CHAPTER 1

RE-VISIONING HIGHER EDUCATION

The Three-Fold Relationality Framework

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PREAMBLE

Rightly, many of us who teach in institutions of higher education are dissatisfied, if not disillusioned, about our efficacy as educational leaders in moving humanity towards a more just, compassionate, and peaceful world. Pessimism abounds: "All things considered, it is possible that we are becoming more ignorant of the things we must know to live well and sustainably on the earth" (Orr, 1994, p. 11). In fact, states David Orr (1994), "[h]igher education has largely been shaped by the drive to extend human domination to its fullest. In this mission, human intelligence may have taken the wrong road" (p. 9). Before him, E. F. Schumacher too expressed deep skepticism concerning education: "If Western civilization is in a state of permanent crisis, it is not far-fetched to suggest that there may be something

wrong with its education" (1973/1999, p. 59). But, apparently, it is not just Western civilization that took a wrong road. William Irwin Thompson (1996/1998), commenting on the "wrong road" that the ancient Chinese civilization took, states: "Over two thousand years ago, humanity chose the militarist and hierarchical path at the fork in the road. Now here we are again, and I, of course, hope that the road not taken 2,000 years ago will be the road we take this time for this axial shift of the year 2000" (p. 262). Today, 13 years later, it seems that we still are, by all accounts, on the same wrong road—a road leading to the planetary destruction and despair.

In this chapter, we the three authors take a hard look at higher education, and propose an analytic framework of the three-fold relationality by which we both account for the failure of higher education and point towards its redress. Our framework posits three-fold human relationality.

WHAT IS EDUCATION GOOD FOR?

There are three fundamental dimensions of relationality within which human beings exist and make life: (A) *self-to-self,* (B) *self-to-human other,* and (C) *self-to-Nature* (Bai, et al., 2009). Today, as the 21st century deepens, there is every sense that each of these interlinked dimensions is in jeopardy. Let us take stock.

The self-to-self relationship (A) is about how one sees, understands, and feels about one's self. This is the domain of self-knowledge. How fully does one know about oneself in all its dimensions of being: mind, body, heart, soul, and spirit? And how fulfilled does one perceive and feel about one's self? Also, most importantly, does one see oneself as growing and becoming increasingly integrated, whole, full, and fulfilled? When the *self-to-self*
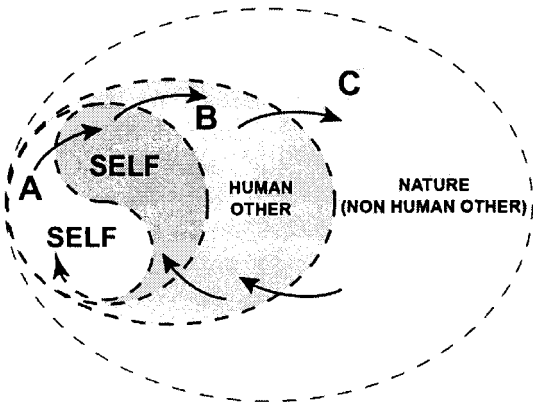

FIGURE 1.   Threefold relationality.

relationship is in disconnect and troubled, we experience mental health issues. Depression, addiction, anxiety, eating disorders, suicide attempts, not to mention all the garden varieties of unhappiness and loneliness, afflict millions of people, young and old, around the world (Alexander, 2008; Romano et al., 2001).

The self-to-human other relationships (B) constitute our social environment wherein we experience intersubjective connection and dialogue. The ability and propensity to approach and experience human beings as having their own subjectivity and enter into dialogue and collaborative meaning-making defines this self-to-human other relationality. When the *self-to-human other* relationship becomes compromised and jeopardized, as in all forms of domination, exploitation, and violence, the consequences are alienation, abuse, hostility, and general lack of peace, harmony, and cooperation between individuals, tribes, ethnic groups, institutions, and nations (Jung, 1970). As we watch the daily news of more slayings, shootings, bombings, massacres, in homes, schools, airports, public squares, and not to mention war-torn areas of the world, we are painfully aware of the extent of self-other relationship ruptures and damages.

The self-to-Nature relationality (C) is about humans' perception and treatment of Nature or Earth. Is Nature an order of mindless matter, as in Descartes' understanding (Bai, 2009)? When the self does not see Nature/ Earth as worthy of humans' intrinsic valuing (Bai, 2001a,b; 2003a,b; 2004), possibilities of exploitation and violence open up. To value something intrinsically is to recognize and validate the worth of the other for its own sake, independent of its usefulness to humans. Beings of Nature may be useful to human beings, but this usefulness is the secondary consideration, and the priority goes to the inviolable sanctity of beings of Nature. The results of lack of intrinsic valuation with respect to Nature/Earth are untold suffering endured by a countless number of earth beings and a growing scale of environmental destruction that threatens the very viability of our planetary biosphere (Brown, 2006; Hartmann, 1998, 1999, 2004; Officer & Page, 1993). Many environmental and ecological theorists have been saying that, while we will need to continue to repair the damage and find practical solutions to pressing problems, fundamentally the environmental problem is our manner of being on this planet and the nature of our relationship to the earth community (Lovelock, 2009; Macy, 1991; Orr, 1994).

