take action (p. 21).

David Hansen

Through three major works (1994, 1995, 2001) that we will consider in turn, Hansen lays out an extensive, detailed conceptualization of vocation written from the perspective of a Deweyan progressivist. Vocation emerges where the spheres of personal fulfillment and public obligation intersect. Thus, a range of activities from medicine and law to athletics and gardening might qualify as vocation, if work has "social meaning and value", that is, so long as it is characteristically and substantively edifying or helpful (1994, p. 2). This is not to suggest that the person is subordinated to the practice, for vocation also implies a vigorous personal involvement which "provides a sense of self, of personal identity" and "meaning", the sense that one has something "significant" and "distinctive" to offer (pp. 3, 5, 7). Nonetheless, much of this meaning derives from the social practice itself. Hansen elaborates upon Dorothy Emmet’s (1958) contention that vocation presupposes an "inner urge" to "venture in and devote oneself in working": ‘venturing’ for him, speaks of a “hopeful, outward-looking” stance despite the uncertainty or unpredictability inherent in the work, while ‘devotion’ alludes to the “strong and persistent desire” to bring these motivations to life (p. 3).

Career choice then is a misunderstanding of teacher vocation, which revolves not around ‘choice’ or what one ‘applies’ oneself to, but around desire and agency. Teaching ‘occupies’ one’s imagination, it is believed to be something worthy of creatively acting upon, and it calls upon the capacity to accept uncertainty and doubt in the face of the changing needs of students and the changing traditions of the disciplines. Moreover, a vocational sense is emergent – a person learns that teaching is a practice whose meaning surpasses the sum of its parts, that its demands are never fully appreciated at the start (pp. 5, 7). Vocation further suggests to Hansen, (citing Emmet 1958; compare Barth, 1961), that the unique qualities brought to bear admit no interchangeability of persons – no two teachers exert the same moral impact in their relationships with students. Related to this is the element of autonomy – the teacher operates as an “architect” of their classroom, shaping and critiquing curriculum and instruction with a growing originality, sensibility of perception, and self-judgment (p. 6). Hansen contends that the criteria to evaluate practice, largely resides in the practice itself. Consequently, growing societal demands and judgments on teachers’ work must not override teachers’ autonomy of personal ethics associated with vocation – the autonomy to make judgments concerning individual student needs and difficulties and how best to address them.

The first chapter of Hansen’s The Call to Teach (1995) is in most respects identical to his earlier essay, though he more strongly underscores the centrality of the person occupying the role of teacher. While he reaffirms that the demands of the practice neither necessitate social zealotry nor heroism, he contends there will be times when one must bracket one’s “self-interest” and be “submissive to a higher end” in an effort to
understand “what a child is struggling to say, to do, or even to become” (1995, p. 5). Hansen also expands upon how vocation is distinct from other activities, distinguishing it from profession on two grounds (p. 8). First, professionals may fulfill their social duties without garnering a sense of identity and fulfillment. And second, many respond to the lure of professionalism’s enhanced recognition, autonomy, and monetary rewards, but these tend to detract from the inward rewards accompanying the everyday personal and moral aspects of practice. Vocation, unlike profession, is a concept that plunges us deeply into the experience of the person, helping us “capture the motivation and ethos” of those called to serve (p. 147).

In the final chapters of his volume — drawing upon the extended study of four teachers, which comprises the core of the book — Hansen continues to couch his analysis in the “language of vocation”, rather than in a more thoroughgoing theoretical structure (p. 124). Vocation for these teachers is “a way of life” to which they not only bring their professional knowledge and skills, but also intellectual and moral discernment, emotions, and also various strengths of character (p. 116). Their work continually demands “their moral judgment, and their moral strength... it draws on the very core of their character” — in sum, it calls for certain “conditions... of mind and heart (pp. 123, 125). Importantly, like Thomas Green (1999), Hansen perceives the call as arising from the sphere of craft and the sphere of tradition, and it is in his subsequent volume (2001) that he elaborates further upon the particular demands of the tradition of teaching. Craft precedes the person in the sense that it calls an individual to develop certain capacities in order to fulfill particular duties and responsibilities. Some of these obligations are relatively mundane, others pivotal and dramatic — but all are rooted in “the terms of the practice itself” (1995, p. 124). This practice in turn has a lengthy history whose rich traditions can serve as sources of “strength and... imagination” and guide “members of a practice” “[i]f they perceive the work in terms larger than their own immediate situation” (pp. 133, 127). Our varied histories and traditions in politics, morality and ethics reflects the deep human need “to cultivate ways” of living together (p. 134, emphasis in original).

It is just here that Hansen begins to explicitly stress the centrality of individual perception in vocation — what I have termed sensibility. He notes that while many forces in society and in individual experience shape “identity and perception”, it is one’s “judgment and... character”, one’s “unique dispositions and moral sensibilities”, which give substance to the “nuanced, sensitive interpretations” of perception (pp. 129, 137). Such perceptions or sensibilities extend to the very notion of vocation itself which “serves as a mirror” into which teachers might look with “self-scrutiny” (p. 139). While particular school contexts no doubt constrain reflective action, teachers’ own expansive perceptions of their work can enable them to “transcend their particular setting” (p. 130). This valuation does not denigrate instructional skills or subject-matter knowledge, but rather locates them within the larger sphere of the purposes they serve — teaching as vocation forefronts the intellectual and moral development of young people in “formal and public ways” (p. 140).

Hansen is both emphatic and explicit in the Preface of his subsequent volume, Exploring the Moral Heart of Teaching (2001), of his intention to “extend and deepen” (p. x) the concept of vocation as introduced in The Call to Teach. Curiously, he does not call attention to the concept elsewhere in the book, choosing instead to elaborate upon the particular facets of vocation expounded upon in his earlier volume. A significant
addition is his final chapter concerning moral ideals or virtues in practitioners. These
great ideals of “character or personhood” – being more demanding and expansive than aims or
goals, intentions or desires – function to provoke “imagination” and “to motivate, guide,
strengthen, and encourage” practitioners’ action (pp. 158, 164, 163). Uncritically
embraced however, they can become obsessive, exploitive, or worse. Moral ideals are
suggestive of the human lure to transcendence – in particular, our urge to transcend our
relational shortcomings. Ideals of human flourishing range widely, from broad notions of
social justice to personal issues of care or compassion. All these are neither novel nor
particularly contentious ideas, but they provide the context for Hansen’s subsequent
affirmations.

He affirms that while ideals have a place “in the crafting of a life” to “become as
fully human as one can”, they must take their form “within the terms of the practice
itself” (pp. 190, 188). No moral ideal, in and of itself, can override that which is “built
into the practice of teaching” (p. 188). Hansen identifies “tenacious humility” – a
regulative ideal suggestive of an expanding sense of agency and humanity – to be a
preeminent virtue in teaching, both because it “complements” the patient attentiveness
characteristic of the necessary perceptions or sensibilities just alluded to, and because it
“guides and disciplines” a host of other ideals in the service of learning (pp. 167, 188).
Endnotes

Introduction

1 I understand moral — not in a technical or specialized sense — but rather as centering on one’s beliefs, values, and understandings that are evaluative. A moral issue concerns a judgment based upon what is right or good, and this judgment typically emerges from a dynamic tension between moral absolutes or ideals and the details particular to a context. The claim made by Hansen (2001), as well as Buzzelli and Johnston (2002), with which I concur, is that for the features of moral significance are inherent in the practice itself. My premise, then, is that teaching is a moral activity primarily because it rests upon a relationship with students, and it involves decisions and actions that influence their formation — intellectual, moral, social, emotional and the like.

2 I understand moral dispositions to be those fairly settled qualities or virtues of character or personhood. My understanding of moral sensibilities includes critical moral reflection, moral perception, moral courage, and moral imagination (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002, pp. 151-155), as well as the sensitivity, insight, judgment, and improvisational skill in dealing with complex or delicate situations (van Manen, 1996, p. 39). (See also footnote 4 in chapter 1).

3 A very brief sketch of the socio-historical roots of the modern concept of vocation is to be found in footnote 9 of chapter 3. As I will make clear shortly, this is not how my conception of vocation is framed. In addition, in the Appendix I have offered an outline of the three major educational conceptions of vocation. This literature review indicates that a vocational ethic is an emphatically moral one — oriented to relationships, service, agency, norms of practice, and personal transformation.

