

**BECOMING DIALOGUE; MARTIN BUBER'S CONCEPT
OF TURNING TO THE OTHER AS EDUCATIONAL
PRAXIS**

by

Charles Scott

Bachelor of Home Economics, University of British Columbia, 1983

DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the
Faculty of Education

© Charles Scott 2011

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Spring 2011

All rights reserved. However, in accordance with the *Copyright Act of Canada*, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for *Fair Dealing*. Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.

APPROVAL

Name: Charles Scott
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy
Title of Thesis: Becoming dialogue; Martin Buber's Concept of Turning to the Other as Educational Praxis

Examining Committee:

Chair: Dr. Robin Brayne
Director, Graduate Programs, Faculty of Education

Dr. Carolyn Mamchur, Professor
Senior Supervisor

Dr. Sean Blenkinsop, Assistant Professor
Supervisor

Dr. Celeste Snowber, Associate Professor
[Internal - External] Examiner

Dr. Maurice Friedman, Professor Emeritus,
San Diego State University
[External] Examiner

Date Defended/Approved: 1 April 2011



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

Declaration of Partial Copyright Licence

The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the "Institutional Repository" link of the SFU Library website <www.lib.sfu.ca> at: <<http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/handle/1892/112>>) and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

While licensing SFU to permit the above uses, the author retains copyright in the thesis, project or extended essays, including the right to change the work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the work in whole or in part, and licensing other parties, as the author may desire.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, BC, Canada

ABSTRACT

My intention is to outline dialogue as Martin Buber's ontological turning to the other through the development of particular dialogical virtues: an ontological praxis of dialogue. This outline substantiates dialogue as an important element of educational praxis insofar as it fosters the development of genuine relationships with others and with the world and the uncovering and creation of meaning through awareness of what is sacred in us, others, and the world. An ontological orientation of being turned to the other can be developed through the conscious act of turning as both a way of life and as educational praxis; the movement of turning to the other constitutes becoming dialogue. Buber's work provides us with the specific details of the art of turning to the other which can help us navigate our ways into dialogue.

I also consider why we might engage in dialogue: what reasons justify dialogue and what propels us to it.

The dissertation consists of three parts: a discussion of the ontological orientation and why it is valuable to us, a discussion of the art of turning to the other, and a concluding discussion of the educational implications. I conclude with a discussion of the role of reflective study and artistic and contemplative practices in developing the life of dialogue, closing with a discussion of issues surrounding the inclusion of dialogue in education.

The heart of this dissertation rests in a detailed examination of this turning to the other—how it manifests in the specific virtues of dialogue that I will outline. I suggest these virtues can be developed through the engagements of a conscious and committed practice of dialogue: an educational praxis. Over time these actions become established as a part of beingness: the life of dialogue. Using Buber's phrasings, the dialogical virtues I include are: *becoming aware*; *confirmation of the other*; *an empathic inclusion of the other*; *being present*; *the "holy insecurity"*; *the "unity of the contraries"*; and a *"synthesizing apperception."*

Keywords: Dialogue; Martin Buber; turning to the other; life of dialogue; I-Thou; education; pedagogy; educational relationships

“We have to be concerned, to be troubled, not about the other side but about our own side, not about grace but about will. Grace concerns us in so far as we go out to it and persist in its presence; but it is not our object.”

— Martin Buber, in *I and Thou*

“We are not less serious about grace because we are serious about the human power of deciding, and through decision the soul finds a way which will lead it to grace.”

— Martin Buber, “The Faith of Judaism” in *Israel and the World*

DEDICATION

*To my father the doctor and researcher and my
mother the Romantic, both of whom helped me
fall in love with the world.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Having written this manuscript, I now have a better appreciation for the "Acknowledgements" pages that authors compose. There are many people without whose support, input, and dialogue it would have been impossible to develop this work. I feel rarely fortunate. That support manifests in many forms: physical and material, intellectual, emotional, existential and spiritual, institutional, and includes both human and more-than-human realms. The process of developing a thesis has deepened my appreciation that I exist in a wonderfully complex ecology of support. John Donne had it right: we are not islands. Neither, it seems, are our works (I won't mention here being-ness as not solely our own: that's a topic of the dissertation itself), although I will do the noble thing and claim that all the errors are solely my own.

First and foremost, I want to express my appreciation of the support of my wife, Judy Earl. Her support covered the entire range I mentioned above and it manifested itself daily—no small feat, that! She made significant sacrifices and responded with humour and good naturedly, even when the grad school process was trying for one or both of us. I cannot imagine how I could have completed this work without her considerable, compassionate backing and encouragement;

I will always be grateful for her loyalty and love. From the bottom of my heart, thank you, Judy!

My deepest thanks and gratitude go to Carolyn Mamchur, my supervisor. We connected from the first time we met and I marvelled at and have been so appreciative of her intuitive, artistic understanding of dialogue, both as a way of being and as praxis. Her guidance, both as mentor as friend, has been constant, affectionate, both engaging and challenging, and a source of inspiration. I think she will appreciate me saying that I have learned more from observing and being with her in a classroom—and, really, the world is her classroom—than from anything she has written. I have many treasured memories of classes with her, of conversations in her office, of wonderful engagements at her house with Judy and Mickey, and often others, and of work, conversation, and food at her cabin. Her love of teaching, of others, of the world, and her sometimes forthright sometimes deliciously humorous remarks have provided a legacy of delight. Carolyn, it has been an absolute delight working with you!

Heesoon Bai also offered superb support, well beyond the call of duty, and it was because of her inspiration that I chose to apply to graduate studies in the faculty of education at SFU. Like Carolyn, she is a remarkable teacher and along with her warm and encouraging moral support she also offered incisive intellectual, moral, spiritual, and relational challenges--the kind that encouraged

me to extend the boundaries of my thought, action, and being. She was always and unfailingly there for me. Her selfless and encompassing support extended well beyond the boundaries of institutional norms. She embodies the ideal of a philosopher as a lover of wisdom who tries to manifest that wisdom not just intellectually but in her entire life. She is not only thinking of the world, she is being with the world. Heesoon, thank you so much for all you have done and offered!

Sean Blenkinsop has also provided encouraging support. He was always willing to talk about Buber's work and his encyclopaedic knowledge, not only of Buber's life and work, but also of educational philosophy and practice, has been immensely helpful. He, too, challenged me to think just a bit more about what I was writing: "Well ... I'm not so sure about that. What about ...?" was a not infrequent response to a point I'd made. Many of his keen insights were shared by Dr. Maurice Friedman, the external examiner. I have especially appreciated Sean's understanding of the subtleties of Buber's work and the need to parse these out carefully; my hope is that dissertation will reflect an understanding and appreciation of these subtle but significant points. Many thanks, Sean!

Celeste Snowber not only served as the internal-external examiner, but was such a source of support, and I very much benefited from her appreciation of dialogue as being, if you will, a complex and inviting dance. I always knew

she would understand if I came to her with some fine point, and I learned so much from her about the embodiment of dialogue and dialogue's literally embodied nature in the world. Buber had written about the embodiment of dialogue and I do not think I could have appreciated his points without her support and insights. Thank you, Celeste!

I would like to express special appreciation to Dr. Maurice Friedman for his generosity in serving as external examiner. I was very excited at this possibility and I am grateful for both his generosity in reading the dissertation and the penetrating insights he brought to it. His keen eyes also caught more than one minor typo. I was delighted to hear him mention during the defence that his latest book (as of 2011), *All Real Living is Meeting: My Experiences with Martin Buber*, will soon be published.

Dr. Robin Brayne not only chaired my oral examination, but has also offered such a warm and delightful friendship; his cheerful, easy-going manner adds grace to his penetrating insight. Many thanks, Robin, for your support, delightful humor, and wise counsel when we were in China in November of 2010!

I would also like to thank the other professors with whom I studied formally.

Charles Bingham has also been an ongoing source of encouragement, inspiration, and support. His EDUC 819 course on student-teacher relations not only provided insights through the readings, but, even more significantly, the very manifestations of dialogical relationality in the classroom demonstrated his commitment to a pedagogy of educationally effective and meaningful relationships. He will always remain as a source of inspiration as a teacher. I will never forget, for example, the walk in the completely-darkened woods at night near his home: it was to mind a brilliant pedagogical approach to learning about epistemology. I will also long remember his caring support for each student and his championing and support of intellectual freedom and diversity. Thanks for hanging out in so many ways, Bing!

Stuart Richmond's insights into and practice of art has been truly gratifying. He is a stalwart supporter of both the arts and arts education and I grew to appreciate that support and its wisdom with the passage of time. He has also been a wonderful teacher: supportive, caring, fair, and his stewardship of his students demonstrated insight and wisdom. Thank you, Stuart, for being there for me at a time when I was overwhelmed and ready to give up.

Suzanne de Castell has been formidable as an intellectual ally and as a challenging mentor. She has a brilliant and blazingly fast mind; it doesn't take long to see that in the shortest of times she has processed an idea and considered

a raft of possibilities and considerations. I will long remember her appreciation of the significance and subtleties of power and will also remember her support of those who sometimes had less institutional recognition and backing than others. Suzanne, working with you was in many ways what grad school should be about, and I so enjoyed your classes and appreciate your support of those who are other to us.

As well, I learned much from many other faculty members, whether it was from seminars, presentations, or conversations in a hallway or office. Meetings. I will not name you all here, as this acknowledge is already longer than most, but I will long remember those meetings.

Dr. Ian Andrews and Dr. Bonnie Waterstone, both of whom work in International Programs, have been very supportive, offering sage counsel, a welcoming hand, and sometimes a shoulder to lean on. I have so appreciated your friendship! The other faculty members involved with the M.Ed. TESL program—Drs. Kumari Beck, Roumi Ilieva, Huamei Han, and Naoko Morita—have also generously offered their support and shared their considerable knowledge. Being able to work alongside Drs. David Kaufman and Allan MacKinnon has been a real treat. I feel immensely blessed to have been able to serve with International Programs; it truly has been one of the highlights of my academic life. What I have learned especially from all the faculty, administrators,

and staff of the International Programs are the sensitivities of caring that both emerge out of and contribute to the intellectual understandings of language, culture, and diversity. As well, they and the international students themselves—so courageous, so courteous!—have taught me how fortunate we are in having these students with whom we can learn; they have so much to offer us.

Dr. Steve Marshall, who oversees the Foundations of Academic Literacy (FAL) program with admirable dedication, has offered ongoing support. His delightful humour and warm friendship have lightened many a grey day for me. Your steady persistence in the face of obstacles, Steve, has served as a source of inspiration. Dr. Ena Lee has also been so supportive to me and other FAL instructors; thanks, Ena, for those great conversations during the rides down the hill! Words without end. Thank you Alissa Ehrenkranz for sharing your passion for teaching literacy and for developing effective and meaningful literacy curricula for both undergraduate and graduate students. And thank you Zuzana Vasko for sharing your insights into the intersections of both art and literacy and art and dialogue. Jan MacLean, Sue Barber, Jan Murray, Buddy Young, and the other FAL instructors have my gratitude, as well as my respect and admiration, for their creativity and passion in working with students in developing literacy.

I have enjoyed the generosity of Dr. Slava Senyshyn, Dr. Lynn Fels, Dr. Vicki Kelly—all of them involved in Arts Education—in discussing the

intersections of art, artistry, and artefacts and dialogue; they have helped me understand the dialogical nature of art and art-making, whether it occur in music, language games, performative inquiry, or aboriginal epistemologies.

My acknowledgements would not be at all complete without reference to the many fantastic, brilliant, and courageous fellow grad students who have graciously shared this journey, with its many ups and downs. What a joy to arrive in a community of people who like to think about things and who are dedicated to developing themselves not only intellectually but also somatically, emotionally, spiritually, and, yes, in their relational aptitudes. It is difficult to express how valuable graduate friendships are. If nothing else—and there is plenty!—I so appreciate the laughter and zaniness; not infrequently, it would arise after or in the very midst of a long and intense day of somewhat serious scholarship. I want to begin by acknowledging Peter Kovacs, who has been there alongside me since the beginning, when we met in Heesoon’s EDUC 833 class in September of 2005. Peter, you have a brilliant and zany mind and knowing you has been a delight. To “La Revolución” —Melanie Young, Jodi MacQuarrie, Gabriela Alonso, Rosa Chen, Kurt Thumbert, and Veronica Hotton—I cannot thank you enough for your unending support and friendship. You represent the best of friendship and collegiality. I want to thank Olen Gunnlaugson (now a faculty member at Laval University) and Meg Zuccaro for the many, many

conversations and contemplative moments. Thank you Yueh-Feng (Lily) Tsai for sharing your material on empathy from your dissertation. Thank you to the students working with Heesoon: the p-pod and c-pod. Thank you Kathryn Ricketts (and Melanie) for your support during my preparations for my defense. Ah, there are so many others. I will not name you all as I would be distraught at omitting a name. But thank you all for your friendship!

To all the students I have worked with in the M.Ed. TESL program: you will always have a vital place in my heart. You have given me far, far more than I can ever repay. Your friendship, your courage, your courtesy, your continuous cheerfulness—all manifestations of your large-heartedness—will forever mean so much to me. I am also grateful to the other students I have taught in FAL and in EDUC 230. I have learned so much from them and I thoroughly enjoyed working with them to develop knowledge and understanding. The six of you in the Indonesian cohort in doctoral studies—Yudhi, Titi, Isti, Adhi, Ojat, and Toha—all have my admiration for your creativity and courage and my gratitude for your generous and open friendship.

I would like to end these acknowledgements where this journey began. In 2003 I was fortunate enough to make contact with the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue at the downtown SFU campus. It was there that I met Dr. Joanna Ashworth, who at the time was Programs Director for the Wosk Centre. I

attended a number of the courses offered through her efforts, but most remarkable of all was an initiative she started in 2003—the Dialogue Makers’ Network. This was a group of people from various walks of life who had a personal or professional interest in dialogue. We met monthly for three years to engage in dialogue—about dialogue. Metalogues, if you will. It was a remarkable experience, serving as a chance to try out and test the dimensions and virtues of dialogue. I owe a debt of gratitude to Joanna and the members of the Dialogue Members’ Network for their support, friendship, and the encouragement they offered me in applying for and sticking with grad studies. I will ever remember their many kindnesses and the friendships sculpted in and through dialogue.

Thank you Dr. Eleanor Vaines, professor emerita from UBC, for your support and those three magical words: ontology, epistemology, and axiology. Thank you to Dr. Clyde Reed, Dr. Antonia Mills, and Claire Wright for your friendship and for supporting my application to graduate studies.

What else can one say about having such a community of support? As William Blake wrote, gratitude is heaven itself. Graduate studies in such a supportive atmosphere offer a unique, almost once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Table of Contents	xvi
<i>Credo – Small Beginnings</i>	1
Chapter 1 – Introduction	5
An Outline of the Dissertation.....	8
Dialogue as Being and Doing and Its Significance	9
Turning Toward the Other as the Basic Movement of Dialogue.....	10
The Educational Implications	13
Why Buber?	14
A Note on My Focus on Buber’s Words.....	18
Chapter 2 – Dialogue as Being (and Doing)	21
Dialogue as Speech.....	21
Dialogue as Being	23
More Than Words.....	23
The Nature of a Thou	25
Encountering a Tree: The Relation ... and Being Through Relation.....	30
Dialogue’s Flashing Flow	36
Dialogue as Doing	39
Grace.....	47
Work on the Self.....	51
Dialogue as Being, Informed by Doing	58
Why is Buber’s Ontological Conception of Dialogue Significant?	62
Becoming Dialogue	67

Chapter 3— Why Dialogue?	74
<i>Credo—small dialogues: requiems for a mother</i>	74
Why dialogue? An Introduction	79
The Significance of the <i>I-Thou</i> Relationship.....	80
Benefits to Individuals: Meaning Making.....	84
Benefits to Individuals: The formation of the Dialogical Self	91
Benefits to Organizations: Dialogical Possibilities.....	93
Benefits to Organizations: Developing and Sustaining Vision and Values	102
Benefits to Global Communities.....	105
The Educational Benefits of Dialogue: A Relational Ethos of Learning	112
Moving Beyond Technical Orientations.....	112
The Educational Vocation of Becoming Human.....	113
A Relational Approach to Knowledge	116
Difficult Speech, Disturbing Silence: The Challenges	118
The Challenge of Intimate Relationships	125
The Lunge of Eros for the Beloved: The Move to the Turning	126
Devotio: The Knowing of Lover and Beloved.....	129
 Chapter 4— Turning: The Move to Relationality	 135
Taking a Stand in Relation	136
Not an Experience: An Encounter.....	138
A Happening, in the Present and other Moments.....	139
Both Fully Present, Fully Human in an Unknown Unfolding.....	141
The Return: A Turning to the Divine in the World	145
The Creative, Integrated Turn	148
 Chapter 5— The Dialogical Virtues	 159
Becoming Aware.....	161
Confirmation	174
Inclusion.....	182
Presence.....	190
The Holy Insecurity: Openness to Ourselves and the World	200
The Unity of the Contraries: The Capacity for Paradox	210
A Synthesizing Apperception.....	217
Turning to the Other: Going Forth.....	223

Chapter 6—Conclusion—The Educational Implications	225
<i>Credo—Dialogues in the Classroom</i>	<i>228</i>
A Praxis of Dialogue	231
Relational Education in a World of Relations: Dialogue in Education.....	237
Relational Education in a World of Relations: Education in Dialogue.....	246
Study and Practice of Dialogue	248
The Contemplative Arts	251
Artistic Practices	256
Becoming Dialogue: The Signs ... and for Whom	266
 Conclusion.....	 267
 Reference List	 271

Credo—Small Beginnings

Dialogue has small beginnings, arising from the slightest openings into otherness.

Attention. Dialogue begins with small openings noticed out of awareness. Awareness to the moment. Awareness of the invitation. Dialogue begins with moments, lives in moments, relishes moments. The glance, the sigh, the longing made manifest and noticed—these are the invitations, the beginnings of the moments of dialogue, the moment of grace which stretch, join, weave into a life, weave through—and into!—a tapestry of lives. The “moment God,” that touch of the sacred, becomes a silent companion increasingly present and omnipresent. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. He who has eyes to see, let him see. Dialogue has small beginnings in noticing. Notice, says Rumi.¹ Notice.

Dialogue has small beginnings, arising from the moments of grace that reveal both ourselves and our others. Grace descends like a ghost into the receptive, open, vulnerable heart propelled by longings ... and those longings, carefully moulded and morphed, gradually open into love for the other, for the world. We realize grace and make it manifest by being attentive. We receive grace by making ourselves empty, offering it an opening to unfurl its wings and reveal its plumage. We open ourselves to grace through the submission to the unknown, through the acceptance of insecurity. We welcome grace with and through our own, full presence, and by fully confirming its presence as this

¹ Barks, Rumi, & Moyne (1997). “Special Plates.”

other who has come, by chance or by design, into our lives, calling. We follow grace in our willingness to step from the edge of security, into the still anonymous wilderness of skies. We embrace her in the inclusion of the other, seek her mysteries in the flashing connections of the skies, bring her to our sides with our reasoned, intentioned communicative acts, and surrender these to paradox. For this is finally where dialogue rests: in a paradox of grace and will, of giftedness and response-ability.

Dialogue has small beginnings, arising from the seeing of another, in the recognition of a wholeness and Otherness in that being whom you confirm, in the presence you gather to your side, to lie down beside.

Dialogue has small beginnings but opens to unbounded possibilities. From the slightest, most tentative yearnings we can come to the widest openings, the largest embraces. Dialogue is possible, and we make its possibilities manifest through that longing. If you wanted bread, what friend of yours would give you a stone? If you wanted a fish, what friend of yours would give you a serpent? "When God tells man: 'Open me the gate of the turning as narrow as the point of a needle, and I shall open it so wide that carriages can enter it'" (Buber, 1948, p. 20). Buber (1958) adds that God wishes that human life be hallowed; the Hasidic zaddik tells us "God dwells where one lets him in" (p. 30). Dialogue and the spaces that make it possible we find in the smallest corners, the hungriest glances, the sighs, and all the almost-hidden longings we encounter. These are dialogue's expressions and manifestations.

I have chosen the word credo because it fits my purposes here. This dissertation is my credo. But the etymology of the word itself supports my thesis of a praxis of dialogue. The word creed comes, of course, from the Latin credo, meaning “I believe.” It may also stem from the Proto-Indo-European root kerd-dhe, which means “heart to put” (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2001), or, more figuratively, putting one’s heart into a belief. That dialogue is a matter of the heart and head appeals to me. But there is even more. As T. J. Papillon (1877, p. 222) points out, in referring to these Indo-European roots, the Sanskrit verb crad-dadhâmi has a root in dhé, “to do,” and the Latin cre-do shares that same root. (Henderson (1911/2007) suggests that crad-dadhâmi means “I give heart to”). Thus, credo means a belief rooted in, or established through, or made manifest in (heartfelt) action, which is at the heart of praxis, where theory and practice meet, consciously and intentionally. Dialogue, as a matter of the head and heart², is, I think, also established in and through conscious, intentional, committed non-doing—which itself is the portal for grace, such that, as Buber says (1947/2002), imperceptibly the spell of separation is lifted and we connect, we meet. Through such non-doing, dialogue becomes established in the heart as a way of being.

² See pp. 66-67 for a discussion of the significance of the heart in dialogue.

I cannot say at this moment³, as Buber does, that dialogue is primal, fundamental. I will take that as a matter of reasonable faith. What I can say is that it is propelled by longing, and that longing itself is primal. It is the longing for relationship, Eros. It is reasonable to claim, as Buber does, that this longing is present in and fundamental to the relationship of the infant to the mother; the infant needs physical nourishment from the mother, but also the emotional nourishment present in the bonding relationship. While dialogue may emerge out of this longing, not only of the body, but of the heart, its manifestations through interaction are also made possible by actions of the mind.

³ As Dr. Maurice Friedman pointed out to me, my entire thesis is predicted on the argument that dialogue is ontologically fundamental. This is true. At the time of writing this musing, I was momentarily not consciously *feeling* that fundamental sense.

Chapter 1—Introduction

The word is everywhere. The word “dialogue” is now increasingly commonplace in education, in business, in politics and diplomacy, in science and the arts. One could cite hundreds of references from any of these fields. Commonplace to the point of oversaturation; ironically, the near omnipresence of the word may have resulted in a loss of meaning; paradoxically and reassuringly, though, the omnipresence of the Word means its meaning is ever at hand and available to us, if we turn toward it.

The Word is everywhere. The Word—*Logos*—is more properly the focus of this dissertation, whose purpose is to outline an integrated model of the practice of dialogue, based on the work of Martin Buber, as a responsive, ontological turning to the other and the applications of that model to education. Such a model anchors dialogue both on the foundations of ontology—beingness—and in the reflective practices and doings that develop what I will refer to as the virtues of dialogue. In short, my intention is to outline dialogue as an ontological turning to the other through the reflective practice of particular dialogical virtues: an ontological praxis of dialogue. I suggest that conceptualizing dialogue as this ontological turning substantiates it as an important element of classroom teaching and educational praxis at all grade

levels insofar as that turning fosters the development of genuine relationships: real meeting of individuals with others and with the world. Those genuine relationships are the vehicles for us to create meaning in our own lives and to see meaning in the lives of others and the world around us, and for us to come into our full potential as human beings with a deeper realization of the sacred in ourselves, others, and the world. I am suggesting that dialogue is an inherently valuable educational activity insofar as it uncovers, maintains, and creates meaning out of a growing realization of what is sacred in ourselves, others, and the world around us.

The philosophical basis for my orientation to dialogue as praxis is Martin Buber's unique approach to dialogue, his philosophy of the life of dialogue. It is precisely this claim—that dialogue as *praxis* represents a way of life, and not just a practice or a set of capacities—which makes Buber's ontological approach to dialogue unique. That approach also alters the role of dialogue in education as our curricular or pedagogical commitment to dialogue now hinges more on our beings than on merely our actions. The essence of Buber's ontological orientation to dialogue is what he calls the fundamental movement of dialogue (or becoming dialogue): a responsive turning to the other. This act of turning to the other is itself as much a matter of beingness as it is about the specifics of any action; however, as Aristotle pointed out (and as I shall discuss), being is influenced and

developed through action, and so it is reasonable to suggest that an ontological orientation of being turned to the other is and can be developed through the conscious act of turning. A part of this dissertation will be a detailed examination of all that goes into the art of turning. I suggest that we can work to develop dialogue as *praxis*, as a way of life; this movement constitutes becoming dialogue. Buber's work provides us with the specific details of the art of turning to the other which can help us navigate our ways into dialogue.

I will examine Buber's philosophy of dialogue in detail, including its central claim of dialogue as ontology. I also consider *why* we might engage in dialogue: what reasons justify dialogue and what propels us to it. The heart of this dissertation rests in a detailed examination of this turning to the other—what motivates it and how it manifests in the specific capacities of dialogue that I will outline. I maintain that dialogue is motivated by and emerges out of the longing forces of Eros and that it is made up of several, interrelated virtues or capacities which can be developed through the struggles, engagements, and risks of a conscious and committed practice. Over time these actions become established as a part of beingness: the life of dialogue. Becoming dialogue. Buber was once asked by theologian Perry LeFevre what factors in individuals made it more likely for them to enter into dialogue. Buber responded that he could only venture an answer with difficulty, but added:

...there are men [sic] whom, in a deep sense, it suits that the other, until now unknown, unforeseen, shall enter their lives.... All risk that what the [non-dialogical person's] plans, projects, attempts, undertakings entail is, in fact, by its nature nothing at all compared with that to which one exposes oneself through the genuine contact with otherness. (Buber & Friedman, 1964, p. 29)

As I will attempt to show, that movement toward exposure, and toward genuine contact with another, comprises a part of the corpus of turning; the significance of this passage to me is that it hints at the significance of the art of turning with one's being. Humbly mindful of Buber's hesitation, I am attempting in this dissertation to elucidate these virtues or capacities of dialogue. These are those capacities which predispose us to entering into dialogue, or offer us a better chance of entering into dialogue (or to grace and through grace to dialogue) and out of the embodiment of which dialogue emerges, and which allow us to expose ourselves to genuine contact with others.

An Outline of the Dissertation

I have roughly divided the dissertation into three parts: a discussion of the ontological orientation and why it is valuable to us (chapters two and three), a discussion of the art of turning to the other (chapters four and five), and a concluding discussion of the educational implications.

Dialogue as Being and Doing and Its Significance

The first section introduces Buber's ontological conception of dialogue because of the significance of that orientation to the practice of dialogue in education. The perspective here, fleshed out in the chapter on being and doing, is that Buber's model of dialogue is fundamentally ontological and that this ontological orientation towards dialogue is both significant to and often not recognized in our current conceptualizations of dialogue in the field of education. As Suzanne de Castell (2004) notes, the "talking cure" has failed to live up to its vaunted promises often enough that it is worth being called into question. I would agree and suggest the problem lies, not with dialogue, *per se*, but with our conceptualizations of it.

In this section, I then focus in the next chapter—"Why Dialogue?"—on *why* we might engage in dialogue and how dialogue and the ontological turn to relationality can (a) meet individual needs, (b) can meet interpersonal needs, and (c) can help establish a global turn toward what Tu Weiming (2005) calls a "dialogical civilization." Dialogue would thus serve individual existential needs, interpersonal and organizational needs, working toward the effective functioning of organizations and communities, and the needs, welfare, and effective functioning of our global commons. If dialogue can thus address these needs, its inclusion as part of our educational efforts makes sense.

Turning Toward the Other as the Basic Movement of Dialogue

The second section—chapters four and five—focuses on the central and core part of the dialogue process: the turning to the other, and the dialogical virtues or capacities that make that possible. The perspective here is that there are several “capacities” of dialogue or what Nicolas Burbules (1993) and Suzanne Rice and Burbules (1992) refer to as “virtues.” Buber does not use the term “virtues” when discussing these dialogical capacities. He does use the term “movements” and the “marks of genuine dialogue” in his later work; see, for example, his essays in *The Knowledge of Man* (Buber, 1965). The first of these two chapters considers the fundamentals of the dialogical turning to the other, while the next chapter delineates the dialogical virtues in detail.

This section outlines, through a detailed examination of Buber’s work, the dialogical virtues I feel form a part of a comprehensive and integrated, ontologically-rooted practice of dialogue. My intention is to bring a Buberian perspective to the discussion of the virtues or capacities of dialogue, suggesting that Buber’s work offers a detailed and nuanced conceptualization of these dialogical virtues or capacities; in turn, an understanding of these nuanced details can help educators deepen and expand their practice of dialogue in teaching.

Although David Bohm (1996), Linda Ellinor and Glenna Gerard (1998), William Isaacs (1999), and Daniel Yankelovich (1999) have, for example, discussed various “capacities” of dialogue, and although Nel Noddings (1992) gives due attention to Buber’s concept of confirmation in her ethic of care, Buber’s work offers what I feel are valuable and detailed examinations of various dialogical virtues which are seldom explored in educational literature. Moreover, few scholars have outlined the various capacities of dialogue—what I will term “dialogical virtues”—that Buber details in his works. My intention is to bring a Buberian perspective to the discussion of the virtues or capacities of dialogue, suggesting that Buber’s work offers a detailed and nuanced conceptualization of these dialogical virtues or capacities; in turn, an understanding of these nuanced details can help educators deepen and expand their practice of dialogue in teaching. Indeed, one of the challenges in reviewing Buber’s work is that he integrates these capacities so intimately that it is at times difficult to tease them apart. Using Buber’s phrasings, the Buberian dialogical virtues I include are:

1. *becoming aware; being present;*
2. *confirmation of the other;*
3. *an empathic inclusion of the other;*
4. *being present;*

5. *the holy insecurity* (a spirit of openness, inquiry, and a willingness to suspend one's ideas about the nature of things, venturing into unknown epistemological territory, including dispassionately suspending assumptions for solitary or collective analysis);
6. *the unity of the contraries* (an ability to sit in or hold paradox, contradiction, and dualism);
7. and a "*synthesizing apperception*" (the ability to see both parts and wholes, seeing connections between people and ideas, and a concomitant awareness that one exists in, influences, and is influenced by a series of physical, sociocultural, historical, and spiritual ecologies).

A perspective that underlies not only these two first sections but also the whole dissertation is my contention that these virtues can be developed through an integrated approach—Buber acknowledged such an approach—which incorporates somatic, psychological, intellectual, contemplative, and artistic forms of learning, and whose "magic" lies in repeated, committed practice. My thesis is a simple, Aristotelian assertion that dialogue as an ontological orientation can be developed through regular and systemic practice, and that this can form part of an educative approach to dialogue.

The Educational Implications

The third and concluding section—the last chapter—considers the educational implications of this conceptualization and practice of dialogue, and suggests curricular and pedagogical approaches to include dialogue in education and to offer education in dialogue—its conceptualization and practice, a *praxis* of dialogue. I note that *praxis* is central to any kind of embodiment of dialogue: that a practice of dialogue is informed by and emerges out of a reflective understanding of its theoretical underpinnings, and that, at the same time, any theoretical understandings and study, whether these are solitary or collective, are shaped by practice. *Praxis* is a realization and commitment to the dynamic, ever-developing relationship between theory and study on the one hand, and practice and embodiment on the other. In this concluding section, I focus on both using dialogue in education and developing education in and about dialogue.

Outlining the curricular and pedagogical details of such an approach will form the basis of future work; here, my primary intention is to lay the conceptual foundations. In its sum, such an approach can be characterized by what Maurice Friedman (2002b) calls “the life of dialogue.” Buber (1947/2002) used the phrase “turning towards the other” in his classic essay on dialogue in *Between Man and Man* (p. 25), citing it as the essential action upon which the life of dialogue is established. I have incorporated the phrase “becoming dialogue” in the title of

this dissertation to point to both the dynamic process of engaging in a life of dialogue and the dynamic nature of dialogue itself; it is always a becoming.

In summation, what I offer in the dissertation is a theoretical foundation for a praxis of dialogue that can serve educators in developing dialogue in their curricular and pedagogical efforts and in manifesting dialogue as a way of life that serves to more fully develop relationships.

Why Buber?

I do not mean to diminish the value of so many others who have made valuable contributions to the theoretical and practical work of dialogue, but I think Buber's ontological and comprehensive conceptualization of dialogue offers a worthy contribution to contemporary education. A number of scholars and practitioners have honoured Buber's dialogical legacy, among them both Emmanuel Levinas and Mikhail Bakhtin, Herman Hesse, Bela Banathy and Patrick Jenlink, David Bohm, Nicolas Burbules, Gemma Fiumara, William Isaacs, Otto Scharmer, and Peter Senge. Levinas (1994) honoured Buber's "valuation of the dialogical relation and its phenomenological irreducibility" (p. 41) as well as Buber's championing, like his own, of otherness and difference. Bakhtin referred to Buber as the greatest philosopher of the 20th century (Friedman, 2002b). Hesse mentions in a letter to a friend that he thinks Buber was one of the wisest people living and an excellent writer, explaining why he

nominated Buber for the Nobel prize in literature in 1949 (cited in Friedman, 2002b).

Nel Noddings' "Ethic of Care" is fundamentally based on Buber's work; she has acknowledged repeatedly that her notion of confirmation, one of the four components of a praxis of caring relations (modeling, dialogue, confirmation, practice), is based entirely on Buber's concept of dialogical confirmation. She has also repeatedly given detailed attention to Buber's philosophy of dialogue and its various elements (see, for example, Noddings, 1992, 2003a, 2007). Given that Noddings' work on the ethic of care occupies a central and enduring place in educational theory and practice, it is worth noting that Buber's own theoretical work on dialogue is fundamental to Noddings'.

Although a number of people have recognized Buber's work on dialogue, relatively few in the fields of education and dialogue have examined it thoroughly and systematically, outlining, for example, its Hasidic roots and its fundamentally ontological orientation. In the preface to a volume of essays on dialogue as a means of communication, editors Bela Banathy and Patrick Jenlink (2005) point to Buber's significance, and although Buber's biographer, Maurice Friedman, provides two essays here on Buber's work, there is virtually no other mention of Buber in this compendium; the same is true in the follow up volume produced by the same authors two years later (Jenlink & Banathy, 2007). Peter

Senge (2004) very briefly albeit insightfully touches on Buber's concept of *Thou* in his preface to David Bohm's (1996) *On Dialogue*. Similarly, Buber rates only one brief quotation on the last page of William Isaacs' (1999) *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*. Daniel Yankelovich (1999) spends a few pages briefly discussing Buber's work in *The Magic of Dialogue: Transforming Conflict into Cooperation*; I commend him for discussing Buber's concepts of *I-It* and *I-Thou*, the idea of empathy, and whether equality in relationships is necessary for genuine dialogue, but there is no in-depth analysis of Buber's work. Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers (2005) offer more commentary on Buber's work, touching on the nature of the *I-Thou* relationship, the significance of presence; similar commentary appears in Otto Scharmer's (2007) *Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges*.

As well, I have encountered a number of educators who appear to display less familiarity with his work than one might wish, characterizing it as being emotionally centred or focused on "reasonableness" (Burbules, 1993), or as being focused on developing "nice" relationships. I have seen others characterize Buber's work as sexist, failing to look beyond translation issues⁴ and, more

⁴ When, for example, Buber used the German *mensch*, referring to humankind, it was, in the ethos of the mid-20th century when such language was normative, translated into the English "man." Rather than note each use of "he," "him," or "his" with "[sic]," let this note serve as my recognition that Buber's use of masculine pronouns would be out of place today. I am not aware of anyone who has studied Buber's work in depth or who studied with Buber who has accused him of being sexist in his use of language.

importantly, the cultural norms and ethos of his times, when, indeed, men were more prominent in the workplace in German culture.

Nel Noddings (1992) and Barbara Thayer-Bacon (2003) are to be noted as two educational theorists who *have* offered detailed analyses of Buber's work, as is Sean Blenkinsop (2004, 2005, 2007). We need more thorough investigations of his work on dialogue and how that work in its totality can benefit education. One additional work I should note is Carolyn Shields and Mark Edwards' (2005) *Dialogue is Not Just Talk: A New Ground for Educational Leadership*. Their thesis is to first point out we have yet to create schools that are "just, excellent, inclusive, and deeply democratic" (p. 3) and that a multifaceted conception of dialogue offers useful and creative possibilities. Dialogue for Shields and Edwards represents "a way of being in relation to other, often different ideas, cultures, perspectives, and, yes, people" (p. 4) and a "dynamic force that holds us in relation to others and deepens understanding" (p. 5). They also point to ideas that I will elaborate on: that dialogue is dynamic, complex, and a process that evolves as we do.

Another benefit that flows from Buber's theoretical model lies in its representation of what Ken Wilber (2001a,b, 2006) would call an integrated, post-postmodern turn that integrates or at least represents the possibility of a dialogue between the traditional, modern, and postmodern perspectives and lifeworlds, of

dialogues across difference. Buber (1947/2002) articulates his philosophical vision of the ontological status of humanity in his essay "What is Man?" His vision goes beyond the confines of "either-or" characterizations, to establish a postmodern "third alternative" between the collective and the individual, between the postmodernly subjective and the modernly, empirically objective, between the certain and the uncertain. It represents one viable attempt to create what Richard Bernstein (1991) calls a *Kraftweld*: a "force-field [which] is a relational interplay of attractions and aversions that constitute the dynamic transmutational structure of a complex phenomenon" (p. 9). It represents a possibility of engagement that is vitally needed in a globalized world where the traditional, the modern, and the postmodern meet at coffee shops, shopping malls, college campuses, and schools, where there is an increasing need for understanding, particularly of the subtleties of our lives and outlooks. Confronted with an increasing number of worldviews, there is a need for the capacity not only to understand those different from our own but also to be able to work harmoniously and effectively alongside those who hold these varying worldviews.

A Note on My Focus on Buber's Writings

A significant amount of this dissertation involves a detailed examination of Buber's words in his writings. Avnon (1998) claims that Buber purposely wrote in a complex fashion because he wanted to slow his readers down, and I find this

perfectly plausible, but I think there is also an additional significance. His writings very much embody and convey a lived reality, and are not merely intellectual musings. By slowing down, by trying to engage with the writing deeply through an open receptivity, one comes into a dialogical relation with the words. It is then that they acquire their formative power. It is then that dialogue becomes manifest. It is then that I, as reader, enter into this transformative, sometimes breathless sphere of between. It is, as Buber's translator Ronald Gregor Smith wrote in 1957 when preparing the second edition of *I and Thou*, that there is "a kind of directness which lays a special claim upon the reader" (Smith, 1958/2000, p. 7). Buber himself, in his postscript added to the second edition of *I and Thou* (1958/2000) confesses that the clarity of his vision when he wrote the book was "so manifestly supranatural in its nature that I at once knew I had to bear witness to it" (p. 115). In a speech given in 1918, around the time he was thinking about and beginning to work on *I and Thou* (completed in 1923), Buber (1967a) declared:

Indeed, I confess that to my insight there is no *essential* difference between what I here call the creation of words and that which has been called the coming forward of the Logos. The coming into being of words is a mystery that is consummated in the enkindled, open soul of the world-producing,

world-discovering man. Only such a word engendered in the spirit can become creative in man. (p. 31)

He refused to re-write *I and Thou* (although he did eventually, in 1957, pen the postscript to answer readers' many questions), feeling that it was written in an exalted state, had a poetical nature, and thus should not be altered. Smith argues the work is sufficiently poetical that it demands more than one careful reading.

I share both Smith's and Avnon's concern for the nuanced nature of Buber's writings, which I feel hold insightful meanings worthy of careful and deliberate consideration. As well, it is worth realizing that Buber's writings emerge out of a Jewish tradition where detailed study and examination of words form an essential part of that tradition.

Chapter 2— Dialogue as Being (and Doing)

Dialogue as Speech

Although it would be natural to wish to make a compelling case for why we should engage in dialogue, acquire the capacities of dialogue, or apply it in our educational efforts, we must first understand the nature of dialogue. As I have shown by way of introduction, there are several concepts of dialogue that are extant, a number of them conceptualizing dialogue as conversation or as a conversational mode, with varying degrees of sophistication. Dialogue as speech acts. We routinely hear of dialogue being compared to or as being analogous with discussion, debate, and plain, casual conversation (Isaacs, 1999; Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, nd; National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation, 2009). Dictionary definitions revolve around notions of conversation, an exchange of ideas or opinions, or discussions of a particular subject. Here, for example, is a definition provided by Dr. Louise Diamond which has been cited numerous times:

Dialogue means we sit and talk with each other, especially those with whom we may think we have the greatest differences. However, talking together all too often means debating, discussing with a view to convincing the other, arguing for our point of view, examining pro's

and con's. In dialogue, the intention is not to advocate but to inquire; not to argue but to explore; not to convince but to discover. (Diamond, cited by National Coalition on Dialogue & Deliberation, 2009)

Perhaps the most sophisticated conceptualization of dialogue as speech acts is Jürgen Habermas' rational model of communicative action (1979, 1984). He goes beyond the mechanics of speech acts themselves to examine universal validity claims: whether what is said is understandable by others, whether there is a claim of fact or truth that can be verified, whether the speaker intends to be understood by another, and whether in fact any degree of mutual understanding and agreement develops in the exchange (Habermas, 1979). His concern is with "... the ability of adult speakers to embed sentences in relations to reality in such a way that they can take on the general pragmatic functions of representation, expression, and establishing legitimate interpersonal relations" (Habermas, 1979, p. 32). Habermas considers not only the objective dimensions of dialogue, but also the subjective and, most significantly, the intersubjective variables.

Language is now a means of relating three worlds: the inner world of the speaker (intentions, feelings, thoughts, desires; the worlds of phenomenology), the external world (the objective, surrounding world that speaker can see and manipulate; the worlds of objective science and systems thinking, for example), and the social, intersubjective world (a symbolic system of communication; the

worlds of hermeneutics and interpretation). Habermas related the reasoned use of speech acts to human development, suggesting a reciprocal effect, and further linked this to the teleological development of society as a whole. In doing so, he represents well the idealism of the Frankfurt School. Habermas' idealist position can be said to represent the necessary conditions for the reproduction of both a species and its society through intentional, reasoned interactions. "Only the rules and communicative presuppositions that make it possible to distinguish an accord or agreement among free and equals from a contingent or forced consensus have legitimating force today" (Habermas, 1979, p. 188).

The significant point here is that Habermas sees dialogue primarily as speech acts and focuses on the reasoned nuances of those speech acts. This stands in contrast with Buber's ontological grounding of dialogue.

Dialogue as Being

More Than Words

But dialogue can also be conceptualized as something more than speech acts.

While many of the dialogue models and formulations have some ontological elements or leanings, I suggest that ontological orientation—one that Buber provides—is crucial. Dmitri Nikulin (2006) maintains that we often shallowly mis-conceived dialogue in ways that not only hinder its full development as

praxis—what Freire (1970/2006, p. 79) referred to as “the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it” —but that also hinder our understanding of being-ness. Martin Buber’s philosophy of dialogue provides an ontological orientation to dialogue that, though it recognizes that dialogue certainly does occur through our speech acts, does not limit dialogue to those speech acts. Rather, it provides that ontological foundation from which these speech acts can be developed.

Succinctly, dialogue is relationality: an existence in and out of relationality. In his essay “Elements of the Interhuman,” Buber (1965, p. 85) casts dialogue decisively as a “turning of the being.” Although it manifests in and through signs and semiotic gestures, although it manifests in what Buber calls “men’s traffic with one another,” it is not limited to or solely defined by that outward traffic. Acts of dialogue manifest in signs (language, for example) through the relational ontology of dialogue, our felt sense of relationality. As Buber points out (1947/2002), dialogue can exist without signs, but this is not obvious from a purely objective perspective; he goes so far as to say that dialogue reaches out beyond all the boundaries of any objectively observable forms of communication. Dialogue is a state of being which can manifest itself, via the ontological capacities which carry it, in signs and semiotics; in that sense, dialogue manifests as both being and the doings of the semiotic acts, whether

these be speech acts, a tone of voice, a glance, a smile or a frown, or, indeed, just a presence. In his essay “What is Man” (Buber, 1947/2002), he stresses, repeatedly, that dialogue represents an ontological state. Two people listening to Mozart in a darkened opera hall can break through to a dialogical relationship, however fleetingly, and Buber stresses that this is more than a mere psychological feeling: it represents an ontological state of between-ness. In his essay on dialogue in *Between Man and Man* (1947/2002), he defines dialogue as follows: “There is genuine dialogue—no matter whether spoken or silent—where each of the participants really has in mind the other or others in their present and particular being and turns to them with the intention of establishing a living mutual relation between himself and them” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 22). Dialogue transcends words; dialogue consists of an intentional, responsive turning to the other to establish a dynamic, giving-and-receiving relationship. Buber characterized the dialogical relationship as an ontological orientation toward what he termed *I-Thou* relationships. In order to understand the significance of this term, we can first consider the significance of the word “Thou.”