In the face of a wounded and suffering world in its three-fold relationality, what are the responsibilities of higher education? The authors of this chapter take the stand that any institutions of higher education must make it their primary responsibility to resist the destruction, repair the damages, and heal the afflictions in all three interlocking dimensions of being. What is education for, if it does not address the sustainability and flourishing, let alone survival, of humanity in its relationship to the world? Humanity has

always depended upon the function of education to both transmit existing societal knowledge, norms, and values and, *simultaneously*, to provide impetus and resources to innovate and transform these norms and values to meet the new challenges and demands (Bai & Romanycia, 2012). Higher education just means that these two functions of education are to be performed at a higher level of seriousness, commitment, and competency.

Schumacher (1973/1999) observes:

> At present, there can be little doubt that the whole of mankind is in mortal danger, not because we are short of scientific and technological know-how, but because we tend to use it destructively, without wisdom. More education can help us only if it produces more wisdom. (p. 61)

Wisdom is more than knowledge. One can know a lot of things without being wise. Wisdom signifies the end results of being able to live a life that is ethical, fulfilling, and mutually supportive of all earth beings. In speaking of philosophy whose root meaning is 'love of wisdom,' the late Raimundo Panikkar (1992) states that the task of philosophy is "to know, to love, and to heal—all in one" (p. 237). Wisdom, then, is the integration of knowing, loving, and healing. In the face of today's mounting concerns about the viability of human presence on this blue planet, higher education needs to shift its raison d'etre from pursuit of knowledge to pursuit of wisdom. Indeed, what is the point of education at all, either higher or lower, if it does not address suffering and destruction in the world through showing human beings how to live in peace and harmony with the world, and to cultivate courage and compassion in the face of suffering? Regrettably, it is our assessment that the current practice of higher education falls short of our rightful expectations. How can it, when its teaching and research pursuits are not grounded in the abovementioned three dimensions of relationality that make up the fundamental existential reality of human beings? Let us now look at the details.

INNERWORK AND *KNOW THYSELF*

Do institutions of higher education make the self-to-self dimension of relationality (from here on, SSDR) a serious point of pedagogical concern and research interest? Does it figure in higher education as an important and prominent educational objective? For the three authors of this chapter, each having spent a decade studying in undergraduate and graduate degree programs in philosophy, psychology, humanities, and human sciences, and now teaching at universities as faculty members, our observational response to these questions is, unfortunately, no. Although there are a few faculty members, like ourselves, especially in the field of Education, who are making attempts to make the SSDR an important part of the learning

process and objective, this in general goes against the grain of the modernist conception of knowledge pursuit (Usher & Edwards, 1994) to which universities in North America and most of the world subscribe.

Knowledge in the modernist conception is most intimately connected to the paradigm of modern sciences whose inception lies in the scientific revolution of the 17th century Europe and the rise of empirical sciences (Borgmann, 1993; Latour, 1993). Within this paradigm, there is knowledge hierarchy in that the top rank is secured by objective knowledge of empirical sciences that is factual, measurable, and replicable, and at the bottom is subjective knowledge that comes from or deals with human values, desires, intuition, body, feelings, and tastes. In this scheme, subjective knowledge does not count much when it stands against the objective knowledge that is supposed to be value-neural. This hierarchy, ironically, is itself very much value-laden, therefore not 'objective' in the modernist sense. That is to say, as it is usually opined in academic arenas, that studying value-neutral, ethics-blind (to coin a term here) subject matters, such as mathematics and 'hard-core' sciences (physics, chemistry), is more valuable and deserves more funding than studying arts, literature, and other humanities subjects is a value-laden judgment that comes out the modernist worldview. As R. D. Laing (1982) has so incisively pointed out, learning that subjectivity does not count as much as objectivity when it comes to knowledge is now very much part of acculturation and socialization of contemporary citizenry. And we see this ironic value hierarchy concerning knowledge plainly in the academy. Mathematics and sciences rule, receiving most funding and garnering most respect, while humanities subjects, often dismissively referred to as the 'fluffs,' languish at the bottom of the priority list and scramble for financial survival (Bamford, 2004; Pollard & Bourne, 1994; Robinson, 1992, 2011).