4 Steven Garber (1996) argues that in elucidating how individuals decide which commitments will give shape and substance to life, one needs to draw upon multiple disciplines — not only the ethics of character which I have looked to, but also the history of ideas, and the sociology of knowledge. Moreover, I recognize that the ethics of character that I have engaged is fairly limited. For example, building on Green’s (1999) work, James Fowler (1990), in his ‘Project on Ethics and Public Education’, has formulated a much more expansive model of character formation — though with youngsters rather than adults in view. He has tried to identify separate components and indicate how they interact in a somewhat coherent unity in persons and communities. Crudely, his model presumes: “The provision of rich normative Stories, plus the forming of Moral Attitudes [the five from Thomas Green (1999)], plus the stimulation and support of Developmental Abilities, plus the systematic provision of Information and Knowledge, taken all together in environments where
students are known, and experience care and accountability, maximize the possibility of the formation and nurture of Virtues and Strengths of Character” (p. 83, italics in original).

5 Profession, like vocation, is an ancient term. “To ‘profess’ means to ‘testify on behalf of,’ ‘to stand for,’ or ‘to avow’ a high good that defines ones’ fundamental commitment – a covenant, if you will, that shapes and constrains the practitioner, the professor” (May, 1999, p. 3). Those with a sense of profession are those “pursuing a learned art as a common calling in the spirit of public service – no less a public service because it may incidentally be a means of livelihood. Pursuit of the learned art in the spirit of public service is the primary purpose” (Pound, 1953, p. 7). Myron Lieberman (1956, pp. 2-6) discerns eight definitive features of modern professions, yet interestingly, the two traditional features of social service and intellectual technique top his list.

Chapter 1


2 Michael Huberman (1993) characterizes burnout as “a state of exhaustion, physical, affective, and cognitive altogether, that strikes individuals involved for a long time in situations that exact a heavy emotional toll. This state is characterized by a progressive ‘alienation’ – a growing indifference – vis-à-vis clients or pupils and by negative sentiments with regard to oneself: sentiments of having failed and feelings of incompetence.” (p. 4). He indicates that in numerous Anglo-Saxon and French studies statistics of burnout is estimated to be “up to 20 percent of the population of workers in the social sector (teachers, nurses, social assistants)....” (p. 4). Huebner (1996) locates the source of burnout in immoral institutional settings rather than, as Shulman does, in multiple demands: “For teachers to be laden with the task of teaching moral and ethical values to students in the midst of an uncaring social order is also hypocrisy. In this context, how can anyone wonder that teachers are so bothered by feelings of guilt and anger that they burn out and leave the profession?” (p. 273).

3 Shulman states: “teachers must be imbued with a set of values that transcends those of particular policies or particular children. They cannot be merely value-free brokers, trading off among competing goods without any deep commitments of their own. ... they must have... a vision of educational excellence... that motivates their choices and lends wisdom to their exercise of professional autonomy” (p. 159).

4 Katz and Raths (1986) emphasize the acquisition of “dispositions” in teacher education programs: those attributes summarizing a pattern of observed actions spanning similar contexts, such as a ‘supportive disposition’ towards students. Raths’s (2001) more recent proposal of broader, professional dispositions – knowledge, colleagueship, and advocacy – begins to approach the more encompassing disposition of service (or
servanthood) highlighted here. Buchmann (1986) understands a disposition as a particular kind of orientation: “While ‘to orient oneself’ means to bring oneself into defined relations to known facts or principles, a disposition is a bent of mind that, once in place, comes naturally. Dispositions are inclinations relating to the social and moral qualities of one’s actions; they are not just habits but intelligent capacities” (pp. 534-535).

5 DeVault’s (1991) position also provides an illustrative contrast. She argues that in the work of the homemaker “the intermingling of the (potentially mutual) care fundamental to group life with personal service work produces much of women’s characteristic ambivalence toward household work. Caring as skilled and significant work can be a source of pride and identity; caring as personal service can draw women into self-sacrifice and resentment” (p. 240). She therefore urges something “Between these two poles” (p. 240). My argument is that this polarity loses its force when a dynamic balance exists between the particular level of service rendered and the corresponding satisfaction derived, and when the caring service emerges from the core of one’s being.

6 The edited volume by Bolin, Falk, and McConnell (1987) is one of the few that seeks to place the teacher as person in the center of professional renewal and development. It offers numerous ways to help strengthen vocational commitments—from joint staff development and curriculum design, to mastery of emergent technologies, to contemplative retreats, and the like. I would argue though, that such activities must remain vitally connected to teaching’s essential ethical core and to the ongoing ethical formation of the teacher.

7 Peterson, 1987, p. 105. For Jackson (1992), contemplation demands that we both narrow and humble our vision: “The narrowing,” he writes, “allows us to focus on features of the environment that we might ordinarily pass by—small details and minuscule events, happenings that come and go in a twinkling. The humbling, which goes hand in hand with the narrowing, turns us toward the ordinary and mundane and away from the dramatic and colorful” (p. 84). For Dyer & Carothers, 2000), contemplation requires ‘listening’ less in the sense of a skill or technique, and more of an attitude of “genuine interest in what really matters to someone else”, attending to “ideas and feelings” and “the intent… being communicated” (pp. 28, 29).

8 What spirituality consists of is an ontological question; its relation to ethics is an ethical question. How the two are related to moral formation is not so much a developmental question as an educational one—an issue of philosophy of education.

9 Murdoch conceives human freedom precisely this way, as “simply a name of an aspect of virtue concerned especially with the clarification of vision and the domination of selfish impulse” (p. 100).

10 Buchmann regularly appears to conflate professional and transcendent ideals. Cua (1998, p. 58) reminds us however, that for some moral agents, once they are satisfied
with caring for the demands and ideals of their moral practice, they often go on to devote themselves to the pursuit of transcendent ideals outside of practice.

There exists a long tradition of secular and religious philosophy on attention as fundamental to the cognitive and moral life. Zaleski (1995) offers a brief survey of this tradition. Attention is also central to cognitive psychology and the more recent discipline of cognitive science. Zaleski considers various aspects of attention in a religious context: its selective and receptive character, its narrow or wider focus, and the convergence within attentiveness of affective, moral, and cognitive characteristics.

Murdoch's conception of prayer is remarkably similar: not a stance of petition, but "simply an attention to God which is a form of love" (p. 55).

Huebner employs the biblical term 'principalities and powers', which denotes those aspects of the social, political, and economic life that operate contrary to biblical injunctions. Notice here also, unlike Palmer, Huebner views reforming institutional life as central to the work of vocation.

Maria Harris (1987) explores four operations of imagination (drawing on the seminal work of Philip Wheelwright) – two of these, ascetic and contemplative, capture Buchmann's notion of 'detached and concerned'. Ascetic or distancing imagination draws upon the various understandings associated with religious discipline – the letting be, or standing back so as not to violate. This mode is especially important in teaching where power can be misused in manipulative or coercive ways. Contemplative imagination incorporates radical particularity and intensity of focus, it "calls for a totally engaged bodily presence: attending, listening, being-with..., which enables awareness of the other" (p. 21). It is noteworthy too that Richard Niebuhr interprets attention "as a cognitive capacity that is at once receptive and constructive, contemplative and imaginative" (Zaleski, 1995, p. 133).

Green (1999), perhaps unintentionally, leaves the impression that – as Walter Wurzburger (1994) puts it – “the promptings of the autonomous human conscience constitute the highest court of appeals in all ethical matters” (p. 5), to the exclusion of religious foundations. Hanan Alexander (2000) actually critiques Green's work precisely for this reason, arguing that all moral norms seek to operationalize a sense of the sacred that emanates from beyond one's own ethical tradition. That is, the immanent aspect of sacredness can be viewed as a regulative principle of all moral education or formation.

Bai does not specify here in this short essay how mutuality functions to enlarge one's capacity to bear responsibility. She does imply that those who readily bear moral responsibility have come to do so through disciplined exercise, but how mutuality is involved in such moral discipline she does not say. Elsewhere (2001, p. 14) though, she does point to the value of cultivating a “contemplative, aesthetic consciousness".
This contrasts with the view that sees moral responsibility “as beyond, outside, not wholly encompassed by any social community's conventions” – a view that Houston (2002) critiques (p. 3).