The Nature of a Thou

From the Oxford English Dictionary, we learn this:

Thou and its cases *thee*, *thine*, *thy*, were in OE. used in ordinary speech; in ME. they were gradually superseded by the plural *ye*, *you*, *your*,

yours, in addressing a superior and (later) an equal, but were long retained in addressing an inferior. Long retained by Quakers in addressing a single person, though now less general; still in various dialects used by parents to children, and familiarly between equals, esp. intimates; in other cases considered as rude. In general English used in addressing God or Christ, also in homiletic language, and in poetry, apostrophe, and elevated prose. (Thou, 1989)

The word is less common today in an increasingly secular English-speaking world. But it has a place, I would suggest, and I find Ronald Gregor Smith's translation of the German *Du* more appropriate than Walter Kaufmann's "You" (but recognize this is a personal preference). Buber, of course, used the Germanic *du* which, as Walter Kaufmann (a translator of *I and Thou*) points out is simply the informal, more intimate "you" that lovers, for example, might use: similar to the French *tu* which not only indicates the second-person singular but also a more intimate form of address. As the OED asserts, the word is also used to denote God or the sacred other. Kaufmann (1970) inquires: "What lovers or friends say Thou to one another? Thou is scarcely said spontaneously" (p. 14). This is true—but I think Kaufmann misses the point here. The point is not whether "Thou" is used in everyday language to intimate something very special in the other; it is that the word *represents* that something special and unique. The

use of “Thou” is to denote something both unique and special in the other; more than that, it is used to denote what is sacred in the other and in the relationship with a *Thou*. Buber is very clear in repeated references in *I and Thou* that the word *Thou* (as it has been translated by Smith, with Buber’s approval (Smith, 1957)) indicates the sacred, and the relationship of an *I* and a *Thou* brings us to a closer relationship with the eternal *Thou*. To his credit, Kaufmann later asserts that he learned from Buber’s writings “the central commandment to make the secular sacred” (p. 23). I would agree that Buber’s claim is that the presence of a *Thou* and, more importantly, the *I-Thou* relationship, do reveal the presence of the sacred in the world.

Buber’s biographer, Maurice Friedman (2002b), points out that Buber was significantly influenced by Søren Kierkegaard (not to mention Buber’s own Hasidic tradition) in developing his own concept of the direct relationship of an individual with God in which God is addressed *Thou*. Given that Buber saw God as manifesting in the world and its people, his use of *Thou* is naturally meant to denote the presence of the sacred, the ineffable, and the immanent. It is worth noting that the use of *Thou* is not restricted to people: an animal, a plant or tree, even inanimate matter such as a rock can be denoted as *Thou*, and the implications should be clear.

For Buber (1958/2002), *Thou* is a primary word that intimates a relationship that emerges from the whole being. A *Thou* is made *Thou* through relationship to an *I* (conversely, an *I* is made *I* through a relation to a *Thou*). In *Between Man and Man*, Buber (1947/2002) maintains that “the saying of *Thou* “stands in the origin of all individual human becoming” (p. 249). A *Thou* is not a thing, is not something to be used, and is not something to be experienced in an objective fashion. A *Thou* is unbounded—to the point where it “fills the heavens” (1958/2000, p. 23). A *Thou* is whole and full and is made full through its relationship to an *I*. The relationship to the *Thou* is exclusive: a *Thou* is perceived as being both ontologically separate and unique and yet connected to all else within the “net of the world” (p. 23). Moreover, the relationship to the *Thou* is a world in itself (Buber, 1988). When you perceive a *Thou*, you see all the heavens are contained within it, related to it. Finally, a *Thou* is connected to the “eternal Thou”—God. For Buber, *Thou* points, as it were, to the “eternal *Thou*,” which he defines as God. God is for Buber (among other things) that which is sacred in and beyond the world and that which is made manifest in relation.

On the first page of *I and Thou*, Buber points to the primary words of “*I*” and “*Thou*” as words spoken from and representing being: “Primary words are

spoken from the being”⁵ (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 19). That is, our orientation to otherness—whether as an object or an intersubjective reality—is ontologically primal; put yet another way, we do not exist *fully* as beings without the presence of the other and our relationship to the other. We “take our stand in relation” (p. 20). The primary words represent an ontological stance, and can give rise to the real, spoken words of either *It* or *Thou*. Both words represent a relational stand—but the qualities and differences in the nature of the relationships are significant.

Whether as a primal ontological orientation or as a spoken word, *It* represents something we hold or regard as an object, seeing it objectively, having a subjective experience of the other as an it, an object; there is no intersubjective relationship of between-ness, although there is a relationship and that relationship colours the nature of both the “I” and the other. The *It* is

⁵ Ronald Gregor Smith, who worked with Buber in translating many of his works into English, points out (in the translator’s notes at the end of *Between Man and Man*), that Buber’s references to the “word” always refer to “lived life”: they are ontological references. This is fairly evident in both *I and Thou* and the essays of *Between Man and Man*, but it applies to his other works, as well. So, for example, when in 1918 Buber writes about the significance of creating new words and preserving the meanings of old ones, he indicates that the creation of words is a mysterious “process of the life of the spirit,” adding that words *represent* the Logos (Buber, 1967a, p. 31). The words of dialogue, as *vox humana*, represent the essence of what Buber once called “*homo humanus*” (p. 197, 198). When Buber refers to words and speech, he is referring to what he terms “fulfilled speech” (p. 199); that is, speech and words which serve as responses of dialogical being, which allow understanding, not only through semiotic clarifications, but also and more importantly, through relationality.

Buber emphasizes (1967a) that words without ontological trust, candor, and directness (presence) represent little more than the “hubbub of contradictory talk” (p. 200). The ontological primacy of the word as dialogue was established early in Buber’s work. For example, we find him writing in *The Teaching of the Tao* in 1910 (Buber, 1957) that the Logos of the Johannine Gospel is established ontically as representing “primal existence”; it is “from the beginning” (“In the beginning was the Word,” John 1:1) because of that primacy.

experienced, sensed, perceived, imagined, and rationally thought of; significantly, it is bounded, and seen separately from all else. In the *I-It* relationship, both the *I* and the *It* are “Shrunk from substance and fullness to a functional point” (p. 40); the element of instrumentalist functionality dominates over ontological wholeness. We extract, instrumentally, from *It*; it is a thing to be used and experienced. On the other hand, *Thou* is not spoken of or apprehended as an object; it is not bounded. *Thou* is not imagined instrumentally as something to be used or experienced. No ideas, intentions, expectations, and anticipations intervene; it is direct, unmediated relation. “But when *Thou* is spoken, there is no thing. *Thou* has no bounds” (p. 20). The world of *I-It* is the world of objective experience; the world of *I-Thou* is the world of intersubjective relationship.

Encountering a Tree: The Relation ... and Being Through Relation

One of the classic Buberian references to relationality is his consideration of a tree in *I and Thou*. He notes that he can see the tree objectively, as a scientist or artist might, paying attention to its shape, physiology, and the forces that govern its functioning. “In all this the tree remains my object, occupies space and time, and has its nature and constitution” (Buber, 1947/2000, p. 23). The tree as *It*. The tree is objectified. But he can also “If I have both will and grace ... become bound up in relation to it.” In doing so, the tree becomes *Thou*. While he can still see the tree in these other ways, he now sees an ontological wholeness in the tree—and

he sees that in and through relationality; what exists now is the “sphere of between” where both *I* and *Thou* now exist. It is a distinct ontological reality: being in and through dialogue. Buber notes in his 1957 postscript to *I and Thou* that in an *I-Thou* relationship there is a “reciprocity of being” (1958/2000, p. 117). A person or object is made present or brought into being in and through the relationship we have with that other.⁶ Buber repeatedly makes the case that humans come into ontological presence when they enter into an “essential reciprocity”; this is where they are revealed; the “saying of Thou by the I stands in the origin of all individual human becoming” (Buber, 1947/2002), p. 249). The *saying* of “*Thou*” develops the full self of the *I*, not merely the *Thou* itself: the relationship itself is ontologically essential. Moreover, any objective reality of an object is distinguishable from its unique intersubjective presence.⁷ In his 1951 essay “Distance and Relation,” he writes that those who turn to the world and

⁶ Of course, each of us brings a unique ontological wholeness to the tree; put differently, the *I-Thou* relationship is unique for each and all. Moreover, in stepping into relation with the tree and becoming aware of its ontological wholeness, I am bringing with me all my sociocultural and historical colourings into play.

⁷ Maurice Friedman (1986) points out that Buber was more “radical” a phenomenologist than Husserl in that Buber recognized a unique phenomenal otherness in things which Husserl did not. The uniqueness emerges, of course, through the dialogical relationship which, as we have seen, is always new and different. In the postscript he wrote to *I and Thou* in 1957, in which he clarified a number of issues which had puzzled readers, Buber wrote a significant passage which, in explaining his phenomenological perspective, allows one to understand how there can be a *dialogical* relationship with a tree, for example. In the relationship, he maintains, there is reciprocity of being. In that reciprocity, the “wholeness and unity” of the tree is disclosed “to the glance of one who says *Thou*” He goes on to add, significantly: “... it is he who vouchsafes to the tree that it manifest this unity and wholeness” (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 117); the tree, as it were, has received “permission” to be manifest in its unbounded form.

become aware of it “step into relation with it.” What is significant, though, is that this is an integrated, holistic knowing:

... he ... becomes aware of wholeness and unity in such a way that from then on he is able to grasp being as a wholeness and a unity; the single being has received the character of wholeness and the unity which are perceived in it from the wholeness and unity perceived in the world. (Buber, 1965, p. 63)

It is after recounting this experience with a tree that Buber points out that when we face another—be it a person, an animal, a tree, or even a stone—as *Thou*, that other is not a thing, either in itself or as a thing among other things.

Thus human being is not *He* or *She*, bounded from every other *He* and *She*, a specific point in space and time within the net of the world; nor is he a nature able to be experienced and described, a loose bundle of names and qualities. But with no neighbour, and whole in himself, he is *Thou* and fills the heavens. (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 23)

Not only does the other fill the heavens. Buber’s point is that fullness of being is developed for us in the *I-Thou* relationship, in boundlessness; the *I-It* relationship, though it can be ontologically primal, does not represent fullness. *I-Thou* can only be spoken with the whole being. “I become through my relation to the *Thou*; as I become *I*, I say *Thou*” (p. 26). The saying of *Thou* brings me into full

being.⁸ This is why “all real living is meeting” (p. 26): real and full life—being—is made possible in the sacredness of the relationship; “relation’s own being” (p. 67)—our ontological fullness—is made possible through one’s contact with the *Thou*. A person “makes his appearance” (p. 67) by entering into relationships with others. Buber carries this theme of the primal nature of relationality in establishing ontological wholeness forward into other writings. “Man can become whole ... only in virtue of a relation to another self,” he writes in his essay “What is Man” in *Between Man and Man* (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 199).

Dialogue is thus an ontological reality that can only be grasped and understood as existing in this dynamic sphere of between: it is not found in one or the other; it is found only in the encounter made possible through turning one to the other. This is the dialogical self. The sphere of between is the “narrow ridge” for Buber, representing that place that is not marked as purely individual or subjective, neither as social and collective, but as a “third kind” of space which “draws the circle round the happening” (p. 243)—the unfolding of what one might call “dialogue as being” between two or more. The sphere of between where dialogue exists is an ontological reality that exists not in the *I* or the *Thou* but in the dynamic sphere of presence developed through their encounter made

⁸ This is a significant point. When Emmanuel Levinas suggested that Buber placed human beingness wholly in the relationship, in what Buber called the “sphere of between,” Buber replied that this was incorrect. The *I-Thou* relationship, Buber replied, only brings being into fullness and completion. See Buber and Friedman, 1964, pp. 23-27).

possible through turning to the other. He ends that essay by asserting that we answer the question of what a human being is when we see her or him as “the eternal meeting of the One with the Other” (p. 244). Here we have both the individual and the other fully confirmed and, paradoxically, the self as that which exists in eternal meeting.

I would stress an additional point with regard to Buber’s phrase: “But with no neighbour, and whole in himself, he is *Thou* and fills the heavens.” He is not merely being lyrical here; rather, he is describing an actual intersubjective understanding, recognizable to those who have come into the fullness of the *I-Thou* relationship—the felt, expansive sense of the ontological wholeness of the other, a wholeness which has no bounds (“with no neighbour”). In that sense, one’s focus is concentrated, as it were, wholly on the other such that nothing else exists; you behold and feel the vastness of the other. Paradoxically, although Buber claims the wholeness has no neighbour, it is in fact true that everything now becomes a neighbour to it, as the wholeness is relationality itself; one maintains plurality. Buber adds: “This does not mean that nothing exists except himself. But all else lives in *his* light” (pp. 23–24). At the very same time, one now apprehends that the other exists in relationship to others such that all others reference to this other. Moreover, part of the immensity of this realization is that one concomitantly realizes that every other being can and does exist in such

centrality. The lived reality is one of expansive wholeness *and* inclusion of all neighbours within that wholeness. Here, the other becomes Other, represents Otherness, and also represents an inclusive fullness, or what Buber calls in *I and Thou* “universality” (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 40). There is this felt sense of expansive inclusiveness, aligned with the sense of relational, causal connectivity:

... the man ... enlarges the nucleus, the substance that showed itself in the *Thou* with power and gathered up in itself all qualities. But now also for the first time he sets things in space and time, in causal connection, each with its own place and appointed course, its measurability and conditioned nature. (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 41)

The *Thou* exists in space and time in relation to all else existing there: “All else lives in *its* light” (p. 80); the *I-It* relationship excludes the rest of the universe.

“For to step into pure relation is not to disregard everything but to see everything in the *Thou*, not to renounce the world but to establish it on its true basis” (p. 80). Abraham Joshua Heschel provides a wonderful description of the *I-Thou* relationship:

Where man [sic] meets the world, not with the tools he has made but with the soul with which he was born, not like a hunter who seeks his prey but like a lover to reciprocate love; where man and matter meet as equals before the mystery, both made, maintained and destined to

pass away, it is not an object, a thing that is given to his senses, but a state of fellowship that embraces him and all things. (Heschel, 1951, pp. 40–41)

Artist Peter London (2003) describes an *I-Thou* relationship of his as feeling “... at home, embedded in an infinitely extended family” (p. 27). The *I-Thou* relationship brings us to a relational sense of beingness that apprehends both wholeness in the other as well as a connected sense of being in relationship with all that exists: it is a felt sense of existing in a world that feels like home where one feels part of a meaningful set of relationships.

Dialogue’s Flashing Flow

In a 1961 essay, “The Word that is Spoken,” Buber (1965) adds that dialogue includes the ontological “presupposition of conversation” in which, because there is an other as partner, there is the possibility of surprise. This sense of openness allows the possibility of an interactive, unscripted “flash up into presentness” (p. 114). What becomes evident is that the self is now open, flexible, and dynamic—responsive to others and present, surrounding ecologies. As they change, so does the sense of self in response. Taylor (1991a) uses the analogy of two people dancing or using a two-handed saw: rhythm and flow are required or else become manifest. I become responsive to your movements or responses: a dynamic, responsive, interpretive self. And yet the self is stable in its primal

nature of relationality; it is always, as Buber notes, the “unchanging partner” (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 39). (This is one of the paradoxes of dialogue.) What is dynamic is that the dance has shifted to another type, another step, another position, and the sphere of between is now different. The dialogical self is dynamic, adaptive, responsive, giving and receiving. Here is the relation where, to use a repeated phrase of Buber’s, one stands “over against”⁹ the other in a “flow of mutual action” (p. 40). The self is now established in the sphere of between, on “the narrow ridge, where *I* and *Thou* meet” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 243). As well, the self dynamically shifts between its subjective solidarity and its intersubjective connectivity: it is a “single awareness,” the “swinging of the *I* in its lonely truth” (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 68). Buber goes on to praise the “*I*” of Socrates, noting its existence in “endless dialogue,” which is “wafted” around it through life, the “*I*” of Goethe, which manifests in a dynamic “intercourse with nature,” and the “*I*” of Jesus, abiding in an unfolding relationship with the Father (p. 70). In the dynamic sense of a relational self, the “world or the stream of the

⁹ The phrase “over against” should not be construed as meaning an antagonistic relationship or meaning one lording over the other. Buber used the phrase to emphasize the ontological presence and distinctiveness of the *I* and the *Thou*; rather than blending together, both *I* and *Thou* remain separate and stand ontologically over against or side-by-side with each other, each bringing ontological fullness to the relation. Being “over against” means genuinely to encounter the other, to come to real meeting. The German equivalent, Kaufmann (1970) points out, is *Gegenüber*. Kaufmann writes: “*Gegenüber* means vis-à-vis (literally that which is over against), and this in turn can become a prefix and figures in many different constructions. In this [translation of *I and Thou*], ‘confront’ has been used in all such cases. *Begegnung* (noun) and *begegnen* (verb) have been translated consistently as encounter” (p. 45). See the subsection “Work on the Self” in the chapter on dialogue as being and doing for further discussion of this phrase.

world flows over it" (p. 74). The world streams over and against me, and I in turn respond over and against it. Dialogue, affirms Buber, bears witness to the continuance of a dynamic spirit composed of "organic stuff" (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 22). In dialogue, the self is transformed. In his 1910 commentary on Chuang Tzu's parables¹⁰, Buber writes that those who renew themselves via attunement with the dynamic Dao affirm the self "which indeed is not a static but just the way, Tao—he attains the eternal change and self affirmation" (Buber, 1957, p. 47; 1910/1996, p. 85 for the equivalent). That transformation can be affected in even the simplest forms of dialogue; in Buber's translations of two of the parables we find: "Speaking and doing happen freely from within, and the world is transformed. One nod, one glance is sufficient, and all rush to follow it" (Buber, 1910/1996, p. 47). And: "With a man like this one, merely his view is needed, and Tao appears" (p. 60). These are not dissimilar to Buber's comment about real dialogue written some 19 years later in his dialogue essay in *Between Man and*

¹⁰ Buber's translations of a number of Chuang Tzu's (庄子 in simplified Chinese; *Zhuāng Zǐ* in pinyin) stories and his attendant commentary, originally written in 1910, appear (translated into English) in Jonathan Herman's study of Buber's work with Daoism, *I and Tao: Martin Buber's Encounter with Chuang Tzu*. The commentary by itself (which covers Chuang Tzu, Lao Tzu, and Daoism) also appears as Buber's essay, "The Teaching of the Tao," in *Pointing the Way* (Buber, 1957); that version was translated into English by Maurice Friedman, and is only slightly different than the version appearing in Herman's book. I refer to both translations: (Buber, 1957) when referring to the essay in *Pointing the Way*, and (Buber, 1910/1996) when referring to the version in Herman's book. It is worth noting that Herman had the guidance of Maurice Friedman, Tu Weiming, the Harvard-Yenching Professor of Chinese History and Philosophy and Confucian Studies, and Daoist scholars Roger Ames and David Hall. The translation there into English is by Alex Page. I quote extensively here so that one can see the similarities between Buber's writings on Daoism and his later writings in *I and Thou*.

Man (Buber, 1947/2002): “Real dialogue is hidden in all kinds of odd corners and, occasionally in an unseemly way, breaks surface surprisingly and inopportunistically ... as in the tone of a railway guard’s voice, in the glance of an old newspaper vendor, in the smile of the chimney-sweeper” (p. 22).

Which brings us to doing.

Dialogue as Doing

The responsive, dialogical self is engaged, it is active. Buber notes that the ontological turning is an act based on choice; it is an act of the whole being. The whole being for Buber is just that: a response of the body, mind, and spirit. Buber mentions that the turning to the other can be considered an “inner action” but that it can only manifest fully when there is the accompanying “very tension in the eyes’ muscles and the very action of the foot as it walks” (1947/2002, p. 25); one turns with both body and soul in directing attention. Significantly though—and this is where he encapsulates once again the paradoxical nature of dialogue—it is “an activity that has been termed doing nothing” (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 78).

... nothing separate or partial stirs in the man any more, thus he makes no intervention in the world; it the whole man, enclosed and at rest in his wholeness, that is effective—he has become an effective whole. To

have won stability in this state is to be able to go out to the supreme meeting. (p. 78)

One notices here the influence of Daoist thought on Buber (which he studied extensively in his earlier years, in what Dan Avnon (1998) calls Buber's "mystical" phase). The point is another significant one insofar as Buber is pointing to what some might term a "a non-egoic" form of activity in which one aligns oneself, ontologically and through action, with the spirit of *Logos*, or what the Daoists would call the Dao. One recognizes oneself, as it were, as part of the Dao, and not solely as an individual acting separately from *Logos* or the Dao. This is not the activity of the instrumental, reductionist "I." Rather, this is the activity of the relational, inclusive "I" — *legein*, the alignment or "lying down beside."¹¹ There is still an I that is active, but there is attunement. Buber studied Daoism about a decade before writing *I and Thou* (first published in 1923), and later claims to have renounced his earlier mystical phase, including his work on

¹¹ The Greek root of *logos* — *legein* — beautifully captures the concept of gathering things together and lying down beside. We understand λόγος — *logos* — from the earlier Greek root λέγειν — *legein* — which means "talking" or "saying. As Martin Heidegger (1975) notes in his essay on *Logos*, "*Legein* also more properly means the 'laying-down and laying-before which gathers itself and others'" (p. 60). There is also a sense of "bringing together": collecting, picking, gleaning, and bringing together. It further means to place one thing down beside another — a gathering together before oneself. Gathering further means to bring things together under shelter — to shelter or protect these things; it is an accommodation or safekeeping. "Laying is the letting-lie-before — which is gathered into itself — of that which comes together into presence" (p. 63). This is what Buber refers to as "confirmation." I refer the interested reader to Heidegger's (1975) essay on *Logos* in *Early Greek Thinking*, to Gemma Fiumara's (1990) *The Other Side of Language: A Philosophy of Listening*, and to John Sallis' (1986) *Being and Logos: The Way of Platonic Dialogue*.

Daoism, but it was only the wholly transcendental mysticism he renounced wherein there is a loss of individuality in unity and a break between the transcendent and worldly. Friedman (1963, 1991) correctly points out that Taoism remained as an influence on Buber's later thought, which is evident in *I and Thou*; Herman (1996) agrees. He never renounced the teaching of *wu-wei*, the principle of knowing when to act and not to act, of doing without doing, or of acting with nonattachment. His active, panentheist form of mysticism is based on adoption of the principles of *wu-wei*, which is central to Daoist thought. *Wu-wei* literally means "without action," and sometimes the term "*wei-wu-wei*" is employed: "action without action," or "effortless action." As Hall and Ames (2003) point out, an overriding concern in Chinese thought is with establishing harmony with the natural order of things. The task is one of what they call "*ars contextualis*," the art of understanding how things and actions can be contextualized and harmoniously ordered; it is an understanding of the *logos* of the world. *Wu-wei* characterizes both the attempts to establish harmony and understand *logos*, and the manifestation of harmony and understanding themselves. Slingerland (2003) maintains that *wu-wei* metaphorically means action which occurs even though the subject is not exerting any force, equating this with effortlessness. He points to a constellation of related, shaping concepts—flowing along with, at ease, resting, harmonizing and fitting, letting

oneself go, losing oneself. He emphasizes, as do the others, that *wu-wei* signifies a state of mind or being, not that which is done or not done.

In his 1910 commentary on the teachings of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, Buber writes that the Dao is “eternally without action and yet without non-action” and can appear in the lives of humans as such (Buber, 1957, p. 50). He points to the problem of action divorced from being, suggesting such action is born of singular, groping, tangled intentions which end up interfering with the order of things, the Dao. “What is called action by men is no action. It is not an effecting of the whole being but single intentions groping their way in the web of the Tao, the interference of single actions in the manner and order of things” (p.53). These intentions are expressed as “oughts,” as commands; love, he asserts, cannot be commanded, as such commands contradict the goodness, purity, and immediacy of the heart. The action of the sage (which subsequently becomes the action of the dialogical person in his later work) is, as cited earlier, “non-action ... an effecting of the whole being” (p. 54).

He who ‘does nothing’ effects. He who is in complete harmony is surrounded by the receiving love of the world. ‘He is unmoved like a corpse whereas his dragon-power reveals itself all around; he is in deep silence, whereas his thunder voice resounds; and the powers of heaven answer each movement of his will, and under the flexible

influence of his non-action all things ripen and flourish.’ (1957, p. 54; see Buber, 1910/1996, p. 91 for the equivalent passage; Buber is here quoting Lao Tzu (老子; *Lǎozǐ* in pinyin)

The paradox of doing and non-doing emerges yet again in *I and Thou*, where Buber notes that the primary word *I-Thou* can only be spoken with the whole being, but that this “fusion” into whole being-ness cannot take place through one’s own agency—and yet “it can never take place without me” (1958/2000, p. 26). Buber agrees with Chuang Tzu that what is willed by the individual manifests not as action but as being; nobility lies in resolving action and being into one. Action divorced from being becomes the “perpetuated act of violence” (p. 36). Against such action stands the Dao and being which cannot be renewed and restored through action but which “still ... must eternally begin anew” (p. 36).

... the fulfilling man has only his life. His words are elements of this life, each executor and originator, each inspired by destiny and caught up by destiny, the multitude of voices transformed through this human body into a conclusive harmony, the weak movement of many dead joined in him into might, he who is the crossroads of the teaching, of fulfillment and dissolution, salvation and degeneration. There are, therefore, logia that no doubt can touch, and that, striding

through the generations without being written down, preserve themselves unmixed, by the strength of their stamp of destiny and the elementary uniqueness of their fulfilling speech. For the fulfilling man, who is assembled out of everything and yet comes out of nothing, is the most unique of men. (Buber, 1957, pp. 39–40; Buber, 1910/1996, pp. 77–78 for equivalent)

Here, any and all doing is centred in being. The words and logia are integrated manifestations of being, and voices and impulses of others are heard, included, bound in togetherness. The Daoists felt that seeing virtues like *Jen* (harmony) as something to be “achieved” and “prized” would ontologically separate the practitioners from their immediate worlds: the goal now becomes the acquisition of a virtue for some external reason or goal separated from its intention—which revolves around the establishment of harmony amongst and between people. The beginning of *wu-wei* rests in avoiding the delusion that *Jen* (or any other virtue) is an object to be attained, as such a delusion breeds attachment and separation. The non-attached, dispassionate action of *wu-wei* is exactly what is required if one is to, as Buber suggests, act from the present, to act in and with a deep sense of responsiveness to who or what is present, and, in a larger sense, to act dialogically (meaning to respond and confirm) in response to what Buber felt was the crisis of modern times—“the crisis of man as the crisis of what is

between man and man" (Buber, 1965, p. 77). It is this very attitude and cultivation of *wu-wei* that makes this deep "presentness" and responsiveness possible; *wu-wei* is the way of dialogue.

Yet it *is* action—in the midst of inaction. Notice the verbs in the description of inaction in following passage where Buber is commenting on Daoist leadership:

He who guards and unfolds the natural life of the kingdom, he who does not impose upon it command and compulsion, but submerges himself to it, listens to its secret message, and brings it to the light and to work, he rules it in truth. He performs the non-action; he does not interfere, but guards and unfolds what wills to become... (Buber, 1957, p. 55; 1910/1996, p. 92–93)

Buber stresses both in this essay and in *I and Thou* that such activity is not a matter of precepts that remain a part of an instrumental world of I-It; as mentioned above, it is not the commanded activity of "ought." The only action required is that "the barrier of separation has to be destroyed"; the one act that is required is "full acceptance of the present" (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 79). There is, as noted in the passage above, an element of surrender. And from *I and Thou*:

This is the activity of the man who has become a whole being, an activity that has been termed doing nothing: nothing separate or

partial stirs in the man any more, thus he makes no intervention in the world; it is the whole man, enclosed and at rest in his wholeness, that is effective—he has become an effective whole. *To have won the stability of that state is to be able to go out to the supreme meeting.* (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 78, emphasis added)

Dialogue emerges out of one's efforts to achieve this wholeness; it is my contention that at the very same time the efforts to manifest the capacities of dialogue will develop this ontological sense of wholeness—one then is able to go forth in engagement. The person of wholeness acts through non-doing: "This action, the 'non-action,' is an effecting of the whole being" (1957, p. 54; 1910/1996, p. 91). And in this passage just cited from *I and Thou* we can see that the *I-Thou* relationship is founded on the "stability" of attaining *wu-wei*. Just as significantly, the statement is yet another of Buber's which points to the foundation of the *I-Thou* relationship as an ontological orientation. But Buber lays further stress on the spirits of *wu-wei* and of dialogue as ontology when in the next paragraph, he writes:

Can it be said what really is necessary?—Not in the sense of a precept. For everything that has ever been devised and contrived in the time of the human spirit as precept, alleged preparation, practice, or

meditation, has nothing to do with the primal, simple fact of the meeting. (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 79)

Meeting is both an act and a state of being. However, we also need to recognize the reality of grace.

Grace

Grace is an essential concept in Buber's philosophy of dialogue. The significance of grace lies in the humbling realization that dialogue is not possible solely because of our own efforts and that we are fallible. We cannot make dialogue happen, but we can prepare ourselves for it. He notes (1958/2000, p. 23) that his becoming "bound up in relation" to the tree happens "if I have both will and grace," thus contrasting the two. To amplify the significance of grace, he writes that the meeting with the *Thou* is affected "through grace—it is not found through seeking" (p. 26). Buber (1948) points out that "Jewish activism" (which focuses on the need of human to act in ways that manifest goodness) does not deny the significance of grace, but it pointed out that through right and decisive action the soul find ways which "lead it to grace" (p. 18). He adds that while we might not be able to finish our dialogical tasks, we must begin to act. Further on (p. 23), he points out that God's presence is nigh—when we meet that presence, and he cites Deuteronomy 30:14 as an affirmation that we should not look to heaven but to our own hearts, words, and actions.

Buber (1958/2000) further defines the relationships between will and grace in *I and Thou*. He notes two types of will. First, he notes the “puny, unfree will” of the “self-willed” person (pp. 64–65) who is controlled by instincts and seeks only to use the world instrumentally to fulfil his or her own desires. Second is the “grand will” (p. 65) which leaves determinism behind to open itself to “destined being” which is at least partially unknown. One activates the grand will by receptivity and openness: what Buber terms in later writing the “holy insecurity” (which I will discuss in more detail in chapter five). One listens to what is emerging both within and outside of oneself, to the “course of being in the world” (p. 65). In effect, one surrenders to actualize being as required; one is willing to meet the world and its inhabitants openly such that the fullness of beingness might be actualized. Such an individual is willing to remain open to an emerging but possibly unknown destiny, to bring the *Thou* into manifestation. Thus, the individual “intervenes no more” —surrendering to grace—but at the same time “does not let things merely happen” (p. 65) and the individual accomplishes this by the use of the grand will. We have again the paradox of action and seeming inaction. As Malcolm Diamond (1967) attests, rationality is inadequate in fully explaining the dialogical reality of *I-Thou*, and only the language of paradox can more fully disclose it. Buber (1958/2000) refers to this paradox of will and grace: “... if I know that ‘I am given over for disposal’ and

know at the same time that 'It depends on myself,' then I cannot escape the paradox that has to be lived ... but I am compelled to take both to myself, to be lived together, and in being lived they are one" (pp. 93–94).

Our focus is not on grace but on what we might do to make ourselves receptive to it; our focus is on enacting our receptive, grand will (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 78). We go out to "meet" grace and "persist in its presence" but Buber notes it is not our object. This is, as noted previously, the action of the person who has become whole, the activity that has been termed "doing nothing" (p. 78) which requires the surrender of a "full acceptance of the present" (p. 79). But at the same time, although grace is not our object, we must not lose sight of its central significance. I can think that I am acting out an attunement with the grand will when in fact in is my own, small will that is holding sway, even when I am trying to act as rationally and morally as possible. I am required to listen, to be receptive, and discern. Sometimes surrender is required; sometimes I am called to stand in resistance or opposition to oppression. There is that tension. Discernment comes from practice, and my experience is that I have made and will make mistakes. A reflective attitude that allows one get up, dust oneself off, make any amends that might be required, and to learn from experience helps one more fully attune to the grand will.

In his postscript to *I and Thou*, Buber (1958/2000, p. 121) asserts that full dialogue is not necessarily inherent in our lives but is rather a grace which is not assured but for which one must always be ready. We act to make ourselves ready. Elsewhere, Buber (1948) notes that we are “dependent on grace; but we do not do God’s will when we take it upon ourselves to begin with grace instead of beginning with ourselves. Only our beginning, our having begun, poor as it is, leads us to grace ...” (pp. 32–33). Our poor beginning suggests humility. He amplifies the message of the significance of grace later by adding that while no specific act can draw grace from heaven, still grace answers deeds in “unpredictable ways” (p. 37). Moreover, it is a grace that is not “self-withholding” (in another essay, Buber (1957) notes that grace always remains open when we turn with the whole being to the *Thou* and to the eternal *Thou* (p. 196)). Our task is to act with awareness in our “partnership in the great dialogue” (p. 37) and surrender that action. Again, the partnership suggests a humble listening and discernment. Finally, the act is “no outward gesture” (p. 38) but rather a manifestation of our being.

At the very same time, we recognize that all our acting does not guarantee dialogue and cannot command grace; we live with an awareness of its certain possibility but an unknowingness of when, where, and if it might shine on us.

Buber's (1958) remarks on service in *Hasidism and Modern Man* further underscore the message that deeds in service of humanly re-uniting the holy sparks, the Shekinah, scattered throughout creation with the essence of God, are acts of the "human spirit" (p. 88). When this "homecoming" is achieved, the "grace of graces has appeared, blessings pour down out of infinity" (p. 88)—but the acts of the human spirit precede grace. While grace "wants to help the world hallow itself" (p. 35), this occurs only when we act to invite God or the *Thou* into the world. (Buber (1958, p. 105) repeats this message: we concern ourselves with grace once we have accomplished our dialogical actions.) Buber maintains that God wants to be won by us and "places Himself, so to speak into man's hands" (p. 175)—but this occurs through the intentions and actions of humanity. God—and God's grace—dwells wherever we let God in.

Work on the Self

As noted above, Buber writes that love cannot be commanded by precept (just as he would later write that dialogue cannot be commanded). He adds in *I and Thou* (1958/2000) that all such practices or the "wielding of power" do not affect ontological meeting, and belong only to the world of *It*. "Going out to the relation Can only be indicated by the drawing of a circle which excludes everything that is not this going out. Then the one thing that matters is visible, full acceptance of the present" (p. 79). It is an openness and surrender to grace

and to possibility. That is the essence of *wu-wei*: full presence, full *I-Thou* relationality. I would suggest Buber is not castigating any work, contemplative or otherwise, undertaken to develop dialogue ontologically and he recognizes the reality and even the necessity of the world of *I-It*; he castigates the profound divorce of that action from the essential spirit of dialogue. In fact, he then points out that those far removed from real dialogue will have a more difficult venture in establishing it; he maintains that what we need to renounce is the instrumentalizing, possessive ethos. And I would stress, insofar as it would appear that my thesis represents solely the undertaking of such instrumentalist actions and commands in proposing the development and practice of the capacities of dialogue, that any action here is undertaken freely and willingly, with the understanding of both the ontological primacy of dialogue (and any action emerges out of that understanding) and the nature of dialogical activity as emerging out of *wu-wei*. Buber's concern, like that of Socrates against the Sophists, centres on the instrumentalizing of dialogue as an ontologically-ungrounded, prescribed set of codified and commanded practices, devoid of the philosophy and orientation of relationality and the associated, ontological turning. "I beg you notice that I do not demand," he writes in *Between Man and Man*; "And how could the life of dialogue be demanded? There is no ordering of dialogue. It is not that you *are* to answer but that you *are able*" (Buber, 1947/2002,

p. 40). Here he stresses the ontological capacity or possibility, not the instrumental demand for action. In replies to his interlocutors in *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*, he acknowledges that real meeting happens “from grace,” but adds that it is a question of both being actively ready for meeting *and* being inactively capable of meeting; moreover, the active preparations to enter into meeting with one’s whole being may not be equal to either willingness or ontological capability (Buber, 1967b, p. 701). Grace is for Buber a matter of openness and surrender. We turn in openness to receive the possibility of *Thou* through grace; we do not instrumentally act to get it. Once again, it is clear that the meeting of *I-Thou* in dialogue is a matter of both action and inaction. As Kenneth Kramer (2003) notes, will and intention are “passionately” involved in meeting. Kramer defines the Buberian concept of grace as the “spontaneously undetermined presence of mutuality.” He also maintains that through the “effective grace of reciprocal acts of compassion” both in the encounter are called to respond out of a spontaneous authenticity (p.22). Such dialogical spontaneity fits precisely with Daoist concepts of spontaneous arising, and I would suggest that awakened awareness and surrender to openness and presentness create the possibility of this spontaneous, undetermined meeting. While Kramer suggests that one can only foster a willingness for dialogue and practice “active listening,” and I would agree with that, at the same time I maintain that all these dialogical capacities can

be developed. But I will certainly agree with that willingness: without that fundamental recognition of the primal, elemental nature of the *I-Thou* relationship, no acts will bring it to bear.

As yet another example, Buber writes in *I and Thou* that the person of *I-Thou* goes out with his whole being to meet an unknown destiny, knowing that “he must go to it” (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 64). The individual goes forth in surrender, but with an act of the previously noted “grand will,” and does not “let things merely happen” (p. 65). And here is the key which relates to what is to come in this dissertation: Buber asserts that “He listens to what is emerging from himself, to the course of being in the world” (p. 65). There is the act of listening, of becoming aware, one of the several capacities I outline, and it is clear that Buber is pointing to volitional acts—but is also pointing to the reality that they emerge out of, and are to contribute to, an ontological orientation of relationality.

There is another significant point to be made here with regard to Buber’s statement “he must go to it.” When Buber first encountered the Daoist teachings, he wholly imbibed the idea of an inseverable unity of knower and known, of the individual and the Dao. Thus, we have, for example, this statement: “This knowledge is not knowing but being. Because it possesses things in its unity, it never stands over against them ...” (Buber, 1957, p. 52; 1910/1996, p. 89). The

phrase “over against them” is significant, as I have noted previously (p. 37), as it is a phrase Buber uses extensively in his later work on dialogue¹², where he repeatedly emphasizes both the ontological separation of *I* and *Thou* and the dialogical relationship between them. However, in his later work on dialogue, he stressed ontological uniqueness and separation; his essay “Distance and Relation” (Buber, 1965) focuses on the concept of *Urdistanz*, this ontological separation and distance between beings, or what he calls “the primal setting at a distance” (p. 60). We now stand “over against” others: unique and having the potentiality of coming up against others in relation. Paradoxically again, though, this recognition of ontological uniqueness leads to a turning toward the other, the possibility of developing a “synthesizing apperception” which sees connections, relations, and a larger wholeness: the “apperception of being as a whole and as a unity” (p. 62). It was this recognition of ontological distance that characterizes both his rejection of much of his earlier work on Daoism and the establishment of one of the pillars of his dialogical philosophy. However, like Herman (1996), I maintain that Buber rejected less than he claims. On the very same page as the statement “... it never stands over against them” appears, we

¹² See, for example, in *I and Thou*, pp. 23, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 81; in “The Question to the Single One” in Buber (1947/20020) p. 97; in *The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism*, p. 244; in the essay “Distance and Relation” (Buber, 1965) p. 62, 63; in the essay “Elements of the Interhuman” (Buber, 1965) p. 73, 79; in the essay “What is Common to All” (Buber, 1965) p. 108; in the essay “The Word that is Spoken” (Buber, 1965) p. 117; in the essay “Man and His Image-Work” (Buber, 1965) p. 161 in the *Eclipse of God*, p. 8, 28, 30, 32, 68, 89, 127; in *Pointing the Way*, p. 86; in *Autobiographical Fragments* (in Schilpp & Friedman, 1967), p. 35.

find this passages which recognizes the paradox of wholeness and separation or opposites: "This knowledge [of the Dao] ... embraces the whole. It overcomes relation in the unconditionality of the all-embracing. It receives each pair of opposites as a polarity with wishing to eliminate their oppositeness, and it includes all polarities in its unity; it 'reconciles in its light the yes with the no'" (1957, p. 52; 1910/1996, p. 89). While the later philosophical stance differs in maintaining and stressing relationality, there is the recognition of the paradox of unity (this recognition comes through his concept of inclusion, which I will examine in a later chapter). Dan Avnon (1998) recognizes this paradox of the self when he asserts that a more complete self-knowledge includes an awareness of both our "unique singularity" and our "being inseparable from the one, unified creation" (p.1). Avnon later includes a Buberian requirement that, if not written with an ironical tone, should certainly at least raise an eyebrow or invoke a smile: "All that Buber suggests is transformation of attitude: remain human, continue in your individual path, but be open to the possibility of radically transforming your relation to self, to other, and to the cosmos. That is all that is required" (1998, p. 118). No small undertaking! But Avon's comment highlights the essence of the doing of dialogue: the "radical" but lifelong, continuous but gradual transformation of the self. Radical transformation and not speech acts or imperatives to dialogue represents the real doing of dialogue, a doing that is

directed to both the self and the relationships with others and the world and emerges out of a responsive, reflective turning to self, others, and the world.

James Michener (1978) has a delightful Daoist-like description in his novel *Chesapeake* which serves to illustrate the nature of dialogue. One of the characters of the novel, Thomas Applegarth, having studied the geography of Chesapeake Bay and the surrounding States, determines to understand fully the geological forces which have shaped this land. He sets off to find the mouth of the mighty Susquehanna river which flows into the bay, shaping not only the geographies of the land but the geographies of its varied peoples. And then, after an arduous journey, he comes to

the ultimate source of the river. It was a kind of meadow in which nothing happened: no cattle, no mysteriously gushing water, merely the slow accumulation of moisture from many unseen and unimportant sources, the gathering of dew, so to speak, the beginning, the unspectacular congregation of nothingness, the origin of purpose.

... Thomas Applegarth, looking at this moist and pregnant land, thought: "This is how everything begins—the mountains, the oceans, life itself. A slow accumulation—the gathering together of meaning." (p. 411)

Dialogue as praxis emerging out of dialogue as being—that is, dialogue as *wu-wei*—is like the slow accumulation of moisture, the gathering of dews. It is indeed the unspectacular congregation of nothingness, but it is definitely a doing, and dialogue as praxis represents both its origins in being and the longings of Eros and its manifestation in the doing of non-doing.¹³

Which brings us—in the spirit of *legein*, that gathering of dews—to being and doing.

Dialogue as Being, Informed by Doing

Aristotle (2000) notes in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that virtues of character are the result of habituation (*ethos*) and are not natural occurrences. A stone will fall down due to the nature of gravity, and no habitual action will allow that stone to act differently. While nature may provide us with the opportunity to acquire virtues, they come to completion through our repeated and intentional actions.

Virtues, however, we acquire by first exercising them. The same is true with skills, since what we need to learn before doing, we learn by doing; for example, we become builders by building, and lyre-players by playing the lyre. So too we become just by doing just actions,

¹³ Ellinor and Gerard (1998, pp. 2-3) cite this passage from *Chesapeake* but they use it to point to dialogue hidden, to historical beginnings. It is interesting to see how the passage can be used in two separate ways with regard to dialogue.

temperate by temperate actions, and courageous by courageous actions....

