A

WAYS-OF-GIVING MODEL

FOR AGENTS OF CHANGE

THESIS

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BY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a reflexive inquiry that explores my identity as an agent of change, with particular attention to my own capacity to give within various communities of practice. I undertake an appreciative inquiry into my own practice of giving, by exploring four distinct landscapes of giving. I adapt appreciative inquiry--an organizational development form of action research--to generate the best examples of giving from my own approach to everyday living as an agent of change. These exemplars are used as data for discovery, understanding, and amplification in a planned change technique.

Two models of giving emerged from this study, reflecting the dual focus of adult education on personal and social goals. I create a unique Ways-of-Giving Model that presents four landscapes of giving in a quaternity, which is in harmony with determinants of giving, ethics of giving, and ways of giving. The Ways-of-Giving Model presents landscapes of giving shaped by the external environment. I also create a second model that presents attributes-of-giving. The attributes-of-giving model presents personal attributes that reflect an internal focus. The models are self-reflexive and emerge from my practice as an agent of change. Giving agency is presented as a theoretical construct that integrates personal, community, and moral agency and reconciles the seeming contradictions between personal and social agency. The models may serve social change agents as they reflect on, and foster, their own giving agency through reflexivity on past giving, empowering their choices in giving, and transforming their experience of giving. This thesis will be of significance to other adult educators who view themselves as agents of change, and especially those who struggle to imbue their social purpose with personal meaning.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Desire knows nothing of exchange,
it knows only theft and gift."
- Still, 1997, p. 19

The literature of adult education is replete with the notion of change, the power to change, and the suggestion that adulthood is "a period characterized by change, [which] implies an understanding of person as a dynamic being who is challenged to make meaning of these life changes" (Loughlin, 1993, p. 45). In this thesis I have been challenged as an agent of change through a critical, appreciative inquiry into gifts and giving. Throughout this thesis, the concepts of agency, change, meaning, learning, and community intersect with gifts and giving as I draw on the literature and a critical autobiography of my own gifts and ways of giving. As adults, we often take for granted the gift of learning and its power to transform our lives. Strengthening communities that encourage and support learning throughout life is a critical task of adult educators. I have been challenged by my research into gifts and giving in communities of practice to be more than an enforcer of the status quo; to be more than an agent of social, political, and economic power elites. The research that underpins this thesis dares me to be responsible to my knowledge and my skill as an adult educator. Serving as an agent of change dares me to become a new kind of person--a giving person.

Background and Context for the Study

There is a landscape that invites a meeting between the personal and the political, between the individual and society, a landscape where one's personal transformation connects to the metamorphosis of the social order. Adult educators, especially those who

see themselves as agents of change, are leaders in this landscape. A core tension in adult education literature has been between a focus on individual goals versus a focus on social goals. Adult educators have questioned and debated this seemingly contradictory focus. The mission of social change, which served as a focus in the formation of the field of adult education in the 1920s, is seen by many to have been lost through institutionalization and professionalization of the field and recent alignment with an agenda of economic competitiveness (see Cunningham, 1993; Finger, 1995; Kerka, 1996). Rather than enter the adult education debate between mission to transform individuals and mission to transform society, which I believe creates a false dichotomy, a fundamental feminist premise underlies my research: I believe the personal is political.

In beginning this thesis I felt challenged to question whether my adult education practice served as a means of empowerment in a democratic society or as an instrument for maintaining the status quo. Many researchers turn to economic theories for answers to the problem of poverty and inequality. However, Saul (1995) warns that "economics has been spectacularly unsuccessful in its attempts to apply its models and theories to the reality of our civilization. It's not that the economists' advice hasn't been taken. It has, in great detail, with great reverence. And in general, it has failed" (p. 4). Economic difficulty is not only a personal problem, but is connected to much broader social and political issues. Acting as an agent of change demands an exploration of the connections between the personal and the political. In this thesis I suggest that *giving* be viewed as the action that connects self to society. I use autobiographical data, within an appreciative inquiry methodology, in order to develop two models of giving which shed light on adult education's dual focus on both individual and social goals and introduce *giving agency* as a theoretical construct that transcends this duality.

Some 15 years ago, I served on a committee that organized a provincial conference for rural women. I was attracted to the connections among giving, learning, and change. As a conference facilitator, I taped flip chart paper to walls, drew a line down the center of the page and placed two headings, "give" and "get," at the top of the page. I asked conference participants to consider what they had to give to others and what it was that they hoped to get from participation in grass-roots community development and action planning. The question "What do I have to give?" balanced the question "What do I want to get?" Neither is a simple or easy question to answer. As a conference committee we determined through dialogue that building capacity through an examination of individual gifts was as important, if not more important, than asking people what they needed in terms of services and resources. I have come to understand how these questions challenge learners to explore the connection between self and society and see how a reconceptualization of gifts and giving has tremendous transformative power.

Origin of the Study

In May 1987 I lay in a hotel room in Montreal, waking to the excitement of my participation in the formation of a Canadian Women's Health Network, a forum of 20 women meeting to establish a national coalition to promote women's health. I would represent the voice of rural women--one voice amongst 20 talented women, feminists, from across the country. Imbued with the sense of responsibility and opportunity in representing Canadian rural women, I experienced an image arising from my connection to a body that was more than my body; my connection to a mind that was more than my mind. Like an angel embodying the collective potential of women isolated by their geographic context, I was part of (embraced by) an awakening body, a body of political, economic, social, and cultural power that existed in the health, knowledge, willingness,

and creativity of rural women. A focus on efficient use of scarce resources was irrelevant in the imagic force of this massive, abundant potentiality. I experienced an awesome sense of connection that has remained with me ever since. I experienced the embodiment of an awakening prosperity, the potential of including the once marginalized, undervalued, unrecognized and trivialized, economic value of rural women. I knew my focus needed to remain with the radical and immediate harvest of this ripe potentiality and not be snared by a limiting mind set that emphasized competition, scarcity, and constraint.

The experience of that morning awakening has led me to know that I stand with others in my desire to resist the seduction of marketing, which reduces my experience of freedom to a choice between various commodities. I contend that freedom lies not in consumptive choice but in the capacity to choose a way of giving. I know that I have often been thoughtless about my giving, being manipulated by expectations embedded in culture. I have often given to whomever asks without consciously intending to make a gift, without having a sincere motive for giving, and with little assurance of appreciation or reciprocity for my gifts. This unconscious giving has stolen my prosperity, my power, and my potential. I have come to this study from my sense that many Canadians experiencing poverty are not those lacking in either capacity or generosity, but rather in the opportunity to give--including the opportunity to develop and utilize their gifts.

I have lived in small-town Ontario for over 10 years, and in rural Ontario for most of my adult life. The population of my town has remained unchanged over the past 100 years. Agriculture and tourism are the primary industries and there is neither a college nor university campus in the region. Over the past 10 years I have been pursuing higher education and have traveled to evening classes in order to obtain a certificate in voluntary non-profit sector management; attended four separate 5-day retreats to obtain a certificate

in process therapy; designed my own course of study to obtain a Bachelor of Independent Studies; obtained licenses in life insurance and mutual funds through self-study and examinations; and finally, pursued my Master of Adult Education degree through self-directed study.

Once active in federal and provincial politics, I felt alienated and dissatisfied with partisan politics. I was uninspired by government programs and initiatives. I experienced my talent, knowledge, and skills being exploited and misdirected when aligned with federal and provincial strategies. These experiences and feelings motivated me to seek ways of engaging in democratic citizenry that prioritized personal agency and integrity over political agendas. The conflict I experienced between my values and political values reminds me of Dirkx's (2000) observation: "Transformative or emancipatory aims are often at odds with the larger economic context in which these practices are embedded" (p. 2). These experiences and feelings influenced me to explore many diverse communities of practice in which I could work as an agent of change grounded in my own moral and ethical value system and at the same time examine the ways in which change agents give and receive.

My Role as an Agent of Change

During the 5 years that I have been conducting research for my master's studies in adult education, at least 15 activities have fallen within my identity as change agent, and arise out of my knowledge of the field. I have served as a board member and treasurer for a non-profit community-based agency; acted as a organizational consultant to several volunteer organizations; organized a public panel to celebrate women's participation in higher education; served as a development consultant to a local training board; participated as a member in several professional associations as well as my own church;

and maintained self-employment as an independent financial advisor and as an independent consultant. I have designed and supervised independent study credits for colleagues in the area of charitable gift planning, financial planning, and estate planning; counselled individual clients experiencing grief, tragic death, career change, and marriage breakdown; co-facilitated a smoking cessation program; and provided financial planning and investment counselling to individuals and families for whom major life events had precipitated a sudden change in economic status. I have also served on a government task force on health promotion and adapted to significant regulatory changes and training requirements in the financial services industry. All of these experiences form the territory that I explore through this self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my own exemplars of giving. My identity as an agent of change is the common thread that links these various activities. I see my work as an agent of change grounded in the theories of adult education and empowered by the skills of adult education practice.

I experience my role as an agent of change as a calling. This sense of calling accompanies a desire in me for meaning, personal worth, and purposefulness. The process of making meaning from one's experience is defined by adult educators as transformative learning (e.g., Boyd & Myers, 1988; Dirkx, 1997; Randall, 1995).

Hillman (1996) proposes that every person is born with a defining image. He explains that many of the prevailing theories of contemporary science, psychology, and philosophy are caught in the archetypal polarity of the self-made person. Hillman reminds me that my own psychological strength rests in an identity that resists alignment with victimization by economic status. Just as strongly, I resist the heroic belief that I could lead the poor out of poverty. Holding to my unique capacity to be an agent of change

transcends this false polarity. I recognize that the kernel of this impulse and motive to explore the relationship between personal transformation and social change acted as a critical factor in drawing me to study adult education in depth. Exploring the many ways in which adult education fosters change in the individual and in society has been a powerful shaping force in my life and has enhanced my experience of living. From my studies has emerged a vision for my own way of being that honours my desire not only to be in a continuous process of learning, but also to connect with others in a way that consciously stresses my capacity to nurture and to foster others' learning.

In my professional practice, integrating action with reflection (praxis) to create new understanding supports my belief that it is important not only what "I know" but to let my knowledge inform my choices and my action and construct that way in which I choose and change what "I do." As I seize opportunities to put my knowledge and my skill as an adult educator into practice I am compelled to ask: "What is my gift?" In this reflection I discovered that prior to my choice to take action is the impulse to give--the desire to give. Giving characterizes my human desire to connect with others. Giving is the action that connects the personal and the political--that connects personal transformation to social transformation.

Landscapes of Giving

This thesis focuses on the phenomenon of giving. It asks: "Who gives?" "Who fosters giving?" "What is the gift?" "How is community a site of practice for giving?" "How am I uniquely gifted?" "What opportunities do I have to give?" "How is an expectation of giving embedded in my various practices as an agent of change?" "How do

adult educators, through praxis, reflect on their practice of giving?" "How do adult educators foster giving agency?"

The concept of giving I use in this thesis is informed by my knowledge of financial planning as well as humanistic psychology, the psychology of religion, adult development, participatory democracy, community development, and adult education, although it is not circumscribed by any of these fields of study. I visualize the opportunity to give existing in various landscapes. I see how social, political, and economic structures control my ability to give and that my giving is always shaped by the historical and cultural context of these structures. I experience these structures as territories and explore them in the thesis as distinct landscapes of giving. In chapter 3 I name these landscapes as: philanthropy, professionalism, public service and profitability.

I visualize these landscapes of giving using the schematic representation of a mandala. Within the circle of the mandala is a quaternity. I use the idea of a quaternity throughout the thesis, which I understand as the element of four, or the square, that is contained within a mandala. Prior to doing this study, I explored the archetype of the mandala and its manifestation in community-based organizations. In my undergraduate thesis I described this archetype:

> The mandala often contains a quaternity or segmentation into four. In this way the mandala, as circle, combines with the concept of the square, cross or octagon. This union of the square and the circle was described by Jung as the archetype of wholeness. In Jungian psychology, the mandala represents the wholeness of the psyche and demonstrates the order and structure that exists within the seemingly chaotic and mysterious realm of the unconscious. (Bolton, 1994, p. 21)

It is significant that, in my use of the idea of a quaternity, these four quadrants are not just any group of four. The four segments come together to form a whole; they complete one

another. The way in which the four elements of the quaternity stand in relation to one another informs each of the other.

This mandalic quaternity, which I use to visualize a landscape of giving, relates to transformative learning, as described by Dirkx (1997):

> The mytho-poetic perspective is represented in the work of Jungian, neo-Jungian, and other depth psychology scholars. Within this perspective, the *psyche* or soul is central to understanding who we are as persons and as a society. [The soul] is not a thing but a quality of experience--of life and of ourselves. Soul has to do with heart, depth, relatedness, depth, and personal substance. Soul manifests itself in consciousness as a search for meaning in life . . . Images are "angels" or message-bearers of the soul and, consequently, represent the depth of our experiences. (pp. 33-34)

I hold a mytho-poetic belief that my model for ways of giving emerged as an image from my psyche as my soul's gift. I celebrate the model as a gift from wisdom, a reward for my work, my patience, and my questioning within the depths of my own giving agency. I take particular delight in the way my creative mind and psyche working in a holistic way produced a structure for the meaningful relationship between otherwise seemingly disparate thoughts, ideas, and experiences on giving. It was as a gift that I first experienced the holistic image of the mandalic quaternity for landscapes of giving.

I had previously written of how an organizational consultant might use the mandala as a tool for organizational self-awareness (Bolton, 1994). During the reflexive appreciative inquiry for this thesis, this mandalic quaternity emerged as a container to gather, sort, and order my experiences and my knowledge, as well as to receive new information and ideas.

An important feature in this landscape of giving that has profoundly influenced my concept of my role as an agent of change is the seeming paradox of receiving as a gift. I believe that one of the elements that contributes to the success of my role is giving the gift

of receiving. As a change agent, I give to the community. But giving expertise and ideas is not my only gift. Creating the capacity to receive gifts is also my role. Giving the gift of receiving is a perspective that I bring to my role as an agent of change, seeking ways to transform and create social, political, and economic structures that are receptive to individual gifts.

Purpose of the Thesis

The questions framing this thesis are those that stimulated my conceptualization of a landscape of giving, namely: "Who gives?" "How is community a site of practice for giving?" "How is giving embedded in the practices of change agents?" Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine how giving sheds light on practices that are relevant for adult educators, especially those working within a community development context.

In pursuing this purpose, I use appreciative inquiry to examine my own experiences of giving within my practices as an adult educator in the four landscapes of public service, philanthropy, profitability and professionalism. I selected artifacts from my own personal writing that demonstrated the best of my own giving agency in these four distinct economic contexts. The items I selected included letters, a story, a speech, a report, an article, and a press release. The original quaternity of landscapes of giving evolved through my self-reflexive study. My study resulted in the construction of the ways-of-giving and attributes-of-giving models, that represent new conceptual ground for adult educators who hope to enhance their understanding of giving and their capacity to give.

I anticipate that this reflective giving model may be useful to social change agents who have experienced a critical incident in their experience of giving. Often such a critical

incident is triggered by a negative experience, by loss and grief, through an experience of betrayal, or in lack of acknowledgment, marginalization, and misunderstanding. I hope to encourage a sense of respect amongst those who choose to give in different ways and to increase their respect and understanding of others whose ethics, values, and skills in giving may be foreign.

This thesis appreciates giving and especially appreciates the diverse ways of giving by individuals within communities. I celebrate and encourage the potential that exists to foster many ways of giving. I anticipate that a conscious and deeper understanding of giving is knowledge that will support the work of change agents.

Scope, Boundaries, and Borders for the Study

Following a review of adult education literature that had challenged me to be an agent of change, I embarked on a self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my own exemplary ways of giving as an agent of change. I gathered evidence for this study from my own written archives stored on my personal computer, which contained evidence of my entrepreneurial approach to the everyday practice of living and giving arising from my identity as an agent of change. The archives examined spanned a five year period from 1996-2000, representing the years in which I self-directed my studies toward a master's degree in adult education. The self-reflexive appreciative inquiry spanned a six month period during the spring and summer of 2000 when I reflected upon written communications held in my personal archives. During this period of time I continued my everyday practice of living and giving as a citizen, family and church member, and learner. I continued to be self-employed as both an independent financial advisor and as an independent consultant to the voluntary sector.

This thesis is not focused on the financial and legal products and services available to facilitate wealth transfer, despite my interest and expertise in the emerging field of planned giving. From the perspective of gift planning (a specialty in the field of fund development professionals), as well as from the perspective of financial advisors, lawyers, and accountants working with charitable gift planners as allied professionals, the phrase "ways of giving" is commonly used by those working within the sector to describe this expertise. My thesis stands against the way in which this product-oriented commodification of giving limits the understanding and scope of giving agency.

Assumptions and Perspectives

Naming community as a site of practice for my change agent work calls for comment on the assumptions and perspectives I bring to my work in community and community development. I experience community in my academic work, volunteer organizations, and professional associations. I experience community amongst people I have never met, such as an internet e-mail discussion group. I have experienced community across time and history through my church and through the brief and transient community of learners brought together by common interest at a conference or retreat. Community is not defined by longevity, by numbers, or by locale. My sense of community has three critical elements: common identity; safety; and organizing in order to give to one another. As an agent of change I hope to be a builder and a promoter of community. I believe that community is where individual potential can be realized. I believe that all people need and deserve to participate in communities in which their personal gifts are nurtured and acknowledged. One of the most important tasks of any community is to create the opportunity for the unique and special talents of community members to be

expressed. At the same time, people need to be supported and encouraged to recognize when we have been ensnared by false community, a situation in which one's gifts are abused, discounted, or stolen. My hope is to encourage others to seek out and create communities that support an appreciation of gifts and giving.

Capacity to give is generally measured in relation to socio-economic status. My own socio-economic status, therefore, presents unique barriers and privileges which have a bearing on my perspective and study of giving. I recognize the extent that my education has been a privilege of being born white into a middle-class family on the one hand, and limited by my choice to live in a rural community and to tolerate a low income, on the other hand. My choice to self direct my learning as well as my choice to live in a rural community have had enormous influence on my economic status, and this is reflected throughout my research. For example, the research of Rubenson (1987) reinforces "that the better an education pays off in terms of income, status, occupation, political efficacy, cultural competence, and similar matters, the greater the differences in socioeconomic status between participants and nonparticipants" (p. 64).

Nevertheless, my own 10-year pursuit of higher education has done little to improve my economic status. Like other Canadian distance students, my experience is reflected in the Statistics Canada report that states:

> Distance students have a relatively lower socio-economic profile than non-distance students. They have, on average, lower incomes, less labour force experience and lower educational status than their non-distance counterparts. As well, they are more likely than non-distance students to live in rural areas, to be women, to be young and to be unmarried. Most of these characteristics are associated with a high risk for interruption of studies. (Burke, 1998, p. 7)

I am unable to take in this information, taken from Statistics Canada data, without a deep sigh. The truth is, that not all the information uncovered in the research process is

good news. How do these statistics speak to my own chances to complete my studies? In a society in which economic status and success are seen as synonymous, I often experience my own economic problems as a disorienting dilemma. I am encouraged by Saul's (1995) observation:

> In general, democracy and individualism have advanced in spite of and often against specific economic interest. Both democracy and individualism have been based upon financial sacrifice, not gain. Even in Athens, a large part of the 7,000 citizens who participated regularly in assemblies were farmers who had to give up several days' work to go into town to talk and listen. (p. 83)

I can imagine that the farmers who resisted traveling to Athens with the complaint of entailing financial loss and cost, were challenged by their associates to "Give it up! Stop your moaning! Come on down! Sharing your political voice will be worth more than an extra pound of butter in the marketplace." Such musings remind me to stop my moaning. If there shall be a cost to imbue my life with meaning, to learn everyday, to make a contribution to civilization, to create a legacy for a future world--it shall be a cost worth giving up.

Definition of Terms

Community refers to a quality that people build as much as to a geographic entity. To ask what people want to give is essential in building community. The etymology of the word community "is the Latin ***munus***, which means the gift, and ***cum***, which means together, among each other. So community literally means to give among each other" (Lietaer, 1997). In this thesis ***community development*** stands against an economic analysis defined by scarcity and is excited by the way in which gifts and giving have both the theoretical force and practical ability to create abundance.

I use the term ***community*** to refer to a place where people can communicate, accomplish, play, love, learn, heal, and explore their potential together. To develop community is to engage in the creative act of shaping safe environments where this kind of activity can occur. Communities do not exist outside of people organizing together (see Bolton, 1988, p. 4). Community is a place where gifts are shared. My definition of community is not limited to local geography, although I highly value localism. I celebrate and am deeply grateful for the experience of community I have living in a small town.

Appreciative inquiry refers to a particular form of action research emerging from a socio-rationalist paradigm. Appreciative inquiry starts with intentional empathy and explores the best of "what is" in order to build upon the best of "what can be" (see Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). Appreciative inquiry is a generative approach, rather than a predictive approach, and stands against a problem-solving methodology. Its socio-rationalist paradigm derives from a perspective in which social and psychological reality are considered to be a product of the present moment and subject to continuous flux and change. Literature on the methodology is presented in chapter 2.

I use the term ***reflexivity, self-reflexive dialogue,*** and ***critical autobiography*** in consistency with their use in educational research. Reflexivity is a way of being with oneself that allows learning to emerge from everyday moments by making visible the research data ordinarily relegated to "living." Reflexivity imbues each thoughtful moment with the potential of providing a missing puzzle piece: that infinitesimal shift when mystery transforms into vision; when the unknown becomes known. Bruner (1990) hints at the way in which reflexivity enables a kind of time-travel that allows us to transfigure the past as well as our present and our future.

> Human reflexivity, our capacity to turn around on the past and alter the present in its light, or to alter the past in the light of the present. Neither the past nor the present stays fixed in the face of this reflexivity. The "immense repository" of our past encounters may be rendered salient in different ways as we review them reflexively, or may be changed by reconceptualization. (pp. 109-110)

I use ***critical autobiography*** as a means of searching and reflecting on my own stories, telling my story again and again in a way that enables me to construct and reconstruct myself in a way that celebrates my living and connects me with other storytellers who "construct their experiences of quality in terms of active moral purposes in response-able relationships" (Lander, 2000b, p.136). The limitation of critical autobiography as a research process is in the lack of diverse perspectives on gifts and giving. The strength of this process is the wisdom that can be obtained from a journey to an individual soul's depth.

Adult educators present a gift to our world. It is the gift of change. Adult education fosters both social change and personal change through a practice that focuses on both social and individual goals. Inviting adult educators to deepen their understanding of this gift and the way in which it is given is the challenge of this thesis.