Houston (2002, p. 9) contends that taking responsibility entails taking responsibility for oneself, which “is a matter primarily of recognizing and dealing with my own resistances.”

Hauervas (1974) speaks of character as the qualification of our agency (p. 60). Strength of character develops, not accidentally, but with our sustained attention, with “our deliberate disposition to use a certain range of reasons [and guiding moral visions] for our actions rather than others” (p. 59). Houston (2002, p. 11) also stresses the relevance of character to self-agency.

Chapter 2


2 Jeffko (1999, p. 27) notes that a personalist ethics of community resembles recent communitarian thought, which attempts to bridge the liberal-conservative divide. Etzioni’s (1993) Spirit of Community is a prime representation. Communitarianism essentially upholds the importance of both the individual’s rights and the individual’s responsibility to the common good. Typically though, it relies upon an organic model of society. Its philosophy of community is essentially one of an individual’s, as opposed to a person’s, proper relation to society; a person, we maintain, is more than merely an individual member of a group. It should be acknowledged here also that for over a generation now, several feminist scholars have sought to resuscitate notions of mutuality and interdependence, which in their view are more central to the female experience than to male one. I frequently engage this ethic of care in my discussion.

3 Historically, the atomistic model of community had it roots in the thought of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, and its formulation influenced that of liberal philosophy; its contemporary adherents include Michael Novak and John Rawls.

4 G.W.F. Hegel, and later Karl Marx and Alfred North Whitehead, were all modern expositors of the organic model of community. Several social philosophers, beginning with Ferdinand Tönnies, have contrasted the organic and atomistic models.

5 Just as Green (1999, p. 93) suggests that prudential interests may be used as a tutor to the moral life, so Kirkpatrick (1986, p. 211) suggests that cooperation may serve to initiate persons into the satisfactions of fellowship.

6 For Macmurray (1961/1999, pp. 12-43) our conceptual maps (or primary knowledge of reality) arise out of experiences in the full, bodily, active, emotive involvement of the immediate mode. In thinking, we withdraw and reflect upon the nature and adequacy
of our conceptual maps, before returning to active involvement with the world. Thinking occurs within the context of action, consequently no essential dualism exists between thought and practice, for thinking is a form of acting. This runs counter to the traditional epistemological view that knowledge consists primarily in correct thinking, rather than in correct action with respect to other agents.

7 Jeffko (1999) links value to this knowledge, for he understands it “as the actualizing of objectivity (primarily) with subjectivity (secondarily)” (p. 11). Value is inherent in the relation between Self and Other — though objectivity is the primary determinant of value for it includes and is partly constituted by subjectivity. Nonetheless, subjectivity dictates that values are cannot be completely objective in the sense of being entirely constituted outside of the Self’s agency. Macmurray’s position is similar, though he places a greater overall emphasis on valuation as it relates to the aesthetic knowledge (1961/1999, p. 184).

8 Macmurray (1961/1999, p. 110f) understands two aspects of perception. Intention is the practical aspect of our selective attention — we attend to what is relevant to our intentions and interests. Habitual interests operate as dispositions — we select, interpret, and organize in an essentially automatic process, which he terms apperception.

9 Gilligan’s (1982/1993) interest lies primarily with the sex differences in personality formation; my concern, like Macmurray’s, is with universal aspects of moral formation.

10 Infants are incapable of responding to external stimuli in any way that is significantly biologically adaptive — their sucking reflex is their contribution to feeding, all the rest the mother supplies. Macmurray (1961/1999) rejects the Aristotelian view that children are essentially animals who acquire rationality and personality through the habituation of animal impulses, for they are less like animals than they are like human adults (p. 45). Macmurray’s insights into the inherent responsiveness of young children have since been supported by numerous research studies in the 1970s and 1980s (cited in Gilligan, 1988a, pp. viii-ix) that document infants’ interpersonal capabilities as well as their desire for relation.

11 In this discussion the psychology of learning is presupposed, and the philosophical perspective pursued here ought not be taken as minimizing its importance. The same can be said for psychological theories concerning the dynamics of love, such as attachment theory.

12 Gilligan (1982/1993) understands voice in an expansive way; she writes, “by voice I mean something like what people mean when they speak of the core of the self” (p. xvi).

13 This is often why the fearful emotion felt during an action may not necessarily reveal the true nature of the motive of love.
Buber is not cited in this essay, nor are the terms ‘mutual’ or ‘mutuality’, but his notion of mutuality is evident in Noddings’s earlier (1984) formulation of her ethic of care.

In her earlier work, Noddings (1984) is explicit about her ethic of care as reflecting an “ethical ideal”, namely, that our desire to be moral is derivative and reflective of a desire to be in caring relation (p. 83). For her: “Ethical caring... depends... upon the development of an ideal self... [an] ideal developed in congruence with one’s best remembrance of caring and being cared for” (p. 94). However, I am using ‘ideal’ here in the sense of an aspiration or expectation essentially beyond reach. In addition, while Noddings speaks of the “free, creative, and joyous response we expect of our genuinely cared-for” (p. 75, italics mine), she does at least acknowledge situations “in which children not passionately loved will at least receive attention and, perhaps, learn to respond to... those who genuinely address them” (p. 61, italics mine).

To be clear, Noddings (1984) does stress intention as well: “Everything depends on the will... to remain in relation to the other”; “We can... maintain an internal state of readiness to try to care for whoever crosses our path” (pp. 18, 103).

Of course, diverse motives for learning exist. Curiosity, wonder, and awe, for example, regularly underlie the desire to problem-solve or achieve mastery. But as I indicated in the last section, my intent is not to minimize such motives but to highlight the primacy of love (and the overcoming of fear) in the learning relationship.

Gilligan (1982/1993) affirms: “Attachment and separation anchor the cycle of human life, describing the biology of human reproduction and the psychology of human development. The concepts of attachment and separation that depict the nature and sequence of infant development appear in adolescence as identity and intimacy and then in adulthood as love and work” (p. 151). More specifically she wishes to stress that “women perceive and construe social reality differently from men and that these differences center around experiences of attachment and separation, life transitions that invariably engage these experiences can be expected to involve women in a distinctive way” (p. 171).

This is not to suggest that this self-consciousness supervenes upon some prior consciousness – the purposes of this discussion are diagrammatic.

Macmurray (1949) stresses that as a political rather than a personal aim, achieved through legal and administrative means, community is displaced by society, and the State takes on moral and spiritual attributes suggestive of absoluteness, when it properly functions as a means to community (p. 75).

Even the mutual intention to be friends does not constitute fellowship, though it is the condition of its possibility. Fellowship can only be realized in activities of the common life – difficulties have to be lived through – for its quality depends upon the
degree to which fear for the self is overcome and love for the other is demonstrated in practice.

22 In all quotes I have used Martin Ostwald’s (1962) translation. Aristotle’s view here differs from R.S. Peters (1974), for example, who sees personal relation as distinctively rooted in a common humanity and “not as an occupant of a role, not as a sharer in a common quest, including that of learning.... Not even as another moral being....” (p. 223). Peters’ concern here is with the instrumental forging of personal relationships with students for the express purpose of facilitating learning.

23 The connection Aristotle often makes between friendship and political life is not that politics determines and guards friendship, but that “friendship determines the political insofar as it is the purpose of good politics to make the life of virtue possible” (Hauervas and Pinches, 1997, p. 37). The state exists not as an end in itself but as a resource for virtue, and lacking this resource one must assist family and friends to attain it (1180a25-31).

24 This task is, in turn, set within the larger context of the teacher’s role which, as Daniel Lortie (1975) perceives, also calls for a balance to be struck: “it is the teacher’s responsibility to coordinate, stimulate, and shepherd... the teacher... corrects the for the capriciousness of students with the steadiness, resolve, and sangfroid of one who governs. The austere virtues, moreover, must be complemented by the warmer qualities like empathy and patience (pp. 540-541). Lortie and Buchmann understand this balance, though it is not self-evident whether or not Gilligan (1982) does also. While she can label the “opposition between selfishness and selflessness” as a “false dichotomy”, Gilligan views her own work as attempting “to turn the tide of moral discussion from questions of how to achieve objectivity and detachment to how to engage responsively and with care” (p. xix). Moral reflection and insight, I would argue, requires both of these discussions, for they both inform practice.