It is not that the three of us here are interested in seeing the hierarchy reversed. That would be, like reverse discrimination, a sure way to perpetuate the same problem of marginalizing and neglecting parts of our relationality, thereby creating underdevelopment and imbalance. Our interest is in seeing all three dimensions of human relationality being equally and simultaneously validated, supported, and fulfilled, recognizing that the three dimensions interpenetrate each other, and that to hierarchize them goes against the ecological understanding of interrelatedness that supports them. The three dimensions we mapped out are together a unity, and hence cannot be separated. Note the nested nature of the three-fold relationality (see Figure 1) and how 'self' is involved in all three dimensions! This means that if any one of these three dimensions is marginalized in its development, it will adversely affect the other two. Recognizing and embracing the three-fold relationality also means changing the very paradigm of knowledge based on disciplinary knowledge and the major division

between arts and sciences that currently still dominates higher education, and championing interdisciplinarity.

The utmost importance of supporting and fulfilling the SSDR is most plainly, or even starkly, revealed when we see its development negated and arrested. A person with a compromised SSDR does not know the self, is not in touch with what is deepest in himself or herself, does not have his or her own voice, and thus would have a hard time living with personal integrity, taking a stand in life, and being responsible for his life and to the world (Mindell, 2002). Such a person has a shaky and vulnerable existential core, and hence is insecure, even if successful in his or her worldly accomplishments and with possessions. It is difficult for such persons to withstand the rigors and pressures of their inner life and the outer world, and they are vulnerable to external control and manipulation, addiction, and escapism of many forms (Alexander, 2008). It is not difficult to imagine that the compromised SSDR would be implicated in much, if not all, social, emotional, and ethical ill-being.

EMBODIMENT OF SELF-CULTIVATION

Students today have fewer opportunities for inner exploration into their existential cores (Lewis, 2006). Instead, their focus rests on the pragmatics of obtaining a career, largely because that has become a primary focus of postsecondary education. And yet the existential demands of the psyche will not be entirely silenced for those experiencing a university education. Higher education, argues Kronman (2007), is not meant merely to impart information, but to serve as a "... forum for the exploration of life's mystery and meaning through the careful but critical reading of the great works of literary and philosophical imagination" (p. 6). In 2003, Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2010) began a longitudinal study that examined students' lives and longings as well as the role that postsecondary education plays in addressing the existential and spiritual dimensions of their lives. They discovered that students *do* want to focus on these dimensions and that they grow spiritually if they have active opportunities for "inner work" through some form of reflective, contemplative practice.

All of our time-honoured *world philosophers* of the Axial Age (Armstrong, 2006)—Socrates, Buddha, Christ, Confucius, Lao-tze, Mohamed—all strongly advocated the knowledge and cultivation of SSDR as a priority in human learning. Consider Socrates' teachings that were focused on two principles: *know thyself* and *care of the soul* (Martin et al., 1988). Consider Buddha's immense teachings on *establishing oneself in mindfulness* (*satipatthana* in Pali). Confucius also taught that self-cultivation is the first step to establishing social and political order (Tu, 1985). Politicians in our midst: please heed Confucius' advice. All these world philosopher-teachers knew the fundamental truth of human beings: that we act who we are, and thus

whatever we do *to* the world reflects who we are. If we are insecure, angry, disturbed, unfulfilled, resentful, and so on, we will act out, in whatever ways, of these states of consciousness, and our action will transmit these qualities of consciousness, affecting the world with negative consequences. This is why 'saving the planet' must be fundamentally grounded in 'saving the soul' through repairing and recovering one's own goodness and sanity through inner work (Cohen & Bai, 2012).

Of course, Socrates and his axial companions are no strangers to the contemporary academy. We have courses about them, and their names and ideas are cited. But the irony is that their teachings that insist on self-cultivation are mostly read *about*, talked *about*, and written *about*. This *learning about* is the principal characteristic of academic learning. This kind of information acquisition is what we may call *objectified learning*, and it renders itself well to tests, exams, and paper writing. Socrates did not teach 'Know thyself' so that we can answer exam questions correctly or write papers about his theory of self-cultivation. That is not the way to *live philosophy*. For philosophy as a way of life (Hadot, 1995), it is the practice of self-cultivation that counts and matters. Imagine how different our teaching and learning in the academy would be if we implemented and practiced Socratic, Buddhist, Confucian, Daoist, Christian, Islamic, Jewish, First Nations (the list goes on) ways of self-cultivation. This would not mean that there would be no reading, discussing, and writing. There could be tests, too, but these learning activities would be in support of the main objective of *self-cultivation*. As well, technologies, whether virtual or actual, would not be strangers to learning and teaching self-cultivation. In fact, adopting Foucault's explication of the 'technologies of the self' (Martin et al., 1988), we would say that whatever aides self-cultivation and can be adopted is 'technology of the self.' For instance, Foucault chronicles the history of letter writing in Hellenistic times to show its contribution to self-cultivation. Writing is a technology of self *par excellence*. So is reading. So is critical thinking. The main point we wish to make here is that the institutions of higher education already do have at their ready disposal tools and materials for the technologies of the self. However, the critical catalyzing ingredient that needs to be added to all this is the actual embodiment of self-cultivation. Here, no amount of advanced and sophisticated 'learning about' would help.