... In a word, then, like states arise from like activities.

(Aristotle, 2000, 1103b, pp. 23–24)

Aristotle adds that it is for this reason that we should pay attention to the development of certain actions. Moreover, it is not just certain actions, but the intentional, repeated actions with an eye to development. Buber would certainly disagree with Aristotle insofar as he feels the dialogical ethos is primal in humans, but he does agree that we develop the ontological primacy of dialogue through acts of dialogue. He notes in *Between Man and Man* that the basic movements of dialogue—the turning toward the other in responsiveness—contributes to the establishment of an “essential attitude.” He notes, significantly, the “circle of essential action and essential attitude,” which reciprocally establishes one another and the wholeness of the person (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 25). Dialogue as acts expresses itself through the use of our bodies, minds, and hearts, and through the use of signs and symbols. Quoting from a 1775 letter by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, Buber notes that it expresses the doing of dialogue: “I open eye or ear, or I stretch forth my hand, and feel in the same moment inseparably: Thou and I, I and Thou” (p. 250). In the beginning of his essay on dialogue *Between Man and Man*, he asks us to consider two people sitting beside

one another. While one of them manifests dialogue as being (noted by the phrase to “be really *there*”), there is also action: “Yet he does something.... But this is what he does now: he releases in himself a reserve over which only he himself as power” (p. 4). Communication, of whatever kind, streams from him to the other, unreservedly. Buber adds that dialogue, although it can exist without the sign as an ontological reality, also has a “distinctive life” in signs and the actions that produce them. He repeatedly notes that dialogue signals through intentions and observable actions. He notes, for example, that dialogue is completed in observable, measurable events that are part of the commerce of daily life, grounded in space and time (although, as noted previously, can also reach beyond them); dialogue is, as he notes, a “mystery that is consummated in the enkindled, open soul of the world-producing, world-discovering man” (Buber, 1967a, p. 31). Our beingness of dialogue enters into situations through words and actions; we respond to that which has presented itself to us. Our response is our turning to the situation, to the other, whether it is a glance, words, or an entire set of actions. Indeed, these actions can seem quite trivial and inconsequential, but they manifest or contribute to real dialogue. And because these manifestations of dialogue flow from an ontological foundation of *I-Thou* relationality, they can be found in odd corners and the smallest acts; for example, in the tone of voice, a glance, a smile, a gesture.

The life of dialogue manifests in our responsiveness to the world, which ever calls out to us. The basic movement of dialogue, the turning to the other, is a responsive, volitional, ontological act that gives rise to and also manifests as what I am calling the virtues of dialogue. In turn, these virtues and their development and nurturance contribute to manifesting dialogue as an ontological reality. Aristotle goes on to note that the (repeated) playing of the lyre or the practice of building allows one to become a good lyre player or builder; practice is key: “In a word, then, like states arise from like activities. That is why we must give a certain character to our activities, since it is on the differences between them that the resulting states depend” (Aristotle, 2000, p. 24).

Through our repetition of carefully considered actions, we become “habituated” with a virtue; it becomes ontologically established. It is central to my thesis that repeated, conscious, and volitional acts—the Buberian virtues of dialogue I will outline—help establish it as an habituated ontology. Thus the actions of dialogue are manifestations of the ontological primacy of dialogue, but at the same time they are also a means to its establishment. However, what is significant is that we act with both the intention of manifesting dialogue with another person or thing *and* the intention of establishing dialogue ontologically, which in turn will allow it to manifest more fully in and through action.

Suzanne de Castell (2004) asks, significantly, why we sanction dialogue as a pedagogical approach, suggesting that it does not have the positive effects presumed for it, and, further, that current conceptualizations of dialogue may not only prevent it from having the effects it might have, but in fact might contribute to serving as a means of marginalization. Her point is entirely valid, and I would suggest that conceptions of dialogue entirely based on “the talking cure” or solely on *any* form of conversation at all are not able to bear the burdens and expectations we place upon them and thus remain problematical. Moreover, “talking cures” can, despite good intentions, result in the commands and imperatives common to prescriptives that can ironically marginalize others (a subject to be explored in more depth in the chapter “Why Dialogue?”). Dialogue is not simply a form of conversation, and to treat it solely as such means to lose touch with its ontological foundations; we might as well just talk about talk, or worse, what Freire (1970/2006) called “an alienated and alienating ‘blah’” (p. 87).

Why is Buber’s Ontological Conception of Dialogue Significant?

I will discuss the topic of why dialogue is important in the next chapter, but here I wish to address the significance of Buber’s ontological orientation to dialogue. We in the west are so used to action, which is largely why we see dialogue as action: it comes out of our ontological orientation to action, to doing things. But Buber (1965) is clear that a dialogical event—the “Word” that is spoken—lies in

the ontological, “oscillating sphere between,” the sphere of between in which dialogical participants exist (p. 112), and that this is a sphere of being. Buber points to the ontological primacy of dialogue in other writings in *A Believing Humanism*. For example, in his essay “Since We Have Been a Dialogue,” about a poem by the famed German poet and Romantic, Freidrich Hölderlin, Buber points to that very line from a poem of Hölderlin’s, drawing attention to the fact that the line does not read “Since we have been *in* a dialogue” (p. 85).¹⁴ We ourselves, Buber declares, *are* the dialogue.

To conclude, in his essay “Teaching and Deed,” Buber (1948) asserts that a teaching only lives in the life of a person who “realizes the teachings in the changing potentialities of every hour” (p. 140). The teacher’s core must be “seized” by the teachings, requiring that one’s “elemental totality must submit to the spirit as clay to the potter” (p. 141). In his commentary *The Teaching of the Tao* (Buber, 1957), Buber points out that the ruler has tasks of organization, the artist has artwork and artistic practice, and the philosopher has philosophical discourse and analysis. But the person who wishes to manifest the Dao and its teaching of doing and non-doing—the person he calls “central” or the “fulfilling

¹⁴ The original German is clear: “*Seit ein gesprach wir sind.*” *Gesprach* indicates a “together which speaks,” according to Jean-Luc Nancy (1999, p. 47). Nancy adds that Hölderlin’s unusual ordering places the emphasis on *wir* (we), and on the indeterminacy of *sind* (since), implying that we have always been dialogue, and that the poem stresses we are this “between-us” which is dialogue.

person" —has "only his life." This means, however, that for this central person all actions are a recognized part of that life and its fullness. Buber (1958) characterizes this as a "realistic and active mysticism" (p. 180) in which one is fully engaged with the world of action as "the involvement of the whole being" (pp. 180–181). He goes on to refer to this active mysticism as "presentness," being fully present with others and in the world. "He has only his life" is perhaps better understood as "He is required to give all of his life"; the offering of this life occurs through interaction in and with the world, and in action the fullness of that life is developed. The zaddik—the spiritual teacher and leader of an Hasidic community—is one who stands with, advances, and penetrates the lives of others, constantly renewing himself and others in beingness but through action; he is "moved at each moment by the renewal of the creature" (Buber, 1960, p. 132) and is "devoted ... to the task of salvation that is for all men and all ages" (p. 130). Such a person is "assembled out of everything and yet comes out of nothing." Such a person is the "crossroads of the teaching, of fulfillment and dissolution, salvation and degeneration" (1957, pp. 39–40). (In Herman's (1996) volume, this phrase is translated: "... the cleat of the teaching, fulfillment and abolition, salvation and decline" (p. 77).) Rumi (Barks, Moyne, & Rumi, 1997) writes about the crossroads, this sphere of between, in several of his poems in which he contrasts being and doing.

Don't worry about saving these songs!

And if one of the instruments breaks,

it doesn't matter.

We have fallen into that place

where everything is music.

The strumming and the flute notes

rise into the atmosphere,

and even if the whole world's harp

should burn up, there will still be

hidden instruments playing.

So the candle flickers and goes out.

we have a piece of flint, and a spark....

Stop the words now.

Open the window to the center of your heart

and let the spirits fly in and out. (pp. 34–35)

"We have fallen into that place/ where everything is music." Grace is an effortless falling into dialogue, a surrender into dialogue. But that grace does not come out of nowhere; that effortless falling is made possible by effort: the effort of opening the windows to the centre of the heart. That effort itself opens us to the possibilities of God's grace. The effortlessness of that grace descending was

for Rumi made possible by all the years of prayer and meditation, of study and the dialogues with Shams, of performing the intricacies of the *sama* ‘-ī *samāwī*—the “heavenly dance” of the dervishes, and of unending yearning. Annemarie Schimmel (1992) has documented some of the many trials, tribulations, and efforts Rumi made through the years, including, for example, the night of continuous prayer in winter in the mosque, when his beard, wet with the tears from his devotions, froze and clung to the ground (p. 162). As she cites Rumi (p. 10): “Behold, I tried all things, turned everywhere ... I tested every fountain, every grape” As Tim Lilburn (1999) points out, an abundance of virtue (analogous to the manifestation of what Rice and Burbules (1992) call the dialogical virtues) is brought about through “laborious industry” (p. 34). At the same time, however, I note that action does not guarantee grace; it remains uncertain.

Rumi’s words have a further Buberian significance in their reference to the heart. Avnon (1998) stresses that Buber repeatedly points to the heart as the cognizing centre, but that this has sometimes been lost in translation. In his critical essay on dialogical philosophy in *The Knowledge of Man: A Philosophy of the Interhuman*, “Elements of the Interhuman,” Buber uses the Hebrew word *Lev*

(לב¹⁵) 14 times, but English translator Ronald Gregor Smith only once correctly translates those usages as “heart,” sometimes substituting “being” or, even, “mind.” Equally significantly, the Hebrew phrase *Da’at halev*, “knowledge of the heart,” is translated as “becoming aware” — a phrase that, as I have noted previously, is critically important in Buber’s philosophy of dialogue. An awareness of being addressed, an awareness that raises the possibility of response, comes from the heart; a focus on the heart that is both physical and psychic and not merely metaphorical is critical in developing dialogical being.

Becoming Dialogue

Buber’s (1965) comments on Hölderlin’s poem bear further analysis. The phrase he uses is “Since we have been a dialogue.” The phrase suggests a developmental movement into dialogue as an ontological orientation. But

Alexander Sidorhkin (2000) writes:

¹⁵ In the Hebrew Bible, the heart is occasionally referred to as a solely physical organ, but is primarily meant as (a) the seat of cognition, both intellectual and emotional, (b) a seat of volition, and (c) the point of contact with or resting place of God (Dentan, 1962, p. 549-550). Robert Denton notes that *lev* is sometimes misunderstood as referring to what we modern Westerners consider the mind since for the Hebrews thought and the heart were intimately connected (thus Smith’s translation as “mind” is understandable). Fascinatingly, the two letters of the Hebrew word *Lev* are ל, *lamed*, and ב, *beit*. The letter *lamed* means “the heart that understands knowledge” in conjunction with an aspiration to understand (the propulsion of Eros, I would suggest); the heart is seen as the centre from which one can contemplatively cognize God’s presence. *Beit* is the dwelling place of God in creation: “My house will be called a House of Prayer for all peoples” (Isaiah 56:7). The house being referred to is the heart. See <http://www.inner.org/hebleter/lamed.htm> and <http://www.inner.org/hebleter/beit.htm> for further details.

[Buber] majestically succeeded in establishing the primacy of relation.

However he had to rely on sharp opposition of the two types of relation to make the point that relations truly matter. Buber described an almost magical transformation that occurs when people shift from the world of regular I-It relations into the higher world of I-Thou, as if an invisible and ineffable switch flipped. As a result, his theory of relations lacks in nuance. It is either I-Thou or I-It, all or nothing.

There is nothing else and nothing in between. (p. 10)

Sidorkin's comments are understandable: the language of the early parts of *I and Thou* do make it appear as if it is all or nothing with respect to the *I-Thou* relationship. His comments are significant because if the *I-Thou* relationship only comes into being because a magical switch flips, then not only does Buber's model lack any nuance (in the extreme!) but we are more or less left at the mercy of whatever flips the switch. But I would suggest a close analysis of Buber's work will reveal a highly nuanced relational model showing a movement toward the full *I-Thou* relationship. Because the issue is significant—since our ability to affect the emergence of the *I-Thou* relationship is at stake—I will spend some time discussing the issue.

First, even at the beginnings of *I and Thou* Buber (1958/2000) clearly states that the two relationships are not mutually exclusive, pointing out that the *I-Thou*

relationship is epistemically additive; one does not abandon the objective ways of seeing (p. 23). Buber's point here is significant and it is further testimony to the integrative nature of Buber's model of dialogue. The same point is made again in his essay on dialogue in *Between Man and Man* (1947/2002, pp. 10–12). The switch flip analogy fails since coming into the *I-Thou* relationship is not an either-or alternative.

Second, even in *I and Thou* Buber repeats the need for attentive, developmental work, although it is couched in language which makes it seem magical. This language is, I think, the blending of grace and will, of being and doing. What appears as mystery is actually the result of patient efforts to become more receptive.

Believe in the simple magic of life, in service in the universe, and the meaning of that waiting, that alertness, that "craning of the neck" in creatures will dawn upon you. ... and to whatever point you turn you come upon being. (p. 29)

It seems evident here that Buber is referring to patient, repeated efforts to turn to the other, to make oneself receptive to grace and thus to come upon being. Buber goes on to add that we are "moulded by our pupils," "built up by our works," and "educated" by others (p. 29); once again, the phrasing suggests repeated effort. Still later, Buber mentions that the individual can, in a response to the

Thou as an act of being, “build again and again” dwelling for Spirit and others; the act of being is an intentional act made as long one “enters into relation,” and such acts are an ascent to “the break through” (pp. 60–62). And, again, in speaking of grace, Buber asserts that we need not be troubled about grace—our concern lies with our side, with our will and effort. “Grace concerns us in so far as we go out to it and persist in its presence [emphasis added]” (p. 78). Finally, the grace of mutuality, of full meeting, is not something that comes to one no matter what but rather is something “for which one must always be ready” (p. 121).

Third, and perhaps most significantly, Buber (1958/2000) *does* outline a developmental model. He writes that the desire and effort to establish relation is primal and is seen in young children, with the fullness of the *I-Thou* relationship developing over time through effort (pp. 38–41). It is, as he suggests, an instinct to turn everyone and everything into a *Thou* and to develop a relational epistemology. There is movement toward a fuller expression of the *I-Thou* relationship. Buber further asserts that the movement to the *I-Thou* relationship—a development of the soul—becomes, over time, a move to a more mutual relationship. He adds that we achieve a more fully personal, actualized personhood gradually by ever more fully entering into *I-Thou* relationships,

spurred on by longing: the process of coming to apprehend and enter more fully into a relation with a *Thou* in a “flow of mutual action” (p. 40).

Finally, Buber’s (1947/2002) writings in his essay on education refer explicitly to both a three-fold developmental model (pp. 117–119) and the asymmetry of dialogue in education. First, he notes that the second and third manifestations of dialogue “proceed from [the] full reality” (p. 118) of the other by our confirmation and inclusion. Second, he notes the asymmetry of the educational relationship insofar as the student cannot fully empathize with the teacher *and* the hopeful possibility of that asymmetry being “burst asunder” when the student is able to achieve this and the relationship moves into friendship, a “mutual experience of inclusion”(p. 119). Sean Blenkinsop has noted the developmental significance of the asymmetrical relationship and the possibility of the bursting asunder on several occasions (2004, 2005, 2007, for example).

Perhaps the most profound developmental aspect of Buber’s model of dialogue is that the *I-Thou* relationship can develop into a relationship with the “eternal Thou,” God, a process outlined in detail in the third part of *I and Thou*. He notes that the moments of “supreme meeting” are not like sudden flashes in the darkness but rather are like the gradual rising of the moon in a clear night sky (p. 108). The pure relation with the eternal Thou is raised to a “constancy” by

our continual efforts to embody that relationship in the “whole stuff of life” (p. 108). Moreover, in other writings Buber (1947/2002) describes this as a “moment God” (pp. 17–18), one whom we can meet in any and all aspects and moments of our lives and interactions; this is a God whose presence exists in and is revealed in the present, unfolding, dialogical moment—a dialogical moment Buber (1947/2002) has called the “strict sacrament of God” (p. 21).

Clearly, even in *I and Thou*, Buber was pointing to our repeated efforts and an ascent into the fullness of the *I-Thou* relationship. It is not the magical or ineffable flipping of a switch, although the transformation is both seemingly magical and ineffable. We should recall, too, that the transformation is not guaranteed. And in *Between Man and Man*, Buber (1947/2002) continues this theme. The basic movement of dialogue—turning to the other with attention and responsiveness—is an action “round which an essential attitude is built up” and this happens “over and over again” (1947/2002, p. 25). The task of turning to the other and bringing *Logos* to realization ever more fully becomes more and more of a challenge for us (p. 45). By the time in the 1950s when Buber wrote the essays in *The Knowledge of Man* (1965), he unmistakably asserted that the *I-Thou* relationship comes into being through our movement toward it—our gradual, repeated, intentional efforts undertaken in the spirit of *devotio*.

The significance of whether Buber's model of dialogue is developmental or an "all-or-nothing" flip of a (magical) switch is clear. If it the former, educative efforts are possible in developing the possibility of dialogue; moreover, we then can, in our educational encounters and activities, move more fully into dialogical relations and the fullness of being as an educational aim. As I shall point out in the next chapter, where I consider why we might dialogue, these concepts and, more importantly, this ontological status, bear enormous significance in the practice of dialogue, preventing it from becoming instrumentalized.

Chapter 3—Why Dialogue?

Credo—small dialogues: requiems for a mother

Gone. She was gone. She had magicked my childhood, filling it with fireworks of the fantastic. She led me, mesmerized and open-mouthed, my small hand in her gentle grasp, through a world of ever-new amazement. She showed me a world that was everything, everything because she showed me so much was possible because there was so much there to see. There were red, red petunias billowing forth from the green, green window boxes, there were entire gardens filled with tangles of crazed, impossible colour, there were puddles whose reflections morphed and bewitched. Each day represented something more to do, to see, something more to be. And always her welcoming laughter and those hugs that wrapped me with infinity. Mine was the happy joy in the happy mind of a happy child so happy, happy, happy.

And now she was gone. Gone. No other word, no other phrase can tell this tale. A moment shattered in time. And the funny-but-really-sad thing is that my memory of it has me, all of nine years old, standing beside the bathtub, staring. The tiled walls, green and black; the tiled floor green, white, and black. All shiny, the way kids like shiny, but now so empty. The memory of it has me standing by the bathtub, looking at the door, looking exactly at the doorknob. Silver, round, reflective, silent. The silence was what the memory of it has the most. But that moment, looking at that doorknob: that's when I

learned to look with lasers. Staring at the doorknob, silently interrogating it for an answer—and now I knew.

My mother was gone. Not dead. I knew that—there would have been talk, and relatives, visitors, phone calls. She hadn't been around for a while, and no one was saying anything. That was the hardest thing. What can a nine-year-old boy say, when so badly he wants to know where his mother is that his heart would scream, would scratch and cry and beat and clutch and—what can he say? How can he dare ask the very thing he doesn't want to know? He needs someone else to do the saying, to take him into her arms and rock and comfort him, even if the saying was that she had gone away. A boy needs someone to say, but no one was.

Tell me. Can you tell me? (You've seen me, haven't you, sadly staring out at you in your classrooms from the sullen crunch of an enfolding body: sad, seemingly at times surly, sulking behind those desks. Looking, looking, looking. Gentle lasers of looking. Staring out the classroom window. It's a sad silence, isn't it? And you, yourself, do you ever look or catch yourself looking, longing?)

The house so still, with the off-white walls of the living room, with the now-bowing, fading, descending light of late afternoon—they weren't saying—and the living room furniture so mutely wrapped in chintz and class—they weren't saying. The windows there revealing a world she'd helped transform with joy—they weren't saying. The window boxes beyond so so deep, deep green—they weren't saying.

But I had known something had been going on. I'd seen her staying in bed until noon each day, the curtains drawn, the bedroom filled with emptiness, darkness, emptiness. And there'd been that time when the ambulance came during the day to take her away, and I'd stood there beside her as the gurney was lifted in. "I'm okay, sweetie," she'd said with a voice so cracked and painful it was the screech and crack of clay gone dry for years. Yes, there had been booze and pills and, as I was to discover 20 years later, much more horror besides. No one had been saying and no one was saying now, and not days, weeks, months, and, dammit, not even years into the future. Finally, within a few weeks I had realized in my nine-year-old way that she had left to live by herself, that this meant my parents were divorced. And soon every Sunday we'd be taken by my father to see her. Taken in our stiff, woolen, white and grey, and Sunday best. Silently. Sitting in the back of that '61 black Plymouth Valiant, I could feel the anger in my older brother, and the sheer bewilderment in my younger sister. The anger that later broiled in my brother like a rage, furious and murderous. The bewilderment that later brought the tears from her in the days, weeks, and years to come.

And we'd arrive there at the small, drab apartment all filled with shadows. Shadows, shadows—always there were shadows, as if the sun never dared reach in to tell you, never. There were no details to that apartment, only shadows. This, all this nothingness of a place for my mother, the queen of my heart who had filled my life with all that was good, was sunny, was possible. And now this nothingness of a place we were

in. For months, we visited every Sunday, and I hated it—we all hated it, even as much as we didn't want to. It was a wasteland of pain and little else. There was the one time when leaving to go home, my sister finally burst into tears.

“What's wrong, honey?” my father's solicitude genuine but knowing it couldn't begin to span the yearning and emptiness between, knowing that in too many ways he knew—that we all knew—what was wrong.

“What do you think?” My mother hissing in response, her eyes scorching anger. My father clenching, clenching, clenching his fists, but nothing more. He is a good man, but was at his limits. And, still, no one talked. No one said.

And life went on and I grew up. School. More school. Work. University. Marriage. A business. And all the usual joys, achievements, trials, and puzzlements of a life. Things weren't bad at all. Until five years ago. When some good friends, working for an organization I deeply respected were treated badly; they suffered silently and had to leave, finally. An old wound reopened. Once again, no one was saying.

This time, though, silence wouldn't do, and I stormed people; I stormed books and more books and computers for answers. Answers I'd have this time, dammit, and I got them, including this word, this magic: dialogue. Simple yet seemingly profound: and I wanted profound. I wrapped myself in profound, and hunted and overturned every hidden bit of knowledge I could grasp on this process of dialogue. This sanguine drug of dialogue had me in her grip and I swooned, drunk with all she had to offer.

How much would you like to know about dialogue? A hundred words? A thousand? Ten thousand? I can give you a thesis. I can talk with you; I will talk with you, anywhere, anytime, and go as deep as you want to go. I swear: I'll talk. I'll listen, too; that's also a passion. I'll listen for the questions, the hurt, and the pain, as well as for the answers, remedies, comforts, and joys. And I'll look; quietly, gently, but with lasers, I'll look. I want it all, especially the depths of your life. Anyone can have the shallows and the ripples that glide and flirt along the surfaces of our lives. That's newspaper stuff. Not for me.

But for what? Why am I so compelled? Why does Heesoon ask me over and over and over about this moral imperative for dialogue I go on and on and on about? Why an imperative, she quizzes. Why so hard when dialogue is so soft?

After thinking she didn't understand, I finally have to admit it's a good question. I came up with reasons, but they weren't enough. Not enough for a scary-good question. And why does Carolyn let me run tether-less, trying to find my way to answer, as if knowing that with just whispers of encouragement, the slightest nudge, I'll find my way there. And so:

Because maybe a nine-year-old boy desperately needs to hear. Because maybe a nine-year-old boy is still reaching, reaching out for the embrace of a mother.

Tell me. Can you tell me?

Why dialogue? An Introduction

I have purposely kept the title of this chapter to two words. There are several possibilities with the meaning of the title, two of which I will address here.

The first question is simply this: why *might* people engage in dialogue? What are the possible benefits to individuals, groups, and to society from a dialogical orientation? We need to ask why—or if—we should engage in dialogue, whether as individuals or as educators. In this chapter, I will review the reasons why a commitment to dialogue as both ontology and, from that, praxis, can be of benefit. I will consider this at three levels: the individual; the group (whether this be a group of students and a teacher in a class or an organization centred on common goals); and on a more universal level as a society, as members of the global commons (this is at an environmental or ecological level).

The second question is related: why *do* we in fact engage in dialogue? What motivations and forces within and without propel us to dialogue? I will not attempt a complete answer to that question—a thesis in its own right!—but will consider Eros as one of the motivating forces behind dialogue, remembering that for Buber dialogue arises out of instinct and longing.

Emerging out of the answers to these questions are the possible answers to why we might engage in dialogue in education, specifically. In another section in this chapter, I will consider the reasons why dialogical approaches in education make sense.

In summation, in this chapter I will explore (a) the significance of the ontological orientation, (b) the possible benefits to individuals, groups, and society, (c) the possible educational benefits and challenges of dialogue as a pedagogical approach, and (d) a consideration of Eros as a motivating factor in dialogue. First, though, I want to visit again the significance of Buber's conception of dialogue, but from perspectives different from the ones I addressed in the previous chapter. I wish to point to the inherent value of the dialogical relationship.

The Significance of the *I-Thou* Relationship

As noted previously, Buber (1947/2002) does not demand dialogue, adding that he has no authority to do so. The ordering of dialogue leads to its establishment as prescriptive, as commands, or as a series of techniques to be applied with and against others, or worse yet, as complete commodification. What can happen in our ordering of dialogue is, quite simply, that instead of developing *I-Thou* relationships, we end up merely perpetuating *I-It*: the instrumentalizing of

relationships.¹⁶ Buber spends a page of *I and Thou* (1958/2000, p. 43) asserting that the *Thou* and the *I-Thou* relationship of dialogue cannot be summoned or sought, planned, surveyed, be seen as existing “out there,” and, significantly, that others as *Thou* do not exist to “sustain you in [the objective, instrumental things of] life,” but rather only help you “glimpse eternity.” I interpret Buber here as meaning to allow a mutual becoming in fullness, in full awareness, and eventually to come to a relationship with the eternal *Thou*. In it in the fully dialogical relationship that we are able to “hallow” (Buber, 1958, pp. 28–37) the world, to allow the divine presence to be revealed or come into fuller manifestation.

Charles Taylor (1991b, 1992, 1994, 2007) has written extensively on the dominance of instrumental reason in our western culture, the reasoned calculation of efficiencies in achieving our own given ends. Although reason has given us a considerable degree of autonomy in severing our bonds to institutionalized metaphysical dictates, it has in turn imposed what he feels is an “iron cage” which separates us from others and the world and all its various ecologies. Others and other things whose worth might lie in areas other than utilitarian values are reduced to these, such as their cost-benefit or efficiency or

¹⁶ It should be noted that Buber is aware that *I-It* relationships are an inevitable part of human life and experience, even pointing out that the “exalted melancholy of our fate” (1958/2000, p. 30) is that the *Thou* can and will at times become an *It* (and, lest we be too dismayed, vice versa). There are times when, understandably and acceptably, we will have instrumental relationships with others. But instrumental relationships or, more importantly, an instrumental approach need not and should not dominate our lives.

technological value; the ontological worthiness of intrinsic wholeness and otherness is lost, replaced by commodification. Or codification. We institutionalize dialogue into a prescriptive methodology that we can “apply” to or with others. Dialogue through *I-It* relationships, or what Buber (1947/2002) called monologue appearing as dialogue. The irony, too, is that we end up using what Freire (2006a) termed “banking” forms of education, explicating or lecturing, instead of using relational forms of knowledge building (see Thayer-Bacon, 2003). We remain apart, wholly unknown to each other, as does our life together in the unfolding present. What we can do instead is make ourselves receptive to the possibilities of dialogue. The work we need to do, especially as educators, is in listening and being receptive to what is present before us.¹⁷ The life of dialogue between the two who thus meet then takes on a life and directions of its own, but it is not the life or directions of a pre-determined prescriptive. Rather, it is emergent and to some degree represents an unknown future. We are in dialogue with significant others in our struggles to develop meaning and create avenues of understanding for us as individuals, pairs, communities, or entire societies.

¹⁷ I do not mean to suggest that lectures, explication, and explanation do not have places in our educational approaches. They do. But we need to realize where and how they are effective, and, just as significantly, what limitations they possess with regard to our educational aims.

In his essay "Elements of the Interhuman," Buber (1965) points out that educators work with students, are committed to their care, and see them as unique individuals who are striving to actualize that stamp of authenticity. But educators, he insists, cannot impose themselves but they "may and must unfold what is right" (p. 83). The curricular and pedagogical implications become clearer: how significant is the establishment of the interhuman, of *I-Thou* relationships in our educational encounters, especially relative to other commitments we have or may establish? Alexander Sidorkin (1995) notes that nurturing communities give priority to developing nurturing relationships and they give other outcomes secondary importance; indeed, such an approach may be based on the reasonable assumption that establishing nurturing relationships in the educational community will facilitate other outcomes. However, the primacy of the *I-Thou* relationships and their development remains. As Olen Gunnlaugson (2009) maintains, we may eclipse the primacy of that "deeper ontological domain" in our efforts to fulfil educational objectives that, even though they may revolve around dialogue, are more instrumentally oriented. The entire upshot of an ontological orientation to dialogue and its applications in education is that the dialogical relationship remains an end in itself, and not the means to an end; moreover, dialogue is a worthy educational goal in and of itself

and it can proceed from more asymmetrical forms, as previously noted, to fuller expressions of dialogue.

Benefits to Individuals: Meaning Making

Dialogue as turning to the other also allows us to circumvent instrumentalism, the world of *I-It* where we are only capable of seeing others as objects who can serve our needs, leading to a lack of concern for the welfare of others or other groups, and, for example, rampant capitalism and misuse of the environment. As Taylor (1991b) points out, such instrumentalism emerges out of a sense of disenchantment with the world. But in dialogue we see ourselves as being engaged with the others, with other institutions, and with the ecologies which surround us. Even if meaning making is a struggle in and against darkness, even if there is insecurity and the loss of certitudes, those actions make life worth living.¹⁸ While the use of instrumental reason is not necessarily bad, we need to contextualize it within the bounds of our recognition that we are beings who live storied lives in specific times and places in quest of meaning. We need to see and respect the “embodied, dialogical, and temporal” nature of human life (Taylor, 1991b, p. 106). Moreover, meaning is not the providence of an elite, whether they are philosophers or priests; rather, it is found in what Terry Eagleton calls “the

¹⁸ See, for example, Shalgi (2008) for a discussion of the “dread of mutual creation of meaning” that can occur in relational, intersubjective psychoanalysis.

routine business of everyday life" (2007, p. 95). Eagleton maintains that we seek meaning individually as part of the process of individuation, adding that we are social animals who create meaning in community; history, anthropology, and culture bear witness to the social creation of meaning. In an earlier essay (2003), he had pointed to the somewhat obvious fact that none of us can understand the world without listening and engaging with it. He concludes his examination of meaning with this assertion: "If we emerge into being in and through one another, then this must have strong implications for the meaning-of-life question" (2007, p. 98). Buber asserts that the moment of meeting another is a stirring happening that can be light and sometimes more pronounced and fraught with depths. He adds that there is not only the expression of fullness in dialogue, but also the "inexpressible confirmation of meaning" (1958/2002, p. 105). We need to try at least to accept what is present, developing our awareness and openness. Working toward that confirmation of meaning may be a delicate, subtle process, requiring refinements of attunement and sensitivity (as we shall see in the chapter on the dialogical virtues), but the meaningful results are palpable; gradually, our lives, our existence in the world, and the world itself and all its constituents increasingly reflect *logos*. We are now caught up in communities and worlds of our dialogical making; these are not "their" communities, but ours, not "the world out there," but our world. As Buber

concludes, nothing can any longer be meaningless to us. And while no prescriptives emerge out of the gathering together of meaning, we now gradually and interactively move toward an ontological stand in and among the world and its inhabitants. Our dialogical relations fulfil us as persons, and we are ready to act; our actions are at the same time attempts to establish connection and fulfilment with the other.

As one determined partially by [social circumstances] the individual stands in each moment before concrete reality which wishes to reach out to him and receive an answer from him And a creative glance towards his fellow-creatures can at times suffice for response. (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 45)

Buber, Taylor, and Freire all assert that our ongoing efforts toward authenticity and wholeness can only find fulfilment through our encounter and engagement with others. We are only completed with and through reciprocal interaction with Thou in all its manifestations. One of the achievements of dialogue and our dialogical engagements lies in the development of a meaningful life. Michael Polanyi (Polanyi & Prosch, 1975) argues that humans, as biological and sentient creatures, are “oriented toward meaning” (p. 178): the vast range of communicative, artistic, ritualistic and celebratory, and overall cultural, scientific, political, and economic efforts—however short they fall of the goal—

can be seen as *collective* attempts at meaning making, whatever else they might represent. As Polanyi points out, the ideals and ideas represented in and through these institutions are what their members are working together to delineate; the efforts constitute attempts to flesh out and make coherent the tacit meanings that are present (Bohm, 1996; Polanyi & Prosch, 1975). The institutional efforts might be limited and imperfect, occurring in only particular quarters, but they do exist. “The picture or image that this derivation suggests is of a *stream of meaning* flowing among and through us ...” (Bohm, 1996, p. 7). As Buber (1947/2002) notes, all that is spoken to us, whether from other humans, or from other elements of the world, interrogates us and demands an answer. What the world requires of us is that we offer in return an authentic presence “... by which we are told that nevertheless there is meaning” (p. 16).

It is not difficult to claim that we have always been beings who seek meaning and the development of meaning. But meaning takes on significance in an age where some shallow forms of postmodernism have reduced the value of meaning and made meaninglessness chic. This meaninglessness is not the same as the existential trends and crises in thought of earlier decades where, for example, Nietzsche exclaimed that God was dead and we had killed him. Nietzsche’s statement here is worthy of examination, for he goes on to wonder what will happen, now that we have killed him:

How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers?

What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned

has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us?

What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of

atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the

greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become

gods simply to appear worthy of it? (1882/1974, pp. 181–182)

His call, which became the call to the will to power as that which is noble in humanity, remains just that: a call to something higher and deeper. If we are to reject God, the result could be nihilism, but it could also be something more meaningful. But it might be said that recent years have seen some trends that, while not exactly nihilistic, are certainly narcissistic in their shallow, relativistic (“everything goes”), and limited scope. Taylor (1991b) points to the disenchantment of our age, a loss of a sense of magic or intrinsic meaningfulness to the world and its events. In *A Secular Age*, Taylor (2007) points to the lack of reference to any ultimate reality or even, in some quarters, to the values developed out of the rational and empirical ideals of modernity; there is a loss of what Taylor calls a sense of “fullness” (p. 6). There is here a stress on the “irremediable nature of division, lack of centre, the perpetual absence of fullness” (p. 10); there is here the loss of both immediate or long-term certainty

and meaningfulness. For some, this is a world of what Ken Wilber (2001 a,b) calls “flatland”: a reductionist world devoid of phenomenological or hermeneutic interiors consisting solely of sensory impressions and empirically verifiable data.¹⁹ Moreover, we can lose sight of the commonality of meaning making, orienting ourselves to a more individualistic or even solipsistic position. As Eagleton (2007) asserts, if we come into being in and through our interactions with each other, then our meaning-making project is necessarily communal.

Buber (1947/2002, p. 41) asserts that the meaning making of dialogue is not a matter of “spiritual luxury” but rather a “matter of creation, of the creature ...

trivial and irreplaceable,” and that the meaning making happens in the

... tiny strictness and grace of every day, where I have to do with just the very same “reality” with whose duty and business I am taken up in such a way, glance to glance, look to look, word to word, that I experience it as reached to me and myself to it, it as spoken to me and myself to it. And now, in all the clanking of routine that I called my reality, there appears to me, homely and glorious, the effective reality, creaturely and given to me in trust and responsibility. We do not find

¹⁹ Terry Eagleton (2007): “One is reminded of the American poet Gertrude Stein, who was rumoured on her deathbed to have asked over and over again ‘What is the answer?’, before finally murmuring ‘But what is the question?’ A question about a question posed while hovering on the brink of nothingness seems a suitable symbol of the modern condition” (p. 42).

meaning lying in things nor do we put it into things, but between us and things it can happen. (Buber, 1947/2002, pp. 41–42)

Gert Biesta (2004), citing Homi Bhabha's concept of the "third space of enunciation," points to this communicative sphere, which is neither "me/where I am, not you /where you are" as the space of meaning exploration and production. It is not within me or the other, but it does act as the space where each of us can come into meaning. While *logos* is made present within us, it comes to fullness and to presence between us, where we have the possibility of the "ever renewed event of the entrance of meaning into the living word" (Buber, 1965, p. 104). *Logos* comes alive in the dance of interaction between the other, us, and the world. Buber adds that we not only develop meanings in the personal and interpersonal spheres, but now, through our openness and receptivity, partake (or at least *can* partake) in meaning making on larger scales, establishing ourselves as more cosmic citizens or as students engaged with an eternal Teacher. The *logos* we engage with and fashion is the same *logos* which "immutably governs the swinging opposites of our cosmos" and we become the "ready and obedient bearers of the word [and] accord to the cosmos its reality" (p. 105). We take our responsible roles as the ones who shape, form, and reveal our worlds, taking part in what David Abram (1996) calls a "deeper, more unitary life-world, always already there beneath all our cultural acquisitions" (p.

41); this is the life-world where *logos* awaits reformation. It is in and through our engagement with *logos* that we and the cosmos come into presence, and this is the “mystical” engagement and calling Buber refers to as “presentness” (1958, p. 181). Our dialogical engagement with others, even if they are opponents, allows them to come into being, affirming them as other (Buber, 1967a, p. 202). What is central to Buber’s philosophy of dialogue is that our relations with others fulfil us as persons in the act of shaping meaning for ourselves and others. To follow the Socratic dictum to know the self is to shape the self and allow it to be shaped: that we necessarily engage with others in shaping personal, interpersonal, and universal *logos*; to know the self thusly means to shape a dialogical self.

Benefits to Individuals: The Formation of the Dialogical Self

Taylor (1991b), like Buber, maintains that we become fully human only through our dialogical encounters and engagements with the world. We define ourselves in dialogue, even if that dialogue is adversarial, with significant others. We need our relationships with others not only to fulfil but to define ourselves. If, as Taylor points out, some of the things I value most highly are only available to me through my relationship to another, she becomes a formative and lasting part of my identity. We exist in and thus define ourselves through what Taylor calls a “horizon” of important wonderings, queries, questions, assertions, and entanglements with the world. In his essay, “The Dialogical Self,” Taylor (1991a)

notes that identity is often and routinely dialogically developed through integrated, non-individual actions—the sharing of agency; he notes that a “great deal of human action happens only insofar as the agent understands and constitutes himself or herself as integrally part of a ‘we’” (p. 311). As I noted previously, even in true solitude our meanings are created dialogically through our engagements with the reflective, witnessing self, with texts, or, in the case of the hermit, with God. This is distinct from the confining strictures of narcissism in which the self only mirrors itself in endless fascination; such narcissistic actions cannot create meaning out of the world, but rather restrict meaning to an endless, empty echo, and cannot serve as a source of authenticity. We can only define a non-trivial identity through our engagements with our fellow citizens about matters of consequence, with the other inhabitants of our planet and their requirement and demands, with our histories, or with the calls of God (which are inherent in all these others, Buber would assert). These communicative acts, whether through conversation, artistic expression, or the opening up and responsiveness to another, help us change from a monological sense of self and to see ourselves as dialogical beings—those who become aware and respond. As Taylor says of writing: “...the end of writing is to reach others and to affect a coming together in the Being revealed, or set free” (2007, p. 760); the engagement shapes and reveals a dialogical Being.

The dialogical self is, by its flexibility, able to find its stability in its responsiveness to a changing world. The dialogical self, while it is able to function in a modern milieu with the tools of reason and empiricism, is also flexible enough to accept uncertainty and change without losing a sense of stability. It can also accept multiple perspectives, allowing it to frame a view of things that, while it may appear unsure of itself, is actually more accommodating and expansive without being overly soft and indecisive.

Benefits to Organizations: Dialogical Possibilities

Dialogue will clearly allow for more effective and meaningful communication within organizations, of whatever size. It allows members to more fully come into presence, to meet, and thus to align personal and organizational needs and goals in ways that avoid having people serve as ends towards others' utilitarian needs. Daniel Yankelovich (1999) outlines several benefits to groups from adopting dialogical attitudes and practices. Members and employees feel they are recognized and valued in such an ethos. Dialogue allows members of an organization to work together in problem solving, mapping out new ideas, and collectively developing creative solutions to the challenges they face. William Isaacs' (1999) thesis about dialogue is captured in the title of his book: *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*. Isaacs points out that the problems many organizations face emerge out of an inability to "think and talk together," and

while I would agree with his sentiments here, I would merely re-cast the dialogical encounter as an ontological one which might possibly allow the manifestation of dialogue in conversation and thinking together. But dialogue allows members of an organization to not only think together, but to engage in those communicative acts which build collective understanding and, concomitantly, lessen misunderstanding by bringing out into the open and uncovering ideas, tacit assumptions, perceptions, and expectations, hopes, and visions. Such efforts are not small or easily undertaken, and would need to be done well, mindful of both the significant commitment required and the reality of the need for and understanding of grace.

Dialogical communication can possibly foster greater creativity, productivity, and efficiency as team members work together with greater understanding and respect for one another. Members are better able to suspend their assumptions, to adopt multiple perspectives, to appreciate better ones different from their own, and to see themselves as a cohesive group, as well as seeing their organization as being meaningfully situated in surrounding physical, sociocultural, economic, political, and historical ecologies. The verbal dialogue process tends to slow down the pace of conversation, allowing for and resulting in deeper and more integrated thought, the unveiling of assumptions and expectations, and deeper, more meaningful connections between both

people and ideas. These connections help us to become more deeply aware of the fundamental relationality of the world's physical, sociocultural, historical, and spiritual dimensions. Ellinor and Gerard (1998) point out that dialogue helps organizations become self-organizing systems when its members at all levels know how the organization operates, what its aims and goals are, and what others are doing. People in each part of the organization can access what people in any other part of the organization are thinking and doing, and each member can have access and feel connected to the overall aims and visions of the whole organization.

It might well be, though, that these dialogical efforts might be perceived as running counter to organizational goals and practices. It would be necessary to assess carefully the likelihood and viability of working toward ontological framings and manifestations of dialogue. The efforts would need to be ongoing, would require long-term commitment, would have to fit into the organizational operations, and would likely have to have the sanction of leaders. Buber (1947/2002) points to the dangers in a section on community in his essay "Dialogue": "If the group is striving even to reach a higher form of society then it can seem dangerous if in the life of the group itself something of this higher form begins to be realized in embryo" (p. 36).

Moreover, there is the very real danger of instrumentalizing the dialogical efforts. Buber writes in *I and Thou*: “But the separated *It* of institutions is an animated clod without soul, and the separated *I* of feelings an uneasily fluttering soulbird. Neither of them knows man ... neither knows the person, or mutual life. Neither of them knows the present Neither of them has access to real life” (1958/2002, p. 53). One can miss the essential message about dialogue representing real meeting—authentic, confirming, taking place in the present, and as making present—all of that. Real meeting is what Buber refers to as “the revealing of two [or more] people of the *Thou* to one another” (p. 54). What can remain absent in these possibly well-intentioned but misguided efforts is the opportunity for people “taking a stand in living mutual relations with a living Centre, and, second, their being in living mutual relation with one another” (pp. 53–54). Instead, dialogue becomes instrumentalized. Dialogue is dialogue—and not marketing or negotiation or mediation, as some would seem to suggest it is. Buber also points to the dangers of genuine community being misunderstood since it values human becoming centrally and not instrumental goals. He also worries about groups becoming lost in pure collectivism.

At the same time, however, feelings of community emerge from the efforts of organizational members to struggle to define themselves as a community and to find common organizational goals. In these efforts, notes Buber in his essay,

members must not forget to consider the meaning of community and that it emerges from the efforts of individuals to turn to the other.