25 Susan Laird (2002) has recently made a case for the concept of ‘befriending girls’, and she sees this as congruent with educative intent. In Ann Diller’s (2002) interpretation, “Laird herself does not advocate friendship. She does not say ‘to be a friend’” (p. 83, italics in original), but rather to act as a friend. Also, Margret Buchmann (1993) makes a fleeting allusion to teacher-student friendship: “That teachers’ attention is urged on toward others also follows form the relation that exists in human life between what one most delights in [subject matter] and the wish to share it with others, particularly one’s friends [students]” (p. 170; cf. 1986, p. 540). Parker Palmer (1983/1993) uses the metaphor of friendship between teacher and subject matter: “teachers overcome the students’ fear of meeting this stranger, the subject, by revealing the friendship that binds subject and teacher” (p. 104).

26 I am indebted to William May’s (2000) insights in the foregoing discussion. Clearly, my argument runs counter to Glass’s (1971) assertion that “metaphors are too inexact to serve as reliable guides to practice” (p. 26). Exactness is not what is required; a
potent, compelling vision is. The issue of image and imagination in a vocational ethic will be explored in greater depth in chapter 5, *The Call of Memory and Imagination*.

Some might object that a friendship relation with children is an unequal one, and not realistically conducive to moral growth in the adult partner. In response, I would point to the work of Robert Coles (1986; 1990), Gareth Matthews (1980), and others that has indicated that even small children are capable of profound questions and sentiments in the philosophical, moral, and spiritual spheres. Also, in stressing the intimate relation between friendship and the moral life, I am not suggesting that friendship is the source of straightforward, even moral growth — such growth is problematic in large part because friendship is by nature problematic. Neither, I am denying the asymmetric nature of the pedagogical relation: “Children are not charged with the pedagogical responsibility of… helping their… teachers grow… This does not mean of course that children do not teach us and do not show us new ways and possibilities of experiencing and being in the world” (van Manen, 1996, p. 49).

The activities of virtuous friendship serve as one source for an ethic of vocation, and Jenny’s story portrays the embeddedness of such friendship in a concrete, local setting. I wish to stress that such particularized detail is especially important in a chapter such as this one, which has regularly abstracted from activities of mutualism in actual settings to produce various conceptual or theoretical insights.

Macmurray (1961/1999) labels strictly functional relations as *absolute impersonal relations* since the impersonal relation is intended solely for its own sake; such relations, which by nature objectify the Other, violate community. (See also Jeffko, 1999, p. 25).

An enormous literature on democracy and education has emerged in the last century. I simply wish to note here that, with the possible exception of Freire (1997/2000, p. 30), it is difficult to find any educational theorists who advance democratic arrangements on the basis of mutuality of relations. This includes prominent scholars such as James Beane and Michael Apple (1995), Ann Sharp (1996), Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren (1992), and Landon Beyer (1996). While Jesse Goodman’s (1992) treatment of critical democracy claims to prize “compassion” and “altruism” (p. 27), its “connectionist orientation” (p. 28) is clearly that of an organicist community, and its view of “care” appears suspiciously self-interested: “…in caring for others we are caring for ourselves” (p. 28). To be clear, I am not opposed to the many excellent initiatives, “the commitment to respect students’ voices and perceptions, and to shared decision-making responsibilities” (Beyer, p. 154) and the like. However, the moral grounding of these analyses invariably tends to lie in relationships of atomistic or organicist community, rather than personalist community.

This view is at odds with that taken by those, like Rousseau, who claim that there is no need to change our egocentric tendencies, we need only provide the socio-political institutions for natural human goodness to manifest itself.
Buber (1949, p. 134) recognizes that discernment is required in knowing how cooperative or contractual relations might be utilized to lead to mutuality of relations.

Willard (2002, p. 189). I am indebted to Dallas Willard’s insights into the social aspect of our personhood in the subsequent discussion here.

Stanley Hauerwas (1974) is very sensitive to the distortions and pathologies of love. Like Iris Murdoch (1970), he notes that much of our loving involves self-assertion and an imposition of a preconceived image of the Other, rather than loving the Other in all their particularity (p. 33). Love, for Hauerwas, centrally involves the apprehension and acceptance of the world’s particularity and beauty (pp. 38-39). The capacity to love, then, is a necessary condition for freedom, in the sense of the disciplined overcoming of self which enables us to see, without fear, what is real (p. 40). Thus reverent attentiveness is central to love, for we are called from self-involvement to a selfless appreciation of a reality that transcends us (p. 39). Like Weil and Murdoch, Hauerwas views attention as that “just and loving gaze” directed upon a particularized reality. Thus growth in the moral life is more a matter of attention and moral imagination than will. Goodness emerges with the disciplined attention to apprehend the loved Other as an equal (p. 41); goodness is an achievement, it is more a matter of purity of heart then decision (p. 42). The exercise of moral imagination is the progressive effort to widen and clarity our vision of reality (p. 44).

I believe the preceding analysis has gone a long way to addressing Sockett’s (1990) concerns over teacher-student friendship: “friendship creates obligations that go beyond the rights and obligations of a role relationship, for friends have privileged access to each other. Thus, there are major problems in the development of friendships (as contrasted with friendly relations) between teachers and students, and also between teachers and parents, and both these kinds of friendships influence the condition of trust on which a professional accountability relationship must be built. Not least because friendships have a measure of exclusivity about them, those outside the friendly relationship may see it as a threat to the roles they enjoy” (p. 234).

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Chapter 3

1 Kohl, 1984, p. 57.

2 As both Tom (1984) and Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) point out, the concept of teaching as a craft is understood differently within conservative as opposed to progressive and radical traditions of educational thought. Conservatives, who tend to prize cultural transmission, often denigrate the craft conception as involving little more than unreflective imitation or uncritical habit.
Care in the performance of one’s craft is, as both Green (1999) and May (2000, p. 89f.) point out, too often overlooked as a sphere for moral or ethical formation – yet Socrates, in the early Platonic works, subsumes ethics entirely to the sphere of skill or craft. For Socrates, a flourishing life was related to the exercise of moral skill – skill that, apparently for him, could be learned. Even today the lack of a skill in conduct is widely regarded as a shortcoming, and its possession as a sort of virtue (Shulman, 1987b, p. 481).

Reflexive judgment issues in either positive or negative emotions of self-assessment, depending upon the nature of the work performed. Whereas careless or otherwise inadequate work activates feelings of embarrassment or shame, skilled and fitting performance issues in satisfaction and fulfillment. The presence of such feelings, argues Green, is crucial for they indicate that standards have become internalized, that judgment is reflexive, and that the exercise of one’s craft is of moral significance (p. 62).

As I shall explore later, the difficulty with this view is that tacit knowledge is not easily articulated, and therefore a practitioner may be able to demonstrate, but not easily describe, their masterful work.

There is a collaborative aspect too: teachers gain a critical perspective and voice as they discuss and ponder together “the complex and embedded social, political, and moral frameworks of schooling” (Grimmett and MacKinnon, 1992, p. 431).

Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) perceive that this tripartite framework constitutes a broad set of guiding principles and ways of understanding teaching as craft that would be valuable both in teacher education and in professional development (pp. 433-438).

The minimum categories that he includes are “content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge...; curriculum knowledge...; pedagogical content knowledge, that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers...; knowledge of learners and their characteristics; knowledge of educational contexts, ranging from the workings of the group or classroom,... to the character of... cultures; and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds” (p. 227). Building on this Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) propose a further synthesis of general pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of learners into a new category of pedagogical learner knowledge which centers upon “procedural ways in which teachers deal rigorously and supportively with learners” (p. 387). In their view, both pedagogical content and pedagogical learner knowledge are the substance of craft knowledge or wisdom, which is exercised through contextual judgments made in the midst of practice.