Let us discuss how SSDR can be embodied, not just studied about in higher education. The essence of SSDR is that the self has a reflexive ability to pay attention to itself and witness what is happening in its feelings and sensations, thoughts, emotions, and perceptions, and energetics (Cohen, in-press). What goes on in the field of person's experience is, yet again, multidimensional, encompassing the body, mind, heart, and some would add, soul and spirit. Like all skills, the witnessing skills can be honed through practice. It is the objective of contemplative traditions, such as the Buddhist

mindfulness practice, to guide and develop the ability to self-witness to a more and more refined level. Highly developed witnessing or self-reflexive abilities gives a person a greater possibility of self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge can only grow when we are able to pay close and sustained attention to feelings, sensations, emotions, and so on. Thus, a learning environment that allows its learners ample, supported and structured opportunities to practice paying attention to SSDR is essential to the development of self-knowledge (Cohen et al., 2012). Unfortunately, most learning environments today, including institutions of higher education, fail in this regard. Especially at the level of higher institution, we are to be rigorous about keeping everything out of the classroom except thoughts and ideas. In fact, it would seem, we should keep thoughts out, too, since they are idiosyncratic: they are too personal. Even ideas can be too personal in that they often come out of our creative impulses. What then is left that can safely be included in the classroom? "In this life, we want nothing but Facts, sir; nothing but Facts!" (Dickens, 2008, p. 3). Thus we may even hesitate to invite our students to come up with creative ideas and play with them. We prefer to spoon-feed students with ready-made 'facts' out of textbooks, and assess their learning by testing them to see how much facts they have retained. This kind of learning is an anathema to cultivating self-knowledge. Woefully, this form of learning still occurs, even takes precedence over the kind of reflective and integrative learning being outlined here, in institutions of higher learning.

Lest our readers think that we are proposing an abandonment of rigorous critical thinking—a mainstay of university education today, we address, in the next section, how critical thinking should not be discarded, but be re-thought to include critical exploration of emotions, and how such broadened and integrated critical thinking in fact bridges the subjective dimension (SSDR) with the intersubjective dimension of our being.

THE LIMITATION AND EXPANSION OF THE FOCUS ON CRITICAL THINKING

One of the primary outcomes of a modern university education is that students will become versed in the art of critical thinking, a higher order level of reflective thinking that examines not only issues but thinking itself and how we come to develop our ideas, claims, and assertions. Critical thinking is said to encompass the higher order thought processes—cited in Blooms Taxonomy—of interpretation, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. One's analysis is based in empiricism and logic, and it strives for accuracy, precision, clarity, consistency, sound reasoning, and reasonableness. In applying critical thinking to an argument, one is to judge the quality of an argument, including the reasons and assumptions on which it is based, the evidence that supports it, and the reasonableness of the conclusions that are drawn.

Ennis (1996) argues that critical thinking is reasoned and reflective thinking that is focused on what to believe or do. Burbules and Berk (1999) point out that one should discern faulty or ill-reasoned arguments, faulty assumptions, generalizations that have no foundation, claims that lack supporting evidence, claims based solely authority, ambiguous or obscure concepts, and conclusions without merit.

However, such a focus is not without its limitations. One is often enjoined to maintain or create a distance from others, whether intellectually or emotionally, and whether these are *self-to-self, self-to-human other,* and *human self-to-Nature* relationships; we cut ourselves off from any emotional connection to others. But critical thinking can include our emotions and it can enhance relations between people. Paul and Elder (2002) include "intellectual empathy" in their conception of critical thinking, along with an ability to transcend what they call "sociocentrism"—remaining unaware of one's sociocultural biases. We can also add to this the same vain of criticism about anthropocentricism: remaining unaware of one's anthropocentric biases. Hadot (1995) asserts that for the ancient Greeks, authentic dialogue marked by a genuine encounter with another rooted in a full and empathic presence was a hallmark of critical thinking; there is a "constantly maintained accord" between the parties. In *Meno,* Socrates asserts that the dialogue is carried out in a "gentler and more dialectical way" that maintains the connection between the parties (Plato, 2004, p. 8, 75d).