In discussing community, Buber (1965) points to Heraclitus saying we must not concern ourselves so much with understanding ourselves in isolation, but rather the “logos that is common to them all” (p. 103); Buber adds that logos attains its fullness between us. In community efforts, Buber wants a “genuine We-ness” to emerge; not individualism and not a collectivism where individuals are swallowed up in mass conformity, but rather a sphere of between-ness between individuals.

Buber was strongly influenced in his ideas about community by his friend Gustav Landauer and his socialist vision (Buber, 1949; Friedman, 1991). In his early thinking, Buber called for a “new community of mankind” (cited in Friedman, 1991, p. 99) formed from small groupings of dialogically minded individuals—an idea he developed over time. His desire for community did not only have such earthly promptings: it was also inspired by his Hasidic tradition in which God is seen as desiring community (Buber, 1949). The community embodied an inner feeling oriented to relationality and a life in common, embodied a sense of work and tribulation and through that a sense of spirit. Moreover, he felt, not surprisingly, that the essence of a community was its centre, which for him had to be openness to something divine (p. 135). Buber felt

that community was a means of surmounting existential emptiness; turning to the other could best happen in and through the community of sincere individuals. He described this as a “living togetherness, constantly renewing itself ... [with] the immediacy of relationships” (p. 135). He felt that such communities could allow people to expand their ontological horizons to take in larger views: all of humankind and the world, even an “alliance with all creatures” in the spirit of St. Francis. Yet he despaired that the strong western focus on individualism precluded the possibility of genuine community, and he called the experiments with communal living in Israel (the Kibbutz) a “non-failure,” falling short of being a success. In spite of that, he recognized that these halting efforts were the workings of progress.

Friedman (2003) notes that efforts in working toward community—and I am including a spirit of community within organizations—do not inspire optimism. We have a long way to go, even today, in the midst of works by people like Peter Senge (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2005) and Otto Scharmer (2007). And yet Friedman, too, maintains this task of building community is a necessity we must work toward.

Real community emerges when its members, in concert with one another, come into being, where each member experiences “... everywhere a turning to, a dynamic facing of, the other, a flowing from *I* to *Thou*” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 37).

While a number of utilitarian benefits may stem from dialogue, the ontological orientation remains primal and essential. Without that orientation, we are soon into prescriptives and commanding of “dialogue,” and from there the possibility of even more authoritarian approaches. While dialogue can serve laudable goals and aims in a variety of organization, efforts under the guise of dialogue can be used to serve instrumental ends which bring benefits to some but not all. Moreover, participants might see civil and polite discussion as full engagement in dialogue, while more radical epistemic and ontological shifts so much a part of genuine dialogue might remain wholly absent.

I will use examples from organizational management and the business world to illustrate how easily the ontological orientation can be lost. Sebastian Slotte (2006) presents a methodology he terms “Systems Sensitive Dialogue Intervention,” where “... improvement is viewed through the realization of the desired consequences of the human system engaged in dialogue” (p. 794). He suggests that “taking action for improvement” is the first step of a dialogical “intervention,” where goals include, for example, the clarification of ideas and concepts, conflict resolution, and improved joint investigation. He adopts a systems approach to dialogue, wishing to examine the roles and values of all parts of an organizational system and not just those of particular individuals. While his systems approach is noteworthy, and while he acknowledges that his

approach is based on Buberian principles of relationality, trust, and responsibility²⁰, and while his situational approach to adopting a mixed-methods procedure makes sense, and while he recognizes dialogue as a “free encounter between participants” (p. 800), he subtly reduces dialogue to an instrumental, mixed methodology—an “intervention” planned and executed by leaders and facilitators, designed for “improvement.” Slotte does not mention the need for any of the participants to orient themselves to dialogue; instead, there is the “intervention” which is “implemented.”

As another example, there is now a marketing approach in business known as “relationship marketing,” or “relational marketing,” abbreviated as “RM” (Kodish & Pettegrew, 2008). One communications scholar bills it as marketing based on Buberian, dialogical principles (Varey, 2003). Richard Varey writes: “In speaking of dialogue, we are trying to re-insert a pre-industrial conception of human interaction into a post-industrial society in which commonplace thinking accepts the decoupling of interaction and communication” (p. 274). Varey argues that dialogical interaction allows an enterprise to be an “integrative social and economic contributor.” We can already

²⁰ Slotte and I would seem to disagree about Buber’s ideas on dialogue. He notes that the “‘space between’ ... exists independently of any particular action between human beings” (p. 796), seemingly ignoring the entire concept of turning to the other, and suggests that the space between arises only “in every accidental encounter between two persons” (p. 796), possibly mistaking an ontological orientation to dialogue for an accidental occurrence.

catch a hint of the instrumental nature of dialogue in such applications. While Varey acknowledges trust must be present, he seems to ignore Buber's admonition that growth for both into dialogical relationality and the "hallowing of the everyday" is the desired outcome. It is not clear that this is so for Varey. The approach outlined by Varey appears more as what Friedman (1973) describes as "monologue disguised as dialogue" (p. 294). These are the "manifold monologists with their mirrors," as Buber (1947/2002, p. 35) remarks.

Varey correctly notes that given Buber's criteria, it would be a rare marketing strategy that was truly dialogical, and he raises important concerns about whether truly dialogical marketing is possible.

These examples—and more could be offered—point to the significant challenges. Is genuine dialogue possible within organizations? It is certain that developing dialogue within many organizations is bound to be enormously complex and challenging. Yet Buber (1947/2002) suggests community is possible in organizations (pp. 42–43) and suggests it manifests when people engage in the fight of a community trying to establish its own reality as a living group bound in longing, awareness, and respect (p. 36). He suggests that moments of dialogue in organizations can lead to a "presentiment of a world-wide dialogue" (p. 43). Buber (1949) felt efforts in community, despite their many failings, needed to continue, seeing community through dialogue as the only way forward. Given

that organizations increasingly play central roles in the lives of individuals, communities, and nations, efforts to develop dialogue within these organizations makes sense.

Benefits to Organizations:

Developing and Sustaining Vision and Values

Group members are also better able collectively to generate values and meanings that sustain and guide them; dialogue allows for clearer and more meaningful and heartfelt communication between others as we develop listening skills and establish respect, confirmation, trust, and empathy. Organizations that were once driven by a “top-down” model of power and communication can now be “flattened” to more horizontal and distributed models where power and communication flow more equitably. A significant challenge for organizations and groups of people is to develop and maintain the visions that originally brought them together, the sense of purpose that drives them as a collective. Group members task leaders especially to develop and maintain focus, purpose, and vision, but these can and properly should be tasks for all members of an organization, and different members of the organization might approach those tasks differently. Because dialogue centres on meaning making and the communication of meaning, it is ideally suited to these tasks. In considering “The True” and the implications of seeking truth and The True for organizations,

Isaacs (1999) suggests that senior leaders of an organization reflect on the deeper questions and values that animate the organization. I would agree, but suggest that reflecting on the deeper questions is a consideration for all members of an organization, and leaders' responsibilities are to bring these deeper questions into focus for others, and that they do so dialogically. Isaacs goes on to cite Alan Webber, an editor of the periodical *Fast Company*, as saying "The most important work in the new economy is creating conversations" (p. 321). These need to be meaningful conversations that allow all members to come into presence, highlighting the values, beliefs, and aspirations of group members. As Isaacs points out, they are attempting to create "communities of meaning" (p. 322). Creating a community of meaning is a central task for any organization: it allows members to integrate personal and collective values, intentions, goals, ideals, hopes, and visions—which is essential to the welfare and sustainability of any organization and its members.

Some organizations assume that personal and organizational values and goals are in alignment when in fact they often are not (Whyte, 2002, 2009).

Individuals express regret at feeling out of step with organizational goals and values or that there are few if any opportunities for their voices to be heard.

Moreover, leaders do not attempt to see if any such alignments exist, how they might be developed, or to honour the voices of those who may see things

differently and enter into dialogue with them, however difficult that might be. As David Bohm (1996) points out, such deeply rooted assumptions about the nature and values of the organizations can be staunchly defended when they are challenged; dialogues might need to “go into all the pressures that are behind our assumptions ... into the process of *behind* the assumptions” (p. 9). Neil Evernden (1993) suggests that such issues are comparable to the visible parts of an iceberg, while a considerably larger mass of assumptions and presuppositions lies beneath the surface, beneath our awareness.

Further, developing a community of meaning allows the organization and its members to situate themselves ecologically with regard to other organizations and surrounding physical, sociocultural, historical, and spiritual or existential spheres. Members of the organization and the organization as a whole can see where they fit in the scheme of things, and they will better understand their relationships to other parts of the community and how their actions influence others; the chances of creating a sense of *oikos* would be increased. Slotte (2006) realizes the challenge for members of recognizing the uniqueness of their particular human systems, and in being able to adopt a systemic and holistic approach to incorporating dialogue within organizations.

For David Bohm (1996), these dialogical attempts to uncover and align meanings and values comprise a “coherent movement of thought,” where tacit

meanings and values are brought to conscious awareness. Bohm draws on the analogy of a laser as representing, through the power of its aligned beams, the power of coherence in organizations. An organization can be considered a collection of people who are centred on common purposes; in that light, an organization whose members have individual and collective coherence around meanings and values—what Bohm terms “collectively shared meaning” (1996, p. 15)—will likely be better able to succeed in reaching their common purposes.

Benefits to Global Communities

David Bohm (1996) points to the somewhat obvious reality that we cannot expect to have harmony on a global level or with nature if we cannot communicate meaningfully and coherently with those of other cultures and epistemes or with the various elements of nature. The flow of meanings is what he refers to as the “glue” which holds societies together. Peter Senge (2004) echoes that thought, pointing out that when societies lose touch with meanings generated in earlier times, dogma results since only the shadows of meanings are left; he adds that people are left “speaking at one another.” The loss of meaning leads to societal incoherence. With a lack of coherence, and the inability to consider issues that transcend a narrowly-focused self, there is little or no chance for reaching agreements on global issues. Buber (1947/2002) recognizes that in an age in which fixed, static, and universal norms are increasingly absent, in the “spinning

whirl of freedom” (p. 121), personal responsiveness and responsibility become paramount.

Ken Wilber (2001a) argues that pollution, climate change, overpopulation, and other environmental problems are not in themselves the issue. Gaia’s main problem, he insists, is “*the lack of mutual understanding and mutual agreement in the noosphere* about how to proceed with those problems. We cannot rein in organizations if we cannot reach mutual understanding and mutual agreement based on a worldcentric moral perspective concerning the global commons” (p. 285). Even more significant is Evernden’s (1993) argument that environmental problems are matters of relationality – not only with respect to a lack of mutual understandings, but more fundamentally about a lack of ontological mutuality itself.²¹ Lucie Sauvé (2009), echoing David Orr’s (2004) thesis that all education is environmental education, suggests environmental education needs to help us better interact with the beyond-human world such that all come more fully into being, “being here together” (p. 330). Philip Payne (2009) further echoes this sentiment, writing that environmental education must allow one to “educatively experience the self and relationships with others and these relations to, with, or *for the world*” (p. 310). Michael Bonnett (2009) writes that an environmental

²¹ Evernden references Buber’s philosophy of dialogue repeatedly and that philosophy figures prominently in Evernden’s fundamental argument that our “environmental crisis” is cultural, stemming from our epistemic and ontological stances toward the environment.

education that develops a proper sustainability cannot inculcate a dominant attitude. Rather, he suggests we inculcate a “re-enchantment” of nature through the kinds of dialogical virtues I will outline later in this dissertation: a humble openness and receptivity to nature’s otherness, a recognition that our knowing is fallible and partial, a willingness to respond to nature, a sense of the inherent value of things and their relationships to one another. “Attending to all this is thinking in a demanding sense, and sets the paradigm of the kind of thinking that education should cherish. ... Such work participates in and celebrates aspects of thing themselves, seeks to allow them to stand forth in their suchness” (p. 182–183). Clearly, though, such thinking runs counter to the instrumental ethos prevalent in many organizations today. Again, the challenge is significant.

The narrow, individual, “atomistic” outlooks decried by Charles Taylor (1991b), which themselves have emerged out of instrumental reason and the self-centred focus of unbridled capitalism, offer only an epistemic stand cemented solely in a disinterested reason that has been disengaged from its “messy embedding” in our bodies, emotions, sociality, and all the traditions that bind us together. Dialogue represents one of the points of resistance against these forces, in both its ontological orientation and its manifestations in conversation; it represents a bringing together of body, mind, and spirit in the contexts of self, society, and local and global ecologies—in short, an integration of self and

surrounding worlds. The development of common consciousness and understandings can lead to common purposes and actions which are sustainably beneficial; these dialogical moves serve to overcome the prevalence of isolated self-interest. Dialogue represents, and must represent (since it cannot be commanded), a “bottom-up” movement from the individual to the universal. Top-down mandates cannot establish the direct, sensuous, turning-to-the-other moves of the self which alone can connect us with larger realms.

Buber (1958/2000) goes on to point to the kind of worldcentric consciousness Wilber references. Each person, each being, each object represents for this person both the individual and the world; each being “implicates the whole world,” Buber notes, and is a “sign of the world-order” (p. 42). We might recall that each being, each object contains the hidden “sparks” of the divine presence in the world, the Shekinah. Our human task is to uncover and re-unite those sparks. In his various writings, Buber repeatedly raises our inalienable connection to the world and the benefits to the world when we realize that connection. In commenting on Heraclitus’ work, he reminds us of the universal grounding of *logos*, and not just its individual manifestations. *Logos* is the “meaning of being that dwells in the substance of the world,” and our dialogical turnings and local discourses help us “have a share in the consummation of this indwelling” (p. 90); our duty is to a universal “waking togetherness” (p. 91). We

remain in the sphere of between. Out of our orientation in that oscillating, dynamic sphere, the possibility of what Buber (1967a, p. 198) refers to as a “*vox humana*” emerges as the consort to global harmony. Buber goes on to intimate the global possibilities emerging out of dialogue:

But where speech, be it ever so shy, moves from camp to camp, war is already called into question.... when the word has become entirely soundless, and on this side and on that soundlessly bears into the hearts of men the intelligence that no human conflict can really be resolved by killing ... the human word has already begun to silence the cannonade. (1967a, p. 199)

Such unreserved, genuine dialogue is not impervious to opposition; it makes room for and engages with what is different, what divides.

Jaylyne Hutchinson (2004) outlines a democracy of strangers—those who are “other” to us—pointing to the possibilities of dialogical engagements which allow for the development of unique identities in the midst of commonalities; we can retain uniqueness without reverting to the modernist myth that we must all be the same or that others must “be more like us.” We need, she asserts, a “pedagogy of strangers” which welcomes diversity and which can sustain a “deep” democracy in pluralistic and postmodern societies where otherness is both recognized and welcomed.

The entire process of opening the firmaments of possibility and recognizing otherness is imaginative. “The role of imagination is not to resolve, not to point the way, not to improve. It is to awaken, to disclose the ordinarily unseen, unheard, and unexpected,” Maxine Greene tells us (1995b, p. 28).

Dialogue represents a chance for what Taylor (2007, pp. 159–211) calls “modern social imaginaries” to develop. Taylor describes these imaginaries as: “... the ways in which [people] imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations which are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images which underlie these expectations” (p. 171). These are imaginings—often conveyed in stories and narratives, artefacts and images—that are created by individuals and collectives of their social conditions, and they are often eventually held by large groups.

Contesting those who see the need to develop a specific (Western) moral order—the ethos of modernity, as represented by a set of ideas about how we should act, and why the world is arranged in the way that it is—modern social imaginaries represent what I would suggest reflects a more postmodern ethos. It is one of diverse self-understandings, of life practices, and of goals and visions that create a sense of shared community, even though they may not be articulated in ways that modernists can appreciate. These are the language and cultural “games” which Jean-François Lyotard (1984), after Wittgenstein, calls “paralogy”: small

groups of individuals developing new meanings that serve their own immediate and local needs. The language users give these meanings their own legitimacy, not requiring of themselves a sense of alignment with institutionalized metanarratives or legitimation from those who have established and maintain such metanarratives.

Tu Weiming (2005) advances the concept of a “Dialogical Civilization” as an imagined response to global problems such as harmonizing economies and addressing environmental issues. He suggests that a sustainable civilization will require a global sense of community that allows contributions from a wide range of people, requiring us to extend our horizons, become more reflexive, deepen our cultural awareness, and increase our abilities to recognize, appreciate, and work with difference. All of this represents a shift from divergence to convergence while still respecting the place of otherness. We can have harmony without uniformity, and diversity in the midst of unity. Further, the dialogues will have to occur at the personal and local, regional, national, and international levels. For that to happen, individuals will have to cultivate dialogical capacities within and amongst themselves, as these acts all require us to engage with others. The challenges are significant: “The current human predicament (i.e., the Problematik of the viability of the human species) clearly indicates that a thorough reflection, a comprehensive critique, and a radical subversion of the

modern Western mind are preconditions for the emergence of a new Civilization" (2005).

The Educational Benefits of Dialogue:

A Relational Ethos of Learning

Moving Beyond Technical Orientations

In contrast to less dialogical forms of education where curricula are developed by those removed from the classroom and the immediate experience of students, and where pedagogical practices rely on what Freire (1970/2006) termed the "banking concept of education," dialogical education allows reliance on both what Ted Aoki (2005) called the "planned" and the "lived" curriculum.

Curriculum planners can recognize the need for emergent forms of curricula, recognizing the roles teachers play in developing these emergent, lived curricula.

On the other hand, teachers now recognize their roles in allowing lived, responsive curricula (where all moments can be "teachable moments") and the requirement for them to develop the authentic presence and sensitivities which will allow them to respond to the immediate presence and needs of their students. Moreover, dialogical approaches stand as acts of resistance against the colonizing, banking forms of curriculum and pedagogy. Aoki suggests that we move away from conceptualizations such as student- or teacher-centred to consider a wider and more meaningful conceptualization which frames

curriculum in relationships. Such a model allows for the development of technical material, but also adds, first, “situational interpretive” orientation, which allows for hermeneutical engagements—meaning making—through the development and sharing of interpretive understandings, and, second, a “critical” orientation which, in Freirean style, adds dialogical forms of reflection and the uncovering of assumptions performed by groups in a process of transformation designed for “liberation.”

The Educational Vocation of Becoming Human

In his 1935 essay “Education and World View,” Buber (1957) argues that education must have both a place from which it proceeds—a rooting, if you will—and at the same time be alive to the present moment and its exigencies. But this does not suggest the absence of a fundamental and animated philosophical foundation which must support and guide the individual: “... one that has produced me and one that is ready, if I entrust myself to it, to bear me, to guard me, to educate me,” and it must also guide and support the needs of “our present situation.” Such a foundation provides existential, moral, and organizational guidance; it is “[W]hat the man who shall withstand this situation, what our growing generation needs in order to withstand it, that and nothing else is the educative material for our hour. Here the universal and the particular properly unite and mix” (pp. 99–100). I would maintain that relationality—markedly more

than just the orientation to socialization as mentioned previously—provides such a fundamental and appropriately responsive educational orientation. It is “... the education that leads man to a lived connection with his world and enables him to ascend from there to faithfulness, to standing the test, to authenticating, to responsibility, to decision, to realization” (p. 105).

As ever, the focus for the educator is on dialogical presence and not a set of techniques. Freire (1970/2006), like Buber, stresses the ontological mooring of dialogue in education. Dialogue embodies (literally and figuratively) the “ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human” (p. 66). Dialogue represents “consciousness as consciousness intent upon the world” (p.79). Dialogue is “an existential necessity” (p. 88) which cannot exist without “profound love for the world and its people” (p. 89). One cannot encounter others if one sees oneself as “a case apart from others” (p. 90), and one recognizes that self-sufficiency—seeing oneself as ontologically whole yet completely individually formed—is “incompatible” with dialogue (p. 90). In *Pedagogy of the Heart*, Freire (2006) stresses that dialogue must not be understood as a tool but as a “requirement of human nature” (p. 92), adding that because we are “unfinished” beings, dialogue represents the possibility of immersing ourselves in the “permanent search,” the ongoing vocation of becoming human (p. 93).

The responsibility of the educator lies in responding to the full humanity and divinity of each person and each situation, thus allowing the light to be revealed.²² In contrast to the lover who chooses the beloved, the educator is called upon to accept and to confirm all who present themselves. In answering the question of what the educator is developing, Buber replies that the individual we are developing represents the development of a culture, but that ultimately what is left to form is the image of God; thus the educator stands as representing "*imitatio Dei absconditi sed non ignoti*" ("the imitation of God who is hidden but not unknown"). God's presence, the "moment God," is revealed in the dialogical encounters of learners.

Buber's entire ethos of dialogue adds an essential quality to what becomes a pedagogy of the heart whose lifeblood circulates with the systolic and diastolic pressures of relationality. As Paulo Freire writes (1970/2006, p. 33): "To be in the world necessarily implies being *with* the world and *with* others." He adds that consciousness and awareness do not end with rationality: "This consciousness is a totality—reason, feelings, emotions, desires; my body, consciousness of the world and myself, seizes the world toward which it has intention" (Freire, 2006, p. 94). I would suggest that the development of such consciousness is not only

²² The "Shekinah." These are the divine "sparks" of the Divine which, according to Hasidic tradition, "fell" to earth, representing God's hidden presence in the world. Our task, it is said, is to bring forth those sparks into full and open manifestation.

carried out relationally, but the degree to which that might happen is dependent on the nature and quality of those relationships.

Dialogue as an educational approach allows both students and teachers (both as learners) to become aware of each other's lived realities: they engage in the mutual actions of naming their worlds, requiring each other to do so. For example, the students can point to the lived realities of family or community life and how these have contributed to their own development. They might also relate deeply meaningful experiences or values that have influenced their lives. In all of this, there can be a real meeting between them characterized by openness, risk-taking, confirmation, and an inclusive empathy. Naming their lived realities allows learners to engage in the vocational or educational task of becoming more fully human. The engagements of dialogue do not "begin with the upper story of humanity. They begin no higher than where humanity begins" (Buber, 1948/2002, p. 40). They do have the potential to take each person to heights not previously realized—and "where humanity begins" is the community of the classroom.

A Relational Approach to Knowledge

Dialogue also embodies the awareness of relationality in our lives. It represents what Barbara Thayer-Bacon (2003) refers to as the development of relational epistemologies: the development of knowledge through relational means, as

opposed to models that see knowledge creation as a solely individual affair. We come to see knowledge itself as relational: we develop it in and through relationships. Thayer-Bacon sees individuals as necessarily contextual beings who contribute to and are formed by surrounding physical, sociocultural, historical, and spiritual contexts and ecologies. We can develop knowledge in and through our relationships, and a dialogical approach in education means that learners can work together in bringing out, in a constructivist fashion, the knowledge that lies within and between them. A dialogical approach recognizes that the knowledge we form is fallible, is in constant need of development and reformation, and is developed through our relationships with others and our surrounding ecologies. Given that our world is increasingly connected, changing, and complex, understanding the relationships between people and things, and having a well-developed ecological sense seem paramount.

Charles Bingham (2004) reminds us about the difficulty of the relational orientation in education, noting the entrenched nature of educational philosophies that either ignore it or diminish its value. A world (universe) characterized not only by relationships between things, forces, and events, but also by a chaotic, unpredictable nature *and*, as well, the presence of sociocultural dimensions which are increasingly complex and driving people closer together in a variety of ways makes relationality as an educational orientation not only

increasingly viable but also increasingly necessary. In her Foreword to Thayer-Bacon's book, Nel Noddings writes:

. . . I want to mention the potential power of a relational approach [in education] for world peace. Instead of continually arguing over who is right and who wrong, we should ask how we can establish the conditions under which people might relate peaceably. A relational approach recognizes difference, is slow to fix blame, and probes beneath the surface of individual actions to find both causes and solutions. The approach is familiar to good parents and teachers everywhere. (Noddings, 2003b, p. x)

As Bingham et al. (2004) emphasize, in an era of sophisticated means of communication where conceivably students could learn on their own, schools remain viable because "education is primarily about human beings who need to meet together, as a group of people, if learning is to take place.... Meeting and learning are inseparable" (p. 5).

Difficult Speech, Disturbing Silence: The Challenges

Scholars have noted difficulties in implementing dialogue. Megan Boler (2004b) has edited a collection of essays noting the difficulties and challenges of using dialogue in educational settings, even to the point of questioning whether dialogue represents a viable pedagogical approach. In her introduction, Boler

(2004c) asserts not only are speech and silence possibly troubling but also it is important to challenge our assumptions about dialogue itself. Some of the questions she raises include: Should we use dialogue in our classrooms: is it ethically justified, especially if it results in tension and turmoil? If we decide that we should engage in dialogue, how should we do so? What about social inequalities which may privilege some voices while silencing others? And what are the roles of silence, if any, in dialogue? Can dialogue be a form of violence to others? How do we deal with anger and hostile words? These are challenges that are not easily met, they require both time and sensitivity, and they remind us that the road to *I-Thou* relationships is not always easy or problem-free.

In her own essay, Boler (2004a) argues that we may have to privilege voices which have been previously silenced or marginalized, and also allow a critical examination of any expressions of racism, religious discrimination, sexism, or homophobia—including in-depth examinations of underlying assumptions and worldviews. She suggests that students “... must delve into the deeply emotional investments and associations that surround perceptions of difference and ideologies. One is potentially faced with allowing one’s worldviews to be shattered, in itself a profoundly emotionally charged experience” (p. 8). Respectful, “polite” dialogues may not reflect the real world and Boler suggests we may need to engage in emotionally “raw” dialogues

which rupture the more respectful climate. Moreover, education itself is virtually tasked with shattering worldviews by varying degrees, and that remains an emotionally charged venture. Cris Mayo (2004) notes that civil, polite speech codes may encourage participants to think they are fully engaging others without there being any radical shifts in thoughts, attitudes, or behaviours. In his essay, Ronald Glass (2004) notes, as would Freire, that moral and caring relationships do not eliminate a commitment to personal and political struggles that challenge others and their worldviews; “Liberatory classrooms can never be neutral . . .” (p. 22). Suzanne de Castell (2004) asks us to remember that, historically, classrooms have allowed hierarchies and domination, and have not allowed marginalized voices to be heard. A concern rests with whether such ruptures—allowing disruptive voices—constitute an ethical practice of dialogue in the classroom.

I believe they can. Isaacs’ (1999) outlines a four-stage model of the development of dialogue in groups. Progression through the stages is made possible by working through the crises that appear at each stage; the crises represent opportunities or turning points. The second stage is what he terms “instability in the container,” where, after an initial stage of stability marked by routine and well-accepted politeness and superficial cooperation, what arise are opposition, disagreement, position-taking and the equation of self and others

with their positions, along with anger, verbal battles, and realizations that expectations will not be met. These can be terribly unsettling for participants. What often happens in the face of these tensions is a retreat to “civility,” to politeness and more superficial forms of engagement. The way through the crisis here is an ontological shift in which people realize they are not their positions, and can suspend the assumptions that drive them, thus allowing them to listen to others. But Isaacs notes that this is perhaps the most difficult crisis to work through in the dialogue process. The suspension of assumptions can represent intellectual, emotional, and spiritual challenges that manifest phenomenologically or somatically. Confronting these assumptions involves being sensitive and open to phenomenological resistance. There is no doubt that these engagements can be deeply challenging, but groups can overcome these crises, although educators will have to decide whether the risks involved are worthwhile. Jim Garrison (2004) recognizes that forms of violence may attend our dialogical efforts, suggesting that we have to adopt a “passionate ambivalence” which recognizes violence may attend our dialogues, but he calls on us to move forward with compassion in attempts to develop understanding in the midst of these crises.

The third stage manifests when, as a result of the ontological shift—accompanied by an emergent uncertainty and genuine questions—participants

move into what Isaacs calls “Inquiry.” Here, the other is seen as other and respected as being different, there is curiosity, reflection, surprise, uncertainty, and an overall willingness to inquire, as participants begin to suspend their assumptions about what is real or right or true. There is now reflective engagement. Isaacs terms the fourth stage “Generative Dialogue,” in which there is an awareness of the “primacy of the whole” (p. 279), where individuals now see themselves intimately connected to others, and where there is a flow of meaning, along with respect and confirmation of others, even in the midst of real differences.

The work of David Bohm, William Isaacs, and Paulo Freire suggest ways forward through these crises. For each of these scholars, an ontological orientation to an *I-Thou* relationship is either the outcome of working through these dialogical crises or is the means of doing so. Alison Jones (2004) suggests dialogue represents a “magnificent” but flawed romantic ideal, arguing that it cannot bridge the gaps we suggest it can. But this argument is itself based on a flawed conception of dialogue: one that casts it as no more than a form of verbal interaction. In contrast to such a narrow conception, Freire (1970/2006), alongside Buber, repeatedly frames dialogue as an ontological orientation, as noted previously. For dialogue to become a “way of life” in the classroom does represent an enormous challenge, given the demands of both curriculum and the

limitations of time which can constrict dialogical approaches to pedagogy, not to mention any possible lack of support, both structural and in training, for the use of dialogue.

de Castell (2004) argues that classrooms are not safe places for “dialogues across difference,” asserting that dialogue does not “fix” inequalities, which can only be remedied by political action. While she raises a valuable point, I would suggest that classroom dialogue can be and even is part of the political action that is necessarily messy and has no guarantees of safety. The significant and possibly insurmountable challenge—since so many variables are involved in the inequalities and inequities of power—is for those who have it to recognize the inequalities and seek to create safety in and through a dialogical engagement. The role of the teacher in making this possible is, of course, significant. At the same time, de Castell’s point stands: there are inequities which the “talking cure” will not remedy.

Jones (2004) concludes:

With more critical understanding of the complexities and contradictions inherent in apparently benign and progressive desires for dialogue in education, we might reduce our romantic expectations of dialogue, and set about working alongside and with each other in

different ways. Dialogue, if it occurs, will most likely be a

serendipitous by-product of that more oblique engagement. (p. 66)

I cannot dismiss the significance of the points these scholars make, especially of the need for me to realize the tyranny dialogue can impose. At the same time, however, dialogue, as a form of critical and loving engagement with the other, characterized by the dialogical virtues I will later outline in more detail, can represent some of the many ways in which we do work “alongside” —literally and figuratively!—others. It is much more than talk within a classroom. Dialogue itself is manifest in and emerges out of these “oblique” engagements. Dialogue for Freire, while it includes talk, is fundamentally, as it was for Buber, about an ontological orientation to relationality and the efforts to make that a reality. Far from being a by-product of these “more oblique” engagements, dialogue represents both the means of engagement and the ontological outcome of the *I-Thou* relationship; again, it represents the ongoing educational vocation of becoming more fully human.

A senior editor at a publishing house that has published books on dialogue, particularly with regard to interreligious dialogue, told me that many religious leaders had moved “beyond” dialogue (meaning verbal forms of dialogue held in meeting rooms) to

... practical interfaith work, where you became friends with adherents of other traditions as you together tried to do work that both traditions felt were important to alleviate human misery or, less grandiosely, solve problems, was central to any kind of peaceable interreligious future. To my own mind, that is a more promising venue for moving ahead than any other. (Bill Burrows, personal communication, February 27, 2006)

I think both Buber and Freire would approve.

The Challenge of Intimate Relationships

We can see that dialogical approaches also allow for the development of what Thayer-Bacon (2003) calls more intimate relationships—Buber’s *I-Thou*—where and in which learners can more fully come into being. Both Thayer-Bacon (2003) and Nel Noddings (1992) point to the need for these more intimate and personal relationships in education. Aside from confusions around intimacy in relationships—where sexual intimacy is confused with deeply meaningful and personal relationships—public employees are enjoined to keep relationships “at a distance,” both physically and psychically. There are the justifiable concerns around making students vulnerable to manipulation, indoctrination, and various forms of abuse, including sexual abuse and harassment. But, as both Noddings and Thayer-Bacon assert, if we recognize the tremendous need for intimacy in parent-child relationships, we can make a case for developing close, caring

relationships in schools. As well, the breakdown in relationships between individuals, organizations, whole societies, and between humans and the physical environment, indicates a need for us to re-establish closer, more meaningful, more intimate relationships. Further, the recognition of the other as *Thou* represents a profound form of respect that stands against and prevents abuse and manipulation. Far from eschewing these more intimate relationships, what we must do is clearly outline the acceptable boundaries of more personal relationships, helping students and educators to distinguish between what is proper and affirming and what is improper and abusive.

The Lunge of Eros for the Beloved: The Move to the Turning

There are, of course, many forces which propel us to dialogue. Here, I would like to examine one additional, significant force; an understanding of the role Eros plays in the genesis of dialogue can be useful in both developing and sustaining dialogue. This is, of course, the primal longing mentioned in the first chapter.

Buber (1958/2000) sees dialogue as primal; the *I-Thou* is spoken from the being, and it intimates a relationship. Our move toward the other comes through our longing—for what? For wholeness, for remembering, for reintegration, for reuniting (with parents, friends, lovers, God)—and in that longing we come to dialogue. The Greeks immortalized longing in its personification as Eros, and they characterized it as having sacred, heavenly elements and profane, worldlier

bents. Buber (1947/2002), though, agrees with Socrates' teacher, the female seer Diotima, who tells Socrates in *Symposium* that Eros is "...neither mortal nor immortal, but in a mean between them.... Intermediate between the divine and the mortal" (Plato, 1993, p. 26). Diotima tells Socrates that Eros was conceived when Penia (Poverty; lack) came to beg where a great feast was taking place in honour of Aphrodite (Love and Beauty). The god Poros (Plenty; fulfillment), the "worse for nectar," falls into a sleep and Penia, seizing her chance to have him as her husband and relieve her poverty, lies down beside him and conceives Eros. Eros, then, is the longing for union and fulfillment driven by a poverty of the same, or the creative urge born of that longing; it is a longing human and divine, profane and sacred.

Robert Solomon (1991) agrees that the force of Eros is a desire for unification or re-unification. Alcibiades impassioned speech about love in Plato's *Symposium* also stresses the longing aspects of Eros, but from a radically different perspective: against the noble and idealized sentiments about love Socrates had received from Diotima, Alcibiades presents a very human face to longing and its fulfillment in some form of union with the other. Not dissimilarly, Aristophanes presents, albeit rather stiffly, the myth of the two perfect, ancestral beings who, split in two, are now ever seeking re-unification as one being: the "infinite longing" to which each of us can relate.

There is, I would suggest, a similar urge to dialogue. The urge to dialogue is in many ways a very personal passion, in some ways much more aligned with the human vision of Eros as presented by the drunken Alcibiades than with the idealized version of Eros presented by Socrates. And while unity is a strong theme in Buber's writings,²³ he maintains the fundamental ontological duality of *I and Thou*, even in the midst of unity.

As I noted above, Buber (1947/2002) refers to Eros as creatively carrying out "his cosmogonic work: he is the great pollen-bearing butterfly of psychogenesis" (p. 33). Jim Garrison (2004) frames Eros as the passionate desire to live meaningfully which can only be satisfied by encountering the Other, and thus being drawn beyond ourselves; engaging the Other, rather than representing a reunion, is a chance of being "born again," as only those who are Other to us can stimulate the creative expression of meanings which lie beyond ourselves and our cultures. In either case, dialogue represents the expression of Eros in both ontology and *poiesis*. Canadian philosopher-poet Tim Liburn (1999) characterizes Eros as: "The desire to feel otherness as selfhood, to be the deer seeing yourself for me, it never leaves, the old residue of Paradise, that amicable common life desire seems to remember, the old bone it never quits

²³ See, for example 1958/2000, p. 26, 80; 1947/2002, p. 29; 1957, p. 19, 100, 102.

gnawing” (p. 4). Further on, he says of that longing: “... you crane forward into the world in appetite and enter it in sorrow knowing that this good desire that casts you out of yourself is right and must not be lost but is necessary and sharply frustrated” (p. 5). But our dialogical craning forward will only happen if we are deeply aware of that frustration and its origins; it is a desire to “know the withinness of things” (p. 6). Our longings lift us into the world where we can open ourselves to what lies before and around us, where we can turn in responsiveness to a world which ever calls to us with a multitude of voices. Lilburn suggests we bring sorrow, compunction, stillness, and an empty anonymity which will allow us to be filled in relation. And then: we watch. Become aware. Buber (1947/2002) asserts that Eros leads to a deeper, more imaginatively empathic awareness. And we realize there may well be an apophatic namelessness to our knowing; this erotic knowing can be the death of a knowing which is objective, stable, secure, or communicable. We have to be prepared for the realization that, as Lilburn puts it: “Individuality, specificity, haecceity—the thisness of a thing that makes it unlike all others, its final perfection, and its beauty, godliness—lies beneath order, law, name” (p. 16).

Devotio: The Knowing of Lover and Beloved

Eros also gives rise to an epistemic stance which Buber termed *devotio*: ways of seeing the world which emerge out of our longings for union. These ways of

seeing naturally include a recognition and concern for the welfare of the other emerging out of the desire for some degree of union or meeting with that other. The lover as knower. Buber's philosophy of dialogue, with its Hasidic religious roots, sees God as both immanent and transcendent, as approachable, and as knowable by all who trustingly and lovingly turn to Him; this is the approach of *devotio*.

The philosophy of *devotio* is one of call and response between God and the individual, between God and creation. The Hasidic tradition includes the concept of the *Shekinah*—the “exiled” sparks representing the glory or presence of God hidden in creation. The play of creation is that humans (as manifestations of the *Shekinah* themselves) yearn for and will eventually become aware of and thus re-connect with the *Shekinah*, the individual sparks, and through that union re-unite with God; we are the means by which the sparks are revealed and thus gathered together before God, effecting the re-unification of God and His glory in the world: “...out of all the things of the earth His eye looks into the eye of him who seeks, and every being is filled with the fruit in which He offers himself to the yearning soul” (Buber, 1958, p. 81). The call to dialogue is a response of Eros toward liberation and unification. “Around each man—enclosed within the wide sphere of his activity—is laid a natural circle of things which, before all, he is called to set free” (p. 105). The sparks of divinity are only released into fullness

through what Sean Blenkinsop (2005) calls "... the genuine encountering of the other. At that moment of insight and connection dialogue is occurring" (p. 290). The urge to dialogue is a response to the urge for re-unification. (Paradoxically, in that "unification," the I becomes more fully I (being made whole through relationality) and the other becomes more fully Other.)

Eros thus forms a foundation for the relationships between humans; devotio captures the longing for a relationship with the divine. In his 1957 postscript to *I and Thou*, Buber (1958/2000) refers to God as "Person" because he wishes to avoid a static, ontically distant conception of God. He means, rather, a presence that enters into relationship with humans in "creative, revealing, and redeeming acts" (p. 124), and which, significantly, makes it possible for us to enter relations with it as Thou. Relationality constitutes what Buber refers to as "mutuality, arising again and again" (p. 124), manifesting in our relationships with others and the world. "The man who turns to him therefore need not turn away from any other *I-Thou* relation; but he properly brings them to him, and lets them be fulfilled 'in the face of God'" (p. 125). God's presence as the sacred is ever present, "happening upon happening, situation upon situation," and it is a part of all that happens to us—if we are aware of that.

In *Hasidism for Modern Man*, Buber (1958) writes that his second step towards Judaism was "wanting to know it," adding "To know—by this I do not

mean a storing up of anthropological, historical, sociological knowledge, as important as these are; I mean the immediate knowing, the eye-to-eye knowing of the people in its creative primal hours" (p. 58,). The "eye-to-eye knowing of the people" signifies the essential characteristic of this knowing: as opposed to the more detached, objective ways of knowing he lists above, this is a knowing born out of an intentionally undertaken, phenomenologically intersubjective relationship. And he notes that his first impetus to Hasidism—and to dialogue, I would add—came from his desire for "the restoration of the connection" (p. 57). Although he places his desire as a longing for community evident among the Jewish community, his own longings may also properly be placed in the loss of his mother at age four and his desire for re-unification—which he conceptualizes as meeting—with all she represented. I can very much relate to Buber's experience.

... Here I stood once in my fourth year with a girl several years older, the daughter of a neighbor, to whose care my grandmother had entrusted me. We both leaned on the railing. I cannot remember that I spoke of my mother to my older comrade. But I hear still how the big girl said to me: "No, she will never come back." I know that I remained silent, but also that I cherished no doubt of the truth of the spoken words. It remained fixed in me; from year to year it cleaved

ever more to my heart, but after more than ten years I had begun to perceive it as something that concerned not only me, but all men. Later I once made up the word *Veregnung*—“mismeeting,” or “misencounter”—to designate the failure of a real meeting between men. When after another twenty years I again saw my mother, who had come from a distance to visit me, my wife, and my children, who had come from a distance to visit me, I could not gaze into her still astonishingly beautiful eyes without hearing from somewhere the word *Vergegnung* as a word spoken to me. I suspect that all that I have learned about the genuine meeting in the course of my life had its first origin in that hour on the balcony. (Buber, 1973, pp. 18–19)²⁴

Devotio responds to the world, both sacred and profane, with a particular, erotic theophany leading to “every unification of the contraries.” The response of *devotio* is that: “This very world, this very contradiction, unabridged, unmitigated, unsmoothed, unsimplified, unreduced, this world shall be—not overcome—but consummated” (Buber, 1963, p. 26).

The fulfilment of that erotic longing lies in a consummation with the world and any and all of its members.

²⁴ I note that childhood experiences might be significant in developing a dialogical orientation. Aside from Buber, Hans Georg Gadamer and Jürgen Habermas have both noted that childhood experiences played a role in orienting them to dialogue.

The response of Eros and the essence of *devotio* help us understand why and how we engage in dialogue, bringing us to turn to the other and to the world.

Chapter 4—Turning: The Move to Relationality

In this chapter, I will summarize some of the characteristics of Buber's concept of the dialogical turn; this summary serves as an oblique introduction of turning, leading to the more direct discussion in the next chapter of the specific dialogical virtues that make turning to the other possible. Here, I approach turning more as an integrally tangled skein, while in the next chapter I attempt to tease the skein apart, revealing distinct dialogical virtues. Turning to the other is the basic, fundamental movement of dialogue. It is in turning that the possibility of *Thou* arises; it is through turning that the reality of *I and Thou* manifests. We make turning possible through our awakened awareness and it manifests through an integrated constellation of dialogical virtues that we develop somatically, sensuously, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. The praxis of turning to the other leads to and becomes the life of dialogue, an existential and ecological situatedness in the world, a opening and responsiveness to the inner and outer ecologies of which we are a part.

The significance of turning lies in its ontological foundation *and* in its manifestation as the integrated response that follows. And so, while it may be correct to point to verbal, dialogical discourse as a manifestation of dialogue, I believe that—conceptually and practically—verbal discourse, shorn of its

connections to the ontology and its integrated manifestation in body, mind, and spirit, cannot fully represent dialogue.

Taking a Stand in Relation

Buber's philosophy of dialogue rests in the ability to turn in response and responsiveness to the other, the ability to enter into relation and connection with the other (qua Other). As Buber (1958/2000, p. 26) notes, "The *Thou* meets me. But I step into direct relation to it." There is the response of the *Thou*; there is the responsiveness and confirmation of the individual *I* stepping into relation with that *Thou*. There is a significant act of will on the part of the individual to turn to the other, having recognized that other as *Thou*: we turn, we go out, we engage, we respond—all volitional acts undertaken to move toward establishing the *I-Thou* relationship. These are volitional acts, but they are undertaken with humility, moving toward grace. The turning manifests itself in the ontological reality of relationality, in the ways of speech acts, the solid give-and-take of talk, and, as well, in the many nonverbal ways we can respond and be responsive. A full and responsive turning requires an engagement of the whole being with the other, Buber notes, and also a continued engagement with the resultant, reciprocal unfolding of self and other and of the relationship itself—not just the unfolding of *I* and *Thou*, but of *I-Thou*. The relationships are not static or even secure; the identities of self and other, and of *I-Thou* emerge and are formed and

re-formed in the dialogical encounters. Ultimately, what can result from that turning is a sense of love and commitment, a sense of responsibility felt toward that which is *Thou*. Buber also characterizes this as a heightened desire for “ever higher, more unconditioned relation, for the full sharing of being” (p. 68).