Welker (1992) points particularly to the roots of service found in the religious (Emmert, 1958) and medical (May, 2000) professions. Historically, this ethic of service or vocation in professions had ancient biblical roots in service to God. In the early
church, vocation came to be understood rather exclusively in terms of a calling to monastic or ecclesial roles, and never to other occupations. As Europe became Christianized, the Medieval church developed a more world-affirming sort of social thought, and along with it emerged a more positive view of work as conforming to the will of God. Secular employment, while not viewed as sacred in itself, was seen as falling under the authority of the church as an avenue of God’s grace (Badcock, 1998). Later, Protestantism came to regard all tasks in life as authentic vocations (Badcock, p. 28); all relational spheres were seen to be “religiously and morally meaningful as divinely given avenues through which persons respond obediently to the call of God to serve their neighbor in love” (Schuurman, 2004, p. 4). Max Weber perceived that Calvinism’s stress upon sanctification and divine election had led to a sort of secular asceticism wherein worldly success was regarded as an indicator of God’s blessing. Out of this historical context, Weber argued, our modern concept of the vocation emerged, for a central feature of capitalism is the notion of the moral obligation implicit in some professional activity (Badcock, p. 27). More recent social analysts, like Robert Bellah (1985), perceive that as society became increasingly secular, the religious center of valuation came to be displaced by an ethic of short-term economic and personal advantage. Bellah regards the recovery of the traditional Protestant conception of vocation as a remedy for these sociocultural ills, pointing to vocation’s insistence upon broader moral frameworks and long-range consequences.

10 Hansen (1994, p. 8) presents a similar argument, using the exploitation of nurses as an example.

11 One can sympathize with Lortie’s position that teachers embrace a collegiality that might sketch the outlines of effective, recommended practice, since some teachers exhibit a disdain for collegiality and for any principles that might guide their work. Lortie does not specify just what technical competence is – indeed, such an effort is problematical since there is little universal agreement on what good teaching entails. Joseph Featherstone (1976), who critiques Lortie’s work, insists that the profession of teaching is “so complex and our modes of knowing about it so limited, that it is difficult to believe that any emerging paradigms of technical knowledge will be anything but scientistic mumbo jumbo” (p. 160). Jackson (1968) had reached a similar conclusion, arguing that technological conceptions inadequately accounted for the contingencies of classroom life, and an artistic and intuitive sense of craft seemed more appropriate to the opportunistic and unpredictable nature of the work. Buchmann (1986) argues that as a moral community, professionals both individually and together must seek to clarify and enact a quality of professional aspiration. Thus professional learning relies upon “norms of collegiality and experimentation” – collegial norms reduce isolation and orient practitioners toward a teaching role, while experimental norms presume that one’s craft can always be better than it currently is (p. 539).

12 Shulman recognizes the dangers of impersonal professional relationship: “The serious problems in medicine and other health professions arise when doctors treat the
disease rather than the person..." (1987a, p. 243), yet he does not appear to take this warning to heart in his essay in the context of education and students.

Other accounts would also suggest Kohl's (1984) personal affection for students. He recounts in chapter eight, for example, hearing that four of his former students had been arrested on trumped up charges of loitering and disturbing the peace. Not only did he write a letter to get the four boys out of youth detention, he visited them there, and offered to help both them and their siblings in the summer with their reading. He took all fifteen over to the children's book section of the library at Teachers College. When, after two weeks, the chief librarian told them that they were no longer welcome, Kohl sought out the President of the College, as an advocate for the youngsters. Before long, the group was given a room of their own with ample resources, as well as the services of a college student in a community education class.

Joseph Featherstone (1984), in the Preface to Kohl's volume perhaps minimizes the concrete nature of love which Kohl is attempting to portray. He writes, Kohl "tries to show that good teachers love students as learners - that love is a significant part of the teacher's commitment, though this can't mean loving every unpleasant or unlovable student. The love he means is abstract, like a love of justice, but it is tied in a teacher's case to confronting the specific student...." (p. xii). But Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) interpret 'loving students as learners' as concrete and particularized, it is: "Unlike an undifferentiated sense of caring and nurturing" (pp. 430-431). Similarly, Bernard Lonergan (1967) perceives that: "The difficulty of conceiving love adequately arises from its essential concreteness and from the complexity of the concrete" (p. 23).

Carini looks to the work of Muriel Rukeyser (1949/1996) who notes that the resistance to an active engagement with poetry is grounded in fear as well. The usual reasons given for this resistance include boredom, or lack of time, or even the obscurity or difficulty of the text. Yet Rukeyser is insistent upon fearfulness, arguing that poetry seeks a response - it demands something of the reader: "A poem invites you to feel. More than that: it invites you to respond. And better than that: a poem invites a total response" (p. 11). One fears being moved too greatly, to the depths of one's being, and not merely intellectually. And a related item here. In co-authoring probably the most extensive educational study in America, Giles and his colleagues (1942) concluded that teacher growth demands a certain self-possession which fear erodes; this fear is pervasive: "Constant fear of failure, fear of fellow-workers, fear of the administration, fear of the community, fear of not imitating the successful example of someone else who is promoted, fear of change, fear of loss of work, fear of failing to follow the edits of state departments or colleges of education - such daily fears are almost purely negative in effect. They result in thinking how to be safe rather than how to be effective" (1942, p. 215).

The importance in all human affairs to be attentive to the density and texture of events - their particularity and complexity - requires a corresponding congruence in student evaluation. Grounding a discussion of standards in assessment (particularly through
standardized instruments), averages and general trends tends to displace “what is in reality immediate, compelling, and only responsible to in the particular” (Carini, 2001, p. 142). Assessment that serves an external and regulatory purpose is to be distinguished from “evaluation grounded in the actualities of the child learning, which folds directly into practice” (p. 142).

van Manen (1991) notes that the connections between the nature of parenting and teaching have been rarely explored in the literature (p. 6). This is not to suggest that there are not differences that educators must recognize and learn from. However, “like parents, teachers often develop deep affection and love for their students, they feel responsible for the young people in their charge, and they cherish hope for the children they teach” (van Manen, 1991, p. 7).

van Manen points out, for example, that in his 1986 AERA Presidential address, Berliner (1986) used the term ‘expert pedagogue’ without indicating how the term differed from ‘expert teacher’. Curiously, while European educators enjoy a long and distinctive tradition of thinking about pedagogy, “their educational theories have only partially explored the implications of the pedagogical relation for teaching” (van Manen, 1994, p. 141).

In the pre-reflective or undeveloped form, the pedagogical relation is present in various relations wherein influence is directed towards the formative growth of another, but the pedagogical relation is far more intentional, less incidental.

Freire (1997) comments similarly: “the teacher who finds herself or himself entrapped by the requirements of a mechanistic curriculum which calls for dispensing more and more content without grounding, needs to revert to her or his conviction that will determine an ethical posture vis-à-vis the curriculum so as to negotiate the context” (p. 315).

van Manen (1994) notes that other professions have relatively stable, though evolving, knowledge bases; their sense of self and their professional or artistic competencies are relatively secure. But for many teachers, their sense of self and professional ‘expertise’ may be called into question, particularly when they encounter ‘difficult’ youngsters, or when they doubt the appropriateness of what they teach or their teaching methods. He perceives that this instability in professional identity is inescapably rooted in the pedagogical nature of their relationship with students.

Elsewhere (1991) van Manen indicates that he has in mind thoughtful action in pedagogical situations (p. 127f), and this is intimately linked to a broad, complex sensibility of pedagogical tact, which is essentially: an “active readiness, sensitivity, and flexibility... instantly knowing what to do, an improvisational skill and grace in dealing... appropriately in complex or delicate circumstances” (1996, p. 39).
van Manen (1994) notes that to say a particular teacher “needs to be more patient is not so much the evoking of an abstract principle (patience) than it would need narrative examples of circumstances where this teacher lacked patience, what teacher patience may mean to the child, and how particular situations should have been handled” (p. 156).

Works which contain at least some elements of the personal or relational include Johnson & Ridley, 2004; Kochan, 2002; Zachary, 2000; and Herman & Mandell, 2004; Parks, 2000. Mentoring programs are not without their opponents, and certain criticisms may well be legitimate when programs are not crafted with care and caringly (Murray, 2001; Freedman, 1993). Often though, a mentoring situation which begins formally or programmatically can evolve into a much more natural relation.

Lewis Hyde (1979) makes this argument as he draws upon the work of the anthropologist Marcel Mauss, who discerned three obligations in gift economies: that of giving, receiving, and reciprocating. The primary scholarship into gift exchange has been by social anthropologists like Mauss and Lévi-Strauss.