Paulo Freire (2006) defined critical thinking as that "... which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and the people and admits of no dichotomy between them—thinking which perceives reality as a process, as transformation ..." (p. 92). He adds that for the critical thinker, the essential matter is the "continuing transformation of reality" (p. 92). And for Freire, dialogue both requires and generates critical thinking. Further, dialogue cannot exist without "a profound love for the world and for people," to such a degree that this love is both the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself (p. 89). This love is a commitment to others and to their liberation from oppression. In its fullest sense, dialogue is founded upon love, humility, hope, and mutual trust and faith. Not that any of these are easy to practice, let alone achieve. If we are not vigilant and cannot exercise critical reflections, love can turn into selfish affection and possessiveness. Humility can turn into servility, especially for reasons of self-protection or gaining favor. Hope, mutual trust and faith—all of these, moreover, can become negative forces or vices in the absence of critical self-reflection. We thus see that critical thinking is inextricably bound up in the quality of our relationships with others; it cannot exist fully without a literal ontological identification with others. We see that critical thinking rests in the SSDR and should not be separated from it.

Martha Nussbaum (1997) asserts that a university education should produce world citizens dedicated to the "cultivation of humanity" (p. 9). Such citizens require an ability for self-examination—the Socratic examined life—an ability to see themselves as inextricably bound to other humans through recognition and concern for their welfare, and a "narrative imagination" (p. 10), the ability to place oneself, empathically and imaginatively, in the shoes of another. We see again that a critical education is rooted in the cultivation of beneficent relationships. The cultivation of these relationships begins with our own self-awareness. As Hadot (1995) points out, there is a connection between one's ability to dialogue with others and with oneself; there must be an authentic presence to oneself and others. The ability to see oneself as being connected to others comes through a dialogical awareness of their lives; such an awareness encompasses an empathic embrace of the other in and through *logos*, in and through a *dialogos*. All of interpersonal awareness begins with self-awareness. We now examine our connections to the other through dialogue.

DIALOGUE AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Let us then focus on the self-to-other dimension of relationality (SODR), also known as intersubjectivity (Bai, 2001b). (See the previous Figure 1, B.) This relationality is about knowing another person, or collectively, other people, as subjects, that is, *not* as objects. How does such knowing come about? Humans are social animals, and, as neurobiologists would say, we are hard-wired to emotionally connect with others, bond, be empathic, and share our joys and sorrows. Apparently, neuroscientists have even discovered 'mirror neurons' that enable us to empathically recognize others' emotions, intentions, and actions (Iacoboni, 2008). This is remarkable but not surprising, given that we are fundamentally and radically intersubjective beings. But being hard-wired with mirroring neurons does not mean that we all attain functional degrees, let alone a high degree, of intersubjectivity just by virtue of having these neurons and whatever other neurobiological mechanisms built into us. The fact that we have fingers does not guarantee that we become pianists; to do so requires dedicated, rigorous, and sustained learning and practice. Likewise, the art of intersubjectivity requires learning and practice in a relational environment.

The earliest instance of such an environment is, of course, child-parent bonding. There now exists a substantial body of psychological and psychotherapeutic literature that addresses the early child-parent bonding rupture and its far-reaching difficult consequences (Bretherton, 1992; Keitaibl, 2012; Main, 2000; Neufeld & Mate, 2006). A closer look at the child-parent bonding should show why paying attention to SODR is of utmost educational importance, and also should give us many clues about the kinds of pedagogy we need to practice in education, including higher education.

Being fundamentally intersubjective means that human individuals' mental, emotional, and physical growth and development critically depend on having an intersubjective environment of interaction. For infants and young children, this means having primary caregivers' constant and consistent loving attention, communication, and devoted care that not only practically look after the physical needs of the child, but also help to establish the matrix of intersubjectivity right in the child's nervous system. Every loving gaze, knowing glance, smile, touch, and responsive or initiating words and sounds made by the caregivers and caring others all work towards establishing the child as a veritably functioning intersubjective human being. Paucity of such environment and caring-others that create this environment will result in those whose capacity to be intersubjective is compromised or jeopardized.

Again, this truth about human beings is best understood, unfortunately, when such bonding work is severely disrupted and substantially lacking. Children of such terrible misfortune tend to grow up to be psychosocially deprived and arrested, even if physically undamaged, unable to form meaningful and fulfilling relationships with other human beings (Smolensky & Gootman, 2003). Such fundamental human capacities as empathy, compassion, love, communion, and solidarity do not grow and develop into full bloom.