Turning is a beginning and ever again a beginning, a humble attempt to align the will with the grand will of destiny. Turning is the result of both will and grace. While the other reaches out to me through its presence or its call, I still turn in response as an act of will and through the grace of presence, which is made manifest through my awareness, receptivity, surrender, and humility. The relationship with the other is reciprocal; as Buber puts it, the other chooses me and I choose to turn in response, stepping into a direct relationship (p. 26). I say *Thou* to the other thus giving myself over to that other; the other reciprocates. The turning in response is or can be an act of love that exists “between” the *I* and the *Thou*; it is an act which confirms both.

In the eyes of him who takes his stand in love, and gazes out of it, men are cut free from their entanglement in bustling activity. Good people and evil, wise and foolish, beautiful and ugly, become successively real to him; that is, set free they step forth in their singleness, and confront him as *Thou*. (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 29)

Turning is the way of response to what is sensed and intuited, and every thing, every moment, every event invites us to response.

Not An Experience: An Encounter

In both *I and Thou* and *Between Man and Man*, Buber often refers to the word “experiences,” as in “the person experiences another person,” or as in “the person has experiences of another person or a situation.” His use of the word varies from our common usage today, and he uses it to characterize the *I-It* relationship. For Buber, to experience another is to reduce the other to an object or to take a distant, objectified stand apart from the other; there is only superficiality and no direct relationship. We add our meeting with the other to a list of experiences we have had; we instrumentalize the other insofar as one’s relationship becomes merely a collection to be catalogued—perhaps, if we deem it worthy of being catalogued. Experiences stand in contrast to genuine, mutual relationships where we bring the full presence of self and the other is revealed through our turning. Buber goes so far as to say that our inability to enter into relationships leads to the focus on experiencing and instrumentalism, adding that we become enamoured with institutions or the “boudoir” or our own, ever-changing feelings (1958/2000, p. 52).

Buber also contrasts the turning to the other, where my attention is directed toward the other in openness and respect, with “reflexion,” where I

become self-consciously focused on myself (1947/2002, p. 26, for example). In such self-conscious awareness, the other becomes only a manifestation of my experience and thought; the other ceases to be fully present as a unique and separate other. Turning recognizes the irreducible presence of the other and otherness itself. I recognize the other as addressing me as an independent being, and one to whom I can respond out of fidelity.

Otherness enshrouds him, the otherness to which he is betrothed. But he takes it up into his life only in the form of *the* other, time and again the other, the other who meets him, who is sought, lifted out of the crowd, the “companion.” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 75)

We now meet or encounter the other; there is a fullness of meeting. In turning to the other, I bring the fullness of my presence and in encountering the other, the fullness of the other stands revealed. Encounter is markedly different from experience; we stand in relation to each other and we meet in the sphere of between. As Buber (1947/2002) says, something happens.

A Happening, in the Present and other Moments

The turning to another occurs in the present moment and through my awareness of that moment; its significance rests in the opportunity for meeting or encountering the other. Unlike the world of *It*, the *I-Thou* relationship made possible by turning exists outside the confines of time and space. There are these

moments of “silent depth” when one sees the world revealed in its entirety, where the world is made present. Buber even characterizes the moment of meeting as revelatory. It is not an experience, but it represents a moment where “something happens.” “At times it is like a light breath, at times like a wrestling-bout, but always, it *happens*” (1958/2000, p. 104). While Buber sees these “immortal” meetings as fleeting and transitory, I do not believe they are necessarily so fleeting. As one cultivates the dialogical life, the moments can stretch, become more common, and gradually become more established.

Degrees of turning reflect our ability to receive and respond to larger spheres of otherness. I can turn to another individual and I can turn to whole communities. Buber in fact stresses that the act of turning implicates everything being “gathered up in relation” (p. 80), and seeing everything, even the whole world, as present in *Thou*.²⁵ Ultimately, one can turn in response to the whole world, coming “to the dreadful point—to love *all men*” (p. 29). The “relational” event of turning becomes the “consummating” event of communion, ever possible.

The spirit and paradox of *wu-wei* still obtains: the individual predisposed to turning waits but does not seek; he is “composed before all things” (1958/2000,

²⁵ Buber asserts that ultimately there is no seeking of God since “there is nothing in which He could not be found” (1958/2000, p. 81). Seeking, then, gives way to the revelation of God as fully present in creation and every moment.

p. 81), and naturally establishes relationships with them by being fully present herself and reaching out to contact them. The turning is a “finding without seeking” (p. 81) because what is revealed comes through one’s full presence, receptivity, and responsiveness—possibilities that remain in all moments and in all places. Buber (1947/2002) uses the analogy of a breakwater, indicating that turning allows us to become open and aware of and to engage with, in a systemic fashion, the “limitless tumult” of events and interactions that exist in the world because we now have a “breakwater” of perception that is “brightly outlined and able to bear heavy loads.” That is, we are now able to cognize and manage the tumult of events, systematically making meaning from them, seeing our connection to them, without being overwhelmed. We live in the company of augurs, but we are discerning.

Both Fully Present, Fully Human in an Unknown Unfolding

In turning and meeting, we expose our human frailties and limitations. Indeed, turning and subsequent meeting are only possible in the contexts of our limited, imperfect natures. In the face of such recognition, the partners establish a covenant to be fully present and to confirm the other. There is openness both to the other and to oneself. Turning allows for the “sounding forth of the soul” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 26), the expressions of beauty that might otherwise not emerge. In *I and Thou*, Buber acknowledges that turning is a recognition of the

spiritual “Centre”; the act of turning exhumes the buried “relational power” we possess, and the “wave that carries all the spheres of relation swells in living streams to give new life to our world” (1958/2000, p. 97).

In turning to the other, we create the possibility of becoming aware of the other turning to us. In turning to the other, we receive not so much informational content but what Buber calls “Presence” (1958/2000, p. 104ff)—the ontological uniqueness of the other that pulls us into a relation that meaningfully confirms and connects us to “this world of ours” (p. 105). We receive content that is not divorced from being and, just as significantly, beingness that is rooted in connectedness: the “whole fullness of mutual action” (pp. 104–105). We are “embodied in the whole stuff of life” (p. 108); the world and not some remote otherworldly sphere becomes our dwelling place. Elsewhere, Buber (1958) refers to this as “making present” (p. 85) or “confirmation.” Turning is the volitional vehicle through which Buber asserts the Word or *Logos* is made manifest—through grace. Although Buber is using “Word” in the context of God’s presence, meaning that the turning leads to theophany, it may also be said to refer to the full and relational Presence of the other(s); this is what Buber means when he says that “the word of dialogue has happened sacramentally” (1947/2002, p. 5). We manifest the sacred. In turning to the other, we increasingly create the possibility of turning toward a cosmic Centre where the “extended lines of

relations meet—in the eternal *Thou*” (1958/2000, p. 97). In that consummative turning, all is connected, and we find the eternal *Thou* here and now. As Friedman (2002a) notes in his introduction to Buber’s *Between Man and Man*, God does not speak to us apart from creation but rather through it. In his essay “Distance and Relation,” Buber (1965) returns to the primal nature of relationality, reminding us of the “great desire” to enter into personal relationships. An instrumental relationship is not enough; we wish to impart our meaning through a semiotic act to establish *dia logos*; meeting becomes a “phonetic event fraught with meaning” (p. 75) for those who have ears to hear.

In a 1954 essay, “Prophecy, Apocalyptic, and the Historical Hour,” one of the many essays he wrote in his later life in which he voiced his concern about the existential, social, and global issues extant in a post-WWII world, Buber (1957) once again raises the need for inner as well as outer transformation in the face of a climate characterized by “the indirectness that has penetrated all human relationships” where we see others not as partners but as “objects among objects”(p. 205). He writes that the individual coming to dialogue must be prepared to be surprised by what presents itself in the present moment. The turning thus represents an openness to what arises from within, from without, and from the between. Such a responsiveness involves risk, since we go to an uncertain encounter, an uncertain future, and part of that risk is the giving of

oneself, as fully as possible and with all one's limitations and shadows, to the other and the present situation. Again, he stresses that we cannot "produce" genuine dialogue, but we can be open and receptive enough to "be at its disposal" (p. 206), being receptive to the unfolding of the present. We require both the willingness to risk ourselves and a trust in humanity and the possibility of genuine meeting. Such a turning is an inner transformation from what Buber calls the "customary soul" to the "surprise soul," the one who is willing to adopt this radical openness and vulnerability.

In *The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism*, Buber (1960) reiterates that we cannot fully know what approaches us in the moment, whether another person or a situation, and so we approach with uncertainty. But we can prepare ourselves "ever again" (p. 181) for the act of engaging that moment. We cannot plan the meeting itself: we can only prepare ourselves for it. Our full meeting with the other or the world in this moment hallows that other, hallows the world. In a similar fashion, in *Becoming Human*, Jean Vanier (1998) points to the need for a seemingly paradoxical embrace of a stable sense of identity and the willingness to leave certainty behind; in his encounters with those who are prepared to embrace the moment of meeting, he discovers that these are people who are "living in a deliberately chosen spirit of risk, adventure, courage, and openness." They live in what Vanier calls a spirit of insecurity, the "embracing of

an unknown future in an attitude of honest questioning” (p. 53). To be sure, turning to the other does not always seem sacramental or easy. There are and will be times when it requires an existential willingness in the face of despair, what Buber (1967a) refers to as a turning of one’s very existence (p. 201). But turning leads to what he calls the “bright building of community” (1958/2000, p. 102), possible in and through all relationships.

Turning represents an act of loyalty to the other, and the meeting or encounter with the other involves both trust and fidelity. Lilburn (1999) writes that the turning of Eros resolves into a “pressing, unrequited fondness” which represents the founding of fidelity (pp. 16–17). If the other trusts me with his response, then I can choose, by turning in response, to offer my loyalty, even if it means struggling to do so, even if it means confrontation. This is what Buber refers to as “the reality of responsibility (1947/2002, p. 52); the other is a “partner in a living event” (1965, p. 74).

The Return: A Turning to the Divine in the World

There is another essential and profound meaning to Buber’s concept of turning. The German word Buber uses is *Umkehr*, which, according to Walter Kaufmann (one of the two English translators of *I and Thou*), more literally translates to English as “return”; Kaufmann maintains Smith has erred in translating *Umkehr* as “turning.” The concept emerges once again out of Buber’s Hasidic tradition,

and Kaufmann (1970, pp. 35–37) claims he means a return to God or to an awareness of God’s presence made possible through meeting; Buber intends *Umkehr* to mean, Kaufmann contends, the spirit of the Old Testament prophets exhorting the Israelites to undertake a penitential return to God. Further, God is seen as ever present and receptive to the return, in awareness, of his children. In *I and Thou*, Buber (1970; Kaufmann’s translation) writes: “Presence is not what is evanescent and passes but what confronts us, waiting and enduring” (p. 64). The sacred is ever present in all the acts of creation. In the ultimate sense for Buber, it is God who represents that presence.²⁶ Later in *I and Thou*, Buber writes that even in the existential “sickness of our age” there is always the possibility of “an ascent to the innermost, subtlest, most intricate turn.” It is neither an advance nor a retreat but the “unheard of return²⁷—the breakthrough” (1970, pp. 104–105). Elsewhere, Buber (1948) emphasizes that the turn is, in fact, a “world-embracing power” since God’s presence as the *Shekinah* (the divine, exiled “sparks” representing the immanent presence of God in creation, awaiting exposure and thus a “return”; God’s ‘indwelling’ in the world) is manifest throughout creation. The person who turns to God “takes the way, the fate of the world upon himself”

²⁶ Smith’s translation (Buber, 1958/2000) reads: “The present is not fugitive and transient, but continually present and enduring” (p. 27). In either case, I suggest that one implied meaning is that God represents that which is “continually present and enduring”; again, the connotation is one of waiting for a (re)turn.

²⁷ Smith translates this term as “reversal,” not “return.”

(p. 21). As noted above, the significance of the turning lies in its recognition of the “Centre” and the “act of being” which allows our ontological orientation to relationality to re-emerge, and the “wave that carries all the spheres of relation swells in living streams to give new life to our world” (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 97).

I am not inclined to agree with Kaufmann’s claims. Avnon (1998) notes that what is significant is that turning re-unites the sacred and the profane, thus bringing God into the world; or, to be more precise, it allows us to become aware of God’s presence in the other, the situation, and the world. Moreover, as Avnon indicates, Buber incorporates the Hebrew concept of *teshuva*, which means a responsive turning to God, but he does so by using the German *Umkehr*, which allows him to draw attention to the unification of the sacred and profane without using a religious term. And so Avnon is more inclined to agree with translator Smith that *Umkehr* means “reversal” or “turning around”; he protests that “return” in German is “*Weiderkehr*” (p. 253, footnote 63). (Maurice Friedman (2002), conversant enough with German that he could translate several of Buber’s works into English, agrees with both Smith and Avnon.) He emphasizes—and I think this is a central point on which many Buber scholars would agree, even if they come at this nuanced point from different perspectives—that the central concept I am referring to here as turning hinges on the *ontological re-orientation and alignment which allows us not only to integrate our own selves, but to integrate the*

sacred and profane, heaven and earth, and thus to allow God's presence—the God of the revealing, dialogical moment, the God who is present in us and the world—to come into manifestation through relationships. To highlight the significance and the subtlety of this ontological move, I again quote Buber's words from *I and Thou*, from both translations. From Kaufmann's translation: "an ascent to the innermost, subtlest, most intricate turn," (Buber, 1970, p. 104), and from Smith's: "an ascent to the innermost, most complicated whirlpool" (Buber, 1958/2002, p. 62). This is *not* an ascent to an otherworldly embrace of a wholly transcendental God; rather, it is an ascent of awareness and the concomitant ontological orientation to others, to the world that takes place here and now—where God (what Buber 1947/2002) once referred to as the "moment God" (p. 17), a God made manifest in the possible genuine meeting of each moment) becomes manifest or revealed. The completed turning, this profound dialogical orientation, is what Buber passionately believed was the answer to the "sickness" of the age, and is what he advocated repeatedly, especially in his later years.

The Creative, Integrated Turn

Turning to the other is a creative act insofar as it allows us to enter into and develop the uniqueness of each relationship. Through turning, "Creation happens to us, burns itself into us, recasts us in burning ..." (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 83). Moreover, Buber (1947/2002) points out in his essay on education that the

creative act is a primal instinct. While turning is fundamentally an ontological orientation, its manifestations can be momentary and even seemingly trivial—the glance, the sigh, the open expression—but the net result is the same: that I confirm the other as a presence. We may also turn through a creative response to the world, as in our artistic encounters with it. Buber warrants that the dialogical turn manifests and expresses itself in artistic expression. In *I and Thou*, Buber (1958/2000) writes of art as an “appearance” demanding an effective power that allows it to be conveyed; it demands the “primary word out of [a person’s] being” which allows the art to be created and to convey meaning. As Buber goes on to say, the “risk” is that a person may withhold nothing; the whole being is required (p. 24). As Friedman (1965, p. 56) points out, for Buber the encounter between the artist and subject is not merely a sensory one, but is rather an encounter between two beings. But this “mediation of the word,” to use Friedman’s term, occurs in and through the senses and the body. Buber writes (1958/2000, p. 25) with regard to the beheld form that he can only “body it forth,” thus disclosing it in its “whole embodied form.” In his essay on epistemology in *The Knowledge of Man*, Buber (1965) writes that the artist’s encounter with nature is a “meeting with the world and ever again a meeting with the world” (p. 151). As artists, we are ever open, receptive, and ready to receive and engage with the world.

Buber writes: "I am enormously concerned with this world, this precious fullness of all that I see, hear, taste. I cannot wish away any part of its reality. I can only wish that I might heighten this reality" (Buber, 1957, p. 28). That Eros-driven desire is the beginning of turning in responsiveness, but there is also existential import in a deepened discovery of self: "...not the trivial ego of the egotistical individual, but the deeper self of the person living in a relationship to the world" (Buber, 1958, p. 159). Buber's dialogical philosophy of the I-Thou relationship epistemically rests in that sacramental way of knowing and defining something through its relationships with others that he termed *devotio*. The beholder "transposes himself into the station of the beheld," experiencing its particularities through a "deep community between the two" (1957, p. 81).

We have encounters that previously might have seemed trivial and are now seen as profound; possibly we experience a gentle re-alignment or a pronounced jerking free of old ways of being in the world. The "radical" change may, for example, emerge out of despair, calling forth the aforementioned "turning of [a person's] very existence" (Buber, 1967a, p. 201). Regardless of whether a gentle re-alignment or a pronounced jerking free, that ontological re-orientation is not merely a "psychic event" but is made possible by and enacted by the "whole person" (Buber, 1948, p. 20): body, intellect, emotions, and spirit contribute to a wholly integrated, ontological re-orientation. Thus, their faculties

all contribute toward the possibility of turning. Turning represents an integrated constellation of capacities that make it possible. Our senses, for example, offer intimate, contemplative ways of knowing and connecting with the world, and of developing I-Thou relationships.

In an essay on Albert Schweitzer, Buber (1967a) refers to the “body-soul totality of the individual ... which is to be actively honoured and helped” (p. 56). It is this body-soul totality that is engaged in turning and through which turning is made possible. In *I and Thou*, Buber twice outlines the three spheres in which we can possibly relate: the world of nature, beneath (or above) the levels of speech acts; our engagements with other people, which can include (but are not restricted to) speech acts; and our lives with “spiritual beings” (1958/2000, p. 22; pp. 98–99). He reprises the conversation later in praising Socrates as an example of dialogue with people, Goethe as one of dialogue with nature, and Jesus as one of dialogue with Spirit (p. 70); and he asserts this integration of heaven and earth even more powerfully when he integrates the universe and the soul, “One and all” (p. 74). Still later, he adds, significantly: “In every sphere in its own way, through each process of becoming that is present to us, we look out toward the fringe of the eternal *Thou*” (p. 98); and “Form’s silent asking, man’s loving speech, the mute proclamation of the creature, are all gates leading into the presence of the Word” (p. 70).

In an essay on Judaism in *Israel and the World*, Buber (1948) writes extensively about turning, outlining its integrated nature. Turning is not merely a “psychic” event but rather it comes upon and is carried out by “the whole person” (p. 20). Buber maintains that God does not call just to the soul but to the “wholeness of things”; it is to the whole person, this “unity of body, soul, and spirit,” that God comes as a revelation (p. 27), and it is with the faculties of body, mind, and spirit that we are capable of responding. “So it is not just with his thought and his feelings, but with the sole of his foot and the tip of his finger” (p. 27) that a person is capable of turning: receiving and responding; the “redemption”—by which Buber means the turning—“must take place in the whole corporeal life” (p. 27). The basic movement of dialogue, this turning, is not just in “inner” action, but is there in the “very tension of the eyes’ muscles and the very action of the foot as it walks” (1947/2002, p. 25). Furthermore, turning is not just something that happens to or with an individual out of context. Rather, it is a “world-embracing power” which orients one to the world. The essence of his message is that the world—in its physical, intersubjective, sociocultural, and spiritual expressions, and as expressions of God in the world—presents at every turn opportunities for dialogical engagement, ultimately for a divine consummation. This dialogue with others and with God in the world occurs in no “sacred upper story” (p. 33), Buber insists; rather, the “whole of life is

required,” and all its circumstances; it is our integrated wholeness that is involved in our “meeting with the world (1965, p. 151).²⁸ *We thus engage in dialogue through an integrated turning of body, mind, and spirit toward the physical, human (including interpersonal, institutional, sociocultural and historical), and spiritual ecologies which surround us and out of which we exist and are made present through our engagement.*

Others agree. Lee Nicol (1996), one of David Bohm’s close associates, notes that he and Bohm felt dialogue represents a “multi-faceted process” involving all human experiences and expressions, including our thoughts and values, emotions, memories, sociocultural inheritances, and neurophysiology. One of William Isaacs’ (1999) concepts in *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together* is the notion of “fields.” These are made up of the “atmosphere, energy, and memories of people who are interacting” (p. 234); they represent the intersubjective, sociocultural, and historical contexts of the interactions between two or more people, and they are both subjective (interior) and objective (having to do with external factors). Isaacs adds that awareness of these fields, an awareness that they represent subjective, intersubjective, and objective realities, increases our capacity for dialogue: “... individuals may come to see and feel [conversations]

²⁸ Charles Taylor (2007) draws attention to what he calls “excarnation”: a disembodiment of spiritual life wherein spirituality resides “in the head” and the world is seen as something separate from that which is sacred or divine.

as *fields* in which a sense of wholeness can appear, intensify, and diminish in intensity again” (p. 236). The significance of Isaacs’ concept of fields is that it underlines the requirement for an integrated set of dialogical capacities; dialogue as an ontological turning of body, mind, and spirit works toward fulfilling that need.

Otto Scharmer (2007; Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2005), in his work on presencing, notes that the scientists and other academics he had researched had developed a capacity for presencing as a result of their ability to integrate their inner lives with the work they do professionally and personally. Senge responds that the ability to suspend assumptions and epistemic stances can be difficult when “...what we start to see [is] disorienting and disturbing, and strong emotions like fear and anger arise, which are hard to separate from what we see” (in Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2005, p. 39).

Buber’s (1948/2002) *The Way of Man: According to the Teachings of Hasidism* (also in Buber, 1958) offers an integrated synopsis of turning; each chapter of this brief book outlines a part of the turning. First, Buber deals with “Heart-searching”: when God calls to Adam (Adam represents all of us in our humanity) “Where are you?” (Genesis 3:9), it is a call for us to examine our hearts, continually, to see where we have come from, where we are now, and where we are going; it is a call to the heart for introspection. “For the Voice does not come

in a thunderstorm which threatens man's very existence; it is a 'still small voice,' and easy to drown. So long as this is done, man's life will not become a *way*" (p. 4). Further, a person is not fully united " ... unless all bodily energies, all the limbs of the body, are united" (p. 11). Such a person, I suggest, needs to be grounded in an existential vision which guides life and, as far as is humanly possible, all one's engagements with it. The life of dialogue proceeds out of the efforts to develop such a united, integrated spirit, and Buber affirms that we are capable of unifying our souls, developing and binding together the various capacities we possess into an integrated, ontological manifestation guided by a personal philosophical and spiritual vision. Buber acknowledges that the work of unifying the soul is ongoing and never completed, but emphasizes the need for the *a priori* determination that such an integrated approach is crucial.

Second, Buber delineates the "particular way" in which individuals will come to the world, discovering their own unique gifts, qualities, and the tasks which will allow them to engage fully with the world and its inhabitants, there to meet God in each moment. Third, a person needs to manifest "resolution" to carry out the work, but—and this is central to the thesis of an integrated turning—that resolution must not be a "patchwork," but rather proceed out of "a united soul" (p. 9). Such a person has "a unitary soul, a soul all of a piece, and accordingly performs unitary works ..." (p. 9). Fourth, and relatedly, one

possesses the responsibility of beginning with oneself. This responsibility, which Buber characterizes as an individual deciding that “I will straighten myself out,” includes coming fully to know oneself: “... not the trivial ego of the egotistic individual, but the deeper self of the person living in a relationship to the world” (p. 13). The work of the self on the self (and its relations to others and the world) is the real work of dialogue. In his discussion of the way of turning, Kramer (2003) includes a set of the kinds of questions individuals can ask themselves as part of their introspective efforts, as part of their dialogical work. Fifth, Buber cautions: don’t be too pre-occupied with yourself. Yes, the turning begins with oneself—but it doesn’t end there; the primal requirement is the existential and spiritual awareness that one’s relationships with others and the world are the primary focus. While a focus on oneself in heartfelt introspection is required, it is animated by a concern and love for the world. Further, and more subtly, one avoids minutely focusing on one’s shortcomings while ignoring the gains one has made or, just as significantly, the relational opportunities: avoid scrupulosity. Delightfully, Buber quotes the Rabbi of Ger: “Rake the muck this way, rake the muck that way—it will always be muck. Have I sinned or have I not sinned—what does Heaven get out of it? In the time I am brooding over it I could be stringing pearls for the delight of Heaven” (p. 16). Finally and sensibly, one can only deal with what is at hand, “here where one stands”; one’s

engagement is with the present, informed by the past, and with an outlook for the future welfare of the world.

Together, these leanings represent an integrated turning to relationality of the whole being. All of these represent what Ken Wilber (2001a,b, 2006) calls an “integral approach,” which he characterizes as developing body, mind, and soul within the contexts and awareness of self, culture, and nature (the physical environment). It recognizes these three areas of personal development (broadly speaking). It also recognizes that this development is influenced by and in turn influences what happens to the self and the sociocultural and physical ecologies which surround the individual. Ferrer, Romero, and Albereda (2005) note that individuals work on, not just intellectual development, but also in the somatic, instinctive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions; all these dimensions co-creatively participate in the unfolding of an individual. As Buber notes, turning—the fundamental movement of dialogue—becomes a more responsive and inclusive turning to wider and wider spheres, from the individual immediately at hand all the way to the cosmos.

The basic idea of integral transformative practice (ITP) is simple: the more aspects of our being that we simultaneously exercise, the more likely that transformation will occur. . . . an [integrated] practice

means exercising physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual waves in
[the contexts of] self, culture, and nature (Wilber, 2001b, p. 138).

In this thesis, I am suggesting that this basic movement of dialogue, the turning to the other, can itself be facilitated by an integrated development of “dialogical virtues” to which I have already alluded and which I will describe in more detail in the next chapter. In his essay “Elements of the Interhuman,” Buber (1965) notes that no one can in advance know how a dialogical engagement will unfold: given its open and responsive nature, dialogue cannot be ordered or arranged. Its course is the spirit, and participants might be influenced by the “call of the spirit.” But he adds that the participants must be capable of “satisfying the presuppositions of genuine dialogue and are ready to do so” (p. 87). This is the work of dialogue, and the “presuppositions” are the dialogical virtues outlined in his work. In the next chapter, I specifically define and describe the dialogical virtues from a primarily Buberian perspective.

Chapter 5—The Dialogical Virtues

Suzanne Rice and Nicholas Burbules (1992), in arguing the significance of educational relationships to human and social flourishing, develop a neo-Aristotelian model of what they call “communicative virtues,” which they define as “dispositions that enable communication, especially between partners who differ in terms of their linguistic styles, experiences, or beliefs.” Burbules (1993) and Rice and Burbules (1992), in alluding to the Aristotelian perspective out of which their work emerges, remind us that these virtues are pragmatic—they are not learned as principles or imperatives, but arise out of our efforts to establish a way of life.

They also contend that communicative virtues are not just abstractions, that they are not synonymous with technical competence, nor can they be easily determined as being present because of any outward appearance. These virtues consist of a “cluster of intellectual and affective dispositions.”

Other scholars and practitioners of dialogue have outlined various “communicative virtues” (Rice & Burbules, 1992), dialogical “processes” (Bohm, 1996), “living technologies” (Ellinor & Gerard, 1998), “practices” or “capacities” (Isaacs, 1999), and “core requirements” (Yankelovich, 1999).

Theoretician	Dialogical Capacities
Burbules (1993); Rice & Burbules (1992)	Patience, tolerance for other points of view, respect for differences, listening, an openness in giving and receiving criticism, honest and sincere self-expression
David Bohm (1996)	Suspending assumptions; proprioception of thought
Ellinor & Gerard (1998)	Suspension of judgment; suspension of assumptions; listening; inquiry and reflection
Isaacs (1999)	Listening; respecting; suspending assumptions; voicing
Yankelovich (1999)	The move to equality; listening with empathy; suspending assumptions

The dialogical virtues Buber mentions²⁹ are: *becoming aware, confirmation, inclusion, presence, the holy insecurity, a “synthesizing apperception”, and the “unity of the contraries.”* These are part of an intimately integrated, systemic constellation. Developing or manifesting the life of dialogue means developing and manifesting these virtues in an integrated fashion as an awareness of and response to the world. My focus here provides what I hope is a deep and nuanced understanding of Buber’s work on dialogue, shining a light on his significant contribution to the scholarship on dialogue.

²⁹ To be clear, Buber never refers to these as virtues; the choice to use the term “virtues” in describing these is solely my own.

Becoming Aware

I wish to explore here how dialogical turning is made possible through awareness. “The limits of the possibility of dialogue are the limits of awareness” (Buber, 1947/ 2002, p. 12). Buber focuses on awareness in many of his works, particularly in *I and Thou*, his essay on dialogue in *Between Man and Man*, and in a number of essays in *The Knowledge of Man*. And to the degree that listening is at least somewhat synonymous with awareness—at least in the most liberal definition of listening, and even if listening is a less-broad concept than awareness as Buber outlines it—then other dialogical educators and scholars of dialogue would agree to its centrality (Bakhtin, 1981; Bohm, 1996; Burbules, 1993; Isaacs, 1999; Nikulin, 2006; Senge, 2006; Vella, 2002; Yankelovich, 1999). Awareness foundationally precedes and is central to the entire process of turning in the dialogical encounter.

“I consider a tree”³⁰ (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 22). With this phrase, perhaps one of the best known phrases from *I and Thou*, Buber begins the development of an integral approach to dialogue. Buber notes that he can have an objective relationship with the tree, noting its size, various other physical dimensions, processes, and capacities. He can look on it as a picture, he can objectively note its various processes, he can classify it, “subdue its actual presence,” or

³⁰ Kaufmann (Buber, 1970, p. 57) translates this as “I contemplate a tree.”

“dissipate it” by noting it as but one member of a species. The tree as object. But he notes: “It can, however, also come about, if I have both will and grace, that in considering the tree I become bound up in relation to it. The tree is now no longer an *It*. I have been seized by the power of exclusiveness” (p. 23). He now perceives the tree as a unique ontological presence *and* that he is in a different type of relationship with that presence; I will return to the latter point of relationality. He goes on to point out that he does not have to give up any of the other ways of perceiving the tree: he can still note and be aware of its size and dimensions, its various physical processes of respiration and transpiration, of photosynthesis and nutrient transport. In fact, he integrates the various epistemic stances:

Rather is everything, picture and movement, species and type, law and number, indivisibly united in this event. Everything belonging to the tree is in this: its form and structure, its colours and chemical composition, its intercourse with the elements and the stars, are all present in a single whole. (p. 23)

The significant point is that there is now an apprehension of ontological presence. Buber also expounds on the theme of awareness in his essay on dialogue in *Between Man and Man*. There, Buber holds that the whole process of dialogue, beginning with the basic movement of turning toward the other, is made possible through awareness. But now Buber (1947/2002, pp. 10–12)

delineates three kinds of perception, a slight and nuanced amplification of what he wrote previously. An *observer* takes an objective, possibly analytical view of the subject—the objective stance he had outlined in *I and Thou*. In beholding another person, the observer “probes him and writes him up,” noting as many details as possible. The *onlooker*, on the other hand, is more dispassionate in the approach to the other, and “undisturbed awaits what will be presented to him.” There is not the determined, analytical and objective classification of the other; rather, the onlooker “lets himself go,” and although he or she may have a purpose in perceiving the other, there is a willingness to surrender and be openly receptive to what unfolds, trusting in this “organic work.” As well, the onlooker will become involved with the other, not seeing the need to remain aloof, distant or detached. “He does not lead in the grass as green fodder, as the observer does; he turns it and lets the sun shine on it.” Buber notes that great artists are onlookers. The onlooker is “seized by the power of exclusiveness,” to use the language of *I and Thou*, apprehending the ontological presence and wholeness of the other. There is both receptivity to grace—“lets himself go”; “lets the sun shine on it”—and will—“he turns to it.” The essential point is that the onlooker apprehends ontological presence in the other, be it a tree or a person. Buber (1965) carries forward this argument about awareness in his essay “Elements of

the Interhuman.” He asserts that one sees in the other wholeness without reduction or abstraction, in “all its concreteness” (p. 80).

However, the other is still separated and there is no demand for action or the inflicting of destiny, as Buber puts it in *Between Man and Man*. The third additional move is becoming bound up in relation with the other, what Buber would later refer to as an “elemental relation” (1965, p. 80). I feel that the tree or person or thing or event before me presents meaning, addresses me, reaches out to contact me.

It is a different matter when in a receptive hour of my personal life a man meets me about whom there is something, which I cannot grasp in any objective way at all, that “says something” to me.... But it means, says something to *me*, addresses something to me, speaks something that enters my own life. (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 11)

The tree is now “bodied over against me and has to do with me, as I with it” (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 23); now the tree “addresses” me and in turning I offer an open receptivity and at least the potential of a response. I feel addressed and so a relationship is forged. And the essential feature is that “in each instance a word demanding an answer has happened to me” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 12): one is now called to response. It is possible to become aware of the address even in the most casual encounter, where something, “however imperceptible,” occurs between

two or more such that one becomes aware of the other as a “partner in a living event” (Buber, 1965, p. 74). While the word and response in dialogue might come through speech, neither the “saying” nor the “listening” are limited to speech, nor are they limited to humanity. They can occur, as Buber lists, with an animal, plant, or even a stone: nothing is excluded from the series of things and events that can address us. Further, the other need not be aware that I feel addressed; there is simply and profoundly my awareness of being addressed by the other in and from the sphere which now exists between us.

Thus, the awareness which develops dialogue and constitutes a central part of turning to the other consists of *both* the apprehension of ontological wholeness and uniqueness of the other *and* the apprehension and acceptance (“awaits what will be presented” (1947/2002, p. 10)) of relationality, of the call of the other. As Buber puts it later in *I and Thou*, we receive not specific content but a “Presence” which contains mutual relation and confirmation of meaning in every event grounded here in the world (1958/2000, pp. 104–105). It is a significant feature of this dialogical awareness that it is additive, not subtractive: objective ways of knowing are not eliminated or devalued: “Rather is everything, picture and movement, species and type, law and number, indivisibly united in this event” (1958/2000, p. 23). Some readers of Buber’s work seem to feel that the *I-Thou* relationship excludes objective ways of knowing, but this is not so, as

Buber himself makes clear in *I and Thou*. The *I-It* relationship is not only marked but is also circumscribed by objective ways of knowing and the lack of the call and response. But the *I-Thou* relationship goes beyond either-or, and includes objective ways of knowing in the apprehension of the ontological presence of the other and one's apprehension of being addressed. In his later essay "Elements of the Interhuman," Buber again asserts that analytical ways of knowing are not under attack; rather, those who use it must be aware of their boundaries.

The challenge we face is becoming aware—of presence, of messages or signs, and of relation. We are, as Buber writes, "encased in an armour whose task is to ward off signs" (1947/2002, p. 12) even though these signs are all around us, happening "without respite." David Bohm (1996) refers to this as developing sensitivity in dialogue, characterizing it as the ability to be aware of all the subtle, sensory cues *and* the meanings which attend them. Buber draws attention to the real risks such awareness poses—that meaning and response is demanded from so many quarters (including from within oneself). But even though these signs of address are so manifold, they are just "what goes on time and again" (1947/2002, p. 13). And so we "perfect the defence apparatus." He writes: "The waves of the æther roar on always, but for most of the time we have turned off our receivers" (p. 12). There is a need for discernment in the ceaseless swirl of complexities, and in the babble of multitudinous voices which surround and assail us at every turn,

when there are not only the voices of what lie at hand but also the ever-present noises of the background and the attendant requirement to discern signal from noise.

Voices from those who are other, who speak in foreign tongues, from those who are not human, not even animate—we are reasonably inclined to deny their existence, except as noise, if indeed we hear them at all. In accepting them, we might be seen to stand outside reasonable norms, to have “fallen into the company of augurs,” as Buber (p. 13) puts it. And yet this is precisely what we might need to do in learning to become more acutely aware, in learning to discern significance in what before we deemed insignificant. Frank Scott (1981, p. 26) notes, in “Poem”:

Nature has her whispers.
If you wait
She will tune your heart to hers,
Soon or late.
...
Be as a wind-harp, still
With taut wires.

Awareness begins with and extends out from our sensuous knowing of the world and our refinement and discernment of that knowing. In his poem

“Dialogue,” Scott (1981) points to the foundation of sensuous, somatic
apperception:

The skin is bare for union

And spirit takes communion

From every living touch.

The skin is bare for union.

The sense is more than mortal.

Our bodies are the portal

Of all created worlds.

The sense is more than mortal.

The eye perceives the token,

The ear the wonder spoken,

The hand is mind’s disciple.

The eye perceives the token.

...

So few, so worn, the symbols.

No line or word resembles

The vision in its womb.

So few, so worn, the symbols. (p. 139)

Italian philosopher Gemma Fiumara (1995), in *The Other Side of Language*, notes that the west especially has a tradition of speaking, saying, informing, asserting, debating, pronouncing in most of our disciplines, from philosophy to art, but we have not developed a culture of listening, as we have developed a rational, logi-centric ethos. We literally know little about listening and developing a receptive awareness. Moreover, our culture has situated listening as something that is *imposed* on the less powerful and those considered less educated. Fiumara marks the value of listening by suggesting it as an "... exercise whereby we can develop a capacity for genuine listening, that is an attitude which occupies no space but which in a paradoxical sense creates ever new spaces in the very 'place' in which it is carried out" (p. 19). She adds that listening is as rigorous as any other philosophical activity.

The challenge does not end with our cultural marginalization of awareness and listening. For we may naturally reduce, describe, analyze the one who calls to us into a sum of analyzable parts and qualities. We thus lose a *Thou* to an *It*. Buber recognizes this "exalted melancholy of our fate," but the challenge to retain the unconditioned nature of *Thou*, to see its wholeness and filling of the heavens and to remain as *I-Thou* in the "streaming mutual life of the universe" (1958/2000, p. 29) is the challenge of becoming and remaining aware of the other

as *Thou*. The person of dialogue becomes aware of what is emerging, both from his- or herself and from “the course of being in the world” (p. 65).

One additional challenge does lie in self-awareness. Bohm (1996) points to the need to become aware of our own thoughts, feelings, words, desires, intentions, and their antecedents: a rigorous, dispassionate, and compassionate self-awareness that is capable of understanding our own “blocks”: those psychic barriers which hide our own sacred sparks. He refers to this as developing a “proprioception of thought” (pp. 27–29), an ability to witness thinking, feelings, and perceptions, as well as any physical responses which might arise from these (such as increased heart rate or breathing): a meta-awareness of these various psychophysical processes. Various contemplative practices, such as Buddhist mindfulness practices, are centred on developing such dispassionate awareness (see, for example, Goleman, 1977). One develops the sensitivity to observe the subtle cues and tracings of the mind and to what thoughts trigger particular emotional responses. Herman (1996), in pointing to the teachings of Chuang Tzu from which Buber initially drew inspiration, cites Chuang Tzu’s teachings on listening: that developing awareness is not just listening with the ears but with the “heart-mind” and the “ch’i” (ch’i is considered to be the energy flow or life force of the mind-body, the ethereal psychophysical energies out of which everything is composed). The significance is that we must still the heart-mind in

order to develop awareness, and that control of ch'i is an avenue to such control. Herman comments that developing such awareness involves an "active and affirmative" component that might hold practical keys to developing and entering into dialogue (pp. 194–195). (I will return to the value of contemplative practices as informing the life of dialogue in the final chapter.)

Yet another challenge lies in also becoming aware of how the other is situated physically, socioculturally, historically, and spiritually. As Lingis (1994), indicates, even physical posture and movement show cultural codings; we require the understandings and sensuous, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual sensitivities to understand these codings and their sources. William Isaacs (1999) refers to this as the ability to see structures, an ability to perceive and develop an understanding of what is unfolding in a particular situation or setting. Such understandings are developed through the relationships we establish over time, through our patient and attentive observations. Naturally, our ability to become aware of the various codings depends on our ability to be aware of and to quiet, when necessary, our own discursive processes which drown out what Lingis calls the "murmur of the world" and what Fiumara (1990) refers to as the "incessant rumbling of our cultural world" (p. 25).

Perhaps the greatest challenge rests in the address to us from the other and from the world. Not just one address but a host of voices calling with a

variety of voices with and for response. There *does* come a sense that you have fallen into the company of augurs, and you *do* wonder if at times you are, to be blunt, a bit unstable. Because this is alien territory for us, we need careful practice and discernment, along with a resistance to the seemingly sensible notion to abandon such listening, to turn off the receivers. With time and the practice of stillness and the development of what Buber (1965) refers to as “imagining the real” (p. 81), our receivers become more refined and sensitive to the signals calling for address; we are better able to pick out the genuine signals from the noise. Peter London (2003) writes that we must wait. Observe. Out of the stillness, if we are attentively receptive, nature (or the other) will “make the first move” (p. 121), or at least we will become aware of the movements being made all around us.

It is possible that we will hear only what we wish to hear. At least with humans we can get feedback to discover whether our awareness is accurate. Such feedback can be invaluable in helping us develop accuracy in perception. Repeated practice and reflection on our thought processes—the aforementioned proprioception of the mind—help us refine our awareness.

Awareness certainly plays a significant role in our efforts as educators. Notice the attention to detail in this passage from Buber:

That inclination of the head over there—you feel how the soul enjoins it on the neck, you feel it not on your neck but on that one over there, on the beloved one, and yet you yourself are not as it were snatched away, you are here, in the feeling self-being, and you receive the inclination of the head, its injunction, as the answer to the word of your own silence. In contemporaneity at rest you make and you experience dialogue. The two who are loyal to the Eros of dialogue, who love one another, receive the common event from the other's side as well, that is, they receive it from the two sides, and thus for the first time understand in a bodily way what an event is. (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 34)

Not only is there attention to detail, but there is also the reception of the head's inclination as a call, an injunction, a response. There is also the reference to the *wu-wei* of being at rest. Aligned with and as part of the process of becoming aware, there is the inclusive empathy of receiving the event from the other's side, as well. What is also significant is that the awareness is clearly an embodied one, rooted in a sensuous way of knowing.

Becoming aware is an initial movement in turning to the other, comprising an integrated, somatic, emotional, rational, intuitive, and relational sensitivity to the signs and signals around us, along with a keen self-awareness

that can discern the signs from our own projections. It is on the basis of our becoming aware of the other's fullness that we are able then to confirm that presence.

Confirmation

Emerging out of and intimately related to our becoming aware of the other and the other's address to us is our confirmation of the other as other. In turning to the other, we validate the ontological status of the other as a whole being—out of our awareness of the other and our relation to the other, we apprehend the other as different and unique. We apprehend beingness and wholeness. It is one's awareness of and receptivity to the other which put one into relation with the other; out of that awareness and openness come the response and the attendant confirmation of the other: “. . . out of the incomprehensibility of what lies to hand this one person steps forth and becomes a presence” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 25).

Buber's concept of confirmation calls forth respect for the other, be it a person, an animal, or even an inanimate object—other *qua* other, or what Buber calls “elemental otherness” (1965, p. 69). Respect can involve the act to which the Latin roots of the word point: to look again at the other, offering a fair consideration. Isaacs (1999) emphasizes that respect confers legitimacy on the other. Respect does not have to mean there will be agreement or consensus; respect for difference is just as (if not more) important. Lingis (1994) goes so far

as to say that we are “burdened” with the sentiment of respect. Giving due consideration to the episteme of another is to offer that stance a status equal to one’s own; it is considered worthy of careful consideration, and as having potentially equal value to one’s own or any other. As well, it means treating the other person as an ontological equal. Treating the other as an equal can be challenging because so often we understandably define others by their relative social roles. Moreover, if we do not hold others and their views with respect, it can be difficult to treat them and their views as worthy of equal consideration to any others. Confirmation opens up the possibility of an *I-Thou* relationship.