I hope to be playful with thoughts about gifts and giving. The idea of giving is embedded in our language in diverse and delightful ways. A gift is a present given to celebrate a birthday or special event. An especially talented person is described as gifted. Cooperation is inspired through the term "give-and-take." Agreement is presumed with the expression "that is a given." Surrender is described as "giving up." I hope to crack open, expand, and exalt my own experience of gifts, what is given, what is gifted, and ways of giving.

Organization of the Thesis

Following this introduction, in chapter 2 I present a review of the adult education literature influencing my thesis. This chapter presents the literature that supports my calling to be an agent of change, the nature of practice for a change agent, multiple meanings on agents and agency, and personal transformations as a gift. I explore theoretical ideas about "the gift" and gift economies and literature that supports homeplaces as a location of giving. I outline the literature that supports my methodology of self-reflexive autobiography and appreciative inquiry. Chapter 3 describes my appreciative inquiry, as a form of action research, into my own exemplars of giving. I document my personal experience journeying in different contexts to give and to learn through giving. I introduce a quaternity of giving that includes four landscapes of giving: philanthropy, professional practice, profit, and public service. Together these four landscapes create a whole that forms giving agency. In chapter 4, I present two models of giving developed from my study. I introduce ways in which these models can be used to develop a more conscious and appreciative understanding of giving and share critical insights that draw together my understanding of the literature, and my own self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my practice. I present recommendations, conclusions and suggestion for further research on the ways of giving and attributes of giving for agents of change. I explore ways in which, we as a society and as adult educators, might foster a more giving society.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHALLENGE OF ADULT EDUCATION LITERATURE

The ability to imagine possibilities, to choose among them, and to act, is at the heart of human freedom.
- Loughlin, 1993, p. 7

In this chapter I review adult education literature that has challenged me to be an agent of change fostering an appreciation of gifts and giving. First, I explore the literature on identity as an agent of change with a particular focus on community as a site of practice and multiple perspectives on agents and agency. I then explore the aspect of gifts and giving including an understanding of the gift as a general theoretical construct. I create the foundation for my use of appreciative inquiry and reflexivity as methodology for my research. I conclude with a personal memory that supports a sense of myth and mystery surrounding my destiny as an agent of change.

The Challenges of Being an Agent of Change

My identity and knowledge have been shaped by my embrace of adult education literature, and this identity enhances my capacity to act as an agent of change, including my capacity to foster new perspectives on giving. Giving is a way of transforming self and society. As an agent of change I give *to* myself and give *of* myself to others. My motive to give is generated in and through my identity as an agent of change. In this section, I explore how adult education literature has challenged me to be an agent of change by framing the concept of a change agent as a calling to vocation; as located in community as a site of practice; as including multiple perspectives on agents and agency; and as a facilitator of personal transformation.

The Calling To Be an Agent of Change

I have been encouraged to recognize and to celebrate the mystery of my own sense of calling, by Hillman (1996), who encourages "a restructuring of perception" (p. 35) in order that educators might "see the child we were, the adult we are, and the children who require us in one way or another, in a light that shifts the valences from curse to blessing, or if not blessing at least symptom of calling" (p. 35). Hillman describes the soul's code as an essence that each person is born with that reflects on the power of character. In his "acorn theory of the soul" (p. 11) he proposes that every person is born with a defining image. He explains that many of the prevailing theories of contemporary science, psychology, and philosophy are caught in the archetypal polarity of the self-made person.

> We are victims primarily of theories before they are put into practice. . . .We are victims of academic, scientistic, and even therapeutic psychology, whose paradigms do not sufficiently account for or engage with, and therefore ignore, the sense of calling, that essential mystery at the heart of human life. In a nutshell, then, this book is about calling, about fate, about character, about innate image. Together they make up the "acorn theory," which holds that each person bears a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present before it can be lived. (p. 6)

Hillman (1996) reminds me that my own psychological strength rests in an identity that resists alignment with victimization as strongly as I resist the "flip-side" heroic belief that I must use my gifts to save others. Holding to my unique capacity to be an agent of change transcends this false polarity. I recognize that the kernel of this impulse and motive to explore the relationship between personal transformation and social change existed long before I was introduced to the field of adult education. In fact, it was this unique calling that acted as a critical factor in drawing me to study the field.

My search of the literature has centered on those writers who engage with, and are sensitive to, an aesthetic appreciation of a life story. I have chosen to read and listen to the

ideas from diverse areas such as the field of psychology, political science, economics, women's studies, and religious studies and to integrate these ideas through the lens of the adult education literature. However, in response to my learning, I do not say "I am an adult educator." My learning has given me the courage to respond to my own unique sense of calling and say "I am an agent of change."

The adult education researcher and feminist, Kathleen Loughlin, first introduced me to the concept of women as agents of change in a 1992 report. I resonated with her approach to an understanding of women's emancipatory education. I identified with the women interviewed in her study. My own accomplishments in community development, political action, and advocacy were similar to those of the women she interviewed. I shared with these women the sense of strength and wisdom emerging from my own personal empowerment and the belief, not only in the possibility of societal transformation, but that my own personal transformation could be a catalyst for social change.

Loughlin (1992) alerted me to the phrase "agents of change" and I began to hear the phrase throughout popular culture. I heard the Honourable Hillary M. Weston, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, praise Ontario hospice workers as agents of change in her keynote speech at the 1998 annual meeting of the Ontario Hospice Association. Similarly, in the exploration of social entrepreneurship, Dees (1998) claims, "Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector" (p. 4). Margaret McCain, New Brunswick's first woman Lieutenant-Governor, speaking of her active volunteerism emphasizes: "Women not only give with their hearts, they invest their hearts, and get their reward by being agents for change" (cited in Ball, 1999, p. 5).

Having the identity of an agent of change is an understanding that I bring to my professional work. In other words, being an agent of change is not a career choice. It is what I think of as a self-constructed identity, an identity that is self defined and not imposed by any external social, political, or economic systems. Being a change agent is cross-sectoral by nature and

> may be facilitated by actions within diverse societal contexts; for example, communications, politics, religion, or education. I understand action for reconstruction in a broad context that extends beyond a definition of political action as the primary means of social structure reconstruction. (Loughlin, 1992, p. 22)

In this sense, being an agent of change is closer to a vocation than a career, because it is what I feel called and compelled to do. As Peck (1993) explains,

> The word vocation literally means "calling." It is derived from the Latin verb vocare, "to call"--the same verb that is the root of the adjective vocal. The religious meaning of vocation, therefore, is what one is called to do, which may or may not coincide with one's occupation, with what one is actually doing. (p. 61)

Similarly, hooks (1994) claims that as adult educators our vocation is to foster a deeper sense of meaning for others:

> There is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred . . .To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin. (p. 13)

As a learner, my calling to be an agent of change includes the call to celebrate my own ongoing learning. Spretnak (1993) calls for an education that recognizes "the presence of the divine, the face of ultimate mystery in all beings" (p. 188). She postulates:

> What if we were educated to nurture awareness of our inseparable relatedness? . . . . Not only education, but the very nature of work itself would be challenged by a revitalized sense of community that is cosmologically grounded . . . .The subjectivity of a worker would be appreciated as a gift to be shared. (pp. 188-189)

Lander (2000b) conveys how it is possible to use different selves (distinct "worker" identities) in response to a deeper, unchanging, and passionate vocation, which I interpret to be a call to an ethic of service. Lander explains, "My knowledge-worker identity enables me to honour, conceptualize, and de-naturalize the know-how of service work in a way I was not able to do through my service worker identity" (p. 12). She celebrates the way in which this call to service is re-assembled--in a way that I perceive as a metamorphosis--in the new form of her knowledge-worker self, experiencing this as passionate devotion. She explains, "I know that I am in the presence of Quality when my work flows gladly from my identity, and when I engage in the service work of meaning-making and relationship with others" (p. 3).

My own sense of calling includes the courage to be vocal, to have a voice, to be able to speak and influence the world around me. Gilligan's (1993) work has challenged me to connect with my own authentic voice and to be willing to speak from this place of connection where the psychological and the political merge and where social transformation may be made possible. I yearn to be a part of what she describes as "the ongoing historical process of changing the voice of the world by bringing women's voices into the open, thus starting a new conversation" (p. xxvii). I also recognize the need to be constantly alert to the political and economic power held by those who would benefit from my silence. Waring (1996) recalls her experience of being challenged by her male colleagues when she was a member of the New Zealand parliament:

> In caucus I was advised to shut up and fall into line for the good of the Government. But it was more than that. There were explicit descriptions of "what my wife is going to think of you, and what my children are going to think of you." And comments such as, "What do you want to be backing this group of people for? They are not important to you." The real intent was to wear me down--to break my spirit, or what remained of it. (p. 21)

The paradox of being called to be an agent of change is caught up in a multiplicity of choice and no-choice. The paradox is that both are contained within this sense of vocation--that sometimes my only choice has been to adhere to the path of my calling.

The Nature of Community Practice for an Agent of Change

A positive and affirming notion of community development evolved out of my work in health promotion and is grounded in a socio-environmental approach to health promotion that, as Labonte (1996) describes, is critical of the limits of a medical or behavioural approach to health. A socio-environmental approach to health promotion focuses on building healthy communities; the emphasis is on creating healthy contexts rather than promoting healthy activities. Health promotion, in this approach, is a conceptual bridge, linking the field with others committed to social reconstruction (Labonte, 1994). Labonte's "holosphere" model of empowerment for health promotion links five spheres: personal care, small group development, community organization, coalition building and advocacy, and political action. Labonte challenges his readers to a strong sense of social agency when he states, "The model presumes that professionals and institutions are capable of change and of sharing power" (p. 3). This pentad (set of five) model foreshadows my own inclination to think through models and to construct a quaternity (set of four) model for giving. Labonte's assertion of this demanding assumption (the capability of change) also foreshadows my own insight into the use of the term *given* as in an admitted fact or premise. In this way, Labonte's assumption is a gift to the imagination. The assumption is the gift. What he assumes, what he demands as a given (an agreed upon premise that institutions and professionals have the capacity to share

power and to change) lifts the reader into realms of possibility that otherwise would be unimaginable.

The etymology of the word health is related to wholeness and the concept of whole. Etymologically, health is connected to greeting others, to looking at the wholeness of people's lives (Labonte, 1996). Peterson (1996) relates community development to the literal translation of "unwrapping of the condition of fellowship" (p. 142). Putting these concepts together defines community as a place where gifts are given (Lietaer, 1997) and where community developers unwrap the gifts (Peterson, 1996). I imagine community development professionals being given the opportunity of unwrapping community gifts as both a privilege and as a caution. There is a distinction between using one's profession to hold oneself apart from community and allowing one's professional knowledge and skill to enter into community.

An emphasis on building community capacity is grounded in the work of McKnight and Kretzmann (1990), and Kretzmann and McKnight (1993). They explain that there have been two paths undertaken in an attempt to rebuild communities. The first has been to focus on community needs, deficiencies, and problems. This has often led to the deepening of the cycle of dependency. The other path is to rebuild communities by first identifying and discovering assets and capacities. An asset-based community development model counters the destructive nature of *needs*-centred programming in low-income community development. Capacity building is a positive alternative to the negative approach of needs assessment. Focusing on assets rather than deficits, capacity rather than need, and empowerment rather than dependence, is contained in an approach that respects people as the greatest community assets and the starting point for change.

A significant concept in my approach to community development is the notion of social capital. I distinguish social capital from human capital. Social capital represents the investments made in social networks and structures that connect people and create communities (Flora, 1998). Human capital generally represents the investment made in workers as part of an investment in the labour force (see Beaulieu & Mulkey, 1995; & Miller, 1996). Schuller (2000) distinguishes human, cultural and social capital explaining: "Human capital focuses on the economic behaviour of individuals. . . .cultural capital focuses on the way power structures are reproduced. . . .social capital focuses on networks: the relationships with and between them, and the norms which govern these relationships" (p. 3)

Flora (1998) examines how social capital contributes to the well-being of rural communities. She explains that introducing concepts of *equality*, *inclusion*, and *agency* to social capital theory creates a foundation for community action (p. 482). Economic well-being of communities relies on the extent to which initiatives are supported by a degree of *embeddedness* within informal social and cultural networks and systems of support. This derives from a sociological perspective.

Flora cites Durkheim's embedded approach to sociology that recognizes the horizontal linkages among diverse groups; she critiques the usefulness and limitations of that approach for analysing communities of place.

> In addition to embeddedness, I believe that sociological perspective should include notions of equality/inequality, inclusion/exclusion, and agency/structure. Durkheim's perspective excludes these aspects of social structure which are associated with the conflict tradition. I argue that, for applied community development, a marriage between embeddedness and conflict theory is not only possible but also desirable. This will be done by introducing the applied concept of entrepreneurial social infrastructure as an alternative to social capital. (p. 482)

A social capital approach has its roots in Alexis de Tocqueville's reflections on American society in the 1830s, which is widely accepted as a foundation for the understanding of philanthropy:

> Social scientists continue to confirm the current accuracy of de Tocqueville's observation--that the quality of public life and the performance of social institutions are powerfully influenced by networks of civic engagement which encourage the emergence of social obligation and trust. By analogy with notions of physical and human capital, such norms and social cohesion may be viewed as social capital. (Waitzer, 1996, p. 2)

The social capital that is created within the third sector is analysed by Roberts and Brandum (1995) in their approach to a simplified life through entrepreneurism. In Get A Life! they concur that this approach is connected to Tocqueville's views on democracy:

> The third sector is making space for new entrepreneurs, and is offering them the hooks and ladders to get to it. The social space occupied by the third sector is hard to define. It's the rich web of middle-level associations that Alexis de Tocqueville identified in the 1830s as the secret success of American democracy, the force keeping it away from the brink of mass conformity and isolated individualism. It's what young kids used to do when they played outside, turning their parents from people who lived on the same street into neighbours . . . . The third sector is the business of "social capital formation"--building up community linkages which let people work together effectively--that will allow the new economy to grow organically. (pp. 248-249)

Carson (1999) provides a critical analysis of a common means of holding community projects and programs to the scrutiny of outside evaluators. Outcomes evaluation applies a productivity model (which emerged from the manufacturing sector) to social change. This model appeals to those who try to quantify social change by counting service units such as numbers served, houses built, jobs sustained. The problem with quantifying indicators of achievement to justify resources is that "social programs neither control the quality of the people who participate or the environment in which the social intervention occurs" (p. 5). Carson refers to the problem of *creaming*,

the response of programs and projects forced to produce good statistics by accepting only participants who will succeed, often rejecting those who by their very need are at greater risk for failure.

Heaney's (1996) explanation that "the most effective power is exercised by control of knowledge" (p. 16) must be balanced with an understanding of how knowledge is created, legitimized, and shared. Cunningham (1993) challenges us as social change agents and as intellectuals to expose the way in which dominant culture has constructed knowledge as privilege. She says, "Critical pedagogy challenges the social reality as it is currently constructed" (p. 5). She defines critical pedagogy as

> the educational action which develops the ability of a group to critically reflect on their environment and to develop strategies to bring about democratic social change in that environment. Education is not about promoting the existing hegemony, education is about developing counter-hegemonic struggle. Education is not simply about attaining knowledge, education is about the politics of knowledge. Education is not about the preservation of status and elitism; education is about democratization of power relationships. (p. 5)

Popular education is a form of adult education that encourages the creation and legitimization of local knowledge, and is an important skill in any community development approach to community empowerment. Based on the importance of beginning with people's experience and the community's identification of issues (Arnold & Burke, 1983; Bolton, 1988), popular education facilitators participate as democratic collaborators, harvesting the knowledge within the community and supporting local people to create knowledge themselves, through new understandings of the social, historical, and political context of their situation.

Merriam and Brockett (1997) caution that the professionalism of adult education

> has been part of the same patterns of oppression, discrimination, and exclusion as have other aspects of society. . . .The professional field of adult education has

> developed without recognition of particular groups' contributions and without accounting for a large segment of practice: adult education for social action or social change. (p. 243)

Hegemony is the situation where exploitation, exclusion, and discrimination are normalized. Having an understanding of the phenomenon of hegemony and its relation to the structures of power, recognition and influence is essential for those who hope to effect social change.

Social entrepreneurs are those who invest themselves in society (Lord, 2000). Thalhuber (1999) points out that akin to business entrepreneurs who take initiatives and risks in the for-profit world, social entrepreneurs engage the same skills to benefit communities and society in general:

> There are many similarities between successful entrepreneurs in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. Both start with ideas and envision possibilities. Both are faced with the daunting challenges of creating demand, acquiring resources and operationalizing concepts. Both are action-oriented and focus on profitability. (p. 2)

Dees (1998) points out that a difference between the two is that social entrepreneurs use profit as a *means* rather than seeing profit as an *end*, and construct their organizations in order to return profit to the work of serving more people and achieving greater results.

Dees (1998) explains that "Social entrepreneurs look for the most effective methods of serving their social missions" (p. 1). Economist Joseph Schumpeter is most associated with the concept of entrepreneurism. Dees describes "Schumpeter's entrepreneurs as the change agents in the economy. By serving new markets or creating new ways of doing things, they move the economy forward" (p. 2). In contrast, he believes Drucker, an important contributor to contemporary theories of entrepreneurship, does not see entrepreneurs as agents of change, but rather as exploiters of "opportunities

that change (in technology, consumer preferences, social norms, etc.) creates. Entrepreneurs have a mind-set that sees the possibilities rather than the problems created by change" (p. 2).

Dees (1998) explains that social entrepreneurs are distinguished from business entrepreneurs in that the social mission is "explicit and central. This obviously affects how social entrepreneurs perceive and assess opportunities. Mission-related impact becomes the central criterion, not wealth creation. Wealth is just a means to an end for social entrepreneurs" (p. 3). Dees creates a definition for social entrepreneurism that places an emphasis on discipline and accountability, describing social entrepreneurs as change agents in the social sector:

> Social entrepreneurs are the reformers and revolutionaries described by Schumpeter, but with a social mission. They make fundamental changes in the way things are done in the social sector. Their visions are bold. They attack the underlying causes of problems, rather than simply treating symptoms. They often reduce needs rather than just meeting them. They seek to create systemic changes and sustainable improvements. Though they may act locally, their actions have the potential to stimulate global improvements in their chosen arenas, whether that is education, health care, economic development, the environment, the arts, or any other social sector field. (p. 4)

It is important to recognize that not all leaders in the non-profit sector have the unique skills of the social entrepreneur. Social entrepreneurs deserve support, recognition, and encouragement. Social entrepreneurs thrive in communities where an entrepreneurial social infrastructure exists (Flora, 1998 p. 491). However, one of the critical elements I found in the sociological research calls for a depersonalization of politics. For example, Flora claims "If community politics is personalized, community actors are reticent to take positions, because of the undue risk they believe it means for their reputations and their livelihood (p. 492)." This has challenged me to consider to what extent I work to

depersonalize issues and ideas within communities in which I practice. Flora's point has also reminded me that other community actors have the same capacity as I to analyze complex political and social dynamics from multiple perspectives and to change in response to changing conditions.

Multiple Perspectives on Agents and Agency

The term "agent of change" came to hold a new meaning that inspired me to research further. I began to listen more carefully to how others spoke about making change and began to pay attention to the concept of human agency, inherent in the term agent, that I viewed as an impetus or volition to promote change. It seemed essential that, in developing my capacity as an agent of change, I come to a deeper understanding of my own understanding and experience of agency.

A review of the way in which contemporary adult educators utilize the concept of agency provides a unifying theme for my exploration of both current adult education literature and my developing sense as an agent of change. For example, Tirrell (1990) relates how telling stories can develop adult educators' sophistication as moral agents:

> It is through the articulation of events, motives and characters that we become moral agents . . . . In telling stories one develops a sense of self, a sense of self in relation to others, and a capacity to justify one's decisions. . . .Telling stories may also increase our sophistication as agents. We may begin with rudimentary stories that show a basic grasp of the moral, and sometimes we may eventually develop the thickened judgement that enables one to take control of oneself, one's place in one's community and to have a directed impact on that community. (p. 125)

To explore contemporary use of the concept of *agency* in adult education literature I conducted a Boolean search in the proceedings of the most recent (year 2000) Adult Education Research Conference. At the conference, the concept of *agency* was applied in a number of ways. Agency is described as an undercurrent of motivation (Wildemeersch,

Jansen, Gieseke, Illeris, Weil, & Marninho, 2000) in which successful participants are said to "express feelings of agency--the belief in control over one's own life as an autonomous individual" (p. 593). In a discussion on the theory of structuration as it relates to teaching practice, Dirkx (2000) reports that "agency reflects our capacity to act and be acted upon by social forces" (p. 554). Lander (2000a) speaks of moral agency in critical autobiography:

> The narrative form of autobiography situates me as a critically reflective moral agent. In retelling the stories of my family and friends, moral agency intersects my public researcher self and my private selves as sister, daughter, niece, cousin, aunt, friend, and neighbour. Autobiography becomes critically reflexive by virtue of attending to multiple selves. (p. 226)

The role of agency in personal decision making is referenced through the exploration of biography in work, learning, and living (Stroobants & Wildemeersch, 2000) whereas the role of agency in social decision making is referenced in an exploration of the concept of civil capital within community sustainability and adult education (Sumner, 2000). To explicate that agency is cogent in both personal and community action, I juxtapose the following two quotations:

> Biographies can indeed be considered as personal answers to the current social situation, thereby bearing witness to *agency*. They show that individuals succeed in leading their life, making justifiable choices and handling new challenges in serendipitous relation to their social context and the given opportunity structures. (Stroobants & Wildemeersch, p. 443, my italics)

> Moving sustainability from the scientific/economic realm to the hermeneutic realm still allows a role for expert knowledge, but, more importantly, highlights and centralizes community negotiation, decision-making, knowledge creation and *agency*. In this way, both urban and rural communities can become learning communities--sites of social learning, resistance and change. (Sumner, 2000, p. 449, my italics)

These two conceptions of agency solidified my understanding of the concept of agency, which has become embedded in my identity as an agent of change who is working

to change the ongoing story of my own life as well as that of my community. In this way, my exploration of my experience of agency integrates my own sense of calling (vocation) to be an agent of change, within my site of practice (community).

The idea of agency within adult education literature is not limited, however, to a polarity between personal and community agency. My exploration of the concept led to my discovery, for example, of Martin's (2000) advocacy of the *profession* of adult education to act as an *agent*: "This requires that adult education as an agent of lifelong learning reoccupy the political and curricular space in which citizens make democracy work" (p. 255). In contrast, Mukherjee and Reed (2000) draw upon Habermasian critical theory to present agency as a critical element (accompanied by policy and structure) in examining the potential of capitalist firms to promote economic, political, and socio-cultural development.