Human beings being irreducibly relational, social creatures, human well-being and happiness critically depends on our being able to form meaningful intersubjective relationships (Qin & Comstock, 2005). No amount of utilitarian and calculated instrumental relationships with other beings, human or otherwise, can substitute this intersubjective relationship for human happiness. And human happiness is not just something nice to have, a bonus and luxury. Unhappiness means suffering, and suffering has personal, social, and moral consequences and 'costs.' Unhappiness precipitates not only personal misery, and if severe enough, self-abuse, but can lead, again, if severe enough, to interpersonal abuse and violation (Miller, 2005). For sure, we are speaking in a generalized way, and in no way are we making predictive statements about any particular unhappy individuals. At any rate, we believe we are justified, in the terms of human psychology, in stating that lack of intersubjectivity leads to general lack of peace, harmony, and cooperation among individuals and groups.

In short, humans critically depend on positive intersubjective relationships and relational environments for their mental health and overall flourishing. From psychotherapeutic literature and personal observations, we would say that varying degrees of early childhood bonding rupture or attachment issue are widespread. Given this state of affairs, plus the fact that this important work of creating and restoring intersubjectivity is an ongoing process throughout one's lifetime, institutions of education must include

fostering intersubjectivity as an important learning objective, along with the more usual ones of learning the subject matter. How are our institutions of higher learning doing in this regard? Do we show, encourage, teach, and lead our students to engender and restore intersubjectivity, and create an intersubjective environment in our classroom? Do we as institutions of learning exemplify in creating intersubjective environments? Are we not only presenting the philosophical or sociological study of the human phenomena of intersubjectivity but also teaching *the art of intersubjectivity* so that our students become more finely attuned intersubjective beings, full of compassion, love, kindness, and good will towards each other and the world?

Again, our answer to the above questions, based on our experiences and observations, is by and large *no*, although, our sense is that we are heading in the right direction with the prevailing valorization of dialogue and collaboration in civic space and public places. Currently, there is a lot of support for the concept and practice of dialogue and collaboration, and educators and business folks alike are making an effort to create the culture of dialogue and collaboration everywhere. Certainly, we support this. And we would like to see higher education joining forces and playing a major role in teaching the art of intersubjectivity as both subject and experience. Currently, higher education learning at the undergraduate level tends to be largely impersonal: students in large numbers of one, two, even three or four hundreds gather in lecture halls and listen to lectures, and this mode of learning prevails in university undergraduate student learning on most university campuses. We are not implying that there is anything wrong with lectures per se. Listening to well-prepared and well-delivered lectures on important and fascinating topics is intellectually stimulating and generative. Lectures have their rightful place in public learning. What is problematic, however, is when students' higher education learning consists mostly of being in a lecture hall environment day after day for four or longer years. Besides the intended learning of subject matter, what these students unintentionally learn is alienation. They learn to be alienated subjects. Dialogue is what ends human alienation.

Dialogue, however, is often understood in a limited way. Dialogue is not mere conversation. Basing our thinking on Martin Buber's work (1947/2002, 1958/2000), we suggest an integrated model of dialogue as a responsive, ontological turning to the other that, while it might include words, goes well beyond them. Such a model anchors dialogue both on the foundations of ontology—beingness—and in the reflective practices and doings that develop dialogue and its attendant virtues of becoming aware of the other, confirmation of the other, an empathic inclusion of the other, being present to the other, a willingness to step outside one's comfort zones, the ability to resolve paradox and see unity in diversity and vice versa, and

a "synthesizing apperception" that makes connections and sees a bigger picture.

Such a model frames dialogue as an ontological turning to the other through the reflective practice of particular dialogical virtues: an ontological praxis of dialogue that develops *I-Thou* relationships. Dialogue both works through and aims at the development of genuine relationships: the real meeting of individuals with others and with the world. Dialogue is thus fundamentally a means of developing intersubjectivity. Again, we would stress that dialogue involves much more than words; it is fundamentally about intersubjective relationality. Just as contemplative practices can engender a deep, intuitively felt sense of interconnectedness, so, too, can a dialogical orientation. Not only has dialogue been cast as a form of contemplative practice (Scott, in press), it is fundamentally placing intersubjective relationality as the foundation of beingness. It is about living in and through genuine relationships.

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.

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; at the same time, it is the practice, and the development through practice, of these above mentioned dialogical virtues that constitutes a praxis of dialogue. We suggest that we can work to develop dialogue as praxis, as a way of life; this movement constitutes becoming dialogue—an ongoing, developmental approach to dialogue (Scott, 2011). We are thus offering dialogue as an ontological orientation toward establishing *I-Thou* relationships, as a practical means of developing intersubjectivity. In dialogue, we see ourselves as relational beings; in dialogue, we see our worlds through relational lenses; in dialogue, we develop knowledge and understanding relationally.