After this realization was confirmed, I came across Richard Titmuss’s (1971) fascinating and extensive study, The Gift Relationship: From Human Blood to Social Policy. His conclusion is similar: “First, that gift-exchange of a non-quantifiable nature has more important functions in complex, large-scale societies than the writings of Lévi-Strauss and others would suggest. Second, the application of scientific and technological developments... has increased rather than diminished the... social need for gift relationships. Third, for these and many other reasons, modern societies now require more rather than less freedom of choice for the expression of altruism in the daily life of all social groups. While this requirement has been argued primarily on social, ethical and biological grounds it is also justified on scientific and economic criteria” (p. 224).

Although Kessler focuses upon the transitions into and out of high school, her definition clearly applies to pedagogical relations more broadly.

It is fitting that it is the final step, for there are some members, so-called ‘two-steppers’, who prematurely jump from the first to the twelfth without undergoing the difficult, life-changing labor of the steps in-between. They attempt to pass on a gift that they themselves have not yet fully received or appropriated.

Hyde points out that a spiritual conversion has a similar structure to the AA experience: first the Message is offered, then received, then it effects a long-term transformation, and finally the convert out of gratitude feels impelled to share the gift of the Message.

For millennia, education has been centrally concerned with character formation – and not just the diminished sense of nurturing private virtues as a way to happiness. Augustine understood this explicitly in his On Christian Doctrine: in Book IV he argues that teaching is incarnational at its heart. In Werner Jaeger’s (1944) Paideia,
visions of character formation are integrally a part of virtually every vision of cultural formation.

31 It may be more evident now why a fee for service tends to diminish the force of gratitude. First of all, transformation cannot, generally, be established ahead of time. The fruits of our labor cannot be predicted; we cannot even be sure that we will submit to the labor required. Furthermore, an abiding sense of gratitude involves an unpaid debt, perhaps one that can never be adequately repaid. We will be motivated to labor so long as the debt of gratitude is felt. But the weight of a gift tends to be suspended by a fee for services rendered; a fee diminishes the force of a gift as an agent of change. This is why one cannot easily imagine any mentor selling their transformative gift, for, as Hyde (1979) puts it, such a transaction “falsifies the relationship” (p. 52) with the protégé. Even so, there will always be those who wish to commodify what mentors have to offer – McParland (1985), for example, offers advice on what to know when shopping for one, how to remain in control of the relation, and when to get out or cut one’s losses.

32 *Esplanchniste* is the strongest possible Greek word to use to express sympathy, pity, and feeling. John Sonnenday (2001) notes that the root word *splanchnon* refers to our inner parts – the stomach, heart, kidneys, liver, and reproductive parts. Thus, to be moved in one’s inner parts came to mean, ‘to have mercy’ – to be able to enter into the pain of another. This is what leads us to have mercy and forgiveness. The Samaritan’s whole insides turned over in compassion for the suffering Jew, to the extent that he overcomes all the prejudices he has inherited, and all the fears that he might have responded to.

33 While the bonding power of gifts can maintain traditional loyalties and identities, it can potentially limit one’s personal freedom – as in the case in adolescent-family relations. Hyde (1979) perceives however that this conflict is not an absolute one – although the tension is real enough. This is because: “Manners or social pressure may oblige us to those for whom we feel no true affection, but neither obligation nor civility leads to lasting unions” (p. 68). Moreover, the issue of indebtedness does not create an inexorable conflict, because the gift is an instantiation of an existing relationship. It is when either the giver (or the recipient) begins to apprehend the gift in terms of obligation that the power of the emotional bond crumbles, for then it ceases to be a true gift. This issue points to a broader critical perspective on gift exchange in human relations, across several disciplines. Both May (2000) and Campbell (1994) offer detailed arguments concerning how the commendable features of gift relations might operate in the professional context without introducing the negative features of disrespect, inequality, or oppression.

34 Evans (2000) and Parks (2000) points out that mentoring was once prominent in the world of business and industry – novices were selected, trained, and advanced through an apprenticeship system. But this system largely came to be displaced by mass production and collective bargaining. Up until the end of the nineteenth century, the professions shared a similar mentoring system – lawyers typically
learned in the office of a practicing attorney, teachers at the side of more experienced colleagues, journalists alongside veteran reporters, and so forth. A similar erosion of mentoring relations can be found in the life of most neighborhoods and families – today increasing numbers of children are born to single moms or grow up in broken homes, and often have not enjoyed close relationships with supportive adults.

35 Evans (2000) refers to this as the mentor chain, and his case method of illuminating the various facets of mentoring is a valuable one. His biographical account of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall in the United States, serves as a classic example of the mentor chain or cycle.

36 Such mentorship, comments Erik Erikson (1964), “far from being a showy form of emotional sympathy, is always part of a discipline of outlook and method” (p. 174). Therefore, the positive power of recognition and affirmation lies in their critical appropriation by the learner. Critical reflexiveness must be preserved and enhanced in the midst of instruction and direction from the mentor, so that the learner retains their own sense of self of dignity and uniqueness as a competent and valuable person. In both mentor and learner alike, then, there must be a careful interweaving of a sense of knowing and being known: mutuality demands that one cannot satisfactorily construct a self-definition either entirely through the recognition of others or solely through one’s own efforts.

37 The comments of Hauervas and Shaffer (1988) are most fitting here: “... hope... is a skill which one learns. ... The acquisition of a skill involves, usually, an initiation into a way of life. A master, who has gone before, usually presides over the initiation... we need a narrative display in order to understand how it is we should hope. From this perspective, the traditional theological virtues – faith, hope, love – are best understood as reminders of the narrative of the master Jesus, a narrative that schools the self to serve God rightly. Some virtues become distorted if they are treated as independent norms for behavior. If the moral life is inseparable from the life of wisdom, then, in spite of modern philosophy’s attempt to secure an independent status for ‘morality,’ our moral lives as lived continue to depend on the existence of masters” (p. 217).

Chapter 4

1 Hansen, 2001a, p. 123.

2 Another prominent proponent of covenantal ethics, Edward Langerak (1994), discerns three similar features of biblical covenants: “First, they are rooted in events or actions, in gifts given or in mutual entrustments that result in the parties becoming vulnerable to each other. Second, these events or actions create a community whose identity is formed by and also helps form the identities of the individual members, a covenantal community that seeks both the common good and the good of each member. Third, covenants tend not only to endure over time but also to have their identity-shaping privileges and responsibilities affected by expected and unexpected developments in
ways that typically cannot be specified in advance" (p. 97). In the professional context, Langerak argues that in "some covenants, practitioners such as physicians or teachers may have special expertise on how to pursue the relevant goods such as health or knowledge, but the other partners – the patients and students – can help determine what goods to pursue... [Thus] covenantal duties should rarely be one-sided" (pp. 104-105).

3 Wendell Berry (1991), for instance, points out that covenantal fidelity in marriage, preceding as it does from the gift of one’s most intimate self to another, is misunderstood “as a grim, literal duty enforced only by willpower. ...Self-restraint that is so purely negative is self-hatred. ...To be faithful merely out of duty is to be blinded to the possibility of a better faithfulness for better reasons. It is reasonable to suppose, if fidelity is a virtue, that it is a virtue with a purpose” (p. 45). “Fidelity can thus be seen as the necessary discipline... the definition of the moral limits within which such responsibility can be conceived and enacted” (p. 46).

4 Edward Shils (1981), in his massive sociological study, highlights four central aspects of tradition: 1) it endures over time; 2) is carried forward and transformed in part by exemplary individuals; 3) is subject to ongoing interpretation and critique; and 4) is passed on, not in whole, but selectively. These same features figure in Thomas Green’s (1999) analysis (pp. 101-109).

5 Huebner (1982/1999) makes a similar point with respect to students and the tradition of cultural wisdom: “The mere existence of a tradition (the existence of content) doesn’t imply that the student should take it into him/herself in the way that the adults expect. A student may transcend it, or change it” (p. 365). Also here, Hansen (2001a, pp. 129-131), following Langford (1985), elaborates on five avenues for critique: (1) to critique both the discrete skills and ways of seeing practice; (2) to compare and contrast the terms of one’s practice with those of other practices; (3) to adopt a temporally longer or more global perspective; (4) to draw upon one’s own personal history, questions, and hopes; and (5) to reflect upon what deflects one from furthering human flourishing, and from cultivating their own personhood and that of their students. I return to this topic, in the context of social critique, later in the chapter.