Several authors link the concept of agency to the concept of capacity. For example, in an examination of two modes of subjective agency, Schweickart (1996) challenges Habermasian communicative action based on argumentative consensus, claiming that "research on the ethic of care underscores the mutual implication of cognitive, moral, and communicative *agency*. . . .I will argue that the feminine moral, cognitive, and communicative *capacities*" (pp. 309, 311, italics added). Apparently, she uses the terms agency and capacity interchangeably. Similarly, the two concepts of agency and capacity are linked in Reich's (2000) statement that "there are some broad types of technologies which deploy the agency and capacities of individuals and populations" (p. 377). This statement is doubly interesting in that it contrasts agency not only to a capacity of persons and *communities* (as I have pointed out earlier, drawing on the work

of McKnight & Kretzmann, 1990), but also to a capacity of individuals and entire *populations*. This linking of the terms capacity and agency provides a foundation for connecting my research into agents of change with my research on community development through a capacity-building model (see Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

My interest in the linked concepts of agency and capacity impelled me to reflect on my own common use of the terms. For me, agency has with it a sense of volition and movement outward, whereas capacity has a connotation of containing or being filled. In other words, my sense is that agency has an assertive connotation whereas capacity has a receptive connotation. Yet in my reading of Schweickart's (1996) essay "Speech is Silver, Silence is Gold," and noting her interchanging the concepts of agency and capacity, I am struck by the statement: "The overestimation of the assertive agency of speaking goes hand in hand with the underestimation of the receptive agency (the paradoxical 'negative capability') of listening" (p. 317). Her concept that silence and listening may be forms of active receptive agency, which is necessarily in relationship to the active assertive agency of voice, provides a distinct way of understanding the ebb and flow of giving and receiving. This matches my own paradoxical concept of giving the gift of receiving. Applying this to my identity as an agent of change, I recognize that cultivation of my own receptive agency, my capacity to be silent and to listen to others, nurturing the opportunity for others' voice to be heard, is a fundamental aspect of my own agency. Schweickart's essay challenged me to fire up my attitude to receptivity, to see the active impelling agency in listening--the activity of listening with a knowing ear. Although I had been trained, early in my professional life, in the skill of active listening, I had retained a sense

that voice is active, that listening is passive. Schweickart's concept of receptive agency challenged this thinking.

Receptive agency is closely linked with my understanding of an ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982), which is distinguished from the moral position of an ethic of rights. In describing the moral capacity of a woman to "include herself among the people whom she considers it moral not to hurt" (p. 165), Gilligan explains that the responsibility that gives rise to compassion and care is grounded in an integrity that enables women to direct care and compassion to the self as well as to others. Gilligan makes sense of Schweickart's distinction between receptive agency and assertive agency:

> A consciousness of the dynamics of human relationships then becomes central to moral understanding, joining the heart and the eye in an ethic that ties the activity of thought to the activity of care. Thus changes in women's rights change women's moral judgements, seasoning mercy with justice by enabling women to consider it moral to care not only for others but for themselves. (p. 149)

Another perspective on agency and agent was brought to my attention by Gore's (1992) examination of the politics of empowerment within discourses of critical and feminist pedagogy. She explains:

> To em-power denotes to give authority, to enable, to license. As such, it is a process that requires an agent--someone, or something, to em-power. Even the notion of "self-empowerment" presumes an agent--the self. When discourses of critical and feminist pedagogy espouse "self-empowerment" the distinction made is not around the agent of empowerment but around the subject of empowerment--that is, who is (to be) empowered. (p. 56)

In exploring my identity as an agent of change, I am challenged by Gore's presentation of "an overly optimistic view of agency" (p. 63). She describes empowerment discourses in which a sense of control, and even omnipotent control, is attributed to the feminist teacher whose potency as an agent of change can be overestimated:

> Having established that the agent of empowerment is usually the teacher, and that the subject (or object) of empowerment is Others, a distinction is immediately set up between "us" and "them". . . . As a given in any relation which aims at empowerment, the agent becomes problematic when the us/them relationship is conceived as requiring a focus only on "them." When the agent of empowerment assumes to be already empowered, and so apart from those who are to be empowered, arrogance can underlie claims of "what we can do for you." (p. 61)

In embracing an identity of agent of change, I certainly do not want to be misunderstood to be acting with a mission to change others. I am reminded of the danger of an unconscious and unrestrained hubris that could accompany the identity of change agent. Strategies that I gleaned from Gore's essay (1992, p. 69) to defend against such hubris include: to consciously name the sites of my practice; to constantly question my own thought and my own self; and to strive for greater reflexivity.

Spretnak (1993) extends the philosophical concept of agency to include the concept of subjectivity. Following the work of Thomas Berry, who includes subjectivity along with differentiation and communion as basic processes of the universe, she explains the enhanced sense of agency that is contained in Berry's notion of subjectivity:

> Berry's sense of subjectivity extends beyond the philosophical notion of "agency" (the capacity to be an active agent, that is, an initiating and directing subject of action) to include a being's unique interiority, depth, spontaneity, and creativity. . . .Subjectivity includes spontaneity, in a wriggling amoeba as well as in a human being, and sentience, in the self-regulating dynamics of a coral reef as well as in a mammal. Through subjectivity, manifestations of the universe present the creative unfolding and ultimate mystery of the cosmos. (p. 29)

Mahoney (1996) also enhances the concept of agent. Using constructivism and feminist theory he creates a strong link with the concept of the individual as a proactive agent of change:

> Rather than being a passive and reactive object of manipulations by external forces, the living system is viewed as a proactive *agent* that participates in its own life. Psychologically, this means that the person is both "the changer and the changed"

> (to borrow from feminist singer and songwriter Chris Williamson). She co-creates the personal realities to which she responds and thereby participates in a reciprocity--not only between her environment and her body, but also with different levels of her own activities. (p. 129)

Mahoney calls upon the theories of constructivism in explaining that all living systems function to establish a patterned order to their experience, which continues throughout the life span. Much of such ordering of experience happens on an unconscious level. He explains, "Constructivism portrays the individual as an active agent seeking order and meaning in social contexts where her uniquely personal experiences are challenged to continue developing" (p. 131).

In acknowledging my sense of constructive agency, I humourously and playfully share a quotation far removed from academic literature--one from Robbins' (2000) novel chronicling the adventures of a hedonistic CIA undercover agent:

> That's the way the mind works: the human brain is genetically disposed toward organization, yet if not tightly controlled, will link one imagerial fragment to another on the flimsiest of pretense and in the most freewheeling manner, as if it takes a kind of organic pleasure in creative association, without regard for logic or chronological sequence. (p. 7)

Returning to more serious academics, postmodern theorists tend to move away from perspectives that rely on a proactive, intentional agent. For example, Lander (personal communication, October 2000) pointed out that Butler (1999) is hostile to the concept of agency. Butler contends that agency is in language rather than in an intentional agent who controls her every word. She describes performativity as the gendered discourse embedded and repeated in our every discursive act. She locates agency in language rather than in an embodied agentic constructor. This contrasts with my sense of a *unitary* self (an embodied agentic constructor) that is fundamental to my concept of agent of change. Clark (1999) raises the postmodernist's view of a *non*unitary self; she claims that the idea

of a unitary self arises out of a humanist tradition. She explains how a unified theory of self presents a problem in a feminist understanding of subjectivity that challenges women's complicity in their own oppression.

> Postmodernists do not agree on how exactly the self should be conceptualized . . . . The self is characterized by fragmentation . . . .It is, by intention, a negation of the autonomy, agency, and rationality of the modernist unitary self. . . .The whole notion of agency is made problematic. The question of agency is a complex one. What a nonunitary model of the self offers, I believe, is a more complex understanding of the interplay of personal agency and the colonizing power of particular sociocultural forces. (pp. 42-45)

My identity as an agent of change stands against the fragmentation and groundlessness of this postmodern view, although I do not deny that I am deeply troubled by the colonizing power of sociocultural forces. I am challenged, as an agent of change, to create the ground that enables the conceptualization of unifying forces--not only to enable my own personal integrity but also to create social and community integrity. Focusing on agency, both personal and social agency, may be a path to such integrity. My stand for personal and social responsibility is consistent with Spretnak's (1993) response to a postmodern perspective that would deny any "physical reality outside of the language games in our minds" (p.17). She explains:

> We're trying to reorient human society, including ourselves, to appreciate and live out basic values--ecological wisdom, grassroots democracy, nonviolence, and so forth. To effect that kind of comprehensive transformation will surely require flexibility and creativity but in a much more grounded sense. (p. 16)

Personal Transformation as a Gift

Along with a strong grounding in Jungian psychology from my undergraduate work, I approached this research with a good grounding in paradigm theory especially Kuhn's (1970), which provided the basis of my perspective on broad social and cultural transformations. Fox (1988) elaborates on Kuhn's philosophy:

> A paradigm or worldview or vision, Kuhn believes, is a community issue, not a private one. Reeducation is greatly needed during the era of a paradigm shift. It will require different roles of different persons--indeed it may require an entirely different kind of person. . . .A paradigm shift requires generosity, courage, and sacrifice. (pp. 80-81)

I have been challenged to become *a different kind of person*, and have pursued my own self-directed learning and higher education as a path to this personal renewal. I imagine myself both unique and connected--the both-and of an integrated self connected to a transforming world--as described by Zohar (1997) in reference to the quantum self:

> The quantum self is both-and. It has both a unique, particle-like individual aspect and a shared, relational, wavelike group aspect. I am me, my genes, my history, and my unique experience, but I am also all those others with whom I live and work and share experience and to whom I relate. Neither my private, individual self nor my public, relational self is more important or more primary. Both are just facts, and to be interesting and to be used for my own and my community's maximum benefit, they must be integrated. (pp. 120-121).

This use of the science of quantum physics to metaphorically resolve the conflict between self and others strikes me as similar to Gladwell's (2000) use of the science of medical biology to compare cultural transformation to the spread of viruses. Gladwell proposes that ideas can spread like epidemics throughout the population. "Ideas and products and messages and behaviours spread just like viruses do" (p. 68). Borrowing metaphors from the natural sciences is useful when moving into a discussion of personal transformation and transformative learning.

Such metaphorical thinking resonates with Boyd and Myers's (1988) model of transformative learning. Boyd and Myer's views include an understanding of depth psychology and the journey of individuation described by Carl Jung. This model of transformative learning is contrasted to the prevalent theory of perspective transformation presented by Mezirow (1991, 1994). Taylor (1998) contrasts Boyd's and Mezirow's

approaches: "In contrast to Mezirow, who focuses on cognitive conflicts experienced by the individual's relationship with culture, Boyd is much more focused on conflicts within the individual's psyche and the resolution among these entities that leads to transformation" (p. 14).

Yet it would be a great mistake to define the depth psychologist's approach to transformation as one that is focused on the individual psyche to the exclusion of the group or to society. This would create a false dichotomy between the individual and the group, and ignore the powerful dynamic interplay (particle and wave) that allows transformation to occur not just in society or in the person, but in the dynamic interplay between the individual and society. Colman (1995) explains, "This individual/group resonance haunts us throughout our lives. For how can we be an individual without being part of our human group, and how can we be part of human kind without being an individual?" (p. 37). Individuals' connection to society is not only through the communicative domain but also through the archetypal images of the collective unconscious that arise through images, dreams, and synchronicity.

A psychotherapist, Lerner (1996), challenges me to maintain a connection between transformative learning and a transformative approach to giving. Lerner developed the idea of a politics of meaning, which emerged from his work in the mid 1970s. He discovered that people were more dissatisfied with a lack of meaning in their lives than with the lack of realization of material well being.

> We found middle-income people deeply unhappy because they hunger to serve the common good and to contribute something with their talents and energies, yet find that their actual work gives them little opportunity to do so. They often turn to demands for more money as a compensation for a life that otherwise feels frustrating and empty. (p. 5)

It is this deeper dissatisfaction and yearning for meaning that concerns me as an agent of change seeking to foster a giving society. I believe that my work as an agent of change is to foster others' recognition of their own spirit, and recognize the truth in Boyd and Myer's (1988) view "that abiding within the person is a truth, a knowledge, which is not separate from socio-economic, political and other cultural influences, but transcends them" (p. 282). This has led me to understand that my work has been to foster the conditions that enable my own and others' capacity to experience this transcendent purpose. As Lerner (1996) writes "meaning is neither a psychological nor a social construct; it is an ontological, metaphysical or spiritual one." (p. 29)

The yearning for spiritual meaning is addressed by Fenwick and Lange's (1998) critical challenge about human resource development initiatives that respond to human spiritual needs by offering workplace promises that have been traditionally fulfilled through personal search and worship. They claim such initiatives are dangerous in their ability to exploit workers and to embed contradictions. They explore alternative approaches to spirituality that are ethical, ecumenical, ecological, and inclusive. The potential for spiritual exploitation is further explored by Holmer-Nadesan (1999) as a "New Age corporate spiritualism" that appropriates new age vocabulary, and fosters a discourse that "strips individuals of gender, class and race," (p. 7). Furthermore, "although the discourse typically accentuates the individual, it conducts a sleight of hand that centers the corporation as agent, when it addresses the corporation as a spiritual entity that derives its life force from its entrepreneurial-like employees" (p. 7).

In discerning an understanding of spirituality in a pluralistic world, the concept of spirituality as a search or journey is common (Fenwick & Lange, p. 68):

> This journey is explained . . . as having two interwoven parts: an inner journey of healing, questioning, and exploring the self in relation to mysteries greater than the self, and an outward journey reaching towards others in interconnectedness and faith expressed in action . . . . The journey both inward and outward is simultaneous. (p. 68)

During a conference at Michigan State University I discovered the ideas of Dirkx (1997), which provided a connection between my undergraduate studies in Jungian psychology and my interest in transformative learning. He explains that:

> a mytho-poetic approach to learning provides a holistic perspective for understanding how learners connect with the content of their learning in deep and powerful ways. Understanding imagination as the source of all psychic life, including reason and rationality, has profound implications for facilitating a transformation of our ways of knowing, our selves, and our society. It suggests an education of the heart, a journey of the soul, and imagination as a way in which the truth of the journey reveals itself in our lives. (p. 35)

His ideas also reminded me that ideas are gifts and that these gifts come not only from others, but also from the depths of our own unconscious through images that rise to consciousness:

> From the mytho-poetic perspective, images and fantasies which flow from the work of the imagination are not under the willful control of the ego. They are not cognitive constructions which we work to create. Rather, they arrive as they so choose, as acts of grace. (p. 34)

Spretnak (1993) confirms that grace is evidence of divine gifts. In contrast to the Christian tradition of grace as a means to salvation, Spretnak understands grace as relating to the truth of being and interbeing:

> The term grace comes from the Christian tradition, but the unitive experiences it names are common to spiritual practice in all the wisdom traditions. . . .The Protestant theologian Paul Tillich defined grace as "the impact of the Spiritual Presence," an unexacted gift that is present within this life . . . .Grace is considered by nearly all theologians to be a gift that is given to humans by the divine, in whose image we are made. (pp. 24, 25)

She (1993) counters a deconstructive, postmodern orientation from four perspectives including (a) ecological/cosmological, (b) spiritual, (c) activist-political, and (d) feminist.

This eco-feminist perspective encourages a form of engagement that transcends the lines of compartmentalization that people are faced within their modern lives with an approach that invites a path through wisdom traditions to an experience of the sacred. Through grace people experience a cosmological context--a centre that holds. She (1993) explains there is an existential angst that accompanies a deconstructive postmodern perspective "that the meaning of every aspect of human existence is culturally created and determined in particular, localized circumstances about which no generalizations can be made. That is, all knowledge is situated within a culture" (p. 14). The conceptual liberation of postmodernism creates a readiness for social transformation that can be shaped by a spiritual journey that is contained within wisdom traditions. We are not lost; it is simply that "an event of deep transition creates its own rules . . . .We are ready as never before to appreciate the great wisdom traditions" (p. 32). My exploration has led me to dissociate with theories of transformative learning that limit transformation to the "process of making meaning from experience" (e.g., Taylor 1998, Mezirow 1991) and to embrace an understanding of transformative learning that acknowledges grace as a transforming power--a transforming gift.

> When we experience consciousness of the unity in which we are embedded, the sacred whole that is in and around us, we exist in a state of grace. . . . Experiencing grace involves the expansion of consciousness of self to all of one's surroundings as an unbroken whole, a consciousness of awe from which negative mindstates are absent, from which healing and groundedness result. (Spretnak, 1993, pp. 24, 26)

Gifts travel through and across time as images, as angels. Hillman (1996) calls us to consider the challenge of finding an innate sense of self through reflection

> The innate image of your fate holds all in the co-presence of today, yesterday, and tomorrow. Your person is not a process or a development. As Picasso said, "I don't develop; I am." For this is the nature of an

> image, any image. It's all there at once. You are born with a character; it is given; a gift, as the old stories say, from the guardians upon your birth. (pp. 6-7)

In my practice as an agent of change I am challenged to allow my life to be gifted by grace, to allow the space and opportunity for my life and my work to be graced by the divine. This breakthrough leads me to an exploration of the gift and especially how ideas of the gift and giving are considered in theory.

Locating the Gift

My exploration of ways of giving has taken me on two distinct journeys in adult education beyond my exploration of my work as an agent of change. I now turn to two key areas: the literature on the gift and the literature on homeplaces, which form landscapes for giving. I first present the gift as a general theoretical model that contrasts to the market and examine ways in which the gift has been considered in relation to capitalism. I then explore the idea of homeplaces as landscapes for giving.

The Gift as Economic Theory

I was introduced to the concept of gift economies in contrast to the dominant market paradigm through Still's (1997) Feminine Economies: Thinking Against the Market in the Enlightenment and the Late Twentieth Century. She points to the work of anthropologist Marcel Mauss, who was exercised by such questions as "What constitutes a gift"and "What is the best way of giving?" (p. 1). She engages an economic theory that presents the market and the gift as general theoretical models:

> The reality of market economies, is, of course, that not everyone works, and time not spent working for money is valued in very different ways. The logic of the gift in its most radical form may be antithetical to work. (p. 2)

The idea and use of the term feminine to describe gift economies is controversial, yet Still (1997, p. 181) explains that this riskiness has some relationship with the gift, and the nature of giving. She presents a gender analysis embedded in language, often using examples from classical francophone economic texts, where the masculine and feminine are more explicitly inscribed in language. Still's ideas challenge me to consider the opposition of scarcity and abundance as gendered throughout the language and history of economic thinking:

> It has been suggested that the scarcity (market) model is masculine . . . and the abundance (gift) model is feminine . . . .The principle of scarcity lies behind most economic thinking. . . [and] finds it very difficult to cope with a feminine economy of abundance--which is frequently relegated to utopian discourse. Contemporary theorisations of feminine economies . . . suggest that abundance can be achieved by expanding supply (of love, say), rather than controlling demand. The feminine economy . . .would exist in particular relations. (pp. 97-98)

Besides the controversy of feminine versus masculine, Still (1997) points out that the deep paradoxes in the idea of gifting have led thinkers to question whether a gift is at all possible, or only a corruption or subtle form of manipulation, or perhaps simply a form of economic power. In describing the complexity of this paradox, Still explains,

> There is no gift without bond, but no gift that does not have to untie itself from obligation. The gift must and must not be recognised by both benefactor and beneficiary, must and must not be forgotten. Any recognition, self-recognition or gratitude could become a motivation for the gift, or become a binding contract, demanding repayment, even interest. But, on the other hand, how can one desire to forget the good of the gift? (p. 13)

I am particularly challenged by the complexity of this paradox in my everyday life, especially as this is reflected in my experience of self-employment and commission sales as the economic structure for my income. Still comments on the complexity of gifts as forms of power, saying that "the gift which is not returned (or reversed) is power. . . . In order to confront power in our own societies it is necessary to make a return gift to the powers

that be" (p. 14). I am reminded that the gift may be exploited or abused as a form of co-opted power (see, Fenwick & Lange, 1998; Holmer-Nadesan, 1999).

Starrett (1994) aids in returning this struggle between the gift and the market back to adult education discourse. Starratt presents an ethical framework for educators comprising three frames: *justice, care, and critique*. In presenting the value of Starrett's work for education practitioners, Merriam and Caffarella (1999) suggest that practitioners tend to adopt a particular ethical style.

> Practitioners need to be aware of the primary frame within which they operate when confronting ethical dilemmas and understand and honor the opinion of those who come from different perspectives. This recognition that we view ethical dilemmas through different lenses does not necessarily make the decision-making process any easier, but it does allow for more open and respectful dialogue when confronting problems and issues of an ethical nature. (p. 378)

The idea that gifts have the capacity to challenge capitalism generally is presented by Dolfsma (1998) in Labor Relations in Changing Capitalist Economies. Dolfsma proposes that gifts act as a concrete phenomenon to confront the purity of capitalism:

> Gifts "contaminate" or "dilute" the pure, ideal type capitalism that many have in mind. The institutional forms that gift giving takes in society, as well as their relative importance, can be used as a means to distinguish capitalist economies. . . . The ambiguity of gifts introduces (some of the) impurities into an economy that it needs to be sustainable. Gifts are one "impure" element in society but gift giving can take different institutional forms. . . . Purifying the economy--placing an increasing weight on monetary remuneration and accumulation--turns labor relations increasingly into the instrumental relations of the perfect markets in neoclassical economics. Quid pro quo becomes the standard, crowding out gift giving and other ways in which "real" relations are established and maintained. (pp. 1-6)

The problem of charity as a gift is the problem of separating the giver from the receiver and the inherent power distortion that occurs when the giver is set apart from the giftee. This calls to question what comes first, the wealth or the gift? Putnam (1993)

challenges this traditional sense of charity in his study of regional and community history of the Italian peninsula. He contrasts northern to southern Italy:

> These communities did not become civic simply because they were rich. The historical record strongly suggests precisely the opposite: They have become rich because they were civic. The social capital embodied in norms and networks of civic engagement seems to be a precondition for economic development. (p. 37)

In a discussion of food politics, Heldke (1992) reconfigures notions of charity as enlightened self interest, and positions giving *within* relationships rather than *between* persons.

> a position that still rests on the substance-based belief that my interests are intrinsically separate from those of others, that my self is ontologically prior to and separate from its relations with others. . . . The relational view of self goes beyond the view that your interests can be shown to be the same as mine, to suggest that your interests and mine are connected to each other, grow out of each other. This is an ontological point, a consequence of defining human personhood as nonsubstantial and relational. (p. 312)

This perspective reminds me of the nonunitary conceptions of self described earlier (Zohar, 1997). Still (1997) amplifies this ambiguity in her discussion of the gift, saying that the gift has no object. The gift stands in its own essentialism, not between or betwixt the giver and receiver.