Only he who himself turns to the other human being and opens himself to him receives the world in him. Only the being whose otherness, accepted by my being, lives and faces me in the whole compression of existence, brings the radiance of eternity to me. Only when two say to one another with all that they are, “it is *Thou*,” is the indwelling of the Present Being between them. (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 30)

Confirmation is a profound recognition—even though it appears obvious and mundane—that the other is essentially not me and I honour and wish that otherness to exist and remain. Such an insight may be developed over time or, as Buber alludes to in his essay on education, may arise in an illuminating instant

(1947/2002, p. 117). Even more, the presence of the other is (and is seen as) unbounded. The person, as Buber points out in *I and Thou*, does not consist of things, is not a thing, but is "... whole in himself, he is *Thou* and fills the heavens" (1958/2000, p. 23). Specific characteristics such as physical properties, or personality, or the other's relationships to surrounding ecologies, or the "winds of causality" (p. 24) do not determine the other as *Thou*. No naming of qualities or properties establishes the other as *Thou*—there is only "silence before the *Thou*" (p. 49), the humble, irreducible, "unreserved" recognition that the other is, quite simply and profoundly, *Thou*. Paradoxically, although Buber describes the *Thou* as not being a specific point within the "net of the world" (p. 23), the other as *Thou* is fundamentally relational and "we know nothing isolated about it any more [sic]" (p. 25). The other as *Thou* has an ontological wholeness as *Thou*, not dependent on or determined by any factor external to it—but at the same time the ontological wholeness is relational; a *Thou* is a part of the net of the world. Put another way, the *I-Thou* relationship itself confirms and establishes the other as *Thou*. In my awareness of the relationship I have with the other, I set the other as a partner, thus confirming ontological status that not only recognizes the other as *Thou*, but the other is also confirmed through relationality, the partnership itself, and through the *I-Thou* nature of the relationship.

Confirmation also opens the door to the *I-Thou* relationship. Once we recognize the other as *Thou*, we can come into an unbounded, unconditional relation. Buber (1947/2002) sees this as the breakthrough: the shattering of solitude into a “strict and transforming meeting” (p. 239). As the word “strict” suggests, such an effort is disciplined, rigorous, and possibly the result of repeated efforts which develop receptivity and openness to grace; Buber (1965) refers to the requirement for an ongoing “devotion to being and becoming” (p. 68). And we ourselves have a desire to be confirmed, to be seen in our native fullness; we wish to be affirmed as irreducibly unique in and of ourselves. We wish this to happen wherever possible: not just in our families, where such appreciation might be natural, but also at school, work, or “... in the course of neighbourly encounters” (Buber, 1967a, p. 95). Thus, there is what Buber refers to as the “twofold” reality: the need to be confirmed and the possibility of confirming the other through what Buber feels is an “innate capacity” (1965, p. 68).

And although *I-Thou* relationships are made possible by confirmation, I also come into the fullness of being *through* these relationships; I am myself fulfilled and completed as ontologically whole in and through the *I-Thou* relationship.

But [the becoming of a self] is ontologically complete only when the other knows that he is made present by me in his self and when this knowledge induces the process of his inmost self-becoming. For the inmost growth of the self is not accomplished, as people like to suppose today, in man's relation to himself, but in the relation between the one and the other ... in the knowledge that one is made present in his own self by the other—together with the mutuality of acceptance, of affirmation, and confirmation. (Buber, 1965, p. 71)

In being confirmed and in confirming others, we “stand over against” each other, a phrase Buber uses repeatedly. We communicate authentically with each other, taking our stand in belief, perception, and perspective, what Buber (1965) refers to as the “authenticity of the interhuman” (p. 77). Even though we might strongly disagree with the other, Buber feels it essential that we hold the other with respect, confirming the other's presence and intrinsic value as a vehicle of Present Being; we are “making present” the other as other. Again, confirmation of the other emerges out of our awareness of that other.

At the very same time, however, although that awareness includes “wholeness and unity” (1965, p. 63), ontological individuality remains and, indeed, is glorified through the process of confirmation. The ontological uniqueness existing in the midst of any sense of unified wholeness is what Buber

means by “distance”: “Only the view of what is over against me in the world in its full presence ... gives me the world truly as a whole to me” (p. 63). To fully comprehend unity, one has to, at the very same time, paradoxically enough, have an appreciation of ontological individuality. As Buber continues: “This making present [confirmation of the other qua other] increases until it is a paradox in the soul when I and the other are embraced by a common living situation . . .”

(Buber, 1965, p. 70). Frank Scott (1981) writes, in “Windfall”:

This leaf, held like the heartache in my hand,

...

This small complete and perfect thing

...

This is a leaf I talk to as a lover

And lay down gently now my poem is over. (p. 144)

What is also significant is that the epistemic stance of *devotio* and the resultant awareness and turning are brought on by a conscious act of will; Buber here refers to entering into relation as an act and as work. An epistemological multilingualism born of respect, of confirmation of the other, allows and even demands co-existence in the midst of difference.

Confirming the other is what Buber (1965) refers to as the movement of a “primal setting at a distance” (p. 60).³¹ One confirms that the other is not only

³¹ The German term for this, referred to by Buber’s biographer and others, is *Urdistanz*.

different but exists apart. One “detaches” the other as a whole being from himself, making it appear as other. While we should be willing to at least temporarily hold others as ontological and epistemic equals³², this does not mean we are the same. Others remain others (other *qua* other) and are worthy of respect *as* others, different from us and, paradoxically, as not equal.

Honouring otherness is a significant challenge. Emmanuel Levinas (1969) argues that the Other is not other “with a relative alterity,” but other in an absolute sense. The face of the Other is not and cannot be contained, comprehended, or encompassed by me, and the Other remains “infinitely transcendent, infinitely foreign” (p. 194). Seeing the other as (absolutely) Other offers a respectful, humble, ethical stance, one of distance. Buber (1947/2002) acknowledges what is “essentially other than myself,” adding that he accepts and honours otherness and its continued presence, both in a universal and particular sense (pp. 71–71).

To be sure, the other presents a challenge. There is what Lingis (1994) refers to as the “intruder,” or the “stranger,” the one with whom we, representing the rational community, have “nothing in common.” This community of others “troubles the rational community, as its double or its

³² Holding others as epistemic equals has particular significance for us in both education and academia: what forms and whose knowledge are we willing to privilege with authority and validity?

shadow” (p. 10). Thus recognizing the Other and the epistemology of the Other can even serve as a means of seeing ourselves in new ways, and, perhaps, a shadow side of rationality itself—by which I mean that which is alien to us and to rationality. But the other represents an imperative which contests commonality. Those of us in the rational community tend to legitimate rationalist epistemic stances, marginalizing other ways of being in and seeing the world; as educators working in a system which understandably champions rationality, we need to be mindful of this tendency.

Isaacs (1999) suggests how we might engender our ability to confirm others, by focusing our attention and to coming to “stand still.” In that stillness, we focus on the essentials, the “essence of things,” as a means of becoming aware of and confirming what is, what Lilburn (1999) refers to as a the essence of something or of the world behind its order, laws, and names—haecceity.

Paradoxically, while there can be ontological distance and otherness, there is still the manifestation (or the possibility of that manifestation) of a common humanity, or a sense of commonality with the more-than-human world. When we come to know another to the point that we can confirm its essence and integral wholeness, we are moving toward what Buber termed “inclusion.” The next aspect of the dialogical turn is the empathic ability to include another’s

experience and views in our own without any loss of our own perspective or sense of identity.

Inclusion

Eros can propel us to a movement of “experiencing the other side” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 114): being able to apprehend what the other is experiencing. This deep apprehension of another’s experience, sensation, emotion, or thought “makes the other person present.” Buber calls this “inclusion,” because I (or we) have both the apprehension of my (or our) own experiences, sensations, emotions, and thoughts *and* those of the other. It is not a movement of “fancy,” an emotional, flighty imagining, but an “actuality of the being” (p. 114), although it is an imaginative move made possible by a deeper apprehension of the other’s reality and experience. He defines inclusion as an “extension of one’s own consciousness, the fulfilment of the actual situation of life, the complete presence of the reality in which one participates,” where an individual, without sacrificing any personal perception or reality, “lives through the common event from the standpoint of the other” (p. 115). One can see that it is an extension of confirmation and contributes to its fulfilment.

Buber (1965) again refers to inclusion in two of his essays in *The Knowledge of Man*, “Distance and Relation” and “Elements of the Interhuman.” In the first

essay, he describes inclusion as “imagining the real,”³³ the ability to “behold before one’s soul a reality arising at this moment but not be to be directly experienced”; one imagines what the other is at this moment perceiving, feeling, desiring, or thinking. It is not a detached, intellectual consideration but rather an apprehension of the other’s “very reality ... a living process” (p. 70). If another is experiencing a specific pain, I feel that pain, as well (to whatever degree possible), not just some vague, general discomfort.

Buber goes on to say that distance—ontological separation—between the other and me remains; the other is still independent, although now (paradoxically) connected and included through my inclusive turning—and that intimate connection is deeply felt. In his 1957 postscript to *I and Thou*, Buber (1958/2000) points to this “bipolar situation,” accentuating that the lived experience of *both* the *I* and the *Thou* are significant and must remain, and he emphasizes that one must live the situation of encounter “not merely from his end but also from that of his partner” (p. 122). *But*—and this point is central to the significance of dialogue in establishing ontological presence—inclusion helps fulfil relationships and through them being-ness. I not only confirm the other but “... experience, in the particular approximation of the given moment, the experience belonging to him as this very one. Here and now for the first time

³³ *Realphantasie* in German.

does the other become a self for me ...” (p. 71). Buber then goes on to add, significantly, that the other becomes a self *with* me. The process of mutual “making present” of the *I* and the *Thou* is accomplished through the relationship; we both come into the fullness of being through our confirmation of and inclusive turning to the other. “It is from one man to another that the heavenly bread of self-being is passed” (p. 71).

Buber (1965) once again points to the integrated nature of dialogue when, in referring to inclusion as an imagining of the real he indicates that this imaginative capacity works in conjunction with the senses, with our somatic and sensory sensitivities, and with our awareness to “work together to make the other present as a whole and as a unique being, as the person that he is” (p. 85). Again, I receive the other—be it a person, an animal or a tree, or a spiritual being—as a partner, fully confirming the partner; in dialogue, both come into present being, both are ontologically fulfilled.

As Buber (1957) put it in another essay, inclusion includes, along with somatic sensitivity, an intuitive capacity to transpose oneself “into the station of the beheld, and experiences its particular life, its sensations and impulses from within” (p. 81). I would suggest that there is a blending of the imaginative and intuitive, and that Buber’s repeated assertion of “imagining the real” is in fact a creative and intuitive capacity. Buber goes on in this essay on Bergson’s concept

of intuition to add that the “living connection” between two in dialogue is expressed through the ability of at least one of the partners to “directly adapt himself to and become part of the nature and manner of existence of the other” (p. 86). In discussing awareness, he writes in one essay that it is not “a question of formal apparent understanding on a minimal basis, but of an awareness from the other side of the other’s real relation to the truth” (1957, p. 102). In *I and Thou*, Buber (1958/2000) notes that the knowing of the other lies beyond the confines of time and space, and in his essay on dialogue (1947/2002), Buber points to an intuitive knowing: “What does he now ‘know’ of the other? No more knowing is needed. For where unreserved has ruled, even wordlessly ... the word of dialogue has happened sacramentally” (p. 5).^{34 35} Nathan Rotenstreich (1967) refers to such knowing as an immediate knowledge of the *Thou*.

³⁴ Although there is an imaginative or possibly intuitive element in the virtue of inclusion, I would suggest it is not divorced from or antithetical to somatic and sensory forms of knowing. As I have noted previously, Buber very much called for the use of all the senses and somatic engagement in developing dialogical relationships. Once again, here we see an integral approach to dialogue—Friedman (1967) writes “In genuine dialogue the experiencing senses and the real fantasy which supplements them work together to make the other present as whole and one” (p. 100) and later (1991) beautifully characterizes this as a “complete intertwining of sensory and spiritual spontaneity” (p. 67). I would suggest that the refinement of our somatic and sensory capacities works in conjunction with or even serves to enhance the intuitive, imaginative capacities which make inclusion and dialogue possible. At the same time, the intuitive and imaginative capacities could serve to enhance sensory capacities; the essential point is the integration.

Buber's description of what he terms inclusion is clearly an empathic turning to the other. He summarizes it in "Elements of the Interhuman" as a "... bold swinging—demanding the most intensive stirring of one's being—into the life of another" (1965, p. 81). And yet Buber states he does not believe in empathy, and many other scholars have repeated this claim (see, for example, Kramer, 2003; Rotenstreich, 1967). I would suggest that it is in the characterization of bold swinging—a characterization which Maurice Friedman (1991) once called a "bold imaginative swinging"—that we can explain why inclusion is in fact what we now conceive of as empathy. Buber's concern with the concept of empathy is voiced in his essay "Education" in *Between Man and Man*. There he defines empathy as meaning to:

glide with one's own feeling into the dynamic structure of an object, a pillar or a crystal or the branch of a tree, or even of an animal or a man, and as it were to trace it from within, understanding the formation and the motoriality of the object with the perceptions of one's own muscles; it means to "transpose" oneself over there and in there. Thus it means the exclusion of one's own concreteness, the

³⁵ Friedman noted in an interview (Czubaroff & Friedman, 2000) that "When we had our first meeting with Buber, a little group of five of us, my then wife, Eugenia, said, 'Inclusion—imagining the real—is very difficult.' 'It's not difficult at all, it's a grace,' Buber replied. 'If you work at it or try to consciously practice it, you won't have it because you'll be watching yourself practice it.'" Friedman is right: if in a dialogue you are consciously "practicing" it, you won't "have it," but this does not undermine my thesis that we can *prepare* ourselves—through practice—for the grace of being in dialogue with others.

extinguishing of the actual situation of life, the absorption in pure æstheticism of the reality in which one participates. Inclusion is the very opposite of this." (Buber, 1947/2002, pp. 114–115)

While I agree that the definition of empathy that Buber provides is certainly not in line with the concept or practice of inclusion as he outlines it, I would suggest we need to be careful in concluding that Buber would disagree with the concept of empathy as it appears in today's scholarly literature. The definition Buber provides of empathy appears to have been very much in line with the German concept of *Einfühlung* as it was conceptualized at that time. Buber's definition has some congruence with the Oxford English Dictionary definition of empathy as "The power of projecting one's personality into (and so fully comprehending) the object of contemplation" (Empathy, 1989). We need to appreciate both that there are several ways of defining empathy and that the scholarly definitions have changed over time (Goldstein & Michaels, 1985; Pigman, 1995). It is important to note that, as George Pigman points out, when Germans Rudolf Lotz and Robert Vischer first defined empathy, it was meant to refer primarily to an aesthetic relation to art or a non-human physical entity in the natural environment, such as an animal or a tree. Theodor Lipps, in advancing the concept and transferring it to psychology, also included relations with other humans. Thus the concept of *Einfühlung* was extended from a mere aesthetic

capacity to the psychological awareness of the existence of others and a felt sense of kinship with them. For Lipps, empathy meant a “fusion” between the observer and the observed, in which the observer develops an “inner imitation” of what the observed is experiencing (Montag, Gallinat, & Heinz, 2008). The emphasis was on the psychic movement over to the experience of the other; these scholars did not emphasize a focus on the experience of the observer. The focus of empathy for the German scholars was the subjective emotional projection, imitation and imagination, and it did not emphasize or even focus on the lived experience of the subject or observer. This concept of empathy does indeed differ with Buber’s concept of inclusion, *Umfassung*.³⁶

First, Buber maintains one does not merely “glide with one’s own feelings” into the life and experience of another when manifesting an empathic response. Rather, as Buber himself indicates in outlining inclusion, one uses somatic, perceptual, sensory, imaginative and intuitive capacities to “experience the other side” insofar as one is able. It is an extension or expansion of one’s own consciousness into the consciousness of another through these aforementioned capacities—thus the inclusive nature of the process. I try to live through the

³⁶ As far as I can determine, most German-English dictionaries translate this German term as “embrace” or “embracement,” which is in line with Kaufmann’s (Buber, 1970) translation of the term. Kramer (2003), however, takes issue with Kaufmann’s translation; I agree with Kaufmann, and think the word “embrace” helps us to more fully understand Buber’s concept of inclusion.

common situation from the perspective or standpoint and in the reality of the other, insofar as I am able.

Second, Buber's chief concern is the ontological status of *both* partners in the dialogical engagement. As he stresses in the essay on education, one does not forfeit one's own reality or experience or ontological status as *I* in dialogue; one adds the standpoint and the lived and felt experience of the other to one's own: this is why he terms it inclusion or an embrace. What he took issue with, it seems to me, is the notion of empathy as meaning that the individual *I* is diminished (the "exclusion of one's own concreteness" (1947/2002, p. 115)); for him the self and its own perceptions remain vital (that is why he writes of an *I* and *Thou* relationship and not just a relationship with a *Thou*). As I mentioned, it is an inclusive expansion of consciousness. George Mead (1934) defined empathy the ability "to feel oneself [sic] into the other" (1934, p. 366). Martin Hoffman (2000, p. 29) notes that empathy not only consists of "the vicarious affective response to another person" but also includes the "cognitive awareness of another person's internal states, that is, his thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and intentions." As Jack Martin, Jeff Sugarman, and Sarah Hickenbottom (2010) point out, most conceptions of empathy today stress the importance of understanding the actual and lived experiences of the other and "imaginatively and affectively placing one's self in that situation" (p. 117). These conceptions do not deny the lived

experience or ontological uniqueness of the subject. Moreover, Buber would definitely disagree with Hoffman (2000) when the latter claims that one's feelings become more congruent with the other's than with his own.

The entire *I-Thou* relationship is predicated, it seems to me, on the empathic ability of the individual, as a full presence, to meet, to encounter, to "become bound up in relation" to the other so that the other is no longer an *It* bounded and limited and egocentrically "experienced"; rather, the other now comes into full presence as *Thou*—through the relationship. I perceive the other as *Thou*: "But with no neighbour, and whole in himself, he is Thou and fills the heavens" (Buber, 1958/2000, p. 23). This is the essence of inclusion, which moves beyond the boundings of egocentricity. Buber goes on to note (p. 40) that in an *I-Thou* relationship I feel the exclusiveness of the other which then inclusively develops into feelings of universality; but never is there a loss of the individuality—*Urdistanz* remains.

Buber's concern for the ontological primacy of both *I* and *Thou* leads us naturally into a consideration of the next dialogical virtue—Presence. The *I* must engage as a full presence. Inclusion is not otherwise possible.

Presence

Both *I* and *Thou* come into being through dialogical engagements. The formation of the *I* is central to and a foundation of dialogue; there is no dialogue without

the full presence of an *I*. We come into the fullness of dialogue as we come into the fullness of being (and vice versa), and the work of developing dialogue is also the work of developing and establishing being. "Becoming a self" is a relational process, but the corollary is also true: bringing a full presence to the engagement contributes to it becoming a dialogue.

Buber (1958/2000, p. 27) points out that the "real, filled present" is made manifest by each individual bringing fullness of being, by then encountering each other, and thereby developing a relationship. Thus, I come to the encounter with presence and through my committed engagement I place myself squarely in the here and now, in the meeting with the other. To the degree that I place myself thusly, the present remains something that is "continually present and enduring." Buber later emphasizes the taking of a stand in destiny in the second part of *I and Thou*, where he says of the free person that:

He believes in reality, that is, he believes in the real solidarity of the real twofold entity *I and Thou*. He believes in destiny, and believes that it stands in need of him. It does not keep him in leading strings, it awaits him, he must go to it, yet does not know where it is to be found. But he knows that he must go out with his whole being. The matter will not turn out according to his decision; but what is to come will come only when he decides on what he is able to will. He must

sacrifice his puny, unfree will, that is controlled by things and instincts, to his grand will, which quits defined for destined being.³⁷

Then he intervenes no more, but at the same time he does not let things merely happen. He listens to what is emerging from himself, to the course of being in the world; not in order to be supported by it, but in order to bring it to reality as it desires, in its need of him, to be brought—with human spirit and deed, human life and death. I said *he believes*, but that really means he meets. (1958/2000, pp. 64–65)

This is a significant passage, and it integrates a number of features of Buber's way of dialogue. One can see the emphasis on the realization of destiny, of the compelling need to bring a genuine presence to the meeting with another. This reference to destiny is, I think, a reference to the primal nature of the *I-Thou* relationship, the overarching relationship to the Eternal Thou, and the responsibility Buber felt we had to reveal and re-unite the Shekinah. We are, as Buber (1947/2002) writes in his essay "Dialogue," "called upon from above, required, chosen, empowered, sent ... you are willed for a life of communion" (p. 17). As well, one sees yet again the subtlety of the play of being and doing: there

³⁷ "... that quits defined for destined being." This is not a misprint or typo. Kaufmann (Buber, 1970) writes this as: "He must sacrifice his little will, which is unfree and ruled by things and drives, to his great will that moves away from being determined to find destiny" (p. 109). What Buber means is that the individual, as an act of free will, chooses to sacrifice personal desires, chooses to quit being determined by external forces, to commit to a larger sense of destiny, the destiny to others and to the world.

is not only will, but a “grand” will made manifest through the realization of destiny, and yet the person of dialogue does not “intervene” (The Daoist influence can be seen here); there is attunement, through becoming aware, with the other and, even more, with the “course of being in the world” — an expansive sense of inclusion. The person of dialogue is willing to go forth, not even knowing where the destiny of meeting will lead: a reference to the “holy insecurity” which I will discuss shortly. All of this combines to bring into being the dialogical turning, the meeting with another.

Buber (1947/2002) returns to the concept of presence in his essay “The Question to the Single One” in *Between Man and Man*, noting that the dialogical person gives an “answer from the depths, where a breath of what has been breathed in still hovers”³⁸ (p. 77), and does so without prompting. Such a person realizes the “historic-biographical” and community contexts which shape her or his actions and which require consideration; such a person “does not spare himself and his community before God” (p. 78). This is the person who thinks “existentially,” and “who stakes his life in his thinking, brings into his real relation to the truth not merely his conditioned qualities but also the

³⁸ This is a reference to the Jewish concept of “Ruach,” the holy spirit or holy breath that animates life (cf. Genesis 1:2). Buber and Rosenzweig (1994) note that Ruach Elohim, a breathing, blowing, surging pulse of life, is neither natural (wind) nor spiritual (spirit) but is both. This is not dissimilar to the Daoist concept of *ch’i* (*qi*), which is transliterated as the creative flow of energy within both the cosmos and the individual. I would suggest the reference to Ruach is a further indication of Buber’s integrated approach to the embodiment of dialogue.

unconditioned nature” and is “standing his test” (p. 95). Such a “Single One ... stands over against all being which is present to him” (p. 97), meaning that this individual stands as someone with values, beliefs, convictions, and a strong sense of self and one’s place—all the bearings that go into the individual having a sense of presence. In his essay on education in the same volume, Buber defines responsibility as the “kindling of the response in that ‘spark’ of the soul, the blazing up of the response” (p. 109); even though it may be wholly inadequate, our response, our “standing over against” is what Buber deems a proper response.

Out of a personal experience of his, when a young man came to him in existential need, he writes: “He had come to me, he had come in this hour. What do we expect when we are in despair and yet go to a man? Surely a presence by means of which we are told that nevertheless there is meaning” (p. 16). He goes on to add the “mysteries” of life dwell in each moment, here “everything happens as it happens,” that each hour claims responsibility, and ... in the claim I am claimed and may respond in responsibility ...” (p. 16). Regardless of the relational situation, he argues that “you with this your mortal bit of life are referred to” (p. 17) and life beckons for your presence: we are called to give meaningful response. When we recognize others and our responsive and responsible relation to them, we come into awareness of our relation to a larger

“Present Being,” which opens us to the world and the spirit (p. 117). The teacher acts directly and “in his whole being, in all his spontaneity.” Thus vitality naturally flows out to the students without being forced or affected (p. 125).

Persons of presence are the bearers of personal conviction who may have to show opposition to the other. But they still confirm the person with whom they struggle; they still see the other as a partner, even though they are opposed to him who is “over against me” (1965, p. 79)—that is, as someone whom they both confirm as a valued other and as someone with whom they realize they are in relation. They offer what Buber calls the “dialogical word,” those stances one must utter, spoken from the foundation of being, offered up into the emergent sphere of between. These are the words or signs that create dialogue and cause it to flash into being. In the climate of

... genuine dialogue, what I have to say at any one time already has in me the character of something that wishes to be uttered, and I must not keep it back, keep it to myself. It bears for me the unmistakable sign which indicates that it belongs to the common life of the word.

Where the dialogical word genuinely exists, it must be given its right by keeping nothing back. (p. 86)

Buber distinguishes presence from individuation (1957, p 224), noting the latter as a presupposition of presence and its essential commitment to the other: our

dialogical words “fulfill ever anew the unity of the two” (1965, p. 86) who engage in dialogue. Buber (1957) calls for an education that can develop the authentic presence and its voicing, which leads us to a lived connection with the world, established “out of meaning, respectful, modest directness between men!” (p. 109). Isaacs (1999) maintains that “speaking your voice” is one of the most challenging aspects of dialogue; he characterizes voicing as one of the four practices of dialogue: “... revealing what is true for you regardless of other influences that might be brought to bear” (p. 159). It requires us to be present to the moment (and contextualizing that moment of encounter as existing within a web of events that led to it) and voicing what we feel we need to express at that moment.

Our presence represents our unique offerings to the world. These offerings might be foreign to the ears of others, especially if they fall on ears only attuned to one, narrow range of frequencies. In a modernist, Western culture, our challenges lie not only in being able to expand the dynamic range of our hearing but also in being able to speak in languages which reflect and transmit who we are, from what and where we have become, and where and what we are becoming, even if these are somewhat alien. Frank Scott (1981, p. 58) writes his poem “Laurentian Shield”:

Hidden in wonder and snow, or sudden with summer

This land stares at the sun in a huge silence

Endlessly repeating something we cannot hear.

Inarticulate, arctic,

Not written on by history, empty as paper.

We have the challenge of learning to hear something we presently cannot hear.

But just as significantly, there is the challenge of boldness in expressing what we

might dare not express, even if it be inarticulate and as empty as paper. By

whose standards, we might ask? Why not the inarticulate voice, why not the

empty paper, why not the unknown, untraveled landscape? If we are to learn to

hear and to read these, might we not need those who can speak in tongues

presently inarticulate to us, to write in ways presently invisible to our eyes, and

might we ourselves need to learn to speak inarticulately? In some fundamental

ways we are as empty as paper; just as profoundly, we are written upon by

language, culture, social circumstances, histories of many kinds, and spiritual

unfolding. Being sensitive to our emptiness, and to the many ways in which we

are written upon, establishes presence. Relatedly, presence can also point to

someone or something—a value, a belief, beyond the confines of oneself. The

voicing may be muted, may not seem unique, but the pointing can be

existentially genuine.

Education fulfils its mandate to learners when it creates opportunities for them, as teachers and students, to come into fuller manifestations of presence. They become people of great character (Buber, 1947/2002), those who satisfy the “claim of situations out of a deep readiness to respond with [the] whole life” and who manifest a sense of unity with others and the world (p. 135). Such individuals embrace a cosmopolitan attitude, accepting responsibility to and for the world. It requires us as educators to be sensitive to the uniqueness of each student, to be sensitive to each student’s needs and the desires of Eros, and to create conditions where students can grapple with existential longings, unfoldings, and realities. In an age where reductionist “performance requirements” are prominent, we may be required to defend the significance of a focus on coming into presence. Among other things, we cannot easily evaluate presence through objective measures, and its unfolding takes time and commitment to a process that may be unique to each. The development of a sense of presence will necessarily involve a dynamic, reciprocal unfolding between student and teacher. Presence requires the recognition that the teacher is really “there” for the student, and the recognition that, although the educational relationship *is* (or at least can be) fully dialogical, it is a unique form of unfolding in which the student does not have the experience of the teacher: the latter has the benefit of knowing the experience of the former, but not vice versa.

Therefore, this relationship is what Buber calls a “one-sided experience of inclusion” (p. 118). (Buber distinguishes between educational relations and friendships, characterizing the latter as a dialogical relation based in mutual inclusion. Once students “throw” themselves across the gap of experience and empathically experience the teacher’s reality, the educational relationship is “burst asunder”; it changes into another form of relationship (p. 119).)

Just as Buber points out that some of our engagements—for example, many manifestations of the educational relationship—are not *full* manifestations of dialogue, so in the same way, we can, through our not-fully-dialogical engagements, learn to move toward the fullness of dialogue. One might wonder whether we can enter into dialogue without any sensing of a “fullness of being.” Of course, it would be discriminating and marginalizing to suggest that only those who offer some sort of reified “fullness of being” can enter into dialogue. Sincerity and the willingness to engage respectfully most certainly open the doors to dialogue, as do our tentative wonderings and propositions. Together, these constitute the epistemic stance of *devotio* and open us to wonder, questioning, and the stance of uncertainty. Our presence, too, is a response to the world; the conviction it embodies requires, then, that we be open and receptive to others and the word, and that we be willing to live on the edge of uncertainty, empty and waiting. Presence is the full engagement with, and openness to, what

is present and what the future may bring. It is worth amplifying the message above about not reifying presence. As Buber (1958/2000) asserts, we have a native, primal instinct for communion that can manifest as presence; moreover, again: “you are willed for a life of communion.”

The Holy Insecurity: Openness to Ourselves and the World

Buber (1947/2002) emphasizes genuine dialogues where presence is felt and there is “speech from certainty to certainty.” He also emphasizes that dialogue includes communication from “one open-hearted person to another open-hearted person” (p. 9). Only then, in a spirit of openness, will dialogue manifest itself. The Eros of dialogue is a call to the unknown and even, in some of its utmost manifestations, to apophatic ways of knowing.

Buber’s concept of the holy insecurity arises out of his epistemic stance of *devotio*. The essence of *devotio* is receptivity to what is reciprocally unfolding, possible, unknown—and that receptivity denotes and occurs in the presence of close, developing relationships. Because it is reciprocal, the knowledge is emergent, unfolding, and unpredictable, and is developed through the

relationships.³⁹ This spirit of openness is lived in the holy insecurity of going forth into a world where there is the uncertainty of meeting, the “unforeseeable, every changing and ever new situations” (Buber, 1948, p.24). Buber offers little in the way of secure answers for those who read his works; the only certainty is the aforementioned uncertainty of meeting. Life is full of uncertainty, risk, and questions; the relationships with others and the world are not pre-cast certainties.

Dialogical persons tread the epistemic path of what Buber calls the “narrow ridge” (1947/2002) where they encounter that which is changing, new, and possibly unknowable. He writes his philosophy “did not rest on the broad upland of a system that includes a series of sure statements about the absolute, but on a narrow rocky ridge between the gulfs where there is no sureness of expressible knowledge but the certainty of meeting what remains, undisclosed” (p. 218). Openness indicates a willingness to go beyond the sure boundaries of our own ideas about the way things are. The significance of this hinges on trust. Openness and a spirit of inquiry seem more possible if we feel safe and trust the unexpected; we adapt what Friedman (1967) calls “existential trust,” being able

³⁹ *Devotio* represents a phenomenological perspective in which the knowledge of a thing is contained in the relationship itself; thus a thing cannot be spoken of something in and of itself since it is ontically defined in and through the relationship it has with something or someone else. This is why Buber refused to see God as anything but a dynamic, unfolding presence whose nature is made manifest by the relationships between God and people. This is also why Buber could consider a dialogical relationship with an animal, a tree, or even a stone.

to accept, with the fullness of our beings, that which is coming to us as new or unknown. We refuse the “security of the false Either/Ors in favour of the insecurity of the “narrow ridge” (p. 288). As Friedman (2002b) further comments, when we try to armour ourselves against insecurity we shut ourselves off from the world; the open person accepts uncertainty and “relaxes into it” (p. 158). The person of presence lives in and engages through the “lived concrete” in its “unforseeableness and its irrecoverableness” (Buber, 1952, p. 35). Such a person is receptive at the edge of unknowing.

The final response of Buber’s philosophy of *devotio* and the attendant holy insecurity is that: “This very world, this very contradiction, unabridged, unmitigated, unsmoothed, unsimplified, unreduced, this world shall be—not overcome—but consummated” (Buber, 1948, p. 26). The movement is one of embracing. It also means accepting the other as other and somewhat unknowable. Lingis (1994) captures the unknowing of the other when he writes that we expose ourselves to the other, with our hands now open instead of tightly gripped on “reality,” and our voices imbued with a “disarmed frailty”; we realize the other as Other—not us (p. 11).

Once again, Eros propels one to confess one’s unknowingness; Eros drives one to the death of certainty and a sole, removed objectivity. One is now engaged; Eros now, in the words of Lilburn (1999), is “hurtling one forward into

the unknowability of unique things” and we are “slendered by awe” (pp. 13–14). To use Bohm’s (1996) terminology, we are willing to let go and to suspend our assumptions about the nature of things. Bohm further suggests our expectations produce an “impulse of necessity” (p. 24)—feelings that what we think or believe or the expectations we hold for the future are vital and cannot be surrendered. A conversation between Buddhist teacher Pema Chödrön and bell hooks illustrates the significance of expectations and our surrendering of them:

Pema Chödrön: The main issue is aggression. Often if there's too much hope you begin to have a strong sense of enemy. Then the whole process of trying to alleviate suffering actually adds more suffering because of your aggression toward the oppressor. Don't you see a lot of people who have such good intentions but they get very angry, depressed, resentful?

bell hooks: Yes, you're talking to one! I get so overwhelmed sometimes.

Pema Chödrön: Well, doesn't that get in the way?

bell hooks: Yeah, it does. I'm on tour right now talking about my book about ending racism, and I hear people say things like, racism doesn't exist, or, don't you think we've already dealt with that? And I start to feel irritable. This irritability starts mounting in me, and I notice how it collapses into sorrow. I came home the other day and I sat down at my table and just wept because I thought, it's just too much.

Pema Chödrön: Well, isn't that the point? That other people and ourselves, we're the same really, and we just get stuck in different ways. Getting stuck in any kind of self-and-other tension seems to cause pain. So if you can keep your heart and your mind open to those people, in other words, work with any tendency to close down towards them, isn't that the way the system of racism and cruelty starts to de-escalate? (Chödrön & hooks, 1997)

There is another, related practice in the suspending of assumptions or presuppositions. We all carry assumptions about others and the nature of things with us, but often they remain unconscious to us. The practice of suspension is to suspend them “out in front” of oneself dispassionately for examination, and to bring them to awareness means they can be considered and understood by oneself and others. The practice of suspension also includes reducing a sense of identification with our assumptions; we can bring them to awareness as detached observers, either by ourselves or jointly. This act of suspension is what Varela, Thompson, and Rosch (1991) refer to as “mindful, open-ended reflection” (p. 27), pointing out that it is more of a “letting go” than trying to achieve something, and that it takes practice. Once the partners in a dialogue have surfaced assumptions, developing common awareness of them, there is at least the sharing of content, even if there is not agreement. An increased awareness of our assumptions and beliefs furthers the possibility of jointly developing them.

It is not easy to suspend assumptions (Bohm, 1996; Isaacs, 1999; Varela, Thompson, and Rosch, 1991; Yankelovich, 1999); it is a meta-cognitive capacity requiring some degree of reflective awareness and courage in recognizing and confronting our assumptions, which often serve as our “bulwarks” against the world, offering safety, certainty, and protection. Varela, Thompson, and Rosch point out that bringing assumptions to reflective awareness is not an abstract, disembodied practice, but rather an embodied form of mindful experience itself. One needs to integrate awareness of somatic, intellectual, and emotional processes, along with any latent longings, desires, and expectations. As Bohm describes the process:

... you ... suspend the [thought process], allowing it to reveal itself, to flower, to unfold, and so you see ... its actual structure inside of you. Movements are taking place inside of you — physical feelings — the heartbeat, the blood pressure, the way you breathe, the way your body feels tense; and also the kinds of thoughts that go along with these feelings. You can observe these things, be aware of them, and of their connection. (1996, p. 84)

Emerging out of the holy insecurity would be the conjoined senses of respect for alternate epistemologies and a humble, postmodern sense that (a) one’s own epistemic stance is only one in a universe of many, and (b) one’s ability to know

everything—that modernist totalizing tendency—is irrevocably severed. One is forced to admit one lives in a world of unknowingness. At the same time, though, we are opened to creativity and wonder. We can be surprised, delightedly. There is a spontaneity, a delightful, humble sense of which emerges the more we realize ourselves as the students of the Eternal Thou. We are released from the narrowness and solidity of our prior convictions which can imprison, concretely. In the *Critique of Judgment*, Immanuel Kant (1790/1952) mentions that conversation can be *soulless*, that is, devoid of the imaginative, “animating principle” of the mind which allows a play of aesthetic ideas (Book II, §49, p. 175). Kant goes on to describe rhetoric as: “The art of transacting a serious business of the understanding as if it were a free play of the imagination,” and poetry as the: “Conducting a free play of the imagination as if it were a serious business of the understanding” (§51, p. 184). With both definitions, Kant intertwines the spirits of imaginative play and the “serious” attempt to develop understanding. The rhetorician conducts his serious work of understanding as if it were “merely play” —with an open and perhaps freewheeling spirit. The significant features are the spirit of openness and a willingness to be surprised such that understanding must appear “undesigned and a spontaneous occurrence” (§51, p. 185). We become open to the possibility of the sublime. Kant (1763/1960) writes in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful*

and the Sublime that the sum of the sublime includes a feeling of the “beauty and the dignity of human nature” (p. 60), that it moves us, fills us with “noble awe” (p. 48), and can even be terrifying by degrees since we are willing to open ourselves to the unknown, to that which is vast, and beyond our current understanding, including the possibility of communion with the more-than-human world. Lilburn (1999) encourages his reader to proceed onto into the wilderness of uncertainty and surprise, humbling the mind’s desires for order and certainty; haecceity, he argues, lies paradoxically hidden beneath order, laws, and certitudes. He suggests we stand before our subjects, poor, empty, and in “perfect puzzlement” so that we can dwell with the subject with an “alert unknowing” (p. 28). Repeatedly, he calls for fidelity—an “alongside-ness,” the resting with, these elements of the Greek *legein*—and attention in these moments of unknowing: “Stay with it and the carefully attentive befuddlement unravels into a fidelity to the branch, a setting down of stakes, an alongside-ness, a fretful proximity to the branch that is as far as it can be known” (p. 29).

One takes an existential stand and reveals a presence in this unknowing, in the willingness to stand on the narrow ridge of uncertainty. With practice, there can be comfort in the humble recognition of fallibilism and the paradox that unknowing itself represents a form of knowing. Then, too, that unknowing still represents meeting, and in that I find, if not comfort, at least some degree of

consolation. The possibility of meeting remains. Not only is it not eclipsed by the realization of unknowing, genuine meeting is made more likely through it to the degree that I am able to step down from elevated assurances, remove my shields of certainty, and open myself to the mystery of the other; in that disarming, the other may incline toward me.

For over three years, from 2003 to 2006, I was a member of an informal dialogue group of about 15–20 people named the “Dialogue Makers’ Network,” started by Dr. Joanna Ashworth, the program director of the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue at Simon Fraser University. The network was promoted as a place for those interested in dialogue “to learn about our values and pre-conceived understandings in a spirit of non-judgmental curiosity.... to cultivate the core capacities for dialogue—listening to understand, suspending of judgment, surfacing assumptions, and demonstrating empathy and respect (Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, fall – spring 05/06, p. 13). One of the significant features of these dialogues is that there was virtually no planning as to what would happen. We would just show up, with all that was going on in our lives, and the conversations would begin. We had everything: times where we jointly developed understanding; moments of doubt, confusion, uncertainty; times where, in the sometimes glaring light of suspension, one’s assumptions became painfully evident, both to oneself and others; times when just about any

of the emotions played out; moments of genuine communion, where, when understandings were deeply shared, there was at least the shudder of the sacred. But throughout the three-year engagement of monthly meetings, there was among participants a committed willingness to explore what was unknown and alien. This willingness alone made those meetings special.

Buber told his student Aubrey Hodes (1972) that he did not accept absolute formulas for life, and that life was a constant unfolding and discovery — an adventure to which we should be willing to accept, and a challenge calling for inner and outer exploration. It follows, then, that we serve education well in allowing learners to explore together. Nicholas Burbules (1993) points out that that he prefers a non-teleological perspective that is open-ended. To the degree that the development of understanding between participants can be seen as teleological, I would suggest that dialogue as it applied in educational pursuits can be teleological but at the same time can and will possibly be required to adopt non-teleological approaches and perspectives. The significance of this rests in both curricula and pedagogy.

Dialogical approaches in education may well require us to allow what Ted Aoki (2005) calls the “lived” or “emergent” curriculum to exist alongside of and to materialize from the planned curriculum. In his “situational praxis” model (p. 116), the curriculum is developed, emerges out of, and is implemented in and

through the existential situatedness of teacher and students. Aoki's notion of praxis is based on the idea that the subject matter is approached in and through the contexts of the students' and teacher's knowings, experiences, goals, and concerns; that is, there is no separation between the subject matter and its influence and relevance to the existential and experiential realities of the learners. The learners interpret and critically reflect on any curricular texts or materials in an ongoing transformative process of interaction between learners and curricular texts; both the curriculum and the learners are being transformed, interactively and situationally.

There is not necessarily any certainty beforehand, for either students or the teacher, of what is going to emerge, and there is an accepted willingness to be open and receptive to what will develop out of the curricular and pedagogical interactions. This requires trust in both the learners and the process, especially when there may be moments of doubt, uncertainty, and fear. Paradoxically, we engage with the certainty of being uncertain. This is one of the many paradoxes of the life of dialogue, and our ability to understand, wrestle with, and to resolve paradox is itself a dialogical virtue.

The Unity of the Contraries: The Capacity for Paradox

In his introduction to *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue*, Friedman (2002b) notes that Buber's "narrow ridge" of uncertainty is a "paradoxical unity of what one

usually understands only as alternatives—I and Thou, love and justice, dependence and freedom ...” (p. 3). One might add to the list being and doing, as well as the swinging between the individual and the collective. Buber resolutely stands in the sphere between these contraries, claiming that the oppositions themselves are not problematic; rather, it is that they too easily obscure the complex transcendence of such dualisms and the resulting distance between us. Buber, Avnon (1998) notes, had an affinity for the pre-Socratic Greeks who spun knowledge in verse, and who had more attunement with the flowing, contrarian, Heraclitean *Logos* than with the ordered and rational Aristotelian one. Buber’s affinity for the Heraclitean *Logos* stems from his belief that the reality of meeting precedes analytical thought. “The relation to the *Thou* is direct. No system of ideas, no foreknowledge, and no fancy intervene between *I* and *Thou*” (1958/2000, p. 26).

Buber (1947/2002) encapsulated paradox when he wrote about transcending either-ors (see, for example, pp. 236ff). Our culture, ever rational, tends toward the binaries of either-or and opposites and has difficulties seeing transcendent unities in the face of things which appear to oppose one another. We readily see differences in language, culture, religion, nationalities, and market systems, generating endless schisms. We have individuals or communities/collectives. We have insiders and outsiders in our communities and

cultures. We see being as distinct from doing. Traditionalists and modernists are more inclined to acknowledge transcendent Truth(s), whereas postmodernists are more inclined to see multiple and relative truths (Thayer-Bacon, 2003). Some of these binary positions can only be resolved in paradox where, as Buber suggests, both-ands replace the alternatives: and some of these both-ands do not logically fit together. There is, for example, the paradox of *legein* (“lying down beside” or “gathering together”) and being “over against” the other with presence. On the one hand, the dialogical engagement is a “bedding down with things,” to use Lilburn’s (1999) phrase, where there is a sense of empathic inclusion. On the other hand, meeting is an encounter (possibly agonistic, fiery) with the other who, despite any deep sense of ontological and spiritual filiality, remains wholly Other. But that encounter is a loving one. Love is what transcends and includes the dualisms of the dialogical encounter. What Buber called in his Daoist days the “love of the perfected man” (1957, p. 52) is the love which unifies things, knowers and the known, at the very same time it maintains ontological distinction.