6 Jackson’s (1986) distinction between mimetic and transformative traditions in teaching, reflect these conservative and more progressive approaches. Jackson, like Hansen, urges a synthesis of these replicative or imitative and generative or creative dimensions of practice. That is, these are not two traditions, but aspects of all proper pedagogy: passing on the knowledge of a community and developing the minds, imagination, and hearts of students. It is, for Hansen (2001a) both an effort to transfer cultural wealth, and to attend to “what people can become” (p. 134), to “think of students as moral beings’ (p. 133), to “help students to think about what they are doing and learning, to ask questions, to consider new possibilities, to take seriously their own capacities to grow and learn, and... to develop a sense of judgment” (p. 135).
Hansen (2001a) elaborates upon several sources for developing a sense of tradition in teaching, these “include studying historical precursors as well as commentaries on their endeavors, plunging oneself into recollections by and about contemporary teachers, examining historical inquiries into teaching as it has evolved in recent centuries, and investigating the empirical research literature on teaching” (p. 150).

Bellah (1990) stresses that such stories must also contain painful elements – elements of both suffering and evil as well as triumph and good, its hopes and fears. Moreover, it is the participation in “ritual, aesthetic, [and] ethical” practices – the “practices of commitment” – that define a community’s patterns of loyalty and obligation (p. 154).

Sustaining personal growth and assuming moral responsibility – for both teachers and students alike – requires a social context, a moral community. Thus, personal and vocational formation is one and the same time highly individual and highly social, having its source in the person, but also in the shared values, meanings, and ideals of the social group, with its “tradition of commitment in communities of memory” (Bellah, 1985, p. 154).

I am not presuming here that the educator’s professional role must include a counseling function, but at many alternate schools, such as Central Park East in New York, where the teacher assumes many of the duties of counselor, stronger teacher-student relations are forged and community is strengthened. Moreover, Johnson (1993) views our “primary” moral task in life as “refining our perception of character and situations and of developing empathetic imagination to take up the part of others... to imaginatively take up their experience” (p. 199).

Sockett’s (1987, 1990) proposal of ethical codes of practice likewise stresses local development, the centrality of trust, and built-in reform, though his proposal emerges out of the context of securing professional accountability, while Fenstermacher’s issues from the context countering hierarchical differentiation of practitioners and strengthening teacher-student relations. Fenstermacher’s (1990) premise here is that: “No one person is perceived as entitled to more control, status, or salary than another solely by virtue of advanced degrees, specialization, or expertise” (p. 148). He argues: “It is an egalitarian profession in that its practitioners use expertise and specialization not as instruments of status and control but as a shared resource of the group” (p. 148).

http://www.essentialschools.org/pub/ces_docs/about/about.html.

To Sergiovanni (1992), “Covenants are solemn and binding agreements between two or more parties that provide reciprocal rights, duties and obligations on the one hand, and guidelines for action, on the other” (p. 103). He conceives covenants as embodying the institution’s moral imperatives – which operate together with the twin managerial imperatives of the organization (pp. 104-105). Writ large, covenants
“represent a collective world view... of deeply held and cherished beliefs” in an organization (p. 108). Again, giftedness is absent from his entire conceptualization. By contrast, Langerak (1994) notes that most scholars “who focus on covenant as the central moral reality usually are influenced by the covenant motif in the Bible” (p. 97) – which is the one I have looked to.

Aikin (1942) details this study. The commission’s first work was assessment of secondary education, to be followed by a proposal for reconstruction. Its findings are not unlike conditions today: students failed to grasp their responsibilities as citizens; schools failed to know their students well and to guide them wisely; the received curriculum was removed from the concerns of students; learning conditions often failed to release student creativity and convey the vitality of the subject disciplines, and so forth (Thomas, 1990, p. 275). Recognizing that school communities required the freedom to act, the commission secured this freedom by convincing three hundred colleges and universities to waive the traditional subject and entrance requirements from the thirty or so experimental schools.

Kohl (1976) notes key features of the two schools involved in the most radical reconstruction: “extensive learning in the community; volunteers were brought in to work with students; interdisciplinary, problem-solving curriculum” and so on (p. 168).

Oftentimes, teachers cannot be faulted for failing to address significant moral and ethical issues in schools – their impotence is not due to lack of moral concern or sensitivity, rather “this concern is deeply buried under the hard shell teachers develop to protect themselves in non-supportive environments” (Huebner, 1996a, p. 267). Many educators too are often oblivious of the moral dimensions of practice because the dominant educational language for generations, deriving from the behavioral disciplines, tends to direct attention to only those problems having a technical solution (p. 268). With this narrowing of educational language comes an obscuring of important moral and ethical concerns, and thus teachers tend not to see themselves as moral agents. Huebner’s corrective, is to see that moral agency demands a reframing of practice: to see it in light of personhood and relationship – unique persons and particular relations, each having their own history and promise (p. 269).

Barry Bull (1990) favors similar decentralization because it funds moral agency and community. He concludes: “Decentralizing decision-making authority to school-level boards of education... is to permit members of the public and teachers to undertake in a meaningful way their shared moral responsibilities for schooling in a liberal society. The direct assumption of these responsibilities will deepen teachers’ and the public’s understanding of and commitment to the legitimate moral purposes of schooling” (p. 126).

Johnson (1993) does not assert that all concepts are metaphorical, rather that many non-metaphoric concepts are implicated in, and extended by, metaphors, as well as images schemas and narrative (pp. 61, 201).
While it is true that ethicists through the centuries have sought to formulate their insights into logical, coherent theories, typically their insights emerged from years of struggling to around concrete issues, and the principles came later. So although educators often present ethical theories by beginning with general principles and working toward particular applications, ethicists have typically began from particular insights arising out of concrete experience and worked toward general principles (Melchin, 1998, p. 65). Moral deliberation is not a logical matter of deducing implications from principles and theories, but a process of getting personal insights and making choices about concrete moral experiences (pp. 66, 121).

Hansen (2001a) makes this same point in the context of other “qualifiers” such as “democratic teaching,” ‘emancipatory teaching,’ ‘indirect teaching’” and so forth when any one conception is given primacy (p. 14, italics in original). No single qualifier, he argues, can ever “supplant the meanings embedded in the practice of teaching” itself (p. 14). McFague (1987) also contends that because any one metaphor is partial, metaphorical analysis must be “pluralistic” (p. 37; cf. Johnson, 1993, p. 195).

This thesis has almost exclusively considered the personal dimension of vocational formation in the context of classroom and institution. It must be stressed however that there is a vital societal dimension to enacting an ethic of vocation, and a whole radical tradition in education can be looked to in this regard.

Similarly, Carini (2001) views students and teachers as “shapers of meaning and interpreters of experience”; she believes schools must nurture thinking and creativity; she adheres to a democratic and humane vision; and she insists that “teachers and children are the real voices and characters in the educational drama” — yet this perspective “goes against the grain of school environments profoundly disrespectful of both kids and teachers” (p. xii).

Huebner (1996a) argues that moral issues can only be brought to the forefront if the teaching's predominantly technical language is exposed and transcended. Discourse can then begin to include discussion about typically repressed feelings: "Hope and disappointment, joy and pain, love and anger, pride and guilt... Feelings can be indicators that ethical quandaries are present and need to be brought to consciousness. ... If they can feel the pain, disappointment, anger, and guilt, then these feelings can be used as information about the moral conditions within the classroom. Negative feelings usually indicate a misfit between a person and the social, cultural, and/or physical environment” (p. 270). Such feelings point, in Huebner's view, to a wrongheaded priority in material over human values, as well as to the political weakness of teachers since materials, environments, and administrators all seem beyond criticism (pp. 270-271). Teachers, then, need to be provided with environments that honor the expression of such feelings and value them for their insight into unresolved problems.
Poetry and story do have the capacity to profoundly move us, as Coles (1989) recognizes, but in spite of their power to engage the moral imagination, he suspects that for most of us, poets and novelists mostly prick at our conscience before we return to our usual business: “we are seized by spasms of genuine moral awareness, but we are as pliant as aspens in our capacity to accommodate to the prevailing rhythms of the world we inhabit” (p. 197).