> The gift has no object--in both senses. It is disinterested and it is not the gift of a commodity. It is pre-essential, prior to any division into giver and receiver, and yet, while undoing division, it prizes (sexual) difference. There is *je* and *toi*--even as I become you, I must be I, in order to love you. It is becoming (and loving) which are the modes of relation between I and you--not being.(p. 177)

Still continues to clarify these fine points by shifting the focus from the giver to the gift. Her construction of gift theory responds to my struggle to integrate diverse concepts of giving in literature from feminism, community development, sociology and philosophy.

> The main focus of this book has been the gift, or the feminine, rather than direct political opposition to dominant economic structures. However, it should not be thought that reflection on the gift has the universalising pretension to take over, or

> substitute for, other forms of struggle, theoretical and practical. Rather that there should be the kind of oscillation . . . . between feminist 'work' and feminine 'dance'. (p. 182)

Exploring the complexity of these economic theorists has challenged my intellectual capacity. I tend to fall back into my identity as a giving practitioner rather than as a giving theorist. Yet I am very willing to sway in the oscillation, to waltz with practice and theory.

Homeplaces as the Location of Gifts and Giving

Any political analysis of adult education practice impels discourse on the relationship among place, power, and identity. Wilson (2000) asks, "How does socially-constructed, materially-defined *place* produce the professional identity and power of participants and professions? In my view 'place' matters" (p. 1). Discourse on place compels us to go beyond the existential question "Who am I?" and ask "Where am I?" (Bondi, 1993). The question of "Where am I?" challenges the adult educator/researcher to identify the values and philosophical perspectives embedded in structures that create the context for his or her practice.

How do agents of change exercise choice regarding their engagement in different communities of practices? What comprises right relationship between an agent of change and the institutions that support practice? This questioning reminds me of the literature on vocation as a calling and on the calling to be an agent of change. Are agents of change called to a location of practice as well as a vocation of practice? Is location of practice a gift from society or a choice to be made? Whether gift or choice, the decision-making process that leads to locating practice may be as important as how to practice or what to practice. Although I do not contend that either community or site of practices are necessary geographic, metaphors of territory, place, or landscape capture the sense in

which there are many varied and distinct spaces or horizons that respectfully provide opportunity for engaged practice by agents of change.

In a qualitative study that aimed to revitalize citizen action, Lange (2000) found that citizens require two related conditions in order to align their individual transformation with action for social transformation. These two related conditions are firstly, "space for mobilizing ethical autonomy, currently blocked by contemporary structures of work; and [secondly,] restoring organic relationships between learners and their time, space, bodies and human relations" (p. 230).

As the participants in Lange's (2000) study intuited, individuals need to make choices among the conflicting ethics of modernity and the demands of cultural scripts that rage within them. The study uncovered and analyzed two directions that participants identified as a spiritual search:

> One, as the search for broader moral and ethical horizons out of which to judge aspects of their lives and in which to end the warring between ethics and cultural scripts--an ontological coherence. Second, the search for balance is the search inward, toward the depths of being, and beyond, toward a larger cosmological horizon in which to locate their lives historically--a cosmological coherence expanding concepts of time and reality. (p. 233)

Naming this inward and outward spiritual search as both an ontological coherence and a cosmological coherence is consistent with the tradition of a dual focus on personal and social transformation that is embedded in the history of adult education literature. It may be that homeplace is not any actual place, but rather an image of the utopian quest for the space where such coherence is realized. I suggest that the horizon identified by the learners involved in this qualitative study is the utopian environment envisioned as homeplaces. Individuals search for the environment--the place that will support the best that they can be.

In her essay on public homeplaces, Belenky (1996) describes the kind of organizations created by women across the country to empower women, organizations like those that I have made as part of my own her-story. Such organizations are able to fulfil the most basic of social goals: "to nurture the development of voice among people silenced at the margins of society" (p. 407). The work of the organizations Belenky calls "homeplaces"' works well with a methodology of appreciative inquiry, as these are the places that "focus their energy on uplifting and empowering the oppressed; they would transform, not destroy, the oppressor" (p. 413). She explains,

> The metaphors, verbs, and adjectives the homeplace women actually use to describe themselves as public leaders almost always suggest activities that foster growth, development, and connection: "raising up," "nurturing," "growing," "caring," "uplifting," "lifting up," "drawing out," "drawing from," "bringing out," "connecting," "drawing in," "networking," and "bridging.". . . "I am a person who is always trying to bring this unruly and divided human family back together." and "I want everybody in the family to be all right. I want everybody to be included. I want this circle. I want a whole. But let me tell you, it's not easy." (pp. 411-412)

My experience in such organizations has been in facing the conflict between the utopian desire to create a more soulful, supportive, holistic environment and the practical constraints of building an egalitarian organization (see Bolton, 1994). Ironically, it is the paternalism of many of societies' institutions (including universities, churches, unions, corporations, and government) and the failure of their paternalistic utopian promise that feminists have criticized. The failure of the paternalistic (or maternalistic) institutions' promise cannot deter us from pursuing the hope of creating nurturing supportive communities that promote the best that citizens can be. The work is not only to create private homeplaces that nurture personal growth, but to transform society's institutions so that they might become new kinds of homeplaces. Belenky (1996) further reflects on the women's organizations that have responded to people whose voice has been silenced

through marginalization: "It is as if the society has focused its public life so intently on generating commerce and profits it has failed to develop a common language for articulating civic enterprises that generate human and community development"(p. 407).

This lack of nourishment for the basic social connections that enrich our lives--whether they be family, neighbours, or friends--whether through church, service clubs, political parties, or sports teams--is described by Putnam (2000) as a disintegrating social fabric. He contends that people are becoming increasingly disconnected from the social bonds that enrich their lives. Putnam translates this loss of social capital into economic terms as a means of shocking his reader to an awareness of the price to be paid for increasing isolation, and dissolving community and social structures:

> He reports that getting married is the equivalent of quadrupling your income, and attending a club meeting regularly is the equivalent of doubling your income. This loss of social capital is felt in critical ways: Communities with less social capital have lower educational performance and more teen pregnancy, child suicide, low birth weight, and prenatal mortality. Social capital is also a strong predictor of crime rates and other measures of neighborhood quality of life, as it is of our health: In quantitative terms, if you both smoke and belong to no groups, it's a close call as to which is the riskier behaviour. (jacket cover)

It is clear that communities vary greatly to the extent that social capital is embedded as part of social infrastructure. Sociologist Flora (1998) describes how communities that engage an entrepreneurial social infrastructure can influence the civic development of community wealth and prosperity and foster social capital formation. This perspective draws to our attention that there are communities of place that have distinguished themselves as being better than others. What are the qualities that make one community a better homeplace than another? Flora's research points to the discovery that such quality is not accidental, but rather consciously developed:

> A new community culture was consciously created. We were told that when people in the community decide how they would like to divide their estates, local financial advisors routinely ask them if they have considered giving part of their assets to one of the trusts or to the community foundation. The mechanisms for contributing to the community are there and the norms that support such giving are also in place. (p. 492)

The evidence that more effective, positive environments can be consciously created substantiates a sense of hope that the practice of social change is worth pursuing. I am suggesting that the concept of homeplace is more indicative of a quality of community experience than a type of community. Such communities would support both the pursuit of ontological coherence and cosmological coherence for individual members. I suggest that such communities are consciously created and developed by agents of change. I believe that this quality of community is possible throughout the full spectrum of types of organizational structure (whether corporate or grass-roots; profit or not-for-profit; local or urban; religious or secular). When we consciously choose to embed the values that support human well being into communities and organizations we are choosing to foster the development of safe and nurturing homeplaces. I further believe that both appreciative inquiry and reflexivity are particularly effective methods for fostering such quality of place.

Appreciative Inquiry and Reflexive Dialogue

Appreciative inquiry is a methodology that begins with an intentional empathy in order to foster trust and to build on what is "the best." Reflexivity corresponds with the sense that everyday experience and everyday moments are rich in content and potential for learning. In this section, I review appreciative inquiry and reflexive dialogue and reflect on the use of metaphor in a socio-rationalist approach. I conclude by reconciling a socio-rationalist and mytho-poetic paradigm.

> Socio-rationalists argue that the theories we hold, our beliefs about social systems, have a powerful effect on the nature of social "reality". Not only do we see what we believe, but the very act of believing it creates it. From this point of view, the creation of new and evocative theories of groups, organizations, and societies, are a powerful way to aid in their change and development. (Bushe, 1995, p. 1)

Appreciative inquiry, reflexive dialogue, and a mytho-poetic approach are the research methods I have chosen to implement my study and they necessarily influence the construction of my experience of reality.

Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative inquiry originated as a form of organizational development that can be used to change organizations and communities. It was developed at Case Western Reserve University in the late 1980s and originally focused on corporate and institutional change. An appreciative approach combines the energy of both heart and mind to tap into the passion and vision that inspires human creativity.

> Feeling is as important as understanding, because the methodology teaches us that the energy for change comes from both the heart and the head. Appreciative inquiry takes the energy of the "positive present" and uses it to build vision of a positive, desired future, one that is grounded in reality. It then helps people mobilize forces for change to turn that vision into reality. (Elliott, 1999, p. 2)

Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987), the originators of appreciative inquiry, draw on Gergen's (1982) socio-rationalist view to present a conceptual reconfiguration of action research. Based on a theoretical knowledge of consequence, appreciative inquiry is the basis for affecting change and stands against a problem-solving view of the world. Appreciative inquiry is a generative approach that inspires the researcher's capacity "to marvel, and in marveling to embrace, the miracle and mystery of social organization" (p. 2).

> Going beyond questions of epistemology, appreciative inquiry has as its basis a metaphysical concern: it posits that social existence as such is a miracle that can never be fully comprehended. More than a method or technique, the appreciative mode of inquiry is a way of living with, being with, and directly participating in the varieties of social organization. Serious consideration and reflection on the ultimate mystery of being engenders a reverence for life that draws the researcher to inquire beyond superficial appearances to deeper levels of the life-generating essentials and potentials of social existence. (pp. 2-3)

Appreciative inquiry calls for a research shift from a predictive capacity to a generative capacity. Such a generative approach supports vision, passion, and integrity. (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). Bushe (1995) explains that social and psychological reality is a product of the present moment and subject to continuous flux and change. He describes his own approach to appreciative inquiry as a method of change that consists of three parts: "discovering the best of. . .; understanding what creates the best of. . .; and amplifying the people and process who best exemplify the best of" (p.17). He places emphasis in his approach on "designing inquiry methods that amplify the values the system is seeking to actualize during all the phases of the inquiry process" (p. 17). Bushe supports four principles, articulated by Cooperrider and Srivastva (p. 160), that will generate new and better images through an appreciative approach. The first principle is that research begins with *appreciation* and the following three principles state that the research should be: *applicable*, *provocative*, and *collaborative*. Appreciative inquiry calls on the skill of the facilitator to shape generative images that embellish the images emerging from the group in creative and affirming ways. This includes the unique skills of a poetic ear, an eye for beauty, and a sense of what will inspire. Research that uses an appreciative approach articulates the unconscious yearning in the group, and permits the consultant to be a wordsmith "using moist, juicy poetic language" (Bushe, 1998a, p. 48). Appreciative inquiry challenges groups to consider the "heliotropic hypothesis" (Cooperrider, 1990),

"which is that social systems evolve toward the most positive images they hold of themselves" (Bushe 1998b, p. 3).

The use of metaphor in qualitative writing is particularly compatible with appreciative inquiry as a research methodology. Thinking through metaphor enables the researcher to be expansive and generative in his or her thinking. Metaphor is critical in bringing life to ideas, in creating the new ground in which ideas are fertizilized and gestate. "Etymologically, metaphor is to be pregnant with quest, to give birth to change" (Adams, 1995, p. 8). Eisner (1991) stands against criticism that metaphor weakens clarity in writing:

> What is ironic is that in the professional socialization of educational researchers, the use of metaphor is regarded as a sign of imprecision; yet, for making public the ineffable, nothing is more precise than the artistic use of language. Metaphoric precision is the central vehicle for revealing the qualitative aspects of life. (p. 227)

Metaphor generates the capacity to listen more carefully, to look more deeply. Elliott suggests, in relating the development of an appreciative inquiry protocol, that participants be invited to listen to what is not being said, for what is not told as well as what is told. Still (1997) also acknowledges an appreciation of the untold. With its emphasis on what is said or not said, appreciative inquiry is highly compatible with reflexive dialogue.

Reflexive Dialogical Practice

Cunliffe (1999) draws from critical and social constructionist perspectives to construct learning as reflective/reflexive conversations in which learners connect tacit knowing and explicit knowledge. From social constructionist suppositions she reframes learning "as an embodied, relational-responsive process in which we are 'struck'" (p. 3). This leads to new ways of being, talking and acting. She explains that, when people tell

their stories, they not only intellectualize the past, but create new ground of common meaning which connects them to "self, others and our social landscape" (p. 12).

> The process of being struck may be central to reflexive practice because it can be the impetus for capturing the active and emerging nature of learning. Goethe also envisions learning beginning in this way, with an "apercu" or impression that acts as an anticipatory event. . . . However, our apercu or moment in which we are struck offers a trigger for clearing the muddy water because it is where we may begin to connect our tacit and explicit knowing. (p. 9)

Neilsen's (1998) development of kitchen table inquiry, what she calls the Academy of the Kitchen Table, and her play with the word response-ability captures reflexive dialogical practice and critical autobiography.

> Kitchen table inquiry aims to collapse the distinctions that compartmentalize the way we have learned to view our work and our lives. . . .It aims to create a space in the academy to make our inquiring selves as researchers the subject of our own inquiry. . . . It is inquiry that aims to make visible in research what has not been made visible, and hence not valued: the material work in the parentheses of our lives, the stuff of daily living that make it all hang together or fall apart. (pp. 143-144)

Lander (2000b) exposes reflexivity as a means of connecting multiple learnings, and of making autobiography critical. "Indeed, both in the process of reassembling my best work and of thinking about it subsequently, I was struck by the resemblance of quality moments across teaching, research, and service work." (p.137)

I propose that reflexivity is the means of opening new ground between understandings; reflexivity is the creative process that allows diverse spheres of knowledge to connect, integrate, and align those elements which were formerly fragmented. I am caught up in the idea of this openness, this apercu or moment when individuals are struck--when the connection is made. The image of opening and openness draws me back to the work by Still (1997) who connects this idea of openness to gifts, giving and the feminine. "This openness escapes classical economy: it cannot be produced, thus it is not a

commodity . . . .An infinite exchange is set in motion by openness; which is to be distinguished from the closed (finite) system of classical economy" (pp. 176-177). This openness is a required attribute of researchers choosing this form of inquiry. Lander (2000a) refers back to Mills' The Sociological Imagination to remind researchers of the value of investigating their own lives as part of our intellectual work. This willingness to investigate one's own life requires a vulnerable openness, a willingness to expose one's personal quest:

> The researcher's autobiography and subjective reflexivity, the sociological imagination that Mills (1959) values, are rarely featured in accounts of organizational research, even feminist approaches. . . .This stands in contrast to feminist qualitative research in which autobiography performs authentic theorizing on reflexivity, the gendering of knowledge and the plurality of women's ways of knowing. (p. 142)

A socio-rationalist, constructivist approach could be considered contradictory to a mytho-poetic approach. A constructivist approach must support an individual's cognitive capacity to shape his or her own world. The mytho-poetic approach must see ideas and images arriving like messengers from the collective unconscious. Dirkx (1997) say "Images are 'angels' or message-bearers of the soul and, consequently, represent the depth of our experiences" (p. 35).

Appreciative inquiry holds power as an approach in that it is able to reconcile the seemingly contradictory approaches of constructivism and the mytho-poetic. Through the socio-constructivist paradigm I am lifted to an appreciative view, an empathy which fosters my best approach to influence my world. Through the mytho-poetic I receive and see the world in new and splendid ways. The two approaches do not stand in opposition to one another, but rather hold the capacity to represent the spiraling circle of my connection to my environment, receiving, through mytho-poetic grace, the images that are gifts from

my soul's depth and through constructivist agency re-gifting the images to the world through my ideas and my actions. Mytho-poetic grace connects me to "the best" of my soul's depth, to the gifts that grace my life. Through a generative approach I find my way to wrap these gifts in my own capacity--offering new hope, new images, and new visions to others. I grasp the potential that appreciative inquiry has to transcend the seeming contradictions of my own constructivist agency and my own mythic-poetic grace through a creative tension that is contained in the oscillating dance of the gift received and the gift given.

Mysteries Across Time

This chapter documents the ways in which the literature of adult education has contributed to my knowledge and challenged me to serve as an agent of change by fostering an empowered approach to giving. As I have sought to integrate the influences that have shaped my identity and sense of destiny as an agent of change, I have remembered another particularly unique thought that I had, years ago, which delights me today. This memory contributes to my own sense of mythology as an agent of change and incorporates a sense of sacredness for me as well as a sense of destiny and liberation. It is a simple thought and, as much as words can describe a thought it went something like this: "I'll go there . . . I will make changes in that place . . . I know . . . I will." It occurred in a particular place, at a particular time, in response to the inspiration of the novel The Lives of Girls and Women (Munro, 1972), read within days of my arrival in Ontario. I lounged in the living room, an upstairs bedroom, and the dining room of a solid red brick Ontario house as I read Alice Munro's novel about rural Ontario. It was October, 1974 in Kitchener, the book lent me from another resident in the house. I had not yet visited

Huron County nor had any personal experience of the place. I did not know that I would come to live only a few miles from the home that shaped Alice Munro's writing. Since then, a quarter of a century has passed. This memory reflects powerfully how one piece of literature can serve as a touchstone to the seeds of destiny foreshadowing my adult life and my life's work. Alice Munro was able to voice the experience of women in Huron County. An important element of my life's work has been to add my voice to those speaking from this place. How was it that another's words could engender a thought that would serve as a premonition of my future work, just as my own memory can now reflect on that work? This is a mystery to me of the transcendent and timeless nature of mind. I have fully embraced my identity as an agent of change. I have the luxury of reflecting on the influences that have shaped my work and my destiny in this place. I have come to know that being an agent of change is not only about changing the world but locating the community within and through which this vocation can be practiced. I have been challenged to explore deeply my own sense of constructive agency and the grace that empowers this capacity. I have come to celebrate the gift of knowing and the ways in which, through grace and through appreciation, I may come to know more deeply as my life unfolds. As Moore (1994) cautions, "The soul always reaches deeper than we expect" (p. 46). In the next chapter, I describe the appreciative approach that I undertook as an intentional change process to develop my capacity as an agent of change.

CHAPTER 3

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE

If you fail to offer the gift of your creative subjectivity to struggles against oppression, your spirituality is a self-serving delusion . . . .To know--deeply know - the nature of the sacred web of life is to live a life of cosmological integrity.
- Spretnak, 1993, p. 195

In this chapter I document my self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my own exemplary ways of giving. Implementing this form of action research was a focus that evolved out of a long her-story (history) of seizing different opportunities to give through an entrepreneurial approach to the everyday practice of living and giving grounded in my identity as an agent of change. My self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my own exemplars of giving was a shift of focus: looking inward, rather than outward, for a deeper understanding of my own practice of giving. This inward focus was prefaced by an apprehension of four distinct economic landscapes that I had experienced in the outer world. I begin this chapter by offering some autobiographical insights into the development of my initial premonition of a quaternity of giving represented by these four distinct economic landscapes. As a quaternity, these four distinct landscapes foreshadow the more comprehensive ways of giving model, which I present in chapter 4. I accessed my own personal written archives, stored on a personal computer over the 4-year period that I had self-directed my master's studies, to identify the artifacts for reflection that comprised the data for my study. The items I selected included letters, a story, a speech, a report, an article, and a press release. It was by diving deeply into a self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my own giving agency, which I explored through reflection on these exemplars, that I was able to enhance my own giving agency. I was attracted to the logic of Bushe's (1995) appreciative inquiry methodology which follows a process of

discovery, understanding, and amplification. I adapted this logical sequence, designed for an organizational development consultancy, to my own self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my own giving.

Following a preface that maps my initial intuition of the landscapes of giving quaternity, I describe my adaptation of Bushe's (1995) three-stage process of discovery, understanding, and amplification as a planned change technique. The majority of this chapter comprises a thick description of this process. I conclude the chapter by introducing a sense of oscillating frequency between this inward and outward focus that enables a full appreciation of the ways-of-giving and attributes-of-giving models, which I discuss in chapter 4.

Mapping My Journey

My interest in deepening and exploring my own capacity to give was inspired by cultural conflicts I experienced between my own financial planning practice (my profession) and my community development practice (my volunteerism). Knowing that creativity can be generated out of the tension of polarity, I willingly accumulated diverse learning experiences while inviting a shift in paradigm that would transform the conflict I experienced as I self-directed my own learning. My learning process was biased by an imagined outcome: a desire to transform my professional practice into a charitable giving consultancy, drawing upon my knowledge and familiarity of two diverse sectors--philanthropy and financial service. I recall one week in the fall of 1998 when I attended three professional development events. The first event was a seminar sponsored by a life insurance company in which charitable gift planning was promoted as critical estate planning expertise for professional financial planners. Next, I attended a workshop

sponsored by the Canadian Association of Gift Planners, which brought fundraisers employed by charitable organizations together with a smaller number of allied professionals (accountants, lawyers, and financial planners) to promote networking and knowledge of gift planning. Finally, I attended, the Ontario Hospice Associations annual meeting. These were just three of many different venues in which the same knowledge and information on charitable gift planning was spreading with a contagion similar to the spread of ideas described by Gladwell (2000) as the tipping point. I was struck by the way in which this knowledge was presented and received in these diverse communities of practice. I imagined myself an anthropologist exploring distinct cultures as I observed elements of the learning context such as gender balance, language, ethical assumptions, food and gifts, luxury of surroundings, and respect for the learner--which differs greatly in each context. I acknowledge that three distinct identities provided my entry into these different learning environments: financial planner, independent consultant, and volunteer board member. Humourously, I thought that, given the choice, I would prefer to be educated in the environment of financial planning, where more luxurious surroundings, respect, gifts, and gourmet food accompanied the learning experience. More realistically, I felt challenged to choose the venue from which my giving agency was best utilized. The question was not: "Where will I be?" but rather, "Where will I give?"