One of the primary paradoxes in Buber’s conception of dialogue revolves around action and non action, or being, as I indicated in the chapter on dialogue as being and doing. Meeting itself is fundamentally wrapped in paradox. In a

1926 poem, "Power and Love," Buber (1967a) tries to capture the "contradiction" of doing and being:

We cannot avoid
Using power,
Cannot escape the compulsion
To afflict the world,
So let us, cautious in diction
And mighty in contradiction,
Love powerfully. (p. 45)

In his 1951 essay "Healing through Meeting," Buber (1957) deals with the paradox of the intellectual professions; in particular in this instance, professional psychotherapists. They are required to go beyond the bounds of familiar methodology into a spiritual destiny and "step forth out of the role of professional superiority ... into the elementary situation between one who calls and one who is called" (pp. 94–95). They are called to the abyss that is "encompassed by chaos," and they enter the realm of unknowing. It is like stepping off the edge of certainty "into the air of the world where self is exposed to self" (p. 97). It is the relation to otherness itself. On the one hand, Buber asserts that the dialogical person can know the other in "all his otherness" and can break

through to the other (1947/2002, p. 239)—but at the same time otherness and the unknown remain.

Moreover, the comprehensibility of the world is “only a footstool” of its incomprehensible nature (1957, p. 27): here Buber is referring to our apophatic knowing, a knowing in the midst of unknowing. The world, Buber goes on, is not knowable, but it is embraceable; each being is both embraceable and non-embraceable. So it is with teaching. It cannot easily be defined, but it can be recognized and it can be embraced. Lilburn (1999) spends considerable time developing the thesis that contemplative, poetic forms of knowing are intimate, at home, a remembering, a seizing of haecceity—but at the same time a “concentration of [a] desire-filled gaze into what could not be known” (p. 12), that are “hurtling one forward into the unknowability of unique things” (p. 13). Celeste Snowber (2002) attests that as her inquiries deepen, she is struck in realizing she feels invited into a “not knowing” and not certainty. She suggests a practice of “paradoxology”: that students and teachers work to examine the paradoxes involved in their lives, teaching, and research, adding that understanding paradox can help us understand the other. The dissonances and unknowing can offer us new ways of seeing and understanding.

Buber (1948) felt paradox plays a significant role in the dialogical meeting. “The unity of the contraries is the mystery at the innermost core of the dialogue”

(p. 17). Holding onto and not resolving paradox into either-or helps us bridge divergent views, possibly even ones held to be incommensurable, such as the differences between modernists and postmodernists (Scott, 2009). Ellinor and Gerard (1998) point to a group which was caught in the middle of divergent views on which way to proceed with their dialogue: slowing matters down or allowing a lot of verbal expression so that disparate views could be heard. Finally, a shift occurred where people lost the desire to make either view right or wrong. Suddenly, there was no need for anyone to do anything—except listen more intently. Although the different perspectives still remained, the sense of separation had vanished. When the group members decided not to choose, but rather simply to be fully present to themselves, to each other, and to the moment, the shift occurred. They could accept, sit with, and integrate the paradox.

Arthur Zajonc (2006) offers the example of students in his courses grappling with paradox or what he calls the ability to sustain contradiction. He suggests to his students that rather than trying to resolve paradoxes into either-ors, that they learn to sustain the presence of paradox. They have found this helpful in, for example, coming to terms with the complexities of their lives, such as issues around identity, learning to live comfortably within the many-sided, seemingly irreconcilable, and hybrid constructions of identity which confront them. Zajonc concludes: “When we deny that complexity, as a society we quickly

decompose into warring ethnic and religious factions vying for dominance” (p. 1754). Buber writes: “On the far side of the subjective, on this side of the objective, on the narrow ridge, where *I* and *Thou* meet, there is the realm of ‘between’” (1947/2002, p. 243).

The ability to enter into and work out of that paradoxical sphere of between may well allow learners to enter into and work out of what Richard Bernstein (1991), borrowing from the work of Jay Martin, calls a *kraftfeld* or force-field: a “... relational interplay of attractions and aversions that constitute the dynamic transmutational structure of a complex phenomenon” (p. 9). Bernstein goes on to suggest that developing understanding of our (post)modern condition requires “... doing justice to the delicate unstable balance of these attractions and aversions” (p. 9). And he advocates what he terms an “engaged fallibilistic pluralism,” requiring us to admit our own fallibility, to be willing to listen to and engage with others without denying their otherness, and to be vigilant against the too-easy dismissal of that otherness as “obscure, wooly, or trivial” (p. 336). We are increasingly unlikely to have consensus in our ever-more pluralistic society, but we can educate towards the dialogical response of what Bernstein calls a “mutual reciprocal understanding” (p. 337) that embodies confirmation, inclusion, and that not-easy-to-achieve living and working together in a Buberian sphere of between where the tensions might buzz and crackle, but where,

simultaneously, there can be the steady, constructive and affirmative hum of a dynamic, cooperative, caring ethos.

A Synthesizing Apperception

One of the paradoxes Buber (1958/2000) mentions in *I and Thou* is that the *Thou* is whole and exclusive and our relation with each *Thou* is unique; in that relationship, the *Thou* confronts you and “fills the heavens” (pp. 23, 80). But the relationship with God is “unconditional exclusiveness and unconditional inclusiveness in one” (p. 80). Everything now is related: the corollary being that we see relationality everywhere because we see God in everything as a connecting life blood. Here is an expression of what Buber (1965) would later call a “synthesizing apperception,” the ability to see a transcendent wholeness in and connections between things: “the apperception of a being as a whole and as a unity” (p. 62). We are not seeing the parts of the world (or seeing the world and the transcending-uniting Spirit as being separate), we are not seeing the sum of the parts of the world (or seeing Spirit as the sum of the parts): we are seeing the world as it is, world *qua* world—having the characteristics of both haecceity and a connected unity (seeing Spirit in all but as more than all the world). In that passage from *I and Thou*, Buber goes on to write:

He who enters on the absolute relation is not concerned with nothing isolated any more, neither things nor beings, neither earth nor heaven;

but everything is gathered up in the relation. For to step into pure relation is not to disregard everything but to see everything in the *Thou*, not to renounce the world but to establish it on its true basis. (p. 80)

In this passage Buber accomplishes three things. First, he elucidates the paradox between the confirmation of a thing or a being as *Thou* to the degree that it, as he had mentioned, “fills the heavens,” and yet is not isolated from any other thing or being which also presumably “fills the heavens”; we have wholeness and relation, unity and uniqueness, in one. Second, for Buber the “pure” or “absolute” relation is characterized by realization of a connection to the cosmic *Thou*—an awareness of its connecting omnipresence. Third, he once again makes clear that this cosmic *Thou* manifests in and through the world; there is no separation of heaven and earth (although transcendence still remains). The essence of Buber’s message seems to be a fundamental sense or awareness of an overarching connectedness, a synthesizing apperception. Rumi (Barks, Moyne, & Rumi, 1995) notes:

There’s a strange frenzy in my head,
of birds flying,
each particle circulating on its own.
is the one I love *everywhere*? (p. 4)

We have the paradoxical realization that, as the poet Frank Scott writes in

“Dancing”:

we are two

not one

the dance

is one. (1981, p. 166)

Significantly, this synthesizing apperception is born of Eros. The passionate longing for dialogue, Buber (1947/2002) contends, brings the awareness of haecceity and from this the “presentiment of a world-wide dialogue, a dialogue with the world-happening” (p. 43). We can experience a meaningful association of persons and things that are bound together in varying degrees of destiny. Such a systemic perception also permits us to link the past with the present through emotion and memory. Rumi (Barks, Moyne, & Rumi, 1995) emphasizes this in his poem “Special Plates” that we:

Notice how each particle moves.

Notice how everyone has just arrived here

from a journey.

Notice how each wants a different food.

Notice how the stars vanish as the sun comes up,

and how all streams stream toward the ocean.

Look at the chefs preparing special plates

for everyone, according to what they need.

Look at this cup that can hold the ocean.

Look at those who see the face.

Look through Sham's eyes

into the water that is

entirely jewels. (p. 7)

Bohm (1996) and Senge (2004) both note the abundance of fragmentation, isolation, and silo-ed thinking in western culture and suggest that our propensity to fragmentation arises out of our inability to cope with the profound awareness that the bell tolls for us. Seeing oneself as enveloped and existing in a complex web is not necessarily a pleasant realization. Along with any beauty or joy we may perceive, there is also much suffering which we now realize and to which we feel intimately connected. Living in that awareness is a challenge, and it is easy for us to abstract ourselves from this profound awareness and any felt sense of responsibility or ethical obligations which might arise.

Bohm draws attention to the awareness the postmodernists have brought to the fore: that we and our ways of thinking are socioculturally and collectively determined to a significant degree. Our dialogical engagement thus includes not only an awareness of the connectedness of external things, but also a realization

of the collective nature of thought and the willingness to explore collectively the collective nature of thinking.

Here we have a significant point. Habermas (1979) and Wilber (2001a, b, 2006) suggest many systems theorists ignore or fail to integrate intersubjectivity. They can see physical connections but not interpersonal and sociocultural ones; put another way, they fail to see connections between subjective, phenomenal experience, intersubjectivity in its sociocultural contexts, and physical environments, thus leading to reductionist forms of systems theory.

Jardine (1998) recounts an experience with an early childhood education class, where he asked students to write down as many ways they could think of to describe how a blank piece of paper could demonstrate or illustrate the various curriculum areas involved. In the midst of the exercise, a shift in perception occurred where he and the teachers in training realized the connections: "... suddenly and unexpectedly, *everything* came to be co-present with this paper, everything seemed to nestle around it" (pp. 69–70). They now realized, more than just intellectually, the interconnections they had previously missed seeing. Jardine points to the paradox of seeing each object or being as a unique centre of all the relationships and yet at the same time not being at the centre by itself; as Buber would say, no thing exists in and of itself, and we come into being in and through the making and sustaining of *I-Thou* relationships.

Further, the students could now see the assumptions of separateness which guide so much curricular thinking. Any possibility of integrated curricula flows from such realization.

Our ability to develop a synthesizing apperception comes partially through our empathic ability of inclusion: to cognize the other's situation; such cognition predisposes us to seeing our connections to the other and to all the systems in which the other (and we ourselves) is embedded. These systems include systems of thought, the collective noosphere, what Bohm (1996) calls a tacit, collective thought, or what Isaacs (1999) calls an ecology of thought. An awareness of the tacit nature of collective thought, and of collective opportunities allows for the possibilities of creatively thinking together and, in doing so, being able to work with the collective flow of thought.

Isaacs (1999) suggests we can learn to create maps of the physical, sociocultural, historical, and spiritual systems in which we are embedded and which inform our lives and thought. Such map making helps us become more deeply aware of the underlying structures which form us, both as individuals and collectives.

Buber's concept of synthesizing apperception draws us to an awareness of our ecological situatedness, one that connects objective, subjective, and intersubjective realities—the physical, interpersonal, sociocultural and

institutional, historical, existential and spiritual ecologies in which we are immersed. It also helps us become aware of the tightly interwoven nature of the dialogical virtues themselves. Although I have teased them apart for the purposes of examining them in some detail, I would suggest that they are in fact interdependent and holistically work together to complete a turning to the other.

Turning to the Other: Going Forth

The sum of turning to the other is an engagement or encounter with the other, be it another person, a group of people, another member of the biosphere, an inanimate object, the cosmos itself, or the Eternal Thou. It is the move to relationality and the concomitant confirmation of the other which reveals the singular *Thou* and eventually what Buber refers to as the cosmic *Thou*. It is made possible through the nurturance of these dialogical virtues, which, although I have teased them apart for the purposes of this dissertation, remain a tightly interwoven and integrated set of habituations: becoming aware, confirmation, inclusion, presence, the holy security, the unity of the contraries, and a synthesizing apperception. In an essay written around the same time he was writing *I and Thou*, Buber (1957) answered the question of “What is to be done?” with his concise response: “You shall not withhold yourself” (p. 109). We are called to meet the other in fullness and to prepare ourselves for that meeting, mindful that grace exerts its flashing presence. We can reach out to engage others

and establish deep and meaningful relationships with them, revealing and releasing the hidden sparks of spirituality, of haecceity, within each. We thus hallow this life. I shift now to consider the role of the educator in that hallowing.

Chapter 6—Conclusion—The Educational Implications

Alfred North Whitehead (1967) suggests that the aims of education are to avoid inert ideas that are not tested and “thrown into fresh combinations” (p. 1); to have us relate ideas to “...that stream, compounded of sense perceptions, feelings, hopes, desires, and of mental activities adjusting thought to thought, which forms our life” (p. 3); to instill duty and reverence to others and the natural world which surrounds us; and to develop an acute sensitivity to the present and what it bears to us. In light of his aims, dialogue as a curricular and pedagogical practice makes sense: dialogue enables us to make those combinations, helps establish meaningfulness in one’s life in and through *I-Thou* relationships in an integrated fashion, and those relationships are predicated on the keenness of perception to the present.

David Orr (2004) suggests that the goals of education are to help students appreciate whole systems; to help them situate themselves as intimately connected to their surrounding ecologies; to help them retain, recover, and develop local and vernacular knowledge of their “places” (physical, sociocultural, historical, and spiritual); and to assist them in considering carefully their definitions of success. Again, we can see how dialogue in education can help us achieve those goals insofar as dialogue can be the means by which we

ecologically situate ourselves, and to consider success in light of our relations with others and the world.

Nel Noddings (2003a) suggests we as educators should be able to help a student "...preserve and enhance caring in herself and in those with whom she comes in contact" (p. 172). Dialogue as both curricular and pedagogical approaches in education help us focus on that *process* of education.

An ethos of dialogue allows, encourages, and fosters new, connected understandings developed collaboratively through relational epistemologies. It embodies an integrated approach to knowledge through the body and senses, through feelings, hopes, and desires, and through a relational approach to knowledge which connects to the everyday occurrences of our lives. It helps establish, through the development of a synthesizing apperception, the ability to appreciate whole systems, and, moreover, to widen inclusively one's circle of sympathies. It grounds its knowledge in the immediacy of lived, situated relationships. It allows the engagements between individuals to deepen to the degree that meaningful consideration of success is possible. It is also the means through and in which caring is established, through the development of *I-Thou* relationships characterized by confirmation and inclusion.

If, as David Orr (2004) asserts, all education is and is to be environmental education, the Buberian ethos of dialogue can play a significant role in

developing integral environmental curricula. It is of no small significance that *I and Thou* begins with Buber's consideration of a dialogical relationship with a tree. It is of no small significance that Buber re-affirms this "reciprocity of being" with the spheres of nature (1958/2000, p. 117) in his postscript to *I and Thou*. It is of no small significance that in *Between Man and Man* Buber avers that we can engage in dialogue even with rocks, and that the limits of dialogue are simply (and profoundly) the limits of our awareness. Our abilities to become aware of the soundings and calls of nature will play significant roles in allowing us to respond effectively, sustainably, and in "re-enchanting" the wonder and mysteries of nature, in apprehending the presence of others. As Michael Bonnett (2009) suggests, the form of awareness we develop "... constitute[s] an extensive domain of knowing that acknowledges and reveals the self-arising that is around us" (2009, p. 183); rather than manipulate and exploit nature, Bonnett would have us learn to listen and respond to its calls. He goes on to assert the need for the openness, receptivity, and surrender that makes up Buber's holy insecurity. Pedagogically, such a stance requires the teacher to embrace dialogical learning, along with a number of virtues; Bonnett lists charity, empathy, openness. Dialogue allows for the development of what Phillip Payne (2009) calls an "ecological dwelling" (p. 311), where dwelling includes a sense of "being for" and responding to the others represented in nature.

Credo—Dialogues in the Classroom

I have taught two undergraduate courses which adopt a dialogical approach to learning (the Foundation of Academic Literacy program and EDUC 230, Introduction to Philosophy of Education). Some students are initially surprised to find out that they are divided into discussion groups and that dialogues are a primary activity of the course, where they discuss the weekly readings. I have received feedback from students about these courses; all of the remarks in quotation marks are responses given in end-of-term anonymous course evaluations where students are told the remarks will not be passed on to instructors until after course grades are submitted.

One student from an EDUC 230 course writes: “Dialogue!!!! It was confusing at first, b/c we were unsure where and when to do it, but once that got clarified, it was great!” The final assignment of the EDUC 230 course is group dialogues where students attempt collaboratively to synthesize the course material, their experiences, and the new ideas they have encountered. One of the students wrote: “Lots of student to student interaction and open dialogue. The strongest point of the course was the community that was created in our groups.”

A number of my students, many of whom come from other countries and cultures, express their appreciation for these classes and the pedagogical approach we take: teaching and learning as dialogue, where we make a conscious effort—born out of Eros and intention—to establish a praxis of dialogue, imperfect though it might be. They

repeatedly point out the significance to them of listening, of being heard; they point out the significance to them of having a teacher who listens to them. One student wrote: "The instructor makes the class more fun because he is always very energetic and respects the students. Basically, the instructor doesn't try to control the class; instead, he listens and works with our ideas."

But more than being heard, the students affirm the significance of being seen: being seen wholly as unique individuals, and affirmed as such. "This class has been the first time I have been actually recognized as a human being with questions, concerns, ideas, hopes and dreams; I have been affirmed as someone who is both unique and special," wrote one student. This affirmation is confirmation. When a teacher attends to the student, and the student's being and presence is confirmed, relational forms of knowing become possible. The key to this ability to listen to the other and to see the other fully as Thou is of course related to the dialogical virtue of becoming aware, developing a deep awareness of and sensitivity to the other (Buber, 1947/2002). In turning to the other, you allow the other to "step forth and [become] a presence" (p. 25). In becoming aware, you feel that the person or thing or event before you presents meaning, addresses you, and you reach out to establish contact. I have been asked which I feel is more significant, becoming aware or confirmation. While I recognize that these dialogical virtues are deeply integrated, even to the degree that such a question becomes difficult to answer, I would suggest that confirmation is not only essential in our educational

encounters but is also, in my experience, something for which students are hungering. One student approached me towards the end of a FAL program with tears in her eyes, reporting that this was the first time in her career as a student that she had been recognized as a writer (she had always been told she was a failure as a writer), as someone capable of learning, even as a unique someone. I have had many students similarly comment how significant it was for them to be noticed. Of course, I am mindful that in such situations students may well just tell us what we want to hear.

The students feel closer contacts with their teachers and with other students in the classroom have been lacking in their educational experiences, ones which can develop into meaningful relationships where, as Buber (1947/2002, p. 242) says, “deep calls unto deep;” they are longing for the opportunities to develop these deeper relationships in and through which their existential and spiritual questions, issues, and dilemmas can be explored and answered. As well, the students appreciate the opportunity to focus on developing their own philosophical orientations: understanding themselves, others, and the world as a whole in an integrated fashion. Sadly, they mention not infrequently that they have never previously had such opportunities, pointing to a lack of focus on both subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and they are keen to take a more philosophical, inward turn, finding that it leads naturally to an increased concern for others and for their surrounding environments, physical or sociocultural. Another student’s feedback reads: “Thanks for inspiring me this past semester — words can’t describe how meaningful this

course has been to me.” Again, I recognize the need for care in interpreting such comments and in using them to promote one’s ideas. It is easy to be momentarily inspired and to chalk up a long resume of “most meaningful experience ever” occurrences. At the same time, however, I think we need to be careful in not dismissing a student’s remarks about meaningfulness, particularly if they relate to experiences occurring throughout a course. In this particular case, the remarks were made as part of anonymous student course evaluation at the end of a course which started off in some considerable turmoil because of organizational issues, and I came in as an instructor almost three weeks into the course. Part of the dialogical engagement was devoted to working through the turmoil and developing mutually agreeable solutions.

A Praxis of Dialogue

Buber’s comprehensive, integrated model of dialogue provides us with a basis for a praxis of dialogue that is not rooted in the esoteric but in the intentionality of the here-and-now of each relationship and each moment, helping us as educators integrate dialogue as a way of being, not only for our lives as educators, but also our lives as individuals, family and community members, and citizens. Buber’s model provides us with the means of engaging dialogically in our teaching; further, it provides us with some possible curricular and pedagogical approaches which allow us to enable learners—both “teachers” and

“students” —to “become dialogue,” to embody dialogue in an integrated and reflective fashion.

We have in recent years placed an enormous burden on dialogue in education—but the burden has been placed on a conception of dialogue as verbal conversation. de Castell (2004) is correct in wondering if (verbal) dialogue is able to bear this burden. Burbules (1993) is correct in his argument that dialogue fundamentally is “at heart a kind of *social relation* that engages its participants” (p. 19). Buber’s model, grounded in *devotio*, works toward an ontological grounding of relationality in the world. “This very world, this very contradiction, unabridged, unmitigated, unsmoothed, unsimplified, unreduced, this world shall be—not overcome—but consummated” (Buber, 1948, p. 26). The “moment God” is found in the world, in the essence of truly meeting another; *here*, one meets the eternal, transcendent *Thou*. A person or object is made present or brought into being—sacralized, ultimately—in and through the relationship we have with it. Out of (and through) this realization, one turns to the other in response and responsiveness. Concomitantly, this is a process of meaning-making, and it is one I notice is valued by students, who seem to have so few opportunities for it. Vartan Gregorian (2005), writing in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, notes that:

Humanity has always craved meaning and wholeness, and when people do not have the ability or the knowledge to separate fact from fiction, to question deeply, to integrate knowledge, or to see coherence and meaning in life, they feel a deeply unsettling emptiness at the core of their lives. (p. B4)

As Freire (1970/2006) emphasizes, dialogue cannot exist without a “profound love” for people and the world which generates, through relationships, acts of freedom (pp. 89–90). Freire’s bases his critical approach on a love of the world. If we lose sight of *devotio*, our critique loses its humanity and heart; at its worst, the critical stance becomes little more than intellectual one-upmanship. In the spirit of *legein*, however, our educational inquiries into self, others, and the world become a lying-down-before, a lying-down-beside, a gathering together. There is conformation and empathic inclusion in our inquiry and response, and the caring recognition of our embeddedness in *familia*—even if we find ourselves “over against” the other in opposition. If anything, our critical stance deepens, since we have a greater awareness that the bell does actually toll for us.

A praxis of dialogue has us deepening our realization of our physical, sociocultural, historical, and spiritual situatedness, realizing that we are shaped and addressed by these and by those who cross our paths in what Buber (1947/2002) terms our present, concrete reality (p. 45). We are addressed by

multitudes who seek to know if we have heard—sometimes it is nothing more (or more profound) than that—and who seek to hear our meaningful response. That response, be it in words or the simplicity of a meaning-laden glance, comes most effectively through our lives, lived in and committed to an ethos of dialogue. An effective dialogue is not driven by prescriptives and “oughts”; rather, it is quite simply an Eros-driven response to a call, nay, to a cry.

My thesis is a simple, Aristotelian assertion that dialogue as an ontological orientation can be developed through regular and systemic practice (even though, once again, dialogue is not a doing but a being). It is clear in considering Buber’s work on dialogue, not to mention the application of dialogue to education, that dialogue is hard. While it does have the softness of being, and although it can be embodied in the lightest touch, and while it is made manifest through grace, developing oneself to it takes work, it does not arrive overnight, and the path of dialogue is long, twisty, dark, unknown, and full of surprises and stumbles along the way. I agree with Burbules’ (1993) repeated assertion that dialogue requires a continual commitment. But it is not just a commitment to a conversation or an engagement: it is a commitment to a way of life and the continual development or unfolding of that way of life, one that is characterized by uncertainty and the possibility of struggle. As a way of life, it is established through effort of the body, mind, and heart; as an integrated effort, it requires the

many dimensions of our lives—what Buber (1947/2002) refers to as “taking everything up into the might of dialogue of the genuine life, from the trivial mysteries of the everyday to the majesty of the destructive destiny” (p.45). On another occasion, Buber (Buber & Friedman, 1964) describes how the educator’s personal life plays a significant role in the hallowing of the educational encounter:

... what can help is the simple personal life, the educator’s own life, in which the everyday and its actions are hallowed, a life that is so lived that he who suffers from the unholiness can, and finally even will, participate in it. I have known no one whom I might call a saint, but many whose everyday performances, with out being meant to be holy actions, work exactly such (p. 62)

The mantra I have heard repeatedly from those whom I consider well versed in the ways of dialogue is “practice, practice.” What I observed in these individuals—particularly students and faculty members here in the Faculty of Education, and members of the Dialogue Makers’ Network, started by Dr. Joanna Ashworth, former program director of dialogue programs at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue—is that they make conscious, intentional efforts to engage in dialogue, and they do not compartmentalize their lives such that they “engage in dialogue” only at certain times; rather, dialogue is an ongoing effort,

a way of life. It is not a switch to be turned off or on as circumstances might dictate. As Michelle Poirier Brown of the Dialogue Makers' Network put it on one occasion, succinctly: "Dialogue is my life" (personal communication). But, again, lest I be accused of insisting upon a certain course of action, let me echo Buber (1947/2002) when he insists our task lies not in "ought" but rather in "may" or "need" but more explicitly in "longing and in grace" (p. 45). To amplify that message, Buber ends his essay on education by pointing to both the indefinable and to "non-doing."

An ontological orientation to dialogue has significant ramifications for us as educators, aside from seeing it as a way of life. Effective and meaningful dialogue and its development can require significant amounts of time, requiring a re-consideration of the use of time within the universality of the 50-minute class. Indeed, it might require a re-consideration of how we allocate class time: is a 50-minute class an effective use of time from a dialogical perspective? Likely not. Moving toward understanding requires sustained effort and does not often come quickly. Instead of thinking of minutes, hours; instead of hours, days; instead of days, weeks. One- or two-day workshops offer only beginnings, but university courses running for an entire term offer much better opportunities for dialogical exploration and the development of relationships and dialogical understandings. I note the Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue offered at Simon

Fraser University (SFU) in conjunction with the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue where students devote an entire term to one program on dialogue and meet for several hours a day, Monday through Friday. This pedagogical approach offers students a three-month intensive program. One advantage of such a program on a daily basis is that having several hours allows conversations and other dialogical engagements to run for extended periods. Often it can take 30 minutes or more just to break beneath the surface in developing connections. We have to consider whether we can, are willing, or are able to invest the necessary time. I would suggest that the investment of time is worth it, fully recognizing that taking time presents curricular and pedagogical challenges. Students regularly inform me that their chief frustration with their university education lies in not having enough time to engage in meaningful conversations about the goals of their education, the goals of their own lives, and what makes a life meaningful and fulfilling.

Relational Education in a World of Relations:

Dialogue in Education

At both the local and global levels, we notice four things about our present reality. First, we are seeing and experiencing change ever more rapidly. Second, this change is more likely to be dramatic, with unknowns and that which was unforeseen arising more frequently; the future is increasingly more and more

unlike the past. Third, the world is increasingly connected and interrelated, whether in regard to climate and the biosphere, economies and finance, culture, language, or technology. Fourth, because of a shrinking world, heterogeneity and cultural differences are more evident and are both celebrated and challenged.

These factors present educational challenges, requiring us to deepen our awareness, to become aware of our relations with others, and to attempt at least to understand others, both human and non-human, who might speak in ways foreign to us. Because our actions will increasingly influence others in a more closely connected world, the requirement to develop deeper understandings of relationships, as well as an epistemology of relationality, grows larger. When David Orr (2004), for example, argues for environmental education, he is essentially arguing for an education which recognizes our environmental embeddedness and interdependence, since the essence of his model of environmental education is an ethos of relationality. The capacities of awareness and presence, and the abilities to demonstrate understanding through confirmation and empathic inclusion, to handle the unknowns and uncertainties which are increasingly likely to confront us, to suspend our assumptions and judgments where necessary, to understand that both-and is sometimes the reality, not either-or, and to see connections—all these will have an increasing place in the world of the 21st century. Further, we increasingly recognize that we

are social beings who exist and are formed in relationships; the modernist idea of a separate, autonomous self seems less viable in a world of relationality. What is essential, Buber (1967a) suggests, is our relation to “all existing things” and being able to address them from the heart (p. 119); from these come a vital humanism.

In his autobiographical *Meetings*, Buber (1973) recounts his first year of university studies in Vienna. What had the greatest impact on him was the:

Regulated and yet free intercourse between teacher and students, the common interpretation of texts, in which the master at times took part with a rare humility, as if he too were learning something new, and the liberated exchange of question and answer in the midst of all the scholastic fluency—all this disclosed to me, more intimately than anything that I read in a book, the true actuality of the spirit, as a “between.” (p. 30)

The spirit of a between is what has most impressed me in pedagogical relations I have observed at SFU. The “liberated exchange” becomes what Isaacs (1999) calls “generative dialogue,” when there is a sparking, creative and yet critical and collaborative flow of ideas, and, even more than this, becomes the generation of a unique intersubjective ethos, a collective sense of consciousness. This collective consciousness has been researched by scholars such as Chris Bache (2008) in *The Living Classroom: Teaching and Collective Consciousness*, and by Briskin, Erickson,

Ott, & Callanan (2009). I have seen this collective,⁴⁰ creative sense emerge repeatedly among graduate students, in both formal and informal educational settings. Serving as a prelude to such creative knowledge generation is a common characteristic: this deep sense of confirming the other. Moreover, the integrated constellation of generative, dialogical capacities contributes to what Buber (1947/2002) calls a “subterranean dialogic, that steady potential presence of the one to the other” (p. 116) in the educational encounter.

As educators, we work to help students understand where they have come from, who they are, where they are situated, and what possibilities lie before them—as individuals who will live and work alongside others, as citizens who can contribute to the commonweal, and as members of environmental ecologies. A clearly developed sense of self allows them for the first time to engage fully as members of the collective. As educators, we help students develop such self-awareness by ourselves becoming learners—jointly exploring, suffering, questioning. We see ourselves, not so much as transmitters of knowledge, but as commoners engaged in the joint exploration and unfolding of knowledge and understanding (Freire, 1970/2006). At the same time, we are aware of what Buber (1947/2002) calls the asymmetrical nature of the dialogical

⁴⁰ This concept of the collective needs to be distinguished from the faceless collectives which concerned Buber in which individuality disappeared into a mass group formation. See Buber 1947/2002, pp. 236 ff.

relationship in much education. Teachers often possess more knowledge than students and have the unique privilege of having experienced what students have experienced and are experiencing; students do not have that experience and are not fully able to empathically identify with the experience and understandings of teachers. Educators can work toward having that relationship “burst asunder” to change into a more fully dialogical friendship.

The challenge for teachers lies in trying to establish learning through genuine, meaningful, heartfelt relationships. Whether engaging the students directly, jointly studying texts, having students engage with each other, the challenge is to foster and create opportunities for *I-Thou* relationships. Burbules (1993) notes that, at its heart, dialogue is about social relations, regardless of what educational tasks are at hand. A further challenge is that the teacher cannot fully predict what will emerge; a dialogical ethos calls upon teachers to be receptive to the needs and longings of students, requiring varying degrees of spontaneity and possible deviation from a planned curriculum. Teachers and students live and work in the emergent “situational praxis” of their common encounter (Aoki, 2005). The spontaneity is not present as an antiauthoritarianism, but as a recognition of the need to be open to the present situation of the learners. Such openness requires a genuine presence of the teacher as a human being with knowledge, values, ideals, needs, desires, and

intentions: the engagement of a whole person. An additional challenge is that the work of developing relationships might not be seen as accomplishing anything, or at least anything worthy of value; this is especially so in an educational climate driven by instrumentalism where the work of becoming is not recognized as valid learning. We need to be willing to trust this unfolding, unknown educational process. It means that we trust in the ability of students in the dialogical encounter to develop their own understandings of what is meaningful and valuable, then to be able to represent these as citizens and members of the various communities to which they belong.

Students and teachers have a longing to engage with and understand the world; part of the engagement is to have the world respond to them and to be able to reply in turn; the world becomes present to us as we become present and responsive to it (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 104). This is Eros driving education, requiring a great deal of trust. A spirit of trust builds what Isaacs (1999) calls a “climate of inquiry” (p. 228) which is open with respect to meaning, feeling, and power. An authentic presence in the teacher helps establish both trust and then inquiry, such that learners come to feel there is meaning in the world and in their lives, that inquiry itself is meaningful and trustworthy. As Buber (1947/2002) writes in the essay on the education of character, in an atmosphere of trust, the

students learn to ask—and the teachers realize they are called to respond authentically.

Such responsivity requires pedagogical and curricular approaches which are flexible, responsive, and sensitive to what is both present and emerging as presence, and the ability to be open and to rest in the epistemic move Otto Scharmer (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2005) calls “letting come,” the integration of being aware, suspending assumptions, and being open—a “‘pre-sensing’ and bringing into presence” (p. 220). Both teachers and students are now in what Aoki (2005) calls an in-dwelling between two curricular worlds, that of the curriculum-as-planned and the emergent “curriculum-as-lived-experience” (pp. 159ff). As Aoki writes, teachers realize that “‘implementing’ the curriculum-as-plan in this year’s lived situation calls for a fresh interpretive work constituted in the presence of very alive, new students” (p. 162). William Doll (2005) characterizes such teachers as imaginatively employing a “pedagogy of practice” which is reflective, responsively flexible, and envisioning in a “play of performance” with other learners.

In this sort of performative process, a semi-stable, semi-permeable structure and fluid habits continually and dynamically interact so that new knowledge and new forms keep emerging. One might well call

this not only a transformative curriculum but also an emergent one.

(p. 55)

Doll goes on to stress that one of the unique and fundamental aspects of such a curricular and pedagogical approach is process. The voices of the learners (both students and teachers) *and* the curriculum itself emerge and are made present: the emergence of *Logos*.

Especially in a postmodern era, where meanings are not fixed and static, the role of the educator involves what Buber terms “self-education” for both teachers and students: the existential moves toward meaning making. These moves become embodied in curriculum as process and thus in pedagogy. Stacy Reeder (2005) submits that these “complicated conversations” comprise and construct a tapestry of meanings through the interactive weavings of the learners. Donna Trueit (2005) characterizes the curricular and pedagogical moves as both “livingness of conversations” and as watercourses which run and spill—playing with meaning, transgressing boundaries, narrating and questioning, and finally challenging the bounds of certainty. These are not moves to self absorption or narcissism; rather, the development of the self requires the inevitable consideration of others and surrounding ecologies. The role of teachers becomes that of exposing themselves and their students to the “creative Spirit” —

the dynamic flow of meaning that makes life worthwhile and provides a touchstone reachable through collaborative, dialogical effort (Buber 1947/2002).

Buber (1947/2002) points out the need of creative expression, or what he calls the “originator instinct” in his essay on education. It is the instinct of doing and creating which can under the right conditions grow to a passion; it is the gesture which “expresses itself to the world” (p. 102). The educational forces which greet these expressions to the world remain vital: greeting these creator-students with enthusiasm, confirming both their creations and themselves as creators, and releasing them to a “life of freely-moving persons, rejoicing in their achievement” (p. 102). Buber stresses that sharing these creative undertakings allows me to realize myself as a “fellow-creature lost in the world” and to become a comrade, friend, or lover of others on the journey. There is also the primal instinct for communion, the longing of Eros to become fully present to the world and have it be fully present to us. That authentic longing of Eros Buber characterizes as the “great pollen-bearing butterfly of psychogenesis” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 33). The engagements of a dialogical orientation are a creative process. It is here that “I, the lover, turn to this other human being, the beloved, in his otherness, his independence, his self-reality, and turn to him with all the power of intention in my own heart” (p. 34). What the educator offers are the opportunities to draw out and develop the creative powers by means of

instruction and refinement, borne along with the understanding on the part of the educator that his or her efforts must proceed to the full humanization of the student, and that the instructor should act, in the spirit of *wu-wei*, “as though he did not” (p. 107); that is, the instructor must fully embody the dialogical. The dialogical must be “concentrated in him; and doing out of concentration has the appearance of rest” (p. 107).

These engagements lead, or can lead, to what I would suggest as vital: the movement to the “saying of *Thou*,” the recognition of *Thou*. Buber (1967a) suggests that we educate by leading others to that recognition (pp. 100–101). This is a central theme in Buber’s writings on education: that the educator serves to reveal, in and through the dialogical relationship, what is sacred in the person and the world. In his essay “Teaching and Deed,” he refers to this as “... the ceaseless begetting and giving birth to the same single spirit, and its continuous integration into life” (1948, p. 143).

Relational Education in a World of Relations:

Education in Dialogue

As well as making dialogue an integral part of curricula and pedagogy, might we also include a curriculum of dialogue? I believe such a curriculum has its place in postsecondary education. If we are to suggest dialogical forms of curriculum and pedagogy, it seems reasonable that learning about dialogue and how to “become

dialogue” would play a role in teacher education, and in education more generally, if we feel that a dialogical ethos makes sense in navigating our relations with other people and our various physical, sociocultural, historical, and spiritual ecologies. This will be the focus of future work, but here I can offer broad outlines.

Again, teachers need to be authentic, responding from their own, lived realities: their convictions, passions, understandings, longings. Theirs cannot simply be the calculated, pre-planned curriculum; rather, curricula would be lived in the moment, responsive to the other learners and to their common situation. These articulations and responses may bring about disagreement and conflict, but this is not necessarily a negative consequence. As long as there is authentic call and response, as long as there is genuine concern for the welfare of the other, there can be fruitful dialogue, even if there is conflict. Even in the midst of conflict, we are still called to confirm the essence and presence of another, satisfying the need to be recognized and affirmed by another. It may seem at times that nothing much is happening, but that is not necessarily true. The work of dialogue is slow, patient, subtle, and, since it is dedicated to exploration and openness, liable to wandering and “wrong” turns. We would now have an educational focus directly devoted to the development of *I-Thou* relationships *and* to developing theoretical and practical, experiential

understandings of how we establish such relationships: a *praxis* of dialogue. As well, developing such a praxis would be facilitated by an integral approach to the development of dialogue, as I have noted previously—an approach recognized by Buber’s integrated philosophy of dialogue. There are three approaches that would contribute toward a comprehensive curriculum of dialogue: the study and practice of dialogue, contemplative practices, and artistic practices.

Study and Practice of Dialogue

First, such a curriculum on and about dialogue for students of various ages interested in dialogue would include the study and practice of dialogue; a foundation in theory is significant so that a *praxis* of dialogue can develop.⁴¹ Study of the works of those who have thought about and theorized about dialogue, who have offered artistic and pedagogical expressions of dialogue, and who have lived the life of dialogue can be invaluable in developing a praxis of dialogue: a conscious, reciprocating integration of ideas and practice. Study provides understandings and knowledge about dialogue and its dimensions which can then be tested in practice; in turn, our practice helps us in developing refinements in understandings and the body of knowledge surrounding dialogue. Engaging in study as an educational community rounds out that

⁴¹ I am only sketching broad outlines here. A detailed description and discussion of such curricula is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

praxis. Study of works about dialogue can be incorporated into curricula for all ages. Joseph Dunne (2006) relates that he has worked with Buber's ideas with children as young as six years. The curriculum would include opportunities to engage with the various texts and teachings on dialogue, from ancient to contemporary, and from a variety of philosophical, educational, and cultural perspectives. An in-depth examination and study of the literature of dialogue—including study of its expression through other means, such as the arts—develops comprehensive understandings of dialogue, also serving to avoid the sometimes endless “check-ins” and learner narratives which border on the solipsistic.

Avnon (1998) makes a salient point about Buber's writings, but I would suggest it might apply to the study of other written works, as well. Avnon maintains that Buber endeavoured to write in ways that would “transcend” language such that the words would serve as “vehicles of *seeing* and of *listening*” (p. 3) allowing a direct, a priori, phenomenal perception of what is present (“wordless attention” in Avnon's words, p. 9). The attempt, then, is that the words will reveal the phenomenal awareness of dialogue. But they require our close hermeneutic attention—attention to what Avnon calls the “intention of the text” (p. 13), the intentions of the author, and one's own possible interpretations

and the genesis of these interpretations. Such attention focuses on seeing and listening to any latent voice in the writing and engaging with it.

As well, a pedagogical approach based on dialogue obviously makes sense, including many opportunities to engage in dialogue in classes. Moreover, this orientation to dialogue sees that the opportunities to develop dialogue as a way of life naturally enough include all aspects of our lives; this is an education without borders, and the opportunities are endless—although not guaranteed! (grace)— from the classroom conversation to engaging the glance of the street newspaper vendor.

We often champion dialogue but then slip back into monological pedagogical practices, partially because it is so much easier to do. We are sometimes not even aware that we have done so. As well, dialogue takes more time, particularly if we are to listen, offer reflective moments between comments instead of rushing in with response, and if we are to probe more deeply into each other's comments and meanings. Moreover, the development of dialogical virtues takes time and practice, and conversational dialogue (which does not exclude its ontological foundations) offers a perfect opportunity for the development, practice, and manifestation of dialogue.

Works engaged in and produced by students, while they would focus on dialogue, could include the entire range of expression and, for postsecondary

students, scholarship: written works, production of artefacts and artistic works, conversational dialogues.⁴² Creative expressions of both dialogue and its scholarly dimensions could represent increasingly appropriate responses in a world increasingly requiring creative response.

The Contemplative Arts

The practice of various contemplative methods has, for centuries, been a principal method of focusing the mind and developing awareness. These methods centre on focusing the mind. Concentration is defined in one treatise (the *Yoga Sūtras of Patanjali*, a classically recognized, comprehensive, and systemic treatment of interiorizing the mind) as the “binding” of consciousness to a single point, or the focusing of the mind on a single thought or object.⁴³

Roger Walsh and Frances Vaughn (1993), like Daniel Goleman (1977), point out that meditative practices generally fall into two camps: those which focus on concentration (as defined above), and those which shift the focus to an “open awareness in a choiceless, nonjudgmental manner to whatever experiences

⁴² Mark Winston provides an interesting anecdote about the possibilities and value of “alternate” expressions of learning (beyond merely verbal or written accounts) in this account, “Methods of Creation: Formats for community building and dialogue,” in the December 8, 2010 issue of the *Vancouver Observer*, available here: <http://www.vancouverobserver.com/blogs/methodscreation/2010/12/08/formats-community-building-and-dialogue>

⁴³ These words refer to the first sloka of the third section of the Yoga Sūtras. “Dhāranā is confining the mind on a spot” (Karambelkar, 1986, p. 315); “Concentration is the confining of the mind within a limited mental area,” (Mathur, 1987, p. 293).

arise" (p. 53); these latter practices are generally referred to (especially in the Buddhist tradition) as "mindfulness" practice. Those practicing meditative mindfulness work with their present experience, developing an increased awareness of the moment-to-moment sensations, thoughts, and other experiences impinging on the consciousness. All these inner or outer experiences or stimuli become meditative objects, worthy of precise examination. Regardless of which approach is used, Goleman points out that all these meditative practices enjoin ". . . continuous, full watchfulness of each successive moment, a global vigilance to the meditator's chain of awareness" (1977, p. 111).

Heesoon Bai (2003) claims that the flow of discursive thoughts produced by the rational mind can prevent us from developing close relationships with people and things we encounter—to the degree that we are absorbed in our own discursive process and lose touch with that we encounter—preventing us from perceiving the "Suchness" of those others. "Disciplining the discursive involves arresting the incessant dissipative flow of mental stuffs and thereby disclosing the Ground of Being underneath." Bai (2001) argues that a way out of this sense of alienation from others is to stop seeing ourselves as alienated from others and the world. The key to such transformation is "intense, total, and sustained attention. Thus the first act we have to accomplish in learning to see is the stop.

We have to stop the usual rushing-around with discursive labeling and calculative chattering.” She goes on to assert that:

When we direct such an intense attention to an “object” of our face-to-face encounter, there occurs this singular experience of the “subject” and the “object,” the self and other coming together, co-present and co-emergent.

In his earlier life, Buber studied Taoism during what has come to be characterized as his “mystical” phase⁴⁴ and later rejected it and, more generally, the value of contemplative practice as part of the life of dialogue. Although Buber claims to have rejected formal contemplative practice, I do not think it is accurate to say that he renounced either contemplation or mysticism; what is more accurate is to argue that he renounced quietism in his renunciation of contemplative practices, insofar as they represent a passive withdrawal from what is regarded as an illusory world.⁴⁵ Buber himself later agreed that he believed in an “active mysticism.” A contemplative focus—on the “immediacy of the relation” (Buber, 1958, p. 180) within the contexts of everyday lives; and one’s

⁴⁴ Dan Avnon (1998) characterizes Buber’s life as falling into three phases: mysticism, dialogue, and “attentive silence.”