We have moved from self-self (SSDR) to self-other (SODR). Buber's conception of dialogue naturally moves us further afield, to relationships with the more-than-human elements of our world. It is significant that in *I and Thou*, Buber (1958/2000) begins his discussion of dialogue with his apprehension of a tree; later on, he makes it clear that we can relate dialogically even to rocks, to the world, and to the entire cosmos itself.

BECOMING EARTH

Finally, let us turn to humans' self-to-nature dimension of relationality (SNDR). (See the previous Figure 1, C.) How do we relate to Nature, to the world as a whole, and to the cosmos? In many people's minds, this notion

of 'relationship' with Nature or Cosmos seems esoteric and strange. This would especially be the case for the highly urbanized population that is estranged from Nature, and sees it in the most objectified sense and manner. Nature to them has become a collection of objectified "things." Nature is there for humans to dominate, use, exploit, profit from, and eventually discard. Trees are there for humans to turn into lumber. Mountains are there for humans to drill, dynamite, and extract minerals from. In one sense, all such activities are forms of relating, but this kind of relationship is at best utilitarian, and at worst, downright degrading and destructive. When our relationship with Nature is mostly instrumentalistic, the ethical consequences are egregious. Species extinction follows. Deforestation follows. Desertification follows. Air is poisoned; mountains are stripped; rivers run dry. In short, we become "vandals of the earth" (Orr, 1994, p. 6). The magnitude of concerns here is enormous. All educational institutions, from kindergarten to university, must take it upon themselves to educate students to become eco-citizens. Institutions of higher learning must take up the responsibility of being leaders in ecological education, research, and living (Bai & Romanycia, 2012).

Viewed from our analytic frame that informs this chapter, namely the three-fold relationality, the greatest obstacle that we see facing the institutions of higher learning in attending to SNDR is intellectualism. This intellectualism is founded upon the age-old mind-body dualism so central to the classical and modern Western philosophical tradition. The influence of this tradition still dominates the institutions of higher learning. Here is a small but telling example: The two universities that we the authors are most familiar with in our province of British Columbia in Canada have taglines like "A place of mind" (University of British Columbia) and "Thinking of the world" (Simon Fraser University), both of which unmistakably suggest the mind-body duality and, moreover, the supremacy of mind. (Note, Simon Fraser University now has a new tagline since the fall of 2012: "Engaging the world.") As students advance on the ladders of institutional learning, all the way from kindergarten to university, they encounter greater and greater emphasis of the 'life of the mind,' and by the time they arrive at the university, seemingly the life of the mind is all there is (or ought to be) to the proper business of intellectual pursuit and scholarship. The portrayal of university scholars as big brains being toted around on their two legs and also as 'talking heads' is no innocuous joke. It is a little too real.

Any ethical relationship, in which we centralize intrinsic relationship, is the work of the whole being: body, mind, heart and soul. Lacking heart and soul and not embodied, a relationship runs the risk of being mainly or totally instrumentalist. Our relationship with the order of non-human others—that is, Nature—especially risks this trouble. If we are concerned about the current state of environmental degradation and destruction,

which we should be, deeply, then we would need to reexamine the nature of our relationship with Nature.

Our relationship with Nature in modernity has been predominantly instrumentalistic (Bai, 2001a, 2004), which would explain well why we have such widespread environmental degradation and destruction today. As we have been noting, institutions of higher learning are predominantly focused on the work of the mind, and do not validate and make ample room for the work of heart and soul, and body and spirit. This makes the institutions of higher learning complicit, even if unwittingly, in the destruction of the environment, or at least, does not render their studies helpful to our building intrinsic relationships with Nature. What good is all the sophisticated research and rigorous teaching in higher education when they do not help and guide students, through a course of study, to *live* the life of integrity, sustainability, and peace and harmony with the earth? To quote a local educational leader, Dr. Arden Henley (personal communication, October 24, 2012, Vancouver): "Correct epistemology results in kindness and compassion." If what we are studying and how we are studying do not result in kindness, compassion, peace, and so on, then, we need to reexamine our epistemology and change it to bring about a better ethical relationship with the world.

Readers may remind us, and rightly so, that there are environmental studies and ecology at most post-secondary institutions. While it is true that valuable and helpful information are obtained and new knowledge is gained through these studies, nonetheless we should not confuse *having knowledge of something* with *embodying and living the knowledge thus discovered.* Embodying and living the knowledge is the work of heart/body/spirit/ mind. Only then can our knowledge help us change our relationship with Earth, from that of instrumentalism to intrinsic valuing, loving, and caring. The late Raimundo Panikkar (1992) reminds us: "No ecological renewal of the world will ever succeed until and unless we consider the Earth as our own Body and the body as our own Self" (p. 244).