I found that constructing my approach to giving as a conflict between my professional practice and voluntary work led to a polarized struggle which could be represented as follows:

Figure 1: Polarized Struggle

It is not hard to imagine that my experience of this duality easily deteriorated into a tug-of-war for my own giving soul. When I commodified my own giving agency (my willingness, my knowledge, my skills, and my abilities) as a community resource, I soon experienced a world of competing forces, vying over possession and co-option of my giving agency. I was struck by a transformative image arising out of this duality. I realized that there were not two, but four, distinct homeplaces (economies) where I found the opportunity to give. I describe these homeplaces as landscapes. I use the word "home" primarily to denote my sense of comfort, ease, facility, and agency that I experience in these distinct economic contexts. I am not "at home" in one place and a "stranger" elsewhere. I am also being playful with the etymology of the word economy which derives from the Greek word *oikos* or home.

> The Greeks called the house *domos*. . . .Yet the Greek home was *oikos*, a word from which we get a whole range of concepts, such as economy. The business of building a fabric, of sheltering the home, as it were, was *oikodomein*: the words were run together to emphasize their separate meaning. (Rykwert, 1991, p. 52)

Being at home in each of these four economic landscapes, I could sense their similarities as giving places and I began to discover how they differed.. Like a traveller, I recognized that I spoke a different language, explored a different culture and experienced a different way of being in each of these distinct places. The names I created for the four landscapes emerged creatively as "p" words, a mnemonic for my aging mind: philanthropy, public service, professionalism, and profitability (see Figure 2). I recognized a mandalic quaternity that mapped these four landscapes in relation to one another. I considered these four landscapes as a quaternity, not just as any group of four, but rather as a collection that, when placed together, represented a greater whole. As a quaternity, the relationship of each element to the other three illuminates an understanding of each.

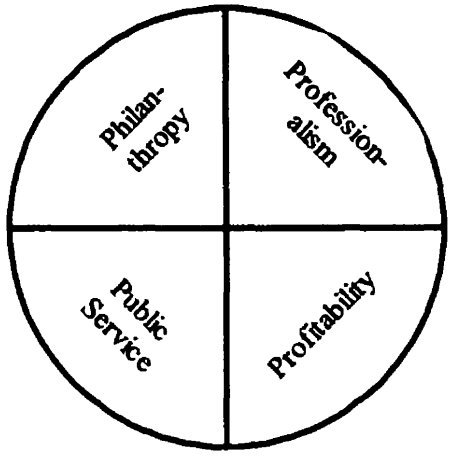

Figure 2: Landscapes of Giving

I began to wonder: "How do these different environments inform one another?" "If I can feel "at home" in each of these four economic landscapes, why should I not experience economic security in each?" I began a quest to harvest the learning that was richly accumulating as I mapped my experiences as complementary and reciprocal in corresponding landscapes. I determined that a self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my own practice of giving would deepen the knowledge I had been accumulating chaotically .

Adapting a process for appreciative inquiry, I implemented a three-phase process of *discovery, understanding* and *amplification* as a planned change technique (consistent with Bushe, 1998). My intent was to compile "best examples" of my own expression of *voice* as documented in my own writing and found within my own archives of practice as an agent of change. I embarked on an appreciative inquiry into my own exemplars of giving.

Discovery

It was a delightful exercise to explore my own computer archives to "discover" evidence of my own wealth and capacity to give. I uncovered great diversity in my giving. I used the landscapes of giving quaternity (philanthropy, profession, public service,

profitability) to guide my research--hoping to find evidence from each category. I looked for items that evidenced the best of my giving and that resonated with a potent giving agency. From this exploration of my archives, I chose eight items to represent a spectrum of giving, like a rainbow reflecting my own giving agency. I printed good color copies of each and placed each within a document cover. The items included letters, a story, a speech, a report, an article, and a press release. In choosing these exemplars, I followed the notion of exemplar that Lindlof (1995) presents: "Exemplars are not just 'examples' in which one choice is as good as any other . . . . Rather, they ask which specimens are most relevant to the phenomenon" (p. 268).

To bolster my confidence that I was justified in appreciating myself as a giving person I fortified this inward focus on my own giving agency by re-searching my archives for evidence that others recognized my gifts and my practice of giving as an agent of change. I found a mother's day card from my daughters saying: "You always help us to make complicated stuff easy to deal with and you are patient when we get frustrated or grumpy. . . .You are really good at helping without being too weird or controlling." I found an e-mail from an acquaintance following my participation in a rather volatile public meeting: "Valerie, you are so well spoken and possess obvious self control. . .and have the hard facts on what it is to deal with any and all levels of government." An independent consultant responded to my participation in a professional (Internet) discussion group. In a letter to an e-mail discussion group. He wrote, "Valerie's letter is amazingly understanding of the several motivations for action and reaction as well as for the ethical questions. Her calling should be that of a therapist. A truly great communication." These three comments, from three distinctly different positions of observation (intimate, acquaintance, and

stranger), enhanced my confidence that I was not alone in appreciating myself as an agent of change. I turned my focus inward again examining my exemplars of giving in terms of the four landscapes in the giving quaternity.

Landscape of Philanthropy

My two exemplars from the landscape of philanthropy demonstrate different aspects of selflessness that distinguish charity from the other three landscapes. The first exemplar is evidence of my work as treasurer of the board of directors of a hospice. I chose a letter that I had written thanking a donor for a contribution, as well as a template for a press release for a public event. In taking on the responsibility of board leadership of a community-based organization, I had moved into an experience of community ownership rather than personal ownership. Moving into the voice of the collective "we" of an organization is very comfortable for me; it is the landscape of giving in which I feel very much at home. I am empowered by the privilege and capacity to take on the voice and authority of a collective. I enjoy the opportunity of speaking on behalf of a group, an organization, or a constituency. This is demonstrated in this letter in which I wrote:

> On behalf of Hospice Volunteer Service I wish to thank you for your generous gift in support of our programs and services. Your donation will go directly to support "Hope for the Holidays" this month. . . .
>
> Recently, on CBC radio, I was inspired by the words of Jean Vanier, this year's Massey Lecturer. Vanier also reminded me of the compassionate intentions of Hospice and the importance of reaching out to those who are vulnerable and weak. I have enclosed a quote from this lecture, hoping that Vanier's words might inspire you as they inspired me.

My work with the hospice exemplifies how stepping out of my own personal identity and into the expansive identity of spokesperson for an organization is an exalting experience. As I let myself speak on behalf of many, I allow myself to become more. I

allow my voice to join with other wise voices, such as Jean Vanier's; I am no longer small, but connected to a strong power and a wise we and us.

The press release that I included in this exemplar demonstrates the way in which, as a board member, I act as one "passing through," leaving behind my work to support those whose stewardship will follow. It is representative of the many not-for-profit corporate policies and procedures that I have written and collaborated upon in my voluntary work. I have learned not only to fulfill my duties as a board member, but to do so in a way that is constructive and instructive to those who follow. My intention is to create new ground upon which others will continue the work.

I contend that it is a particularly challenging element of work in the voluntary sector to serve without taking ownership, and without confusing my identity with the organization I am identified with. I find the exaltation of being expanded into a larger sense of my own self through association with others to be seductive. I experience my social context as placing a high value on volunteer activity. I have often been motivated to give voluntarily for the esteem that it will confer upon me in the eyes of others. I have been intoxicated by the honour and recognition attributed to my leadership in voluntary organizations only to crash into a sober acceptance of my own individual limits. In a social context that highly regards volunteer activity, it is common to glorify others for their "doing" rather than their "being."

My second exemplar is an article for the church newsletter reporting on my husband's charitable work in Guatemala. I was the "ghost writer" of this article and it is the ghost quality of this item, portraying my own invisibility, that makes this an ideal of a particular kind of selflessness in charitable work. This item represents the invisibility

of those who support those who serve. I join here with many hidden, quiet, and unrecognized supporters, including anonymous donors, whose quiet (even covert) giving makes things happen.

Brian's opportunity to travel to Guatemala through the sponsorship of the Rotary Club was an extraordinary opportunity and a major act of giving from our entire family. I remember well the summer night he returned from an executive committee meeting with a potent and infectious excitement, sharing his desire and sense of call to seize this opportunity. I remember the option he gave me to veto his participation. I recall the consideration I gave to what my support might cost. I remember considering the different kind of cost that denying him this opportunity might incur. Perhaps I really did not have an option to interfere with his passion. Nevertheless, I felt included in the decision and Brian successfully recruited me to his cause. It was an important part of the process. Many times in the following year I would hearken back to the memory of our summer evening walk when I was included in the decision to embark on this generous commitment.

I discovered that, in the realm of giving, I would rather be the one in the spotlight. It was a humbling experience for me to be the one in the background--a backroom supporter--even though this extraordinary philanthropic undertaking meant that many of our other projects and intentions were diverted. There were many ways in which I supported Brian's major act of giving to this particular project and, more generally, the demands of being a Rotarian. From this support, I chose this minor act of writing the article for the church newsletter as my representation of selfless giving particularly because I did it under some duress. The timing of this gift might be characterized as the "last straw." I was getting tired of the project. It was a relatively simple task--I did not

need to conduct any interviews in writing the story. I had heard the stories, viewed the slide show, many times. There were other things I wanted to do on the sunny Saturday afternoon that I wrote the article. I thought that Brian and his companion Rotarian should write it, especially because their names were to be on the by-line. In fact, they spent an afternoon together drafting an article that was politely rejected by the newsletter editor. Building houses, installing plumbing, and repairing back-hoes were their talents, not journalism. This is my exemplar of the kind of charity that is demanded and drawn out of us, not out of duty, but out of commitment grounded in choice and love. It is charity that is done because someone has to do it and it is not going to get done otherwise. Instead of charity as enlightened self-interest, it is the co-responsible option (see Heldke, 1992). It is giving that is done without recognition or reward. I experience duress from this kind of giving. The selfless quality of this charity-ability can threaten my sense of self, my very existence. I become afraid that if I go on giving, I will be given away. I not only fear there will be no-thing left to give, but no-one left to give.

An important part of this exemplar is that, in writing Brian's story for the newsletter, it was his story, not my story, that was told. My story was a synchronicity that occurred when Brian was in Guatemala. I had seized his absence as an opportunity to begin writing my thesis. I had been productive particularly in relation to my thoughts in relation to the work of John Ralston Saul. Synchronistically, Brian's productivity building homes in the remote mountains of Guatemala was interrupted by unseasonal rains. The only book available (at the Christian Mission) to fill his vacant time was The Unconscious Civilization (Saul, 1995), the very book that was so engaging my research.

This exemplar is my recognition not only of the danger of self-less giving but an acknowledgment that so much of what is charitable comes from this place. I believe the world is a better place given our human capacity to survive this kind of selfless giving. As a feminist, I recognize how controversial this way of giving is and that embedded in our social structures and economies is the expectation that women will give in this way. This is a profound feminist issue. It is a critical challenge for the voluntary sector to recognize and acknowledge such hidden giving. There is danger when such secret giving becomes covert giving and represents unacknowledged and hidden power influences. I recognize that the weariness of my giving presented a certain risk. I see how easily unconscious resentment or weariness can introduce negativity into collaborative giving.

These two exemplars from the landscape of philanthropy contrast one another in the effect of the selfless act of giving. Both exemplars demonstrate a limitation to ego. In the first exemplar, stepping out of ego identity and into the collective identity expands and exalts the experience of self. In the second exemplar, the hidden, quiet and silent giving annihilates self and may lead to unconscious negativity or existential angst.

Landscape of Public Service

My next two exemplars come from the landscape of public service. The first exemplar is a letter I wrote to the editor of my local newspaper in response to another citizen's letter to the editor that complained of high taxes. I took this as an opportunity to make the distinction between taxation and charitable giving and to call on citizens to be more generous with their wealth.

> As promoters of a civil society we have a common challenge--to ensure that our economic system is structured in a way that rewards effort equally and fairly. Although taxation may seem a scourge designed to oppress and smother, its purpose is simple: to re-distribute wealth. Taxation forces us to give to others.

> Charity enables us to choose how we give. We usually associate the "voluntary sector" with the use of volunteer workers. In fact, the sector is a major employer, producing over 1.3 million jobs and has annual revenues of $90 billion. Although volunteerism is an essential element of the sector, the historical origin in the name voluntary comes from "voluntas" as in freewill giving. Voluntary giving through charitable organizations enables a sense of independence, integrity and empowerment that is frustrated by involuntary giving (taxation).
>
> I was inspired listening to Jean Vanier on the CBC recently delivering this years' Massey Lectures. When asked "Where is your hope?" Vanier replied "My hope is in you heart". As we move through the darkening days of November on our journey from Remembrance Day to the Gift Giving Season, we undoubtedly face despair and anger as we endeavour to change our own hearts and hold true to our visions of a better future. My hope is in the change of heart that will come as Canadians learn how to give freely.

This letter demonstrates the best of my ability to challenge, inform, and inspire others to civility through my writing. As I appreciate the best of myself in this letter, I acknowledge and celebrate my own idealism. As long as I can remember I have been accused of being naive and/or idealistic. I now celebrate that, in my middle adulthood, I am as idealistic, visionary, and hopeful as I was as a teenager. I also appreciate that my idealism is supported by both knowledge and wisdom. This exemplar shows my civil and political leadership capacity, especially in my willingness to address a broad and general constituency.

I recall the circumstances that led me to write this letter. I was first captured by a sense of energetic passion, experienced as anger, that was ignited by reading a letter to the editor in my town's local newspaper. Later that same day, I unexpectedly had some free time when I was excluded from a meeting that I had planned to attend. Rather than stewing over my experience of exclusion, I redirected my energy to the thoughts arising in response to the letter. The energy I was able to capture from these two negatively experienced emotional circumstances provided a rough draft of the letter. With this

momentum in place, I needed to draw upon my own personal reserve of discipline and courage to follow through in editing the letter and delivering it to the newspaper in time for the following week's paper. This act of giving did not take place as one act of giving. In fact, it was a process that was ignited with anger, was fueled by exclusion, was tended with discipline, and spread with courage.

My second exemplar from the landscape of public service focuses on a much smaller constituency. It is the text of a speech delivered to members of Women Today, a feminist organization. The gathering was called in response to a challenge by Status of Women Canada for Women in History month with the theme "Women: Having an Impact." In the speech I toy with a mythical place called Grantarctica--the cold, isolated place where non-profits without funding dwell--and the idea of scarcity. Scare City is the capital of Grantarctica. I explored the way that poverty, as an attitude, can be a debilitating place. I challenged the organization to abandon the scarcity mind-set, saying "If we decided we were willing and able to be accountable for organizational affluence how would we go about acquiring such wealth and what would we do with it?" In this sense, economic status is a *place*, a very influential place that warps how we view the world." Later in the speech, I tie this change of attitude with the idea of struggle.

> We stunt our understanding of history and society if we fail to observe the extent to which our civilization has been built through conflict and struggle. We cannot simply create a history that records the victors of this struggle. The voices of the poor, the oppressed must be included to understand where we have been and how far we have yet to go. Sometimes we assume that our power and responsibility as citizens to uphold democracy is limited to the voting booth. We hope that somehow we can pass off to elected officials the responsibility for our freedom, for our communities and for our quality of life. The trust is that to *have an impact*, we have to jump in, be willing to take risks, to fail and account for our failures. We have to work together and then reflect on our work together. I believe that the exercise of freedom is hard work.

As I reflect on this particular speech, and why I have chosen it to appreciate my knowledge and skill in the landscape of public service, I focus on the fact that this was a response to a challenge by the federal government's Status of Women, Women in History Month. I believe that this speech demonstrates a particular way of giving; I was able to integrate an opportunity, created by Women Today as a charitable organization, with my knowledge and expertise of the for-profit sector in response to a call by my government to civic voice. This was also informed by my research as an adult educator--I recognize how I draw upon hooks' (1994) idea of conflict and struggle in shaping the speech. Although I have chosen this as an exemplar of public service, in the best of democracies people are supported by governments that challenge citizens to be their best, providing opportunities and support to bring the best knowledge and skill from each person's individual diversity (including diverse experiences, diverse knowledge, and diverse communities of belonging) to one's civic duty.

Landscape of Professional Practice

Under the category of profession, I examined a report that I produced as an independent consultant summarizing a supervised access service that I implemented in my role as an independent adult education consultant. Supervised access describes a condition placed upon an adult's (usually a parent's) visitation with a child. A supervisor is required to ensure the child's safety while an access visit takes place. I chose this report as an exemplar of my professional capacity for several reasons. The report establishes my professional agency as an adult educator in a unique and unusual capacity, distinguishing myself from other professionals, including psychologists, lawyers, social workers, and childcare advocates involved in providing services to the clients of this case. I

distinguished myself from a supervised access professional who may have been trained specifically for this purpose. In a milieu of social service downsizing, this family was desperate for a service to respond to their severe family crisis. The court had ordered supervised access when no such social service existed. In my entrepreneurial response to the situation I was able to obtain ethical guidelines, procedures, and protocols from the Internet site of a professional association located in New Zealand! When I created the service contract, I structured an equal financial obligation of both parents to my fee, which created a rigidity in which I would not be biased by the source of my remuneration by either party in the conflict. This case demonstrates a particular rigidity and non-negotiability of boundaries that characterized this entrepreneurial response to an identified need. I discovered that the capitalist purity of the quid pro quo element of the fee-for-service relationship carried the burden of providing the clear and distinct boundaries to the service, which were lacking through the absence of an institutionalized structure (including policies, procedures, and protocols that such an institution could provide). As an independent contractor I learned the importance of securing a service-fee retainer prior to conducting work, not only to protect my own economic interest, but to define and secure the boundaries of the relationship. As I read through the case report I am reminded of the extraordinary emotional intensity, including fear, hostility, antagonism, and enmity between the parents and the uncomfortable position of being placed between these two individuals with a responsibility to them both equally. I believe this case illustrates the best of my capacity to mediate intensely emotional situations with very clear professional and ethical boundaries. I see that the rigid boundary of my contractual fee-for-service

relationship served the needs of this situation and that my gift was to construct a service that was delivered within the boundaries of these constraints.

My second exemplar from the landscape of professional practice is a letter I wrote, as a Level II life insurance professional, to the Commissioner of Insurance in response to the establishment and design of the Life Agents Council of Ontario. I received no fee and no perceivable economic benefit from participating in this professional duty. In many ways, this letter could also represent the best of my participation in the landscape of public service, because the letter addresses the passing of the regulatory authority of life agents from the public service to a self-regulating professional organization. I believe that the best of my capacity to speak knowledgeably in these two landscapes on inter-related complex issues such as training, organizational structure, and ethical issues of fiscal structure is demonstrated in this extract from my letter:

> I am concerned that the perspective of persons being recruited into the profession, being trained during their Level I period, and those failing to be successful in the industry, will not be represented by the proposed structure of this governance body. This lack of representation by recruits into the industry could be exacerbated if the Life Agents Council of Ontario is significantly subsidized by profit generated through examination fees. My observation is that thousands of people seek licensing as life insurance agents without going on to succeed or proceed to professional status. Does this not present an ethical dilemma to the profession?

I appreciate the tact of my statement and am delighted by my ability to make an important ethical point unemotionally. I am able to sustain a respectful tone by using formal and even bureaucratic language. In conversation with a peer I may have said, "Typical! The provincial government along with the wealthiest of financial institutions, the life insurance companies, would seek an opportunity to not only off-load their regulatory duty and training responsibilities but do so by passing the full cost of the responsibilities onto the backs of the poorest, the most remote beneficiaries of the industry: those

vulnerable, poverty-stricken, untrained new recruits inappropriately solicited into the industry (80% of whom will not last a year in the business). Let the most vulnerable, the voiceless, the untrained pay!" I restrained myself and did not express my perspective as an attack on the government or the industry's corporate elite. I trust that my tact enabled me to be heard. This exemplar reminds me of the numerous times that I have similarly seized the opportunity to translate an emotionally laden response to injustice, not only from my own experience but also as an advocate for others. I am able to hear others' emotionally laden language in response to social, political and environmental injustice and translate individual and collective concerns into the formal and bureaucratic language that carries political efficacy. As an adult educator, I choose this exemplar of a way of giving that relies on my duty to confront those instances in which examination fees or training profits can be used by those with political and economic power to unconscionably exploit those with no political voice and little economic influence.

These two exemplars contrast one another in that the first was clearly defined as a fee-for-service, quid pro quo, professional service. My gift was my willingness to serve those in need of service and to create a boundary of professionalism distinct from the legal, medical, and social work community, who had exacerbated the conflict. The second exemplar demonstrated the pure gift of insight and advocacy as I sought to bring a higher degree of accountability to the industry associated with my financial service profession.

As I consider the juxtaposition of these two exemplars from my professional practice I am struck by the way they contrast my participation in what I describe as pure capitalism (after Dolfsma, 1998) in the first exemplar and the gift that confronts capitalism in the second exemplar. This dexterity between my capacity to make an entrepreneurial,

market-based response (in my first exemplar) with my ability to confront exploitive capitalist practice with the pure gift of my own independent voice (in my second exemplar) represents the very best of my own economic freedom. I am struck that this is how I define and defend my own economic freedom. I value the freedom not only to speak and to act from a variety of professional discourses but to choose from a variety of economic structures that will, in various professional circumstances, support my best work. I guard my freedom to work with economic constructs as forces that influences factors beyond issues of my own compensation. I treasure this economic freedom and acknowledge that it is distinct, not exclusive of the economic freedom associated with accumulated wealth. I recognize that I often place my own compensation as secondary to other fiscal concerns. For example, in the supervised access case, the need to construct equality between the parents placed a particular burden upon the fee structure that was contrary to the highest fee for my professional services. I recognize the paradox of giving: this capacity to mix the gift into the marketing of my professional practice not only exalts but also marginalizes my practice.

Landscape of Profit

I define profit as the surplus and rewards accrued from ownership. If I effectively steward my assets and resources, they will grow. In my learning journey to become a financial planner I have been immersed in the language, concepts, discourse, and ideas of the financial service sector. Concepts from investing such as value investing, efficient frontier, risk, margin, options--the list is endless--have flooded my language and provided new ways for me to think about growth and development. Even the term appreciation is economic language. I contend that this language provides more than a metaphorical way

of understanding ownership and profit, but rather *is* the language of ownership and profit. This language has been a gift from the financial service sector to my understanding of prosperity in the broadest sense. I contend that this language holds integrity far beyond the realm of capital investments. For example, as adult educators we might consider how individuals invest in themselves through participation in adult education. The critical issue in profitability is ownership. In the case of education, the question arises regarding ownership of knowledge. A profit can only be taken if ownership of the asset is maintained.