⁴⁵ In his preface to the second edition to *I and Thou*, translator Ronald Gregor Smith (1958/2000) argues, surprisingly, that he feels that while “poet” might be an accurate description of Buber, the term “mystic” poses too great a danger of misunderstanding. I disagree. The danger, if there is one, lies in the all-too-common misunderstandings surrounding mysticism and its nuances. To the degree that nuances of consciousness will be felt to be important for our continuing evolution, an appreciation of the nuances of mysticism may well prove fruitful.

whole being—physical, mental, and spiritual—is demanded. With his focus on the world and immediacy, Buber termed this form of mysticism “presentness” — being present to the everyday world (p. 181).

As Maurice Friedman (1991) puts it: “Not expansion of consciousness to the All but awareness of otherness, not universality but uniqueness, not perfection but the unreduced immediacy of the ‘lived concrete’ became Buber’s way from this time on” (p. 81). I would simply add that in its highest and most complete form, Buber’s philosophy of dialogue is compatible with and even embraces a contemplative ethos and contemplative approaches. A rejection of contemplative methods on Buberian grounds might well be misplaced. The intersubjective can be a common meeting point.

As Clifford Hill (2006) and Bai, Scott, and Donald (2009) note, contemplative practices have been used in teacher development programs as innovative pedagogy, helping shape student-teacher interactions and deepening their engagements with each other. Hal Roth (2006) and Ed Sarath (2006) both point to the dominant focus of first-person modalities in contemplative practices. When we consider these—and certainly they have their place, as many contemplative practices are entirely subjective—we notice a lack of second-person approaches. However, second person orientations have also long been practiced, and need more attention (Gunnlaugson, 2009; Wilber 2006). Arthur

Zajonc (2006) argues the need for an “epistemology of love” in the academy, noting, in a spirit reflective of Buber’s epistemology of *devotio*, that:

...contemplative practice can become contemplative inquiry, which is the practice of an epistemology of love. Such contemplative inquiry not only yields insight (*veritas*) but also transforms the knower through his or her intimate (one could say loving) participation in the subject of one’s contemplative attention. (2006, p. 1744)

An intimate participation with others grounds us more fully into the moment of meeting, the juncture of presence and confirmation, illumined by the process of becoming aware of the other and a willingness to surrender to the unknown.

Jackie Seidel (2006) explains: “Through efforts to be contemplative, to meditate— if even for a moment—we become present at those places where life is integrated and connected, at those places where knowledge and wisdom are born” (p. 1904). Olen Gunnlaugson (2009) notes that educators have not given sufficient attention, at least in theory, to intersubjective approaches in contemplative education.⁴⁶ These represent a focus on what is *between*, rather than just on what is *inside* (first-person) or *outside* (third-person) us.

⁴⁶ Following from and building on his definition of contemplative education in higher education (p. 27), I would define it as the integration of first-, second-, and third-person contemplative practices and theory into the curriculum of traditional higher education settings for the purposes of fostering intuitive, relational, and experiential forms of knowing along paths of learning characterized by wholeness and integration.

I would suggest Buber's dialogical model itself represents a contemplative approach to intersubjectivity; at the same time, it can benefit from a conceptualization which includes contemplative approaches or which sees the entire model as having contemplative elements.⁴⁷

In recent years there has been a resurgence in study and practice of contemplation in higher education. The *Teachers College Record* published a special edition in 2006 devoted to the theory and practice of contemplative methods, and journals such as the *Journal of Transformative Education*, the *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*, *Paideusis: International Journal in Philosophy of Education*, *Educational Leadership*, the *American Journal of Education*, *Educational Psychologist*, and the *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, have recently offered scholarship on contemplative theory and practice.

Artistic Practices

Artistic practices would serve well in a curriculum on dialogue, both theoretically and practically. I offer here a defence of the use of the arts and artistic practices in a syllabus on dialogue. Charles Taylor (2007) in *A Secular Age* writes that a post-Romantic understanding can connect us to meaning and beauty in our secular age: that the arts can play a significant role in the recovery

⁴⁷ In future work, I wish to explore the contemplative elements of the dialogical virtues; I would suggest they can be seen as contemplative moves toward a deeper engagement with others and the world.

of *logos* and beauty. Our engagement with the arts can thus help us surmount the instrumentalism and the *I-It* ethos of the day. Taylor focuses on poetry, but his ideas serve for all the arts. He points out that words (in poetry or prose) do not acquire or possess meaning in and of themselves but do so through their interaction with the readers, or, more precisely, through an ongoing dialectic engaged in by authors and readers who reflect on the text and engage with still other authors and readers. Moreover, as a result of these interactions, we develop new relationships with the people or things represented by the words. Finally, words help us find expression for and meaning in the “highest” and perhaps most abstract domains: the infinite and our deepest longings and ideals; as well, poets and writers—and other artists—articulate our situated presence.

Making manifest the conditions of awareness which then manifest *Logos* or *Thou* shows the immense value of the arts for both our contemporary society and as part of a comprehensive approach in developing dialogue. In articulating our situated presence, the artist can reveal and confirm its beauty, presence, and haecceity. And to stress the point again, Taylor adds that this is not a Romantic monologue but a post-Romantic, dialogical shaping: “... the resonances which matter are those which link speaker and hearer, writer and readers, and eventually (perhaps) whole communities. Poets may fail to be heard, but the end

of the writing is to reach others and to effect a coming together in the Being revealed, or set free" (p. 760).

Maxine Greene (1995a) notes that simple "exposure" to works of art is not sufficient: there must be "conscious participation," which she characterizes as a "going out of energy, an ability to notice what there is to be noticed in the play, the poem, the quartet" (p. 179). One must enter perceptually, affectively, and cognitively, and there must be a balance of attention and openness so that the engagement is meaningful. Aesthetic events, she maintains, are participatory transactions with our environment which situate us in time and space. She highlights attention frequently, as in this passage:

I hope teachers can learn what it means to attend, truly to attend to Manet's *Luncheon on the Grass*, in all its detail, the changing contours and hues of Monet's *Rouen Cathedral* at different times of day, Cezanne's *House of the Hanged Man*, Picasso's *Guernica* with its searing images of pain. I hope more teachers can share with their students glimpses of reality long obscured by familiarity (2008, p. 19)

From attention she brings us back to engagement, offering a commentary on a passage from Mary Oliver in which the poet concludes, "Attention is the beginning of devotion"; Greene remarks that devotion is where the arts in education find culmination.

Phyllis Greenacre (1971) points to the significance of awareness in artistic practices, and argues that while a particular intensity of perceptual acuity is necessary, that acuity indeed shapes and is shaped by a “love affair with the world” (p. 490). The arts can provide a powerful means of developing awareness, and I suggest an alignment between the arts and a dialogical engagement. In the *Critique of Judgment*, Immanuel Kant (1790/1952) argues that art is human in origin, that art has purpose, and that its purpose is to allow a free play in the mind, and thus to communicate ideas. What he calls “aesthetic art” (art that is seen as beautiful) has a quality of “reflective judgment” that arises out of the sensing of the object being portrayed. Like Kant, James Young (1997) sees art as having a cognitive, aesthetic function: helping us understand humanity, human relations, and the world. Jerrold Levinson (1989) argues that art making can be viewed as having two intentions: the *intrinsic* intention—“art for art's sake”—and the *relational* intention—the desire to have the art *regarded* (p. 21). Here, too, is the purposiveness of communicability. Thomas Leddy (1993) argues that one of art's essences lies in its emergent nature—an emergence that can exist only in the art's relationship with a perceiver. Art, is, then, among other things, essentially and purposively an act of communication in which ideas are imaginatively created and communicated, and in which we create or develop understanding (see Kant, 1790/1952, Book II, §49, pp. 175–182). As Tim Lilburn

says of poetry, its appetite is to “know the withinness of things” (Lilburn, 1999). One can clearly argue that art and artistry can have the dialogical intention of revealing and conveying meaning.

Buber felt, in a fashion perhaps not unlike Kant, Leddy, and Levinson, that art itself was dialogic in nature; he felt all art forms “ . . . say, to him who receives them, something (not a ‘feeling’ but a perceived mystery) that can be said only in this one language” (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 30). The focus is on this perhaps mysterious act of sharing meaning—an act that often, although it may use words, goes well beyond the scope of words themselves. What is important is that the purposive intent is receiving and conveying (and perhaps sharing and developing) meaning. In *I and Thou*, Buber (1958/2000) writes of art as an “appearance” demanding an effective power which allows it to be conveyed; it demands the “primary word out of [a person’s] being” which allows the art to be created and to convey meaning (p. 24). Conveying meaning is part of the process of confirmation. As Buber (1957) goes on to say, the “risk” is that a person may withhold nothing; the whole being is required. Thus artistry demands fullness of presence. And when the artist brings presence to the encounter, the spirit of *devotio* reveals the “existent thing”:

True art is a loving art. To him who pursues such art there appears,
when he experiences an existent thing, the secret shape of that thing

.... This he does not see only with his eyes, rather he feels its outlines with his limbs; a heart beats against his heart. Thus he learns the glory of things. (p. 29)

It is not enough that we have these meanings within ourselves: the urge of Eros is to develop *logos* in and through the relationship, and then to give testament to that meaning in the artefact:

Man has a great desire to enter into personal relations with things and to imprint on them his relation to them. To use them, even to possess them, is not enough, they must become his in another way, by imparting to them in the picture sign his relation to them. (Buber, 1965, p. 66)

In his essay on Henri Bergson's ideas on intuition, Buber (1957) points out that the beholder "transposes himself into the station of the beheld," experiencing its particularities through a "deep community between the two" (p. 81). Here, Buber is referring to his concept of inclusion. As Friedman (1965, p. 56) points out, for Buber the encounter between the artist and subject is not merely a sensory one, but is rather an encounter between two beings. But this "mediation of the word," to use Friedman's term, occurs in and through the senses and the body. Buber writes (1958/2000) with regard to the beheld form that he can only "body it forth," thus disclosing it in its "whole embodied form" (p. 25). In his

essay on epistemology in *The Knowledge of Man*, Buber (1965) writes that the artist's encounter with nature is a "meeting with the world and ever again a meeting with the world" (p. 151). In advocating an integrated wholeness to that knowing and to that meeting, he goes on to add: "The whole body-soul person is the human in man; is this wholeness which is involved in his meeting with the world. . . . We no longer begin from above, and certainly not from below, but from everywhere" (pp. 151–152). The artistic encounter is dialogical and can serve in developing dialogue.

In *The Body of the Artisan*, historian Pamela Smith (2004) provides a detailed examination of the role of artisans in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries in developing detailed, intricate understandings of the subjects with which they worked. The work of these artisans was in some ways a radical epistemological shift, highlighting the roles of the artisan's body and somatic sensibilities in developing knowledge. Smith points out that for Paracelsus, as an example, *scientia* was the power of discerning ("overhearing") the divine power inherent in nature which the artisan or the physician developed through their interactions. "Experience" was the means by which they worked with nature to discern its secrets; knowing came through doing, and doing meant interacting, through the body, with nature or nature's material with close attention: it was a process of becoming aware. As Smith goes on to argue: ". . . knowledge of nature

is gained through direct observation of particular objects and that nature is known through the hands and the senses rather than through texts and the mind” (p. 151).⁴⁸ A key feature of this new epistemological approach was the imitation of nature (and hence the Divine) through close observation of its features; as Smith concludes, “In this intellectual revolution from the bottom up, these artisans transformed the contemplative tradition of natural philosophy into an active one” (p. 239). This active tradition involved both awareness and confirmation. “And the more such a craftsman wishes to make perfect images, the more he must discern the Sign, for the reason that Nature’s art prefigures the operations by which the Sign is discerned—what soul is within a person” (Paracelsus, *Astronomia Magna*, cited in Smith, 2004, p. 87).

Frederick Franck defines his artistic work as an effort “... to live in radical openness to pure experiencing in kitchen, bedroom, subway, newspaper, that is: to everyday life, inside as well as around oneself” (Franck, 1993, p. 10). He sees drawing as a means of developing seeing, a way of “getting into intimate touch with the visible world around us, and through it ... with ourselves” (Franck, 1973, p. xi). Franck had students go out and just sit with an object, so that eventually looking became seeing. “The experiment [in seeing] is successful if

⁴⁸ Needless to say, such assertions were indeed a challenge to the academic and spiritual orthodoxies of the day. Paracelsus, Bernard Palissy (who maintained that peasants working the fields engaged in philosophy), Jakob Böhme (who, in *Aurora*, claimed that the search for God began and continued in nature), Albrecht Dürer (“Depart not from Nature for Art is rooted in Nature, and whoever can pull it out, has it.”), and others in the 15th and 16th centuries with similar views were initially scorned.

you succeed in feeling you have become that leaf or that daisy, regardless of what appears on the paper” (Franck, 1973, p. *xviii*).⁴⁹ Dialogue begins with the art of seeing, of listening. “...we know the labels, but don’t know the wine” (Franck, 1973, p. 4). So here Franck points to both inclusion and confirmation.

John Daido Looi (2004) notes that stillness leads to an increasing awareness of self and of the relationship between self and other, but this awareness must be allowed to unfold. For example, once you have discovered a subject with which you feel some resonance, you are not to rush into immediate expression. He advises waiting in the presence of the subject, quietly and dispassionately observing until a sense of relationship has been established. Then one spends even more time in this presence of the relationship, observing as the subject changes and unfolds. “On occasion, I have sat for hours with a subject, waiting to release the shutter” (p. 89). This unfolding is both a deepening awareness of the other and of being addressed, and the dynamic process of confirmation of the other as an other. Peter London (2003) concurs, maintaining that the artistic process forges an illuminating relationship between artist, subject, and the viewer of the artefact that helps reveal the nature of each while also revealing underlying, connecting relationships to other patterns and parts of nature. Moreover, artistry serves to “... reveal the pattern that connects us to the

⁴⁹ And from a Buberian perspective, there need not be any loss of self, of *Urdistanz*.

rest of the world, and to illuminate the special qualities that make everything in the world simultaneously unique and related—more succinctly, sacred” (p. 65). London suggests artistry is the call of an *I* to evoke a *Thou*.

Thomas Merton (in Steindl-Rast, 1969) refers to attention, openness, and to a synthesizing apperception when he speaks of an artistic contemplation: “Drink it all in. Everything—the redwood forests, the sea, the sky, the waves, the birds, the sea lions. It is in all this that you will find your answers. Here is where everything makes connections” (p. 10). Merton saw his artwork as “summonses to awareness,” claiming, in Zen-like fashion, that awareness and not necessarily interpretation was the key to his work (Lipse, 2006). Howard Griffin, the professional photographer who worked with him for a few years, describes Merton's approach; one can see the move to confirmation:

Merton's approach to photography, and one of the reasons his photography is truly personal, lay in his use of his lenses primarily as contemplative instruments. He photographed the things he contemplated He did not seek to capture or possess, and certainly not to arrange the objects he photographed. He lent his vision and his lenses to them in a new way ... he allowed the objects to remain true to themselves and to reveal themselves, and he trusted that “the connections would be made.” ... He worked for photographic images

which, when viewed without haste or pressure, might accomplish the slow work of communicating “a hidden wholeness” (Merton & Griffin, 1970, p. 4)

In summation, artistic practices and our interactions with artefacts can serve as valuable pedagogical approaches in a curriculum of dialogue. They offer us the opportunities to become aware, to confirm the other, to develop inclusion, and to embrace the holy insecurity through the encounter with the sublime.

Becoming Dialogue: The Signs ... and For Whom

I have maintained that dialogue as an ontological reality can be developed through practiced effort, including the openness and surrender that brings grace. If there is a progression towards the fullness of an *I-Thou* relationship, what are the signs that indicate the becoming of dialogue? I would suggest the fundamental sign is a primal sense of relationality: that one sees oneself existing in and through relationships, and, moreover, that these are relationships which reveal the *Thou*, the sacred. This primal sense *is* the turning to the other.

In this dissertation, I have frequently ventured into detailed examinations of a number of dialogical concepts and principles. While I feel a comprehensive understanding of the theory of dialogue is a worthwhile part of a dialogical *praxis*, I do not feel dialogue is an esoteric practice reserved only for the few.

Dialogue is available to all; its virtues are easy to grasp and its practice is simple.

A pure heart is likely of much more value in the development of dialogue than a sophisticated mind. As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, Buber pointed out to his interlocutors that he felt he must philosophize about dialogue—he wanted to develop a comprehensive philosophy of dialogue and an anthropological statement about the nature of humanity—but he insisted that dialogue as a way of life could not be comprehended or achieved through the discursive practice of philosophizing. He also repeatedly points to the simplest acts as possible manifestations of dialogue and maintained that its vistas were open to all. As Avnon (1998) points out, dialogue is a search and an urge, not a system of thought. It is, ultimately, a way of being.

Conclusion

Buber wrote about it repeatedly; it was his largest concern, voiced over decades of writing and public speaking; it is a major issue for both Jürgen Habermas and Charles Taylor, and some postmodernists: the *I-It* relationship. And out of that instrumentalism we have an associated loss of meaning and the mistrust between people; Wilber (2001a, b) refers to this loss of depth of meaning and the reduction of most values to mere instrumentalism as “flatland.” Buber’s chief concern was the kind and quality of our relationships with others, be they human or not. He worried about a “crisis of trust” (1967a, p. 201), not only between people, but a lack of trust in Being which allows for unreserved

dialogue with the other. As he maintains in his essay on education (1947/2000), those who count today are not the mighty institutions of church and state or highly-visible personalities, be they politicians, business, scientific, or cultural leaders, but those who respond to and take responsibility for a “living spirit” of inquiry and meaning making. Dialogue engages the deepest values education embraces. Yankelovich (2005) notes that students want to explore these primary educational values: the search for identity, meaning, and place. He also notes the need to understand other cultures, moving beyond mistrust:

Recent events, however, have driven home how important it is that we learn to see the world from the perspective of others, not just from a distinctively American vantage point....

... Instead, our whole culture must become less ethnocentric, less patronizing, less ignorant of others, less Manichaeian in judging other cultures, and more at home with the rest of the world. (p. B7)

In a world of increasing complexity, connectedness, and change, win-lose engagements, whether political, economical, or personal, are not likely to continue to serve us adequately. Senge (2004) notes: “People ‘speaking at one another’ will not foster the mutual understanding, shared aspirations, and networks of collaborative action needed” (p. viii). Bohm (1996) adds that it is collective, shared meaning which provides the interpersonal, social, and cultural

glue that cements us together. Yankelovich (2005) further notes that for all our talk about dialogue in education, it is still relatively uncommon.

... some categories of truth will not yield to scientific inquiry but must be pursued through dialogue. In dialogue issues are thrashed out from a variety of points of view that need not be deeply grounded in factual knowledge. But such methods of pursuing knowledge have little standing or legitimacy in higher education. And yet, for many of the emotion laden moral, political, and religious controversies that pervade our cultural lives, a disciplined form of dialogic discourse is better suited to truth seeking than are the specialized methods of gathering knowledge that now dominate higher education. (p. B9)

In the face of both an educational system and social order that in many ways hinder the development of dialogue, the move to dialogue still represents a considerable challenge, as Burbules (1993) concludes. Against that, though, I wager my own experiences, both inside and outside the educational system: the many people I have met, when they have the chance for dialogue, appreciate these opportunities to explore what is meaningful to them and to deepen their relationships with others. The intrinsic value of dialogue lies in its ability to create, uncover, explore, and develop meaning; to manifest an *I-Thou* relationship which reveals and affirms self and other; and to serve as a way of

being in and with the world. This creation of meaning in and through relationships reveals what is sacred in ourselves, others, the world, and our relationships. At the conclusion of *A Secular World*, Taylor (2007) points to the instrumental, “triumphant grasp of the world, intellectually and practically” (p. 773) the instrumentalism and ontological separate-ness our secular world has wrought. He calls for the revelation of the sacred. Buber (Buber & Friedman, 1964) writes:

The crisis that has come over the human world has its origin in the dehalloving of existence.... True education is never in vain, even if the hour makes it appear so. Whether it manifest itself before or in or after the threatening catastrophe—the fate of man will depend on whether the rehalloving of existence takes place. (p. 62)

Dialogue can represent the challenge of both the educator and education.

Dialogical education serves to bring the sacred into our educational encounters.

All that is left to form, Buber suggests, is the image of God; that image is formed within and between us as meaningful relation. It dwells here, immanently, in the dialogical relation. It dwells here, transcendently, in the sphere of between.

Dialogue becomes the revelation of the sacred in the sphere of the between, in the meeting of *I* and *Thou*.

REFERENCES

- Abram, D. (1996). *The spell of the sensuous*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Aoki, T. (2005). *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted Aoki*, W. Pinar & R. Irwin (Eds.). Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.
- Aristotle. (2000). *Nicomachean ethics* (R. Crisp, Trans.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Avnon, D. (1998) *Martin Buber: The hidden dialogue*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bache, C. (2008). *The living classroom: Teaching and collective consciousness*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Bai, H. (2001). Cultivating democratic citizenship: Towards intersubjectivity. In W. Hare & J. Portelli (Eds.), *Philosophy of education: Introductory readings* (3rd ed.) (pp. 5–10). Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises Ltd.
- Bai, H. (2003). The stop: The practice of reanimating the universe within and without. *Educational Insights*, 8(1). Retrieved Dec. 1, 2007 from <http://www.csci.educ.ubc.ca/publication/insights/v08n01/contextualexplorations/bai/bai.html>.

- Bai, H., Scott, C. & Donald, B. (2009). Contemplative pedagogy and revitalization of teacher education. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 55(3), 319–334.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays* (M. Holquist, Ed.; C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Banathy, B. & Jenlink, P. (2005). *Dialogue as a means of collective communication*. New York: Kluwer Academic.
- Barks, C., Rumi, J. & J. Moyne, J. (1997). *The essential Rumi* (C. Barks & J. Moyne, Transl.). Edison, NJ: Castle Books.
- Bernstein, R. (1991). *The new constellation: Ethical-political horizons of modernity/postmodernity*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Biesta, G. (2004). "Mind the gap!" In C. Bingham & A. Sidorkin (Eds.), *No education without relation* (pp. 11–22). New York: Peter Lang Publishers.
- Bingham, C. (2004). Let's treat authority relationally. In C. Bingham & A. Sidorkin (Eds.), *No education without relation* (pp. 23–38). New York: Peter Lang.
- Bingham, C. et al. (2004). Manifesto of relational pedagogy: Meeting to learn, learning to meet. In C. Bingham and A. Sidorkin (Eds.), *No education without relation* (pp. 5–7). New York: Peter Lang.
- Blenkinsop, S. (2004). Martin Buber's *Education: Imitating God*, the developmental relationalist. *Philosophy of Education Yearbook*, 2004, 79–87.

- Blenkinsop, S. (2005). Martin Buber: Educating for relationship. *Ethics, Place, and Environment*, 8(3), 285–307.
- Blenkinsop, S. (2007). Relational distance between teachers and students: What's the problem? *Philosophy of Education Yearbook*, 2006, 127–130.
- Bohm, D. (1996). *On dialogue*. London: Routledge.
- Boler, M. (2004a). All speech is not free: The ethics of “affirmative action pedagogy.” In M. Boler (Ed.), *Democratic dialogue in education: Troubling speech, disturbing silence* (pp. 3–14). New York: Peter Lang.
- Boler, M. (Ed.) (2004b). *Democratic dialogue in education: Troubling speech, disturbing silence*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Boler, M. (2004c). Editor's introduction. In M. Boler (Ed.), *Democratic dialogue in education: Troubling speech, disturbing silence* (pp. vii–xi). New York: Peter Lang.
- Bonnett, M. (2009). Education, sustainability, and the metaphysics of nature. In M. McKenzie, P. Hart, H. Bai, & B. Jickling (Eds.), *Fields of green: Restorying culture, environment, and education* (pp. 177–186). Creskill, NJ: Hampton Books.
- Briskin, A., Erickson, S., Ott, J., & Callanan, T. (2009). *The power of collective wisdom: And the trap of collective folly*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

- Buber, M. (1910/1996). Commentary/afterword on "Talks and parables of Chuang Tzu," In Herman, J. (1996) *I and Tao: Martin Buber's encounter with Chuang Tzu* (pp. 69–96). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Buber, M. (1947/2002). *Between man and man* (R. Smith, Trans.). London: Routledge.
- Buber, M. (1948). *Israel and the world: Essays in a time of crisis*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Buber, M. (1948/2002). *The way of man: According to the teachings of Hasidism*. London: Routledge.
- Buber, M. (1949). *Paths in utopia*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Buber, M. (1952). *Eclipse of God: Studies in the relation between religion and philosophy*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Buber, M. (1957). *Pointing the way: Collected essays*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Buber, M. (1958). *Hasidism and modern man*. New York: Horizon Press.
- Buber, M. (1958/2000). *I and thou*. (R. Smith, Trans.). New York: Scribner.
- Buber, M. (1960). *The origin and meaning of Hasidism*. New York: Horizon Press.
- Buber, M. (1965). *The knowledge of man: Selected essays* (R. Smith & M. Friedman, Trans.). New York: Harper & Row.
- Buber, M. (1967a). *A believing humanism: My testament, 1902–1965*. N.Y.: Simon and Schuster.

- Buber, M. (1967b). Replies to my critics. In Schilpp, P. & Friedman, M. (Eds.), *The philosophy of Martin Buber* (pp. 689–744). LaSalle, IL: Open Court/London: Cambridge University Press.
- Buber, M. (1970). *I and Thou* (W. Kaufmann, Trans.). New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster.
- Buber, M. (1973). *Meetings* (M. Friedman, Ed.). LaSalle, IL: Open Court Publishing Co.
- Buber, M. (1988). Religion as presence. In R. Horwitz (Ed.), *Buber's way to "I and Thou": The development of Martin Buber's thought and his "Religion as Presence" lectures*. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society.
- Buber, M. & Friedman, M. (1964). Interrogation of Martin Buber. In S. Rome & B. Rome (Eds.), *Philosophical interrogations: Interrogations of Martin Buber, John Wild, Jean Wahl, Brand Banshard, Paul Weiss, Charles Hartshorne, Paul Tillich* (pp. 13–118). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Buber M. & Rosenzweig, F. (1994). *Scripture and Translation*. Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press.
- Burbules, N. (1993). *Dialogue in teaching: Theory and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Chödrön, P. & hooks, b. (1997). When things fall apart: Pema Chödrön & bell hooks talk over life and all its problems. *Shambhala Sun*. 5(3). Retrieved

December 12, 2009 from:

http://www.shambhalasun.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2043

Czubaroff, J. & Friedman, M. (2000). A conversation with Maurice Friedman.

Southern Communication Journal, 65, 243–254.

de Castell, S. (2004). No speech is free: affirmative action and the politics of give

and take. In Boler, M. (Ed.) (2004). *Democratic dialogue in education:*

troubling speech, disturbing silence (pp. 51–56). New York: Peter Lang.

Dentan, R. (1962). Entry for “heart” In Buttrick, G., Kepler, T., Knox, J. May, H. &

Terrien, S. (Eds.), *The interpreter’s dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 2. New York:

Abingdon Press.

Diamond, M. (1967). Dialogue and theology. In P. Schilpp & M. Friedman (Eds.),

The philosophy of Martin Buber (pp. 235–247). LaSalle, IL: Open

Court/London: Cambridge University Press.

Doll, W. Jr. (2005). The culture of method. In W. Doll Jr., M. Fleener, D. Trueit, &

J. St. Julien (Eds.), *Chaos, complexity, curriculum, and culture: A conversation*

(pp. 21–75). New York: Peter Lang.

Dunne, J. (2006). Opening plenary on dialogue. Presentation given at the

conference on *Dialogue as praxis: Beginning without an end in mind*,

Vancouver, July 21, 2006.

- Eagleton, T. (2003). *After theory*. London: Penguin Books.
- Eagleton, T. (2007). *The meaning of life: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellinor, L. & Gerard, G. (1998). *Dialogue: Rediscover the transforming power of conversation*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Empathy, *n.* (1989). In *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. Retrieved January 2, 2010 from http://dictionary.oed.com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/cgi/entry/50074152?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=empathy&first=1&max_to_show=10.
- Evernden, N. (1993). *The natural alien: Humankind and the environment*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Ferrer, J., Romero, M., & Albareda, R. (2005). Integral transformative education: A participatory proposal. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 3(4), 306–330.
- Fiumara, G. (1990). *The other side of language: A philosophy of listening*. New York: Routledge.
- Franck, F. (1973). *The Zen of seeing: Seeing and drawing as meditation*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Freire, P. (1970/2006). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Freire, P. (2006). *Pedagogy of the heart*. New York: Continuum.

- Friedman, M. (1963). Introduction. In M. Buber (1957), *Pointing the way: Collected essays* (pp. vii–xvi). New York: Harper & Row.
- Friedman, M. (1965). Introductory essay. In M. Buber, *The knowledge of man: Selected essays* (R. Smith & M. Friedman, Trans.) (pp. 11–58). New York: Harper & Row.
- Friedman, M. (1967). *To deny our nothingness: Contemporary images of man*. New York: Dell Publishing.
- Friedman, M. (1986). *Martin Buber and the eternal*. New York: Human Sciences Press.
- Friedman, M. (1991). *Martin Buber's encounter on the narrow ridge: A life*. New York: Paragon House.
- Friedman, M. (2002a). "Introduction." In M. Buber, *Between man and man* (R. Smith, Trans.) (pp. xi–xx). London: Routledge.
- Friedman, M. (2002b). *Martin Buber: The life of dialogue* (4th ed). London: Routledge.
- Garrison, J. (2004). Ameliorating violence in dialogues across differences: The role of *Eros* and *logos*. In M. Bolen (Ed.), *Democratic dialogue in education: troubling speech, disturbing silence* (pp. 89–103). New York: Peter Lang.
- Geldard, R. (2000). *Remembering Heraclitus*. Edinburgh: Floris Books.

- Glass, R. (2004). Moral and political clarity and education as a practice of freedom. In M. Boler (Ed.), *Democratic dialogue in education: Troubling speech, disturbing silence* (pp. 15–32). New York: Peter Lang.
- Goldstein, A. & Michaels, G. (1985). *Empathy: Development, training, and consequences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.
- Goleman, D. (1977). *Varieties of the meditative experience*. New York: E. P. Dutton.
- Greenacre, P. (1971). *Emotional growth: Psychoanalytic studies of the gifted and a great variety of other individuals*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Greene, M. (1995a). Art and imagination: Reclaiming a sense of possibility. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(5), 378–382.
- Greene, M. (1995b). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Greene, M. (2008). Education and the arts: Windows of imagination. Unpublished document. Retrieved from <http://www.maxinegreene.org/articles.php>.
- Gunnlaugson, O. (2009). Establishing second-person forms of contemplative education: An inquiry into four conceptions of intersubjectivity. *Integral Review*, 5(1), 25–50.
- Habermas, J. (1979). *Communication and the evolution of society*. (T. McCarthy, Trans.). Boston: Beacon Press.

- Habermas, J. (1984). *A theory of communicative action*. (T. McCarthy, Trans.).
Boston: Beacon Press.
- Hall, D. & Ames, R. (2003). Understanding order: The Chinese perspective. In R. Solomon & K. Higgins (Eds.), *From Africa to Zen* (pp. 1–20). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Heidegger, M. (1975). *Early Greek thinking*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Henderson, G. (1911/2007). *Survival in belief among the Celts*. Glasgow: J. MacLehose & Sons/ Charleston, SC: Forgotten Books.
- Herman, J. (1996). *I and Tao: Martin Buber's encounter with Chuang Tzu*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Heschel, A. (1951). *Man is not alone: A philosophy of religion*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, & Giroux.
- Hill, C. (2006). Introduction to special issue of TCR on contemplative education. *Teachers College Record*, 108(9), 1723–1732.
- Hodes, A. (1971). *Martin Buber: An intimate portrait*. New York: Viking Press.
- Hoffman, M. (2000). *Empathy and moral development: Implications for caring and justice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hutchinson, J. (2004). Democracy needs strangers. In C. Bingham & A. Sidorkin (Eds.), *No education without relation* (pp. 73–90). New York: Peter Lang.
- Illich, I. (1973). *Tools for conviviality*. London: Routledge.

- Isaacs, W. (1999). *Dialogue and the art of thinking together*. New York: Currency Books.
- Jardine, D. (1998). *To dwell with a boundless heart: Essays in curriculum theory, hermeneutics, and the ecological imagination*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Jenlink, P. & Banathy, B. (2007). *Dialogue as a collective means of design conversation*. New York: Springer.
- Jones, A. (2004). Talking cure: The desire for dialogue. In Boler, M. (Ed.) (2004). *Democratic dialogue in education: troubling speech, disturbing silence* (pp. 57–68). New York: Peter Lang.
- Kant, I. (1763/1960). *Observations on the feeling of the beautiful and the sublime* (J. Goldthwait, Trans.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Kant, I. (1790/1952). *The critique of judgment* (J. Meredith, Trans.). London: Oxford University Press.
- Karambelkar, P. (1986). *Patanjala yoga sutras*. Lonavla, India: M.V. Bhole.
- Kaufmann, W. (1970). I and You: A prologue. In M. Buber, *I and Thou* (W. Kaufmann, Trans.). New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster.
- Kodish, S. & Pettegrew, L. (2008). Enlightened communication is the key to building relationships. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 7(2), 151–176.
- Kramer, K. (2003). *Martin Buber's I and Thou: Practicing living dialogue*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

- Leddy, T. (1993). Philosophy and the histories of the arts. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 51(3), 399–410.
- Levinas, E. (1969). *Totality and infinity: An essay on exteriority*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.
- Levinas, E. (1994). *Outside the subject* (M. Smith, Trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Levinson, J. (1989). Refining art historically. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 47(1), 21–33.
- Lilburn, T. (1999). *Living in the world as if it were home*. Dunvegan, ON: Cormorant Books.
- Lingis, A. (1994). *The community of those who have nothing in common*. Bloomington IN: Indiana University.
- Lipsey, R. (2006). *Angelic mistakes: The art of Thomas Merton*. Boston: Shambhala.
- London, P. (2003). *Drawing closer to nature: Making art in dialogue with the natural world*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Loori, J. (2004). *The Zen of creativity: Cultivating your artistic life*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Lyotard, J.-F. (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Minneapolis, MN.: University of Minnesota Press.

- Martin, J., Sugarman, J., & Hickenbottom, S. (2010). *Perspectival selves in interaction with others: Re-reading G.H. Mead's social psychology*. New York: Springer.
- Mathur, H. (1987). *Patanjali's model of human mind: A scientific approach to Indian mythology*. New Delhi, India: Shree Publishing House
- Mayo, C. (2004). The tolerance that dare not speak its name. In M. Boler (Ed.), *Democratic dialogue in education: Troubling speech, disturbing silence* (pp. 33–47). New York: Peter Lang.
- Mead, G. (1934). *Mind, self and society from the standpoint of a social behaviourist*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Merton, T. & Griffin, H. (1970). *A hidden wholeness: The visual world of Thomas Merton*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Michener, J. (1978). *Chesapeake*. New York: Random House.
- Montag, C., Gallinat, J. & Heinz, A. (2008). Theodor Lipps and the concept of empathy: 1851–1914. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 165, 1261.
- Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue (2005). "The dialogue maker's series, fall – spring 05/06."
- Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue (n.d.). "What is dialogue." Retrieved from <http://www.sfu.ca/dialog/study+practice/what+is+dialogue.html>.

- Nancy, J-L. (1999). The calculation of the poet. In A. Fioetos (Ed.), *The solid letter: Readings of Friedrich Hölderlin* (pp. 44–73). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- National Coalition on Dialogue & Deliberation (2009). What is dialogue? Definitions from leaders in the field. Retrieved from <http://ncdd.org/rc/item/1501>.
- Nicol, L. (1996). Forward. In D. Bohm *On dialogue*. London: Routledge.
- Nietzsche, F. (1882/1947). *The gay science* (W. Kaufmann, Trans.). New York: Vintage.
- Nikulin, D. (2006). *On dialogue*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group.
- Noddings, N. (1992). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Noddings, N. (2003a). *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education* (2nd ed.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Noddings, N. (2003b). Foreword. In B. Thayer-Bacon, *Relational (e)pistemologies* (pp. ix–x). New York: Peter Lang Publishers.
- Noddings, N. (2007). *Critical lessons: What our schools should teach*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Online Etymology Dictionary. (2001). Etymology of "creed." Online reference accessed October 13, 2008 at

<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=creed>.

Orr, D. (2004). What is education for? In D. Orr, *Earth in mind: On education, environment, and the human prospect* (pp. 7–15). Washington, DC: Island Press.

Papillon, T. (1877). A manual of comparative philology, as applied to the illustration of Greek and Latin inflections. Oxford: Clarendon/MacMillan & Co./Oxford University Press.

Payne, P. (2009). Postmodern *oikos*. In M. McKenzie, P. Hart, H. Bai, & B. Jickling (Eds.), *Fields of green: Restorying culture, environment, and education* (pp. 309–322). Creskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Pigman, G. (1995). Freud and the history of empathy. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 76, 237–56.

Plato. (1993). *Symposium* (B. Jowett, Trans.). New York: Modern Library.

Polanyi, M. & Prosch, H. (1975). *Meaning*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Reeder, S. (2005). Classroom dynamics and emergent curriculum. In W. Doll Jr., M. Fleener, D. Trueit, & J. St. Julien (Eds.), *Chaos, complexity, curriculum, and culture: A conversation* (pp. 247–260). New York: Peter Lang.

- Rice, S. & Burbules, N. (1992). Communicative virtues and educational relations. *Philosophy of Education Yearbook, 1992*. Retrieved from http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/92_docs/rice_burbules.HTM
- Rostenstreich, N. (1967). Buber's dialogical thought. In P. Schilpp & M. Friedman (Eds.), *The philosophy of Martin Buber* (pp. 97–132). LaSalle, IL: Open Court/London: Cambridge University Press.
- Roth, H. (2006). Contemplative studies: Prospects for a new field. *Teachers College Record, 108*(9), 1787–1815.
- Sallis, J. (1986). *Being and logos: The way of Platonic dialogue*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International.
- Sarath, E. (2006). Meditation, creativity, and consciousness: Charting future terrain within higher education. *Teachers College Record, 108*(9), 1816–1841.
- Sauvé, L. (2009). Being here together. In M. McKenzie, P. Hart, H. Bai, & B. Jickling (Eds.), *Fields of green: Restorying culture, environment, and education* (pp. 325–335). Creskill, NJ: Hampton Books.
- Scharmer, O. (2007). *Theory U: Leading from the future as it emerges*. Cambridge, MA: Society for Organizational Learning.
- Schilpp, P. & Friedman, M. (Eds.). (1967). *The philosophy of Martin Buber*. LaSalle, IL: Open Court/London: Cambridge University Press.

- Schimmel, A. (1992). *I am wind, you are fire: The life and work of Rumi*. Boston: Shambhala Books.
- Scott, C. (2009). Epistemological multilingualism: A tool for conviviality. *Paideusis*, 19(2), 43–54.
- Scott, F. R. (1981). *The collected poems of F. R. Scott*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.
- Seidel, J. (2006). Some thoughts on teaching as contemplative practice. *Teachers College Record*, 108(9), 1901–1914.
- Senge, P. (2004). Preface to Routledge classics edition of “On Dialogue.” In D. Bohm, *On dialogue* (pp. vii–xiv). London: Routledge.
- Senge, P., Scharmer, O., Jawaorski, J., & Flowers, B. (2005). *Presence: Human purpose and the field of the future*. N.Y.: Currency/Doubleday.
- Shalgi, B. (2008). The dread of mutual creation of meaning. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 18, 243–247.
- Shields, C. & Edwards, M. (2005). *Dialogue is not just talk: A new ground for educational leadership*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Sidorkin, A. (1995). The pedagogy of the interhuman. *Philosophy of Education Society Annual Meeting*. San Francisco. Retrieved July 2, 2009 from: http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/95_docs/sidorkin.html

- Sidorkin, A. (2000). Toward a pedagogy of relation. *Philosophical Studies in Education*, 32, 9–14.
- Slingerland, E. (2003). *Effortless action: Wu-wei as conceptual metaphor and spiritual ideal in early China*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Slotte, S. (2006). Systems sensitive dialogical intervention. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 23, 793–802.
- Smith, P. (2004). *The body of the artisan: Art and experience in the scientific revolution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Smith, R. (1958/2000). Translator's preface to the second edition. In M. Buber, (1958/2000). *I and thou*. (R. Smith, Trans.) (pp. 5–10). New York: Scribner.
- Snowber, C. (2002). Bodydance: Enfleshing soulful inquiry through improvisation. In C. Bagley & M. Cancienne (Eds.), *Dancing the data* (pp. 20–33). New York: Peter Lang.
- Solomon, R. (1991). The virtue of (erotic) love. In R. Solomon & K. Higgins (Eds.), *The philosophy of (erotic) love* (pp. 492–518). Kansas: University Press of Kansas.
- Steindl-Rast, D. (1969). Recollections of Thomas Merton's last days in the west. *Monastic Studies*, 7(10).

- Taylor, C. (1991a). The dialogical self. In D. Hiley (Ed.), *The interpretive turn: Philosophy, science, culture* (pp. 304–314). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Taylor, C. (1991b). *The malaise of modernity*. Toronto: House of Anansi.
- Taylor, C. (1992). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Taylor, C. (1994). The politics of recognition. In C. Taylor et al., (A. Guttman, Ed.), *Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition* (pp. 25–74). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Taylor, C. (2007). *A secular age*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University.
- Thayer-Bacon, B. (2003). *Relational (e)pistemologies*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Thou. (1989). *Oxford English dictionary* (2nd ed.). Retrieved from:
http://dictionary.oed.com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/cgi/entry/50251501?query_type=word&queryword=thou&first=1&max_to_show=10&sort_type=alpha&search_id=GPeQ-LI9txa-6998&result_place=1
- Trueit, D. (2005). Watercourses: From poetic to poietic. In W. Doll Jr., M. Fleener, D. Trueit, & J. St. Julien (Eds.), *Chaos, complexity, curriculum, and culture: A conversation* (pp. 77–99). New York: Peter Lang.

- Tu, W. (2005, March 24). Towards a dialogical civilization: Religious leaders as public intellectuals. Paper delivered at the 19th World Congress of the International Association of the History of Religions, Toyko.
- Vanier, J. (1998). *Becoming human*. Toronto: House of Anansi.
- Varela, F., Thompson, E., & Rosch, E. (1991). *The embodied mind: Cognitive science and human experience*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Varey, R. (2003). A dialogical foundation for marketing. *The Marketing Review*, 3, 273–288.
- Vartan, G. (2005). Grounding technology in both science and significance. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 52(16), B3–B5.
- Vella, J. (2002). *Learning to listen; learning to teach*, Rev. ed. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Walsh, R. & Vaughn, F. (1993). *Paths beyond ego: The transpersonal vision*. New York: Jeremy Tarcher/Putnam.
- Whitehead, A. (1967). The aims of education. In A. Whitehead, *The aims of education and other essays* (pp. 1–14). New York: The Free Press.
- Whyte, D. (2002). *The heart aroused: Poetry and the preservation of the soul in corporate America*. New York: Currency Books.
- Whyte, D. (2009). *The three marriages: Reimagining self, work and relationship*. New York: Riverhead Books.

- Wilber, K. (2001a). *A brief history of everything* (2nd ed.). Boston: Shambhala.
- Wilber, K. (2001b) *Sex, ecology, and spirituality* (2nd ed.) Boston: Shambhala.
- Wilber, K. (2006). *Integral spirituality: A startling new role for religion in the modern and postmodern world*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Yankelovich, D. (1999). *The magic of dialogue: Transforming conflict into cooperation*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Yankelovich, D. (2005). Ferment and Change: Higher Education in 2015. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 52(14), B6–B9.
- Young, J. (1997). Defining art responsibly. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 37(1), 57–65.
- Zajonc, A. (2006). Love and knowledge: Recovering the heart of learning through contemplation. *Teachers College Record*, 108(9), 1742–1759.