What specific curricular or pedagogic suggestions do we the authors have for redressing the SNDR problems in higher learning? In keeping with Panikkar's credo above, we believe that the most substantial difference that we can make in our students' SNDR is through helping them to reclaim their own embodiedness. By 'embodiedness' we mean 'feeling and being bodies,' which necessarily involves feeling one's connection to the ground, to the air, to water, wind, mountains, other sentient bodies, and so on. Even if we are indoors, as when we are in classrooms, we can have the practice of feeling the ground under the feet, feeling the air moving in and out of one's body, experiencing the water one drinks and uses, and other myriad of subtle experiences of embodiment in the moment.

A quote from Morihei Ueshiba, O-Sensei (Stevens & Krenner, 1999), the founder of aikido, which he claimed was the only martial art based on love, is relevant here:

> Now and again, it is necessary to seclude yourself among deep mountains and valleys to restore your link to the source of life. Breathe in and let yourself soar to the ends of the universe; breathe out and bring the cosmos back inside. Next, breathe up all the fecundity and vibrancy of the earth. Finally blend the breath of heaven and the breath of earth with that of our own, becoming the Breath of Life itself. (p. 117)

The importance of these embodiment practices, undertaken whether indoors or outdoors, is to guard oneself against the constant push and pull towards abstraction, being cerebral or mentalistic, being 'out of body,' and emotionally out of attunement. We cannot feel and be the Earth "as our own Body and the body as own Self" when we don't even feel our body connected to and supported by the ground, and be attuned to our breaths.

Embodiment has little to do with *having* bodies or looking beautiful. It has everything to do with being fully present to reality, and *being one with reality*. East meets West in experiencing and expressing the same understanding of embodiment. Tu (1989) comments on the classical Chinese thought:

> [F]orming one body with the universe requires continuous effort to grow and to refine oneself. We can embody the whole universe in our sensitivity because we have enlarged and deepened our feeling and care to the fullest extent. (p. 76)

Could the institutions of higher education rise to this height of learning?

CODA: IMAGINING THE POSSIBILITIES

Humans are creatures of imagination: our way of changing reality is first through imagining different possibilities. Below, as a way of ending this chapter, we offer a small story of possibility.

> A doctoral seminar is about to start. The group of ten students and their professor are seated in a circle with no intervening desks. They can all see each other and be in each other's presence fully. Professor Michelle Sontag makes an invitation: "Let's start with our usual five minutes of quiet reflection. I have a suggestion for you today. 'Feel' yourself as connected to every other person in this circle, in our classroom community; and as part of the larger whole that encompasses all human beings, all sentient beings, and all beings. "

> There are a few moments of adjusting body postures and seating position. Everyone is either softening the gaze or closing his or her eyes. The room is quiet, except for the sounds of breathing. At the five-minute point Professor Sontag gently states: "Please return to your ordinary consciousness now."

Slowly everyone emerges from their contemplative consciousness. Some seem to be looking 'nowhere' and others are slowly looking around, smiling to their neighbours.

Professor Sontag invites: "Let's hear from everyone. Remember, this is our personal time. This is our opportunity to share and hear about each other's lives. And, be sure to only share what you are comfortable sharing. You are not required to share anything. It is up to you. After we have the initial round, we will take some time for feedback, any issues within our group that we feel need to be dealt with, and any additional sharing."

The first student to speak is Bob. He says, "I took your suggestion. At first, I could feel a resistance in me. It took the form of ideas and body sensation. The idea was: "I am wasting my time. I need to talk about my research. I need feedback and input about my work. I then wondered whose voice is this. I immediately knew it was my father who always told me that anyone who wants to get ahead will work very hard on achieving their goals. I could feel the familiar feeling that I used to feel when we used to have these discussions: a tension in my chest, and an anxious feeling in the pit of my stomach. Suddenly, I remembered my connection to the group and the support I have here, and everything softened in me, and I remembered that we will have time for me to talk about my research and I just know I will get the input that I need. Thanks everyone for listening and for being here with me."

However strange the beginning to a class in the story may seem to readers, we the authors have enacted this story in real life for many years. The time we spent in connecting with the self through breath and silence and with each other through sharing our intersubjective content has proved to be well spent. Students learn about themselves as human beings rather that what John Taylor Gatto referred to as 'human doings' (Gatto, 1999). The re-humanizing of education that includes ecologizing is essential to the academy not only for its own wellbeing but also in order to facilitate developing educational leaders, public intellectuals, and researchers who will model being fully human in three-fold relationality.

The story above shows a possibility on a micro level of what could be done to reclaim human sensitivity and relationality. Unless we are working on rediscovering these human capacities on an individual and small group level, our chances of finding and creating these capacities on national and international levels seem miniscule.

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