From the language of profit I build upon the very popular philosophy of investing, championed by Warren Buffet (cited in Hagstrom, 1997), called value investing. Value investing employs a buy-and-hold strategy, which identifies undervalued stock and invests over the long term based on inherent value. This idea is a fitting introduction for my first exemplar for the landscape of profit, a story in which I reflect and retrieve some of my earliest childhood memories, discovering and celebrating the qualities of ingenuity, independence, focus, determination, and strength that had been cultivated in my childhood. The investment of love and care I received as a child bound me to my parents, producing valuable dividends in my adult life. I treasure, nurture, and continue to hold these assets and reap immense profit from them. I call attention to the notion of possession implied in the way I describe relationships with people in possessive (ownership) terms. The phrases "my husband," my daughters," "my parents," "my friends," "my clients," all imply a sense of ownership to which I am particularly attentive. I do not believe that I own these people. Rather, I invest in my relationships with people, and declare an ownership stake in the quality of those relationships. It is the quality of relationship, rather than the

person, that I own, invest, steward and through which I reap dividends. This exemplar is a story in which I describe my relationship with my own re-discovered inner child. I wrote a story about my first visit to Disneyland. Memories of the early childhood experience were triggered by a Mickey Mouse parade that came to my town in the summer of 1999. Forty years earlier, when I was age 6, I had been lost for over an hour on Tom Sawyer's Island, and I share here part of that story.

> I arrived at Disneyland in the company of four adults and three older children, including my sister, Gail. I remember instructions from my father as we arrived at the Disney gates. Stick together so we won't get lost. If you do get lost, don't talk to strangers--look for a policeman and ask for help. Tom Sawyer's Treasure Island was a destination within the Disneyland compound. We were ferried from the Disney mainland to the special world of Treasure Island. With instructions from our parents to meet at the ferry dock in precisely an hour, we four children were set free to explore the island. I remember the four children deciding as a group to enter the haunted cave. We followed a line-up of tourists through the dark and damp cave. Ghosts jumped out at us. . . .Eery skeletons fell down from the ceiling. It was terrifying. Somehow I called upon inner strength to make it through the cave to the daylight. Yet when I emerged my sister and companions were nowhere to be found. I was lost.
>
> I looked for a policeman but there were only strangers around. My intuition told me to retrace my steps. As fearsome as it seemed, I would have to go back into the cave from the exit and make it through to the entrance where I last saw my sister. My only hope was to find my sister or to make it back to the ferry dock within the hour. In my child's mind, I assumed that they would leave, carrying on the vacation and returning to Canada without me. It did not occur to me that they would also be looking for me! I felt fully responsible for finding my way back to my family. How would I ever find my way back to my home in Canada without them?
>
> I remember the cunning and stealth it took for me to gain entry into the haunted caves from the exit, traveling backwards through the exhibit to seek the entrance. Everyone kept telling me I was going the wrong way. I ignored their advice. After all, they were strangers and dangerous and did not understand that I had a strategy for finding my way home. Something amazing happened as I snuck backwards through the cave. I saw all the mechanisms driving the frightening exhibits. The ghost was just a plywood cutout on a spring mechanism. The skeleton was just glass beads illuminated with a light bulb. I felt so empowered and knowledgeable seeing the construction behind the guise of terror. My memory is full of feelings of courage, of stealth and strategy, resistence to advice, and critical insight as I snuck backwards through the haunted cave.

In some ways, that hour alone on Tom Sawyer's island was when I first really met myself. It is the strongest early childhood memory I have of my own inner thoughts and feelings. In some ways, the cunning, strength, and independence of my 6-year-old self informs me again of who I am and who I have always been. As an exemplar of profit, coupled with the philosophy of value investing, I celebrate this knowledge of myself: my independence, cunning, and strength are qualities of my character that I continue to hold dear. In fact, I have often been challenged in my adult life to continue to hold these qualities, and not to "sell out." Certainly, my independent nature and willingness to resist advice have made my life more challenging and more difficult than perhaps it has needed to be. Yes, there is risk in holding onto these assets. I may suffer losses in the short term. Nevertheless, knowing myself and holding true to my uniqueness and underlying character delivers great profits and great rewards. Perhaps the way in which these qualities have made my life more difficult follows in the next account.

My second exemplar, from the landscape of profit, documents a significantly more intense, difficult, and profound learning experience that arose out of the debt associated with a failed investment. The exemplar is composed of two items: my personal story of the circumstances that led to the failed investment and a letter to the Chairman of a Canadian Bank and outstanding CEO of the year, challenging him to his leadership responsibility and potential. Written in the spring of 1996, these documents emerged from a mammoth file box of legal documents, correspondences, financial statements, and credit-counseling sessions that only begin to reflect the psychic enormity of this experience in my life. It strikes me that perhaps some ethereal psychic velocity was the actual profit I gleaned from

this investment, in contrast to the financial profit that was its intention and its failure. The story documents a cogent example of my consumer knowledge of investments in 1990. Contrasted with my significantly high esteem as a person who knew about money and handled it well, my story exposes an embarrassing naivete and ignorance of the very basics of investing. I have often challenged myself to imagine, with my current knowledge of products and planning, how I might counsel my ignorant/arrogant younger self. Perhaps today I would not have the patience or willingness to take the "then me" on as a client. "Go read a book," I might well advise. The gift of my story is the insight into an intelligent woman's lack of knowledge, and the fiduciary responsibility we have as professionals to know and understand the limits of our clients' knowledge and risk tolerance. This story serves as a touchstone to a way of thinking that did not understand leveraged investing, misunderstood spousal RSPs, and did not comprehend varying degrees of investment risk. I gifted this insight to the bank and, I believe, it provided insight into consumers that, if used, was worth thousands of dollars otherwise expended on research through focus groups. However, the investment of time and emotional vulnerability that is represented by my story was not intended as an investment solely in the bank. Rather, I demonstrate that an intense investment in a severely conflicted relationship (between myself as a consumer and the bank as a service provider) has the potential for entering the archetypal realm and a mythic potency that is transpersonal.

In searching for the best from this exemplar, I believe that I have demonstrated an ability to challenge powerful leaders, not to weaken them or destroy their power, but to deepen and strengthen their ability to fulfil their call to purpose (or as Hillman, 1996 might say, "their soul's code"). To the Chairman of the Bank I wrote, in part:

What I do demand of the Bank is the same that I demand of myself:

* to acknowledge weakness and vulnerability
* to reflect on experience and learn from mistakes
* to take responsibility for behaviour and actions
* to deal with others honestly and justly

To regain the trust of the Canadian consumer, I do not think you need yet another marketing scheme to focus on your accomplishments in being big, strong and successful. We know you are big, strong and profitable--and we are afraid. It is difficult for me to honour your success/profitability when my home will be sold to pay an "unjust" debt feeding profits that make your bank the 'hot stock' for analysts' approval.

My heart is broken.

To campaign for acceptance that the banks' powerful position is "good" medicine for consumers and the Canadian economy will take more than clever image making. I think you (the bank) must acknowledge the situations where, through lack of perfection, you have betrayed those that have given you their trust. James Hillman, the psychologist, teaches that trust, by definition, must lead to betrayal and that betrayal is healed only through forgiveness. He teaches that forgiveness is only possible when the betrayer acknowledges the commission of betrayal. I challenge you to read my story and to look for other stories where the myths you have described appear to be true. Bring leadership and governance, aligned with your colleagues at the Canadian Banking Association and senior politicians (also the caretakers of the Canadian economy) to these places of leadership. Create ethical governance. I can't see, how else, you can hope that your bigness, strength and success (profitability) can be "good".

What is not conveyed in words on paper is the disguise in which I sent the letter to the chairman. Mischievously, I imagined that my letter would more likely be received by the Bank Chairman if it was disguised as a love letter. I crafted a feminine pastel envelope, scented the package with perfume, and hand scripted the entire letter and story. I imbued the entire package with the romantic and alluring attention/intention that I would gift to a secret and intimate lover. I researched the exact address of the chairman's executive office. I waited for the right transformative point in time--the Easter weekend--to courier

the package. Through my action, I intentionally transformed my most severe economic problem into an intimate gift.

This creative and courageous action exemplifies my capacity to dive deeply into the most painful and troubling life experience with courage, trusting the transformative power of the feminine and the gift. My courage in working the story through to the point of sending it to the Chairman of the Bank resulted in a resolution of my debt to the Bank. I did not receive a personal reply from the Chairman. However, the legal action that the bank was posed to take against me never materialized. I imagine that I took my real gift (my knowledge, insight, and forgiveness), packaged it as my most alluring feminine wrapping, and presented this to a public and mythic leading Canadian executive, who represented not only my oppressor but more generally the Canadian "market" economy. I acknowledge that I projected these archetypal qualities upon the person of the Bank Chairman and the corporation of the bank. I trusted they would have the strength to carry the projection. In an esoteric sense, I believe I connected my own personal economic drama to the larger unfolding story of the Canadian economy. Through my action, I became an "act-or" in a larger drama. The proposed merger of two Canadian banks was scuttled by the federal government, a contagion of investment information and consumer education spread through the general population transforming the public knowledge of investing. Whether or not the Chairman or the Bank was actually challenged or influenced by my letter remains unknown. Was I able to transform my personal problem into a force for national social political action? That is the mythic proportion I personally ascribe to this exemplar. Personally, I experienced healing and survived economic oppression

through my gift. It is the transpersonal, including the political and social impact of the gift that remains unmeasured and unknown.

Discovered Landscapes

A surprising finding during this initial phase of my self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into the process of giving was to realize that, standing in relation to one another, these acts of giving were not easily assigned to particular landscapes or ways of giving. I discovered that often my gift-giving crossed sectors; my gifting celebrated journeys between landscapes, between familiar economic homeplaces. As I have related, the experience of dutiful volunteerism borders on the landscape of public service. In this example I discovered that duty is accountable to a commitment. In some cases, duty is to a personal or social commitment. In other cases, duty is to professional practice or to a contractual relationship. Civic duty is accountable to citizenship and democracy. It is in analyzing the small and subtle distinctions between these various landscapes that I discovered deep insights into my practice of giving. I also found that many of the painful conflicts that I had experienced in my experience of giving could be re-framed (i.e., the meaning of the experience in my life could be transformed) by re-discovering the experience in the context of a different landscape. For example, giving that I had undertaken as unsuccessful marketing endeavours could be easily reframed as acts of charity. Yet, without the charitable intent, was it truly charity? My discoveries led to more questions than answers. These insights lead into the next phase of my appreciative inquiry, the phase of understanding.

Understanding

I pursued my self-reflexive appreciative inquiry by moving beyond this phase of discovery and entered into a phase of understanding. I found new understanding through

two dialogues: one in written dialogue with my thesis advisor and the second through self-reflexive questioning.

It was in an effort to communicate my ideas with Dorothy Lander, my thesis advisor, that I explored her web page and correspondence to find points of connections with my ideas on a quaternity of giving. I appreciated the presentation of her services in four distinct sectors as well as noted a description of a quaternity of skills she described as a personal shield. I used these points of connection to begin a dialogue. As I wrote, I was "struck" by the image of a kaleidoscope, and the beauty that is created through the structured mirrored reflections between quaternities. It was in my efforts to be understood by another that I created new ground of understanding. I created new clarity in my communication as well as a new clarity in my own understanding. It was from this image of a kaleidoscope that I realized my learning in each of the four landscapes was heightened through reflection (as in mirrored reflection) from learning in a corresponding landscape. For example, when I would have a key insight in my professional practice, I would contemplate how this phenomenon manifested in my voluntary work, or my civic duty. I found that the reflexive dialogue of writing to a knowing "other" drew out of me a new depth of insight and understanding that surprised me. I was shocked by the power of her appreciative responses to my thoughts and ideas.

I then pursued understanding through self-reflexive questioning. I brainstormed my own list of questions, which included the following: (a) What life-giving images are contained in each instance of giving? (b) What miracle (i.e., an unplanned, surprising, fortuitous, or serendipitous occurrence) was experienced in this act of giving? (c) What change did I imagine my gift would make? (d) What circumstances allowed this gift to

take place? (e) What about this gift demonstrates "the best" of my giving? (f) How might I amplify this in future giving? (g) What attributes are evidenced in each of these gifts?

As familiarity with the documents in my gift portfolio grew, I began to create new ground of understanding regarding my own gifting agency. I began to analyze and interpret small acts of giving from my own practice and from my observations of others' practice.

Rather than simply appreciating my giving, my understanding of giving entails examining, interpreting, and explaining acts of giving for content and meaning. I uncovered distinctive and qualitative differences in my giving agency. Using a highlighter on a photocopied set of my eight exemplars I searched out the words that described my own attributes of my giving. This analysis of my exemplars led to the construction of a second quaternity: the attributes-of-giving. These attributes were unearthed in my self-reflexive dialogue: in reflexive response to my own questions. The attributes are categorized in Figure 3 into four encompassing attributes: wisdom; courage; integrity; and compassion. These attributes are presented not as an absolute or comprehensive guide to giving, but rather, as a point to embark on reflection and dialogue about giving agency. These four attributes animate all the sectors of the landscapes of giving described above.

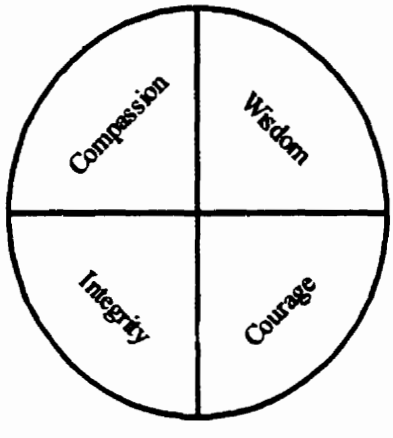

Figure 3: Attributes of Giving

The attributes-of-giving are asymmetrical to the landscape of giving. I present the two as standing in relation to one another, moving interactively and reflectively--like a kaleidoscope. As the reflection and refraction of the emerging quaternity formed and reformed, I found the mandalic image was metamorphising with a sense of its own life.

My quest for understanding prompted me to deepen my self-reflexive questioning and observation of my own generosity. I began to change my question from "What do I want to give?" and from "To whom do I want to give?" to "How do I hope to experience giving?" In response to this introspective analysis I came to identify four critical ways of giving observed in my own giving experience. I found that my simple quaternity of philanthropy, public service, professionalism, and profitability was transforming into a more complex model. For example, as I considered my discoveries and understandings in the landscape of philanthropy, I realized that there were distinctions between the landscapes (or homeplaces) and the ways of giving that emerged from this landscape. In this case, voluntary service was a better descriptor than philanthropy for the landscape, and charity was a better descriptor for the way of giving that emerged from this landscape. In chapter 4, I present my "Ways of Giving Model" as a completed version of this model. Here I present four ways of giving as findings that emerged from the understanding component of the process of appreciative inquiry. Included in my findings is my realization that each landscape was dominated by a prevailing ethic of giving and that each landscape was determined by a critical factor, which I name as the determinant of giving. These findings emerged out of my inquiry into the phenomenon of my own giving agency. Reflexivity and dialogue on my own ways of giving as an agent of change served to expand the discovery and understanding processes of appreciative inquiry.

Way of Giving: Charity

From my research into my own charitable giving that I exemplified through my work with Hospice and my support for my husband's mission work, I realize key insights into my own experience of charity. Through acts of charity, I give freely from my own abundance. I experience both the joy and pain of giving that arises out of the lack of ownership, and abandonment of ego inherent is this way of giving. I am rewarded by observing others receive my gifts and benefit from my generosity. I release ownership and transfer control and stewardship of my gifts to others when I am charitable. I endeavour to not expect reciprocity for my charitable giving and may even be insulted by an exchange gift. I do expect gratitude and see that gratitude is an antidote to the existential angst of selfless giving. I experience a sense of release through charity as a way of giving, and find that it leads to a sense of liberation that accompanies a release of ownership, responsibility, and control. Charitable giving fosters social agency. My charity is welcomed and facilitated in the landscape of the voluntary sector.

Way of Giving: Civic Duty

From my research into my own exemplary ways of responding to public service, as described in a letter to the editor of my local newspaper and in a speech delivered in honour of Women in History Month, I realized key insights in my practice of giving that arise out of citizenship in a civil society. I have a civic duty to give. I am compelled to give in this way because I cannot not give. I respond from a sense of duty, necessity, and shared responsibility. I give in order tc share with others, not releasing ownership, but sharing ownership, responsibility, governance, and stewardship with other citizens. I experience a sense of connection through this way of giving that leads to a sense of

belonging. My giving fosters community agency. My civic duty is welcomed and facilitated in the landscape of citizenship.

Way of Giving: Expertise

My research into my exemplary professional practice as an independent consultant, as evidenced in my supervised access report and in my accountability to my profession as a financial planner through advocacy and participation in a professional organization, brought me to the realization that my expertise is valuable. I give my expertise because it is valued by others. I give in response to a call to service and expect to be compensated for the value of my gift--quid pro quo--in the marketplace. In a marketplace that readily would exploit my generosity, I have realized how attentive I must be to stand against theft of my gifts. I cultivate creative and complex ways of ensuring that I am compensated for my professional skills, and celebrate that I receive compensation for my work in many ways. The diversity of these forms of compensation highlights my experience of economic freedom. I nurture and cultivate my own expertise in order to increase the value and potency of my gifts. I am accountable to the scrutiny of my professional peers and strive for excellence in my work. An alliance with professional associates serves to reduce marginalization and exploitation of my practice. I experience a sense of pride and accomplishment through this way of giving that leads to a sense of recognition and status. My giving fosters professional agency. My expertise is welcomed in the landscape of professional practice.

Way of Giving: Investing

My research into the landscape of profitability led me to understand the importance of ownership, stewardship, and retention of my assets as a quality of this way of giving. I

invest for the future without surrendering ownership of my assets, although I may delegate control/management of my assets/gifts to others. I invest in quality, and I particularly invest in quality relationships. I invest with the expectation that my gifts will be used, stewarded, and returned to me enhanced by influences and use beyond my personal realm. I experience discernment and risk as I engage in this way of giving that requires trust and leads to a sense of power. My giving fosters fiscal agency. My investing is welcomed in the landscape of prosperity.

Amplification

As I deepened my learning journey, having completed the stages of discovery and understanding, I entered into the final phase of my learning project: amplification. I utilized various strategies to amplify the best of my giving that I had discovered and understood through my research. These amplification strategies included: creating provocative affirming statements regarding my own giving agency; embedding the language of giving into everyday conversations; and applying the insights from each way of giving to others, through reflection and refraction as in a kaleidoscope. To describe the way in which I have used these amplification strategies in my appreciative inquiry, I again return to the four ways of giving and begin each of the four sections with a provocative statement (italicized) arising out of my research. These provocative statements take the form of affirmations, but are much more than wishful or positive thinking. These provocative statements solidify my discoveries and understanding, and represent the new ground from which I employ giving agency as an agent of change. I follow the provocative statement by describing how I have amplified this way of giving through language and

dialogue. I conclude each section by expanding my insight through comparison with the other ways of giving.

Amplifying Charity

I have a strong, flexible ego and a secure identity, which enables me to be (at times) selfless in my giving. I am able to be selfless on the one hand through anonymity and on the other hand by representing the giving of many people working together. The strength of my secure identity enables me to give and give without being given away and to merge my giving with others without being diluted or subsumed by participation.

My insights into my own charitable giving has motivated me to become more attentive to small acts of charity around me daily. When I realized how valuable it was to be appreciated by others as a giving person, which I discovered in the mother's day card, e-mail comment, and discussion group, I wanted to become more generous in recognizing others in this way. These exemplars of others' appreciation of my giving were more than vague compliments. I was both acknowledged and recognized by these appreciative acts. I realized that appreciation for others that is grounded in a genuine and authentic recognition of others' gifts is a way of being charitable. A generous application of appreciation for others' charitable giving is distinct from reciprocity or exchange-giving. It is a different form of charity used to amplify and celebrate others. I now seek out and cultivate opportunities to express my charitability through such small appreciative acts.

I have learned much about the landscape of charity through its opposition and contrast to the landscape of prosperity. Charity does not seek ownership, but rather releases ownership. Ownership is a test that distinguishes charity from prosperity. I realize that it is not unethical, wrong, or a transgression to *invest* in voluntary organizations. Yet,

I distinguish my acts of charity from those acts in which I expect to reap future dividends. For example, when I invest in relationships with my family or my friends or my church I acknowledge my giving comes with strings attached--when it is with expectation of future benefit (an investment), rather than an act of release (charity). This insight demonstrates the vulnerability of charitable acts to the sabotage or cooption of other ways of giving. For example, in my exemplar in which I selflessly spent the afternoon writing the article for the church newsletter on Brian and his friend's behalf I needed to defend myself against thoughts such as "Why am I doing this when he's out golfing?" "This would be a lot easier to do for him if he were washing my car or doing the shopping." In fact, my marriage is generally imbued with this balanced reciprocity. Yet, in the realm of charity I stand against the dilution of my (pure) charitable gift by contamination with the qualities (e.g., reciprocity, duty, return on investment) of other ways of giving.

My understanding of the importance of contracts and exchange-value in my professional practice has helped me to realize that it is uncharitable to expect reciprocity or exchanges in my charitable giving. For example, I do not anticipate any special service or favours from Hospice, regardless of my past leadership and stewardship within the organization. I resist counting my charitable work as examples of my professional practice. I have, in this regard, renamed the volunteer work that I do from my professional practice as "pro bono" rather than as "volunteer" work in order to distinguish the distinctive ways in which a professional service given without a fee is, in my understanding, a distinct way of giving in the landscape of professionalism that is distinct from a charitable gift. This has been a surprising finding that results from my appreciative inquiry. In the past I have been an advocate of the charitable receipting of pro bono professional gifts. I now question this.

Do I expect Revenue Canada's charitable tax rules to stand up to the rigour of my definition of charity?

Amplifying Civic Duty

I belong to a civil society; I thrive through my citizenship in a participatory democracy that welcomes my wise voice, my contributions, and my capacity to share and collaborate in building a better world together with other citizens.

My speech, given to honour Women in History Month, exemplifies my facility to be playful with language. My playfulness with the ideas of Grantartica and Scare City uses irony to engage in a form of double-talking that confronts and challenges preconceptions. I discovered my propensity for playfully using irony in language as a discursive strategy through my exemplars of giving in this landscape. To challenge and to provoke (to be provocative) is critical to my identity as an agent of change, and it is in the landscape of civility that I master these capacities.