Interestingly, William May (2000) also stresses the metaphysical setting of the transcendent, in the context of resolving difficulties with the potentially conflicting elements of responsiveness and gratuitousness that covenantal ethics requires. He reminds us, one cannot even arrive at the indebtedness of each one of us merely by tallying up all the sacrifices made by others on our behalf. In the biblical tradition, because God is the hidden source of every gift between persons, responsiveness in relationship – even professional relationship – though it may appear gratuitous (in that it was not specifically provoked by another person), it remains at its deepest level a gift, responding to a far greater divine gift. “A transcendent reference may also help lay out not only the larger horizon in which human service takes place but also the specific standards by which we should measure it.” (p. 139).

Thomas Green (1999) and Hanan Alexander (2001, 2003) are numbered among those theorists who argue that the moral life of the commons in a liberal society actually depends upon the health of various covenant communities within it – especially faith communities.

Given the power of cultural images generated by the various media, Huebner (1996b/1999) urges that teachers develop a more acute awareness “of how their imagination – the foundation of their knowing, acting, valuing, and freedom” – is being “shaped, perverted, and diminished by the easy commerce in symbols and images” (p. 437).

Since transcendence is foundational to fashioning ontological assertions, it has long been a preoccupation of Western metaphysics. The versions of transcending humanity are numerous, since each philosopher, theologian, or theorist operates with different understandings of human nature and the human condition. One recent accessible volume is Fergus Kerr’s (1997), which details transcendence in the work of seven recent scholars.

Transcendent lures can become distorted and self-serving – both by internal and external forces. Eugene Peterson (1992) cautions that pride “always plays on these sublime aspirations, these... drives for completion and wholeness” (p. 74). This highlights the importance of a disciplined ascetic – the sort of self-discipline stressed in chapter 1. Dwayne Huebner (1993/1999) warns that the journey of self may be inhibited by those who wish to “define the ends of life and education in less than ultimate terms” (p. 405). Pedagogical vocation and personal formation both concern the ways in which we attend to and care for the journey of self; it is not insight into transformation which educators typically lack, argues Huebner, rather it is inattention to what gets in the way of one’s journey.
Lonergan (1968/1974) details this process: “What promotes the subject from experiential to intellectual consciousness is the desire to understand, the intention of intelligibility. What next promotes him from intellectual to rational consciousness is a fuller unfolding of the same intention: for the desire to understand, once understanding is reached, becomes the desire to understand correctly…. Finally, the intention of the intelligible, the true, the real, becomes also the intention of the good, the question of value, of what is worthwhile, when the already acting subject confronts his world and adverts to his own acting in it” (p. 81). Lonergan (1972) uses the term ‘transcendental precepts’ to describe the four imperatives paralleling this four-fold structure of intentional consciousness: be attentive to your experience; be intelligent in inquiring into this experience; be reasonable in judgments concerning your understanding of experience; and be responsible in your subsequent decisions and actions (pp. 20, 53, 55, 202, 231).

Lonergan (1968/1974) comments: “What, then, is value? I should say that it is a transcendental notion of being. Just as the notion of being intends but, of itself, does not know being, so too the notion of value intends but, of itself, does not know value. Again, as the notion of being is dynamic principle that keeps us moving toward ever fuller knowledge of being, so the notion of value is the fuller flowering of the same dynamic principle that now keeps us moving toward ever fuller realization of the good, of what is worthwhile” (p. 82). Lonergan speaks of the good in the same way he speaks of what is of value – “of what is worthwhile, of what is right as opposed to wrong… It is the intention of the good in this sense that prolongs the intention of the intelligible, the true, the real, that founds rational self-consciousness” (p. 84). Lonergan’s detailed account of the structure of the human good can be found in Method in Theology, 1972, pp. 36-52.

See Conn, 1988, p. 42. Lonergan (1968/1974) contends that we come to apprehend the good through our action, and our reflection upon that action (p. 82). The good, in this sense, is “what is worthwhile” (p. 84). “We come to know the good from the example of those about us, from the stories people tell of the good and evil men and women of old, from the incessant flow of praise and blame that makes up the great part of human conversation, from the elation and from the shame that fills us when our own choices and deeds are our own determination of ourselves as good or evil, praiseworthy or blameworthy” (p. 83). Hanan Alexander (2001) also makes the point that we require a vision of the good in order to understand what is to count as valuable (p. 42).

Lonergan (1968/1974) stresses that conversion is “not a simple matter” – it may seem like, “moving out of a world of sense and of arriving, dazed and disoriented for a while, into a universe of being” (p. 79). Moreover, growth is not straightforward because of external constraints and the incomplete development of our own moral capacities to understand and make choices. Thus, there exists a gap between our potential effective freedom and our actual effective freedom. Lonergan (1978)
perceives that actual freedom is ultimately achieved by the power of transcending love experienced in one’s religious conversion.

34 If specific loves, such as friendship, actualize important parts of our capacity for self-transcendence, then the love of God actualizes its ultimate basis. Self-transcendence and God’s love structure Lonergan’s understanding of religious experience: the two intersect because as we experience God’s boundless love, our response is a love which is unwilling to set limits. Our being-in-love with God entails an endless going-beyond with Him – there is always more to admire, love, serve, and desire (Carmody, 1988, p. 59). Moreover, such a love sets up a very new moral horizon; it resets our values and shifts our knowing in a profound way. In addition, God’s unrestricted love cast out selfishness and fear – both central hindrances to our moral formation, as we saw in chapters 1 and 2.

35 Melchin, following Lonergan, speaks of three levels of ‘good’ and three corresponding levels of moral meaning: 1) personal interest or desire, 2) the interests of others in the context of various social structures, and 3) social structures viewed within a longer historical dynamic. Melchin views the movement to more expansive levels of moral meaning as an obligation: “Not only are the obligations of each higher level more significant than those of the lower, but we are especially obliged to make this transition from lower to higher. This is what we mean by self-transcendence. …growth towards moral maturity involves our becoming more self-determining, more socially responsible, and more meaningfully socially connected. Our fundamental moral obligations are to take responsibility for our self-constitution, to take responsibility for the constitution of social identity, and to appropriate self-transcendence as the norm for discerning what this responsibility entails” (p. 80).

36 Zaleski (1995), picking up on Richard Niebuhr, makes this dual connection also: “Niebuhr links the awakening of moral attentiveness with the power of imagination: ‘It is the image – enlivening or atrophying attention – that escorts the world to us.’ Again, the converse is also true: it is attention – enlivening or atrophying the imagination – that escorts the world to us” (p. 133).

Conclusion

1 Summative statements of this sort tend to inflate the significance and scope of one’s contribution. This is unfortunate, for essentially in this conversation among scholars, I have only added a word here or a refined a thought there. Moreover, although it is not always evident in contemporary literature, the various themes I have considered – character, moral formation, human relationships and community, vocation and profession – all have ancient roots with long traditions of insight and wisdom.

2 Drawing upon the insights of Kant, Aquinas, and Mill respectively, Green (1999) argues that “particularity, reflexivity, and… associated moral emotions” are a sufficiently complete characterization of moral perception and discernment to enable an accounting of moral formation (p. 24, italics mine).
3 Hendrik Gideonse (1998), following Green (1999), argues along these lines. Similarly, Buchmann (1986) contends that professional norms of collegiality and experimentation “are moral demands with intellectual substance... based... on a shared understanding of the kinds of behaviors and dispositions that people have a right to expect of teachers” (p. 539). In turn, the assistance and loyalty of collegial relations requires various mental, social, and role competencies, and the ability to articulate issues of practice (p. 539).

4 Buzzelli and Johnston (2002, pp. 118f.) have recently argued that teacher education and development ought to seen from two perspectives: 1) that of a socially negotiated activity wherein language, power, and culture take on moral dimensions in the social contact of the classroom, and 2) acquiring, with the help of others, a set of moral sensibilities – moral perception, moral imagination, moral reflection, and moral courage. They contend, as I do, that developing moral sensibilities must “be a central feature of any teacher education and professional development program” as it provides a basis for envisioning and enacting teaching as a moral activity (p. 133). I am much less sanguine than they are about the implementation of such initiatives.

Afterword

1 Translation by Walter Kaiser Jr. (2003), p. 30. He notes that while many translators render verse 24 as “There is nothing better...,” since a similar phrase appears in 3:12 and 8:15, there is no evidence to support such a translation.

2 Hanan Alexander (2001) argues that life’s ‘big’ questions are inescapably spiritual in nature. The five that he identifies have all been major themes in this dissertation: questions of “Identity... Community... relat[ing] to others...Meaning and Purpose...[and] Transcendence” (p. 4).
References


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