I know more about civic duty from its contrast to my understanding of charitable giving. Similarly to my use of language in charitable giving, I ably use the collective voice of "we" and "our" in the landscape of civility. This voice has the capacity to speak for more than myself, to speak on behalf of many. I recognize that this voice is not so much a merged voice as a distinct and included voice. It is often a political voice, rather than a social voice. There is more, however, to the fine distinctions between these two landscapes. In this landscape I am not selfless but equal. I am included. My voice is represented because I count, I belong; I am a citizen with a legitimate right, along with everyone else. Choice is a test that distinguishes duty from charity. I recall that my choice to join Hospice as well as my choice (on that summer's evening walk) to support Brian's

mission work were important touchstones that sustained my ongoing commitment to my charitable giving. In the landscape of civic duty I do not need to anchor my giving to a philanthropic choice. My citizenship is a given. My citizenship is what sustains me through acts of giving. I do not need to hearken back to a decision, a choice, made in time. Often my civic duty is shaped by existing legislation, laws, and community standards. At times, such as the impulse to write the letter about taxation to the newspaper or my "having an impact" speech, I feel called by a sense of loyalty coupled with a sense of opportunity. It is in this realm that I celebrate the bounty that I have received and feel the obligation to include others in this bounty. I am impelled to give in order to serve and protect democracy because it is the nature of my vision of democracy that it be participatory. I, therefore, have both the right and the duty to participate.

Amplifying Expertise

I have valuable expertise that I exchange for fees and commissions. I am able to negotiate profitable contractual relationships for the provision of services that I provide. I deserve to be well compensated for my expertise.

In both of my exemplars of professional expertise, (my supervised access report and my letter to the Commissioner of Insurance), I demonstrate a strength of emotional intelligence in my writing. I have a valuable talent of bringing clarity and compassion to emotionally charged situations and contexts. I choose effective communication strategies, at times to remove the emotionality from the text and, at other times to imbue my text with passion and emotion that articulates previously unexpressed depth and nuance. I couple intentional empathy with appreciation in order to discover, understand, and amplify

through my use of writing the emotional and poetic text that is hidden within many diverse contexts.

I know more about the importance of constructing contractual relationships around my delivery of service given my experience in the landscapes of voluntary service and citizenship where my expertise is valued and solicited but not financially compensated. Understanding my motives and desires to give in these landscapes helps to identify the complex and fine distinctions between gifting and marketing my skills. I draw upon my understanding of investing to support the long-range efforts that I invest into my professional practice, in order to ensure that economic compensation becomes embedded in my practice.

Amplifying Investing

I possess extraordinary and valuable assets that I protect from unnecessary risk. I hold onto these assets and continue to invest in them. These assets include but are not limited to personal attributes, knowledge, talent, relationships with people and organizations, precious objects, and financial assets. My care and nurturance for these assets supports growth, and I reap dividends from this growing abundance.

It is through my exemplars in the realm of prosperity that I demonstrate my capacity to use dialogue with an other as a transformative agent of change. In the story of my childhood experience of being lost, I travel through time to my childhood self to discover the personal attributes I invested (bought and held) and nurtured over time. In this way, I was able to experience my life outside the constraints of time. My correspondence with the Bank Chairman demonstrates my capacity to trust and to imagine how the gift of the feminine could transgress political, economic, and cultural constructs

that defined my economic oppression in a set way. I was able to experience my life outside the political and economic constructs that constrained my fiscal freedom.

I have come to appreciate the personal stewardship, accountability, and fiduciary responsibilities of ownership in the landscape of prosperity by contrasting this with my experience in the voluntary service and civic duty, where I am able to transfer or share this responsibility with others. This has brought to my attention the importance of securing professional advice for that which I own. I am familiar with receiving the expertise of others freely in my charitable associations and from government in the realm of citizenship. When I alone "own" an asset, I must secure the best advisors, and this often entails seeking out professional advice.

This insight into my own ways of giving emerged out of a prevailing attitude toward my own learning process, an attitude that defied constraint: an attitude of generosity. When I consider my many exemplary ways of giving, whether through charity, professional practice, civic duty, or prosperity, I celebrate and honour my own generosity. I generously observe my own practice of generosity. I give permission to let my learning proceed unrestrained. This generosity is grounded in an ethic of self-care, which includes a deep respect for the cultivation of my own receptive agency, including both a *desire for* and a *belief in* the power of symmetry between giving to others and giving to myself. I have come to celebrate a sense of mystery and awesome power in the nature of giving, which is reflected in the two amplified models of giving which I present and discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

WAYS OF GIVING

If we understood being as participation in an internally related unit, an unfolding whole, we would view our labor as a gift given to the community and the cosmos.
- Spretnak, 1993, p.189

Give in! Give up! Give it over! Commands to surrender emerge in language when giving is coupled with the directions of in, up, and over. I am struck by the notion of defeat insinuated by these common expressions that seem to link giving with directionality. This playful reflexivity with language reminds me that surrender and retreat are essential capacities of agents of change engaged in conscious giving.

Come in! Come up! Come on over! Notice how this call invites friendship rather than surrender? It is with this friendly spirit that I call my reader to join me in an adventure to determine how an appreciative inquiry into the ways of giving of change agents may confirm and augment, as well as challenge, the literature. In this chapter, I generalize my autobiographical data toward developing an *expanded* model of the ways-of-giving: a mandalic quaternity of giving agency. I *augment* this model by presenting a second quaternity that represents attributes-of-giving. In keeping with the practice of my study, I engage in critically reflexive dialogue to explicate my learning process and to compare it with the literature. I discuss the implications for adult education of a focus on ways-of-giving, and draw conclusions and recommendations that relate to ways-of-giving as an agent of change--both in general terms and in reference to a quaternity of giving.

Analysis and Interpretation

My embrace of adult education literature led me to form an identity as a change agent, challenging me to seek out opportunities to practise my skills and knowledge and to

approach my work and my life with a sense of meaning and purpose. Through my appreciative inquiry, I uncovered four modalities in which I was able to engage in practice as an agent of change and to experience my giving agency. I found that naming these distinct modalities as landscapes enabled me to distinguish political, social, economic, and cultural factors that shaped my opportunity to give in multiple contexts. An appreciative focus on my own giving has demonstrated my capacity as an agent of change within these four landscapes. I not only demonstrate the sense in which I am called to give and through my giving to make change, but also that community is primarily the site of my practice as an agent of change. I found that my own agency was experienced in multiple ways--and that these diverse ways were reflected in contemporary adult education literature by the use of the term agency. In this section I discuss the relevance to adult education of who gives and what the gift is.

Who Gives? Locating the Self Who Gives

Adult educators and agents of change are both called to give and commanded to give. How do we bring consciousness to this giving? How, and under what authority, do we draw boundaries around our gifts and our giving? Are we agents of knowledge, stewards of the gift of knowing, inherited from our teachers? If so, how do we guard against an unrestrained hubris, that, as Gore (1992) warns, can be a form of unacknowledged power. In promoting discourse regarding giving agency and disciplined reflection on the gifts of our profession I do not want to generate an ungrateful discourse: a discourse that inspires reflection on the gift that would "conjure the gift away, refusing its magic or madness in the name of reason, of reducing everything to economic exchange" (Still, 1997, p. 172).

My analysis of giving by adult educators and agents of change leads me to compare two holistic models presented in the literature, which lend themselves to the search for the giving subject. Labonte's (1994) empowerment pentad and Starratt's (1994) ethical triad serve as conceptual frames that support community agency (Labonte) and ethical agency (Starratt). Labonte's model arises from empowerment discourse in the community development (health promotion) literature and frames a spectrum that moves from personal care to political action, explicating how empowerment is distinguished in varying levels of organizational complexity. Starratt's model arises from school administration discourse and is taken up by adult education (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999) to distinguish ethical decision making in three distinct frames. Neither of the models places the giving subject within the framework. These models foreshadow the development of my Ways-of-Giving Model, which responds to the complexity of my own integrated giving agency. The Ways-of-Giving Model places the giving subject in the centre of the model--the centre that holds is the gift of grace, the soul's immanence described by Spretnak (1993). For example, shifting my giving to volunteer organizations from a give-until-I-give-out approach to a pro bono approach is in response to my soul's sentience (rather than the command of an external authority) and is experienced as the self-regulating dynamics of human subjectivity (Spretnak, p. 29). The model I offer is built on a quaternity and assumes that the giving subject is able to integrate and resolve contradictions and paradoxes in a continuing process of action and reaction to changing conditions.

I recognized my own ethical agency in all three styles described by Starratt (1994), and Merriam and Caffarella (1999): justice, care, and critique. I associate an ethic of

justice with an ethic of rights and use the two terms interchangeably. The Ways-of-Giving Model suggests that the ethic of care emerges from the landscape of voluntary service and that the ethic of rights emerges from the landscape of citizenry. Similarly, the ethic of quality emerges from the landscape of professional service; and the ethic of value emerges from the landscape of prosperity. In distinguishing an ethic of quality from an ethic of value, I contend that an application of quality asks "Is this the best?" whereas an application of value asks "Is this worthy?". For example, in practice change agents often are presented with conflicts in decision-making processes between action that supports the best professional quality of work and action that represents the best long-term investment. By placing the giving agent in the centre of the quaternity, the ethic of critique, described by Starratt (1994), emerges in the Ways-of-Giving Model as critical reflection and critically reflexive dialogue. Through critical reflection the giving agent discerns the complex and paradoxical elements inherent in the impulse to give, as well as discerning the relationship between what one is given and what one gives. Distinguishing the ethical frame that supports specific ways of giving may strengthen change agents in their capacity to implement action for change and to secure support for the action from others who may be persuaded by ethical discourse. I contend that linking ethical discourse to ways-of-giving discourse strengthens giving.

To explicate how a quaternity of ethical frames strengthens giving I return to my exemplars of giving. For example, in my letter thanking a donor for his charitable donation to Hospice, I recognized, responded, and celebrated his ability to support the care of a caring organization (from an ethic of care). In describing to him where his donation would be directed, I focused on the worthiness of his gift (from an ethic of value). In this way, I

recognized his charitable way of giving supported by an ethic of care and also recognized his investment founded upon an ethic of value. When I designed the supervised access service I asked, "What injustice arises from this unmet need?". I also asked, "Can I deliver the best response to this need?". I tempered my initial motive to give that was generated through an ethic of justice by engaging in a consideration of giving grounded in an ethic of quality. I responded to the challenge of Merriam and Caffarella (1999), who point out that adult educators who acknowledge the ethical framework that supports their practice will be more able to engage in open and respectful dialogue with other practitioners. The ethic of justice arose out of my sense of civic duty that recognized a need that was not being met (in a culture dominated by social service cuts). However, I also questioned, from an ethic of quality, whether my professional expertise was an appropriate (albeit unconventional and marginal) means to respond to the need. The ethical frames presented in the Ways-of-Giving Model are transformed from Starratt's (1994) triplicity into a quaternity: justice, care, quality, and value, associated with the respective landscapes of giving. The ethic of critique located in Starratt's model as critical reflexivity within the agent of change is located in the Ways-of-Giving Model as the integrating agentic constructor animating giving from the centre of the quaternity. Agents of change may consciously strengthen their giving agency by recognizing, and at times naming, the ethical frame that supports their gifts.

The ethical styles are not exclusive, but rather integrative--like a four point check-list. Change agents are encouraged to not only ask "Is this ethical?" but also to ask "What ethic(s) create the ground for this action?" "Is the ethical ground congruent with the gift and the way of giving?" "Do I challenge others' ethical frame through the introduction of

this ethical influence?" The critical reflexivity and reflexive dialogue fostered by such questions are founded on an ethic of critique that is not rigid in moral dogma, but rather open and integrative. I suggest that understanding distinctions between ethical frames may provide clarity to those questioners, identified by Lange (2000), as experiencing ontological incoherence arising from the warring between ethical ground and cultural scripts. Ethical agency is supported by developing a reflexive habit that questions the ethical ground that supports specific acts of giving.

What Gift? Locating and Following The Gift

Cunliffe's (1999) article on reflexive dialogical practice stimulated my thinking of the apercu. Perhaps it is that I was caught up in my own muddy thinking that I was mixing up the words *apercu* and *aperture*. Apercu is a glance or an insight; perception. Aperture is an opening; an orifice, hole, or cleft. In optics, an aperture is often adjustable in diameter. I began imagining that there are opportunities in time, in the linear path of one's life story, where/when openings occur; perhaps they are adjustable. I imagined, playing with my mind, that I can send images backward and forward through time. Imagine such a gift! I delight in this idea that I might be able to send an image, like an e-mail, back in time to my former, questing, becoming self! When I frame my idea of the aperture as a condition in time, (such as this time of writing) that opening occurs; I am compelled to define the apercu as the experience in time when this gift is received--the experience of being "struck." Like a fissure that breaks open and fractures a structure, this aperture/apercu creates the opportunity to gift forward and back in my life the gift of insight. These images are like Dirkx's (1997) angels as messengers. Such time travel is congruent with Bruner's (1990) understanding of reflexivity.

In this way, an agent of change may construct experience as abundantly full of potential, as being immersed and surrounded by puissance. This is a constructivist approach. For example, when I was caught up in the excitement of the Disney parade, this energy opened an aperture which I sailed through to visit my 6-year-old self. Like a memory angel, I hover over my lost-little-girl self and invest love and wisdom through reminiscence. When I celebrate an insight, a synchronicity or a dream in such a way I move from the glance (aperture) to the gaze. What is this gaze? The gaze is to look, look, and look again; search, search and search, again--to re-search.

I encourage change agents to pay attention to the gifts of insight, to the meaning embedded in coincidence. In these delightful "ah-ha" moments we have the opportunity to be the proactive agents that Mahoney (1996) describes as being both the changer and the changed, whereby the agent of change responds "not only between her environment and her body, but also with different levels of her own activities" (p.129). Such practice enhances the moral agency that Lander (2000a) describes as emerging from critical auto-biography as we tell and re-tell our stories. This willingness to look and look again is the re-search that Neilsen (1998) suggests examines "the material work in the parentheses of our lives, the stuff of daily living that makes it all hang together or fall apart" (p.144). The search is not only to see and to know but to be seen and to be known. This gaze desires connection and seeks reciprocity--seeks eye contact. Moving from the glance to the gaze enables me to remain engaged and to be connected in order for action to emerge from insight. As adult educators we are challenged to follow the gift of insight, experienced in the reflexive moments in which we are struck, and to follow these insights upon their own momentum to a natural conclusion. For example, in my appreciative research I observed

how energy (experienced as anger) that arose in reaction to a letter in my local newspaper combined with spare time (experienced as exclusion) to provide the momentum I needed to write my own letter to the newspaper. In this way, I was able to harness my passion and respond to the challenge of Gilligan (1993) to participate in "the ongoing historical process of changing the voice of the world by bringing women's voices into the open" (p. xxvii).

Still's (1997) theory of "the gift" in relation to market theory provides the construct for me to understand my choices and my creativity in a more profound way. I contend that it is my resonance with the gift that leads me through my life. I am attuned to the gift. When I imagine the gift in opposition to the market I create a tension that manifests as economic suffering. When I imagine the gift as a relationship--a quintessential relationship--it is the relationship that leads me. When I return to a focus on the gift, I find the path of my own giving. This is the gift of grace--the centre that holds (Spretnak, 1993). When I am lost and confused, frightened or angry, I can ask: What is the gift? If the gift is not known, I wait until the gift is revealed. In this waiting I trust not only my singular individual self but all to whom I am connected; I celebrate the both-and quantum nature of the self that Zohar (1997) describes as "me, my genes, my history, and my unique experience, but . . . also all those others with whom I live and work and share experience and to whom I relate" (pp.120-121). I imagine that the gift that leads is a quintessential relationship in a Pythagorean sense. For Pythagoreans, the fifth or celestial essence is ether which transcends the four elements of earth, fire, air and water (Avis et al., 1986) In this sense, waiting is a part of the critical reflexivity that stands as an integrative agentic constructor in the centre of the quaternity of giving. I am supported by

Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) who state that "reflection on the ultimate mystery of being engenders a reverence for life that draws the researcher to inquire beyond superficial appearances to deeper levels of the life-generating essentials and potentials of social existence" (pp. 2-3).

It is my experience that the gift of grace manifests as synchronicity (meaningful coincidence). For example, when Brian returned from Guatemala I listened to his stories and his adventures and celebrated the meaning that he invested in his reminiscence. It was *his* story of being thwarted by a rainstorm and compelled to read the only book available--the very same book I was studying--that I celebrated as part of *my* story. The meaning? Synchronicity represents connection. Brian's and my connection was manifested in this awesome way, despite our loss of proximity. Synchronicity works in a compensatory way--mysteriously. I understand synchronicity as an intrapsychic process, revealing knowledge. Synchronicity, so often, wraps the gift. It is through conversations that the unwrapping takes place, recalling that Peterson (1996) defines community development as "unwrapping of the condition of fellowship" (p. 142). When I am overwhelmed by gratitude in the presence of such a gift I am impelled to ask: "Is this the gift or simply the wrapping?" I share with others the experience of being delighted by the wrapping and disappointed by the gift. Yet, I do not let this experience deter me from unwrapping the gifts, given that engaging in critically reflexive dialogue is an essential element of community building. When I mischievously wrapped my story and letter to the bank chairman I did not know of Still's (1997) theory of the gift, yet intuitively I knew that a gift would confront my oppression. "In order to confront power in our own societies it is necessary to make a return gift to the powers that be" (Still, p. 14). Like the homeplace

women described by Belenky (1996) I sought to "transform, not destroy the oppressor" (p. 413). I am doubly struck, first by the insight that oppression is often the incapacity to pass on the gift, and secondly, that in giving we cannot dictate the meaning to be revealed through the gifts' unwrapping.

I am reminded of Rykwert's (1991) exploration of the etymology of the word economy--exposing the idea of the homeplace, which is supported by Still (1997), who writes "The term economy includes among its semantic value law (nomos) and home (oikos). The law of the economy is the circle (exchange, circulation, return)--the circular return to the point of departure, the home" (pp. 83-84). Yet the gift does not take one home. The gift takes one outside of the circle of exchange, beyond the familiar and known, and transports one to a new place. The gift launches a new journey--going beyond economy, spiralling beyond homeplace, beyond the imagined utopian dream, to a foreign place, hitherto unknown. The gift has the power to confront, challenge, and transform--it is particle and wave. Like synchronicity, it is quantum. It is in the spirit of this quantum power to confront, challenge, and transform that I present two original and unique models to encourage discourse amongst adult educators on gifts and giving.

Development of my Models

An analysis of the way in which the many paradoxes of giving may be held in creative tension is framed by the Ways-of-Giving Model, which has emerged from my analysis of adult education literature and my own appreciative inquiry into my practice of giving. The first model I call the Ways-of-Giving Model, which is a development from Figure 2 presented in chapter 3 (see p. 62). Upon further analysis I expanded these landscapes of giving and developed the detail, which distinguishes determinants, ethics,

landscapes and ways of giving as distinct components of giving. The second model I call the Attributes-of-Giving. In a similar manner, I developed it from Figure 3 in chapter 3 (see p. 85) by constellating the many attributes that fund my personal giving agency in relation to the four primary attributes. Furthermore, I present the two models as distinct and in relation to one another.

Ways-of-Giving Model

I begin with an original model (Figure 2 of chapter 3), which describes four contexts for giving and which I name landscapes of giving. I also refer to these landscapes as economic homeplaces, deriving from the etymology of the word economy. In my experience, these four landscapes--which I have re-named voluntary service, citizenry, professional practice, and prosperity in the evolved model--are distinct places where I feel at home, where I am able to give. At the same time, these landscapes are imaginary, idealized, and utopian. The landscapes represent the best that I imagine these contexts for giving may offer, arising out of a socio-rational perspective that demands the creation of the best by imagining the best (Cooperider & Srivastva, 1987). In this sense the landscapes represent a utopian horizon (Lange, 2000) and relate to a feminine economy of abundance, which Still (1997) laments is usually relegated to utopian discourse. The expanded Ways-of-Giving Model, shown here as Figure 4, demonstrates how the opportunity to give and to have one's gifts received is constructed differently in different landscapes. For each landscape I describe a way of giving that is fostered in the landscape yet not confined by the landscape's boundaries. I add factors of ethics of giving and determinants of giving for each landscape, and I also add ways of giving as the outward movement from each landscape. The four resultant landscapes are (a) voluntary service, in which giving as

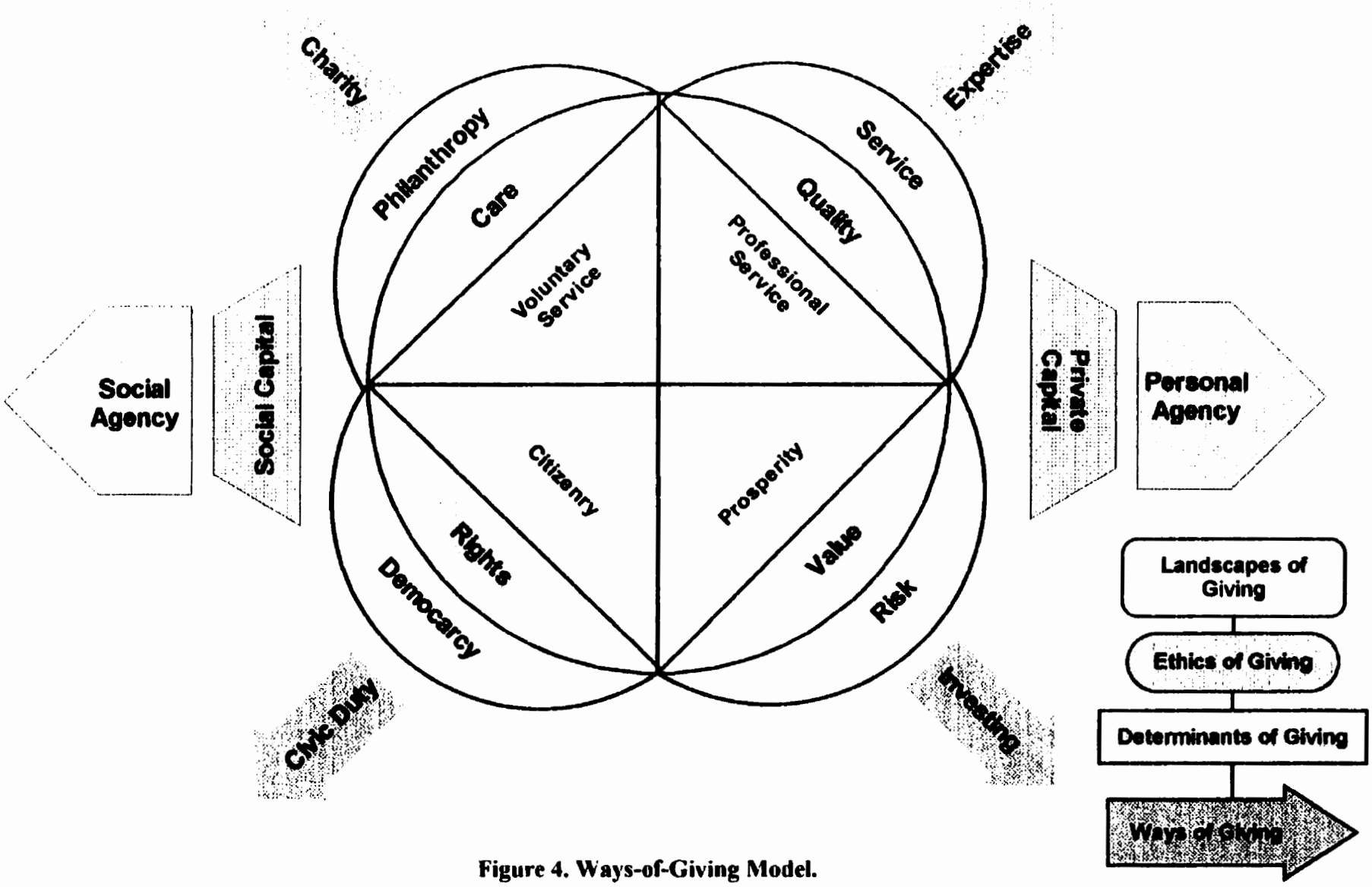

Figure 4. Ways-of-Giving Model.

determined by philanthropy, is embedded in an ethic of care, and promotes charity as a way of giving; (b) professional practice, in which giving as determined by service, is embedded in an ethic of quality, and promotes expertise as a way of giving; (c) prosperity, in which giving as determined by risk, is embedded in an ethic of value, and promotes investing as a way of giving; and (d) citizenry, in which giving as determined by democracy, is embedded in an ethic of rights, and promotes civic duty as a way of giving.

The model presumes a giving, autonomous individual, consciously strong and balanced in the centre of the model, having choice to give in different landscapes. The ethics described do not *belong* to the landscape, but rather, are the ethics that commonly dominate practice and discourse within each landscape. The determinants of giving are pre-conditions that support the ways of giving. The ways of giving are not tied to the landscapes but are fostered and promoted in these landscapes and may be deployed in practice beyond the confines of the homeplaces. A balance of expertise and investing contributes to personal agency. A balance of civic duty and charity contributes to social agency. A balance of the four ways of giving enables giving agency, which holds in creative tension the paradoxes and contradictions of the various ways of giving.

This model emphasizes the choices and opportunities I found available to fulfil my own giving agency. The model stands against a "way of getting" in that it does not explore different career choices or opportunities to work in different economic sectors. The model enables any adult educator to construct for themselves an integrated identity as an agent of change, able to use all the ways of giving in each of the four distinct homeplaces.

The Ways-of-Giving Model fosters discourse that engages in the complexity of giving and being gifted. This discourse constructs new ground that challenges the

conflation of giving to a singular concept. The model provides a conceptual frame to consider inherent ethical conflicts in the realm of giving and the paradoxes and challenges of giving that encourages both social and personal agency. This new ground is resultant of the generative capacity of appreciative inquiry (see Bushe, 1995; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987).

The quaternity of my model reveals meaning through the way in which the four quadrants stand in relationship to one another. Prosperity, which is the landscape that focuses on ownership, stands opposite voluntary service, which is about sharing and giving up ownership. Professional practice is about exclusive membership based on knowledge and expertise. This stands opposite citizenry, which is based on including all. Professional practice and prosperity are linked through a focus on the personal and the development of personal agency. Voluntary service and citizenry are linked through a focus on the community and the development of social agency. Likewise, social capital is contrasted with private capital between these two hemispheres. For agents of change challenged to foster entrepreneurial social infrastructure within communities, as described by Flora (1998), the broader perspective fostered by this model supports an analysis of giving that enables us to see beyond self-interest. It is not only our own self-interest that this understanding enables us to transcend, but also, in understanding the actions and motives of others. Too often, the gifts of community animators are discounted and misconstrued as self-interest. I hope that the deeper understanding of giving fostered through this discourse will encourage the recognition of the prevalence of magnanimity in our communities. In this way the Ways-of-Giving Model is ground for a sociological perspective that "includes notions of equality/inequality, inclusion/exclusion, and

agency/structure" (Flora, 1998, p. 482), and encourages a less cynical and more positive view of community. The model, therefore, is a new tool for shaping an understanding amongst those committed to building community capacity (e.g. Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

Exploring the phenomenon of my own giving has enabled me to create a deeper understanding of the giving of educators who act as change agents. I am excited as I prepare to share this model with others. I hope I will have created a gift to help "practitioners deal with ill-defined, unique, emotive and complex issues . . . to help us cope with more informal, everyday ways of sense making and learning that are the essence of practice" (Cunliffe, 1999, p. 2). My self-reflexive work follows constructionist suppositions, which embrace a belief in my learning as an embodied, relational responsive process in which I am continually struck by new insights and delightfully discover and uncover new ways to think, talk, and be. I hold this in creative tension with the sense of grace that comes from a mytho-poetic imagination. I eagerly anticipate the "make sense" conversations I will have with others willing to engage in reflexive dialogue, examining their own ways of giving and their own homeplaces or landscapes of giving. I am curious to know if my model will support others in their struggle with personal, professional, or organizational dilemmas that arise in practice. I am curious what fidelity this model will hold for me over time through the challenge of such dialogue. I imagine how the model may support individuals thinking through conflicts and ethical dilemmas arising in their practice of giving.

In the following six paragraphs I demonstrate how an educator might work through the various facets represented on the ways of giving model.

Landscapes of Giving

The landscapes represent distinct economic environments or networks where I exercise personal and social agency. Simply, I have a choice of various distinct communities of practice where I exercise my capacity as an agent of change. The landscapes are viewed from my own giving perspective and respond to the question: "Where will I give?" Possibilities for today might be: Meet with clients (prosperity); dialogue with candidates in a municipal and federal election process (citizenry); send off a proposal to present a paper at an academic conference (professional practice); attend a membership meeting of a community organization (voluntary service). My giving agency is exercised by the opportunities that I perceive in these various landscapes and the utopian horizon I imbue with their respective power. I recognize that I make choices in how I give and receive in these distinct landscapes and that I am engaged in a relationship whereby I rely on social capital expressed as encouragement, opportunity, call, and invitation to stimulate and motivate my giving agency.

Ethics of Giving

The four ethics of giving (care, rights, quality, and value) are associated with the four landscapes, but not confined to the landscapes. As ethical styles they are more prevalent and embedded in the practice of the landscape with which they are associated. Like the ways of giving, the ethics of giving are sustained (receive sustenance) from their respective landscape. Yet the ethics of giving may be used as powerful influences for conscientization when introduced to dialogue and practice in the corresponding three

landscapes. My capacity as an agent of change is often to introduce an ethical perspective that is distinct from the prevailing style associated with the landscape of practice.

Determinants of Giving

The determinants of giving (service, risk, democracy, and philanthropy) are essential elements that animate each way of giving. For example, charity is not possible without *philanthropic* intent. Professional expertise cannot be deployed without an element of *service*. Investing is not possible without a measure of *risk*. Civic duty (freedom) is not possible outside of *democracy*. As an agent of change, I foster attention, knowledge, and development of these determinants of giving in order to foster giving agency.

Ways of Giving

The ways of giving (expertise, investing, civic duty, and charity) supported by the ethics of giving and determinants of giving, are liberated from the landscapes of giving in which they are promoted to operate in all four landscapes. The ways of giving are not confined to the landscapes of origin (it is possible to be charitable in the landscape of profit and employ expertise in voluntary organizations) although they are fostered and sustained through an association with each landscape. For example, in order to understand the depth and variance of charity as a way of giving, one is encouraged to turn to the discourse and the culture of voluntary organizations.

Private/Social Capital

Distinctions between private and social capital rely on issues of ownership. As an agent of change I invest in both private (mine) and social (ours) and recognize that my agency is

facilitated or constrained by access to capital. Capital is fuel. Without it, my giving agency is immobilized--not fulfilling my design, purpose, or potential. Capital is not the gift, nor the wrapping, but the energy (fuel) of giving.

Personal/Social Agency

Personal and social agency is developed distinctly through choices made as to where one gives and ways in which one gives. Giving agency is a transcendent concept that integrates the contradictions and paradoxes between personal and social agency.

The Ways-of-Giving Model provides an analytical tool for reflecting and engaging in discourse on giving agency. The model fosters an understanding of individual, group, and organizational motives underlying giving and promotes the considerations of how determinants of giving and ethics of giving are embedded within organizations, communities and social structures. The Ways-of-Giving Model is, therefore, a new tool for community development professionals focused on building community capacity.

Attributes-of-Giving Model

The Attributes-of-Giving Model arose from my close appreciative look at my exemplars of giving with a focus on the question, "What personal attribute do I bring to this giving occasion?" As depicted in Figure 3 of chapter 3 (see p. 85), I discovered the four primary attributes of courage, wisdom, compassion, and integrity. Upon further analysis, I explicate the nuances of 20 further distinct attributes that support this quaternity by naming 5 attributes that support each of these four attributes. I added these attributes to develop more fully my Attributes-of-Giving Model, which I show here as Figure 5. I consider these attributes as assets of my character, which arise out of my

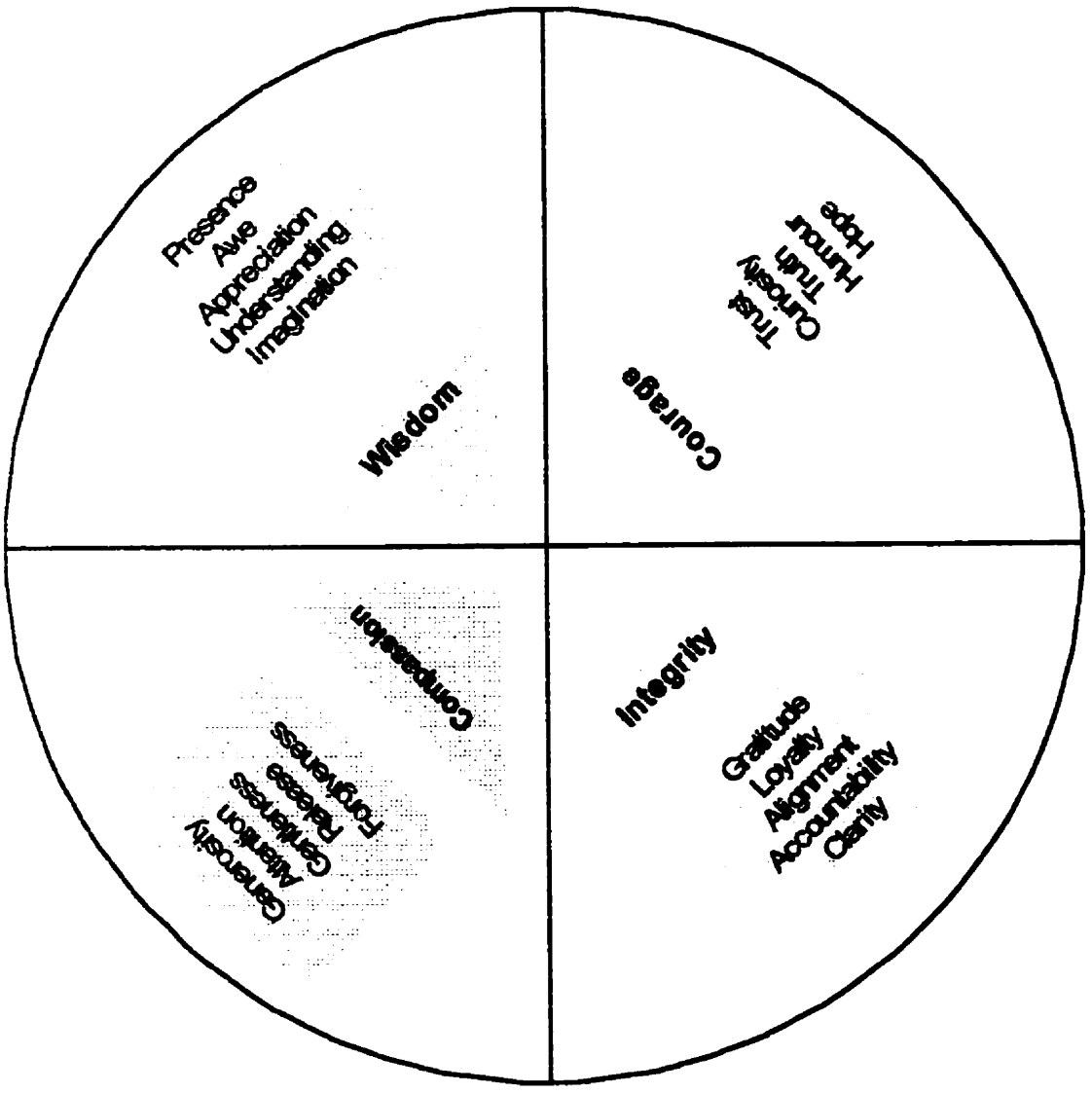

Figure 5. Attributes-of-Giving Model.

humanity, that have been cultivated and invested through experience, knowledge, and maturity. These attributes represent a form of my personal wealth and provide the source from which my giving agency is fueled. Following the metaphor of fuel, I suggest that the attributes-of-giving are a form of capital distinct from either private or social capital, which I understand as human capital. These attributes arise not only out of my own nature, but out of my human nature, and as such, are shared with all of humanity. This is congruent with the individual focus that characterizes human capital (Schuller, 2000), yet softens the "hard and economistic" (p. 7) characteristics of human capital that have been associated through the concept's "methodological manageability, and . . . political acceptability" (Schuller, p. 6). The way in which I nurture, invest and develop these attributes is a measure of my human potential, the human capital upon which I draw. As I did with my Ways-of-Giving Model, here I demonstrate use of the attributes-of-giving.

Courage

My courage is supported by my willingness to *trust*; to be curious-; to be *truthful* to others and to myself; to laugh and to find *humour* in complex, difficult, and frightening circumstances; and through my ability to sustain *hope* over time.

Wisdom

My wisdom is fostered through my willingness to be fully present; to allow the pregnant pauses and openings that allows wisdom to manifest through *presence*; to experience and celebrate a sense of *awe* and awesomeness in everyday moments; to *appreciate* and to *understand* intentionally others and myself; and to use my *imagination* to expand consciousness.

Compassion

My compassion relies on my capacity: to be *generous* with all of my assets, gifts, and giving agency; to pay *attention* to nuances, subtle communication, and unspoken concerns; to employ *gentleness* in my action and my conduct; to be willing to *release* what is no longer valuable through surrender to what is not known; and to forgive, to forgive, to forgive, and to *four-give* again.

Integrity

My integrity is achieved through: a sense of *gratitude* and graciousness for what I am given; through *loyalty* that enables connections to be sustained over time; through *alignment* with what I value; compliance with structures that support *accountability*; and through *clarity* of vision and action.

I discovered these attributes within my own giving agency, my own subjectivity. Yet, I also celebrate these attributes as the gift of humanity. I believe we must engage in discourse that celebrates such attributes and invest in communities that enable individuals to experience and exercise their capacity to employ such attributes through various ways of giving.

How can we be builders of communities that invest in these human attributes? How can we organize ourselves in a way that enables these human attributes? This is the challenge of those engaged in community development. We are challenged to structure our relationships that allows these attributes to be fully utilized. Like fuel, or energy, these attributes act as capital--to fund giving agency. In this way, they draw upon the aspects of our humanity which compel us to give. In this sense, they represent the human gift that confronts pure capitalism (see Dolfsma, 1998).

Conclusions

The two models, attributes-of-giving and ways of giving, stand in relationship to one another. They are the gifts I offer as outcomes of my appreciative inquiry into my own practice of giving. These models are the generative images that create new ground for my understanding and action as an agent of change.

Following Cunliffe's (1999) approach to reflexive dialogical practice as a means of reworking knowledge as "knowing-from-within," I seek to bring the language of the ways-of-giving and attributes-of-giving into my conversations with family, friends, and clients. This embodied way of talking and acting opens up everyday encounters into opportunities for reflexive dialogical engagement that creates new ground of understanding between myself and others--new ground connected to the best of what is and can be. I find my conversations enriched by the mystery and magic inherent in the story of ordinary lives. Frustration evaporates when I remember to engage with the content of my learning in an embodied way, letting my knowledge enable me to be in the world and to talk in different ways (Cunliffe, 1999).

The Attributes-of-Giving Model and the Ways-of-Giving Model stand apart. I understand them to exist in two distinct dimensions. Attributes-of-giving represent an inward focus. I journey inward and develop attributes that celebrate and honour the best of my giving subjectivity. The Ways-of-Giving Model represents an outward focus: my journey into the world in order that I might give. In my life, I experience the two quaternities oscillating in relation to one another, illuminating and refracting light and insight upon one another like a kaleidoscope creating infinite and infinitely complex mandalic representations of my giving agency. This oscillation is reminiscent of Still's

(1997) description of the oscillation between feminist work and feminist dance (p. 182). This oscillation also conjures the duality of an inward and outward focus represented by Lange (2000) as both an ontological coherence and a cosmological coherence. This kaleidoscopic complexity is also reflected in Schuller's (2000) study of the relationships between human and social capital. This oscillation captures the quantum aspects that Zohar (1997) describes as both-and, including both the private, individual self and the public, relational self. As Still (1997) lyrically describes, "The gift . . . appeared in the undecidable oscillation of to give oneself/to give oneself for, give/take, let take/appropriate" (p.148).

I recognize that these attributes-of-giving form the sustaining, abundant wealth from which I draw the capacity to be an agent of change. I exercise my capacity to be an agent of change in various landscapes of practice that are supported by ethics and determinants of giving. I have created a conceptual framework that I hope will foster further discourse on giving as well as support the development of a deeper knowledge and understanding of giving agency amongst other agents of change. With this gift, I offer two challenges:

1. Agents of change must work to reduce the marginalization of their practice within the profession of adult education. The marginalization of change agents not only oppresses those valuable social animators who are called to foster change in individuals and communities, but also marginalizes valuable knowledge that is held within the history, the literature, and the practice of adult education.

2. Program planners may easily integrate a mytho-poetic approach and a constructivist paradigm through the use of reflexivity, appreciative inquiry, and an

integration of personal and social agency through a conceptualization of ways of giving that fosters giving agency.

Recommendations for Agents of Change

As a gift to myself and to other agents of change I offer the following recommendations to remind us of the powerful force for change that is located in a gift. These recommendations are summarized as (a) focus on giving; (b) choose giving; (c) foster giving; and (d) locate the giver and the gift.

Focus on Giving

Focusing on giving fosters a profound paradigm shift. To consciously give requires persons to locate the ground of their own giving agency. To give is to make choices in how to give, what to give, where to give, to whom to give, and what is given. A focus on giving fosters empowerment--locating control within the person who chooses to give.

Choose Giving

Agents of change are encouraged to explore the opportunity to give, not only in different landscapes, but in different ways. A gift that is frustrated, refused, or thwarted may be welcomed in a different landscape. Yet a change in landscape may not be required. The same gift might be unblocked by importing an ethical frame from a foreign landscape, facilitating a gift that was misunderstood. Challenge others to name the ethical framework that underlies their gifts; challenge others by naming different ethical perspectives underlying their gifts.

An unconscious gift is untamed and unfocused power. Learn to cultivate an understanding of the motive and intent behind your gifts. Discard giving that does not

enhance your moral and ethical agency. A deep cultivation of giving agency will integrate moral, ethical, social, fiscal, personal, communicative, and community agency.

Foster Giving

An appreciative approach to others fosters giving. Acknowledging giving and expressing gratitude for gifts are the two most powerful ways in which agents of change can foster others' giving. It is important to create opportunities for giving; to call others into the relationships that enable gift giving; and to recognize, acknowledge, and celebrate giving. It is important to resist minimizing others gifts as mere self-interest. Imagine others' motive and intent imbued with magnanimity and generosity. Design curriculum, workshops, group exercises, and programs that foster giving agency.

Locate the Gift and the Giver

An appreciative approach stands against a problem-solving methodology; nevertheless, I suggest that focusing on giving, choosing giving, and fostering giving can prevent problems and can resolve conflict. Simple questions can re-frame many situations, shifting the paradigm to new insights and new opportunities. Ask these questions: (a) What gift is being presented? (b) Who is giving the gift? (c) What is the way or ways of giving being deployed? (d) What determinants of giving are in force? (e) What is the prevailing ethic(s) influencing the gift? (f) Does the gift foster personal or social agency or both? (g) Can application of the ways of giving model introduce creative tension between the paradoxes of giving that will foster giving agency?

Recommendations for Future Study

In celebrating the momentum generated from this research study I now document the undeveloped ideas emerging from this work. The following five paragraphs present the seedling ideas which could be pursued, based on the findings of this thesis.

1. The Ways-of-Giving Model could be used as a framework for designing research into others' experience of giving. Research could be conducted with individuals, in organizations, and through discourse amongst adult education researchers. Do others experience giving constrained by similar landscapes? Do others experience ethical styles that dominate action and discourse within particular landscapes? How can ethical frames be imported and introduced to foreign landscapes?

2. The Ways-of-Giving Model could be used as a framework to enhance feminist participatory research. How does an enhanced theory of the gift transform the way in which feminist researchers foster knowledge of empowerment? Is a gift economy a feminine economy? Does the ways of giving model aid in helping researchers locate and identify hidden, unspoken, and covert gifts? Can an appreciative approach lead to the shadow of the gift, including false benefience, theft, hubris, hegemony, scapegoating, procrastination, thanklessness, neglect, and denial?

3. Research could be conducted to uncover exemplary stories in which the gift confronts and transforms oppression. How do agents of change foster giving that can "transform, not destroy, the oppressor" (Belenky, 1996, p. 483)?

4. A self-reflexive appreciative inquiry into my own and others' stories of synchronicity could deepen adult educators' understanding of the relationship between synchronicity and the gift. Do others experience synchronicity as a gift? Do synchronistic experiences lead others to the gift? Is synchronicity an intrapsychic reciprocity that works through compensatory action? Answers to these questions could extend my research from my (singularity) reflection on my *written artifacts* to an examination of *synchronistic*

incidents occurring in practice (plurality) with others. An appreciative inquiry into synchronistic stories could represent new, unexplored ground, in adult educators' common knowledge.

5. How does recent research into social capital theory and human capital theory shed light on the ways-of-giving and attributes-of-giving models? How does an understanding of distinct forms of capital such as fiscal, cultural, organizational, intellectual or environmental capital enhance our knowledge of giving?

Summary

I intend to celebrate the gift of the content of my learning in an embodied way, letting my knowledge enable me to be in the world, to talk and to be in new ways, with a fully capable giving agency. This new ground welcomes my energy (my human capital: courage, wisdom, compassion, and integrity), calling me to participate in communities that will receive this gift and celebrate the multiplicity of ways in which it is given.

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