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TRANSCENDING CURRICULUM IDEOLOGIES:
EDUCATING HUMAN BEINGS WELL

A Dissertation

Presented to

the College of Education

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Kevin M. Cloninger

November 2008

Advisor: P. Bruce Uhrmacher Ph. D.

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Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation is to consider the role of well-being in schooling. Recent advances in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and medicine have led to a reexamination of the role of well-being in society. There is a growing body of educational theory on the subject of well-being in schools that draws on these advances (Cohen, 2006; Noddings, 2003, 2006; Ruyter, 2004; Spring, 2007). The few serious treatments on the role of well-being in education consider it from a theoretical perspective. Few if any empirical research studies in the fields of Curriculum or Educational Psychology have been conducted that explore well-being in schools. This dissertation will use the Science of Well-Being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004), an emerging theory unifying many fields of science, to take a new look at alternative education to explore how schools can attend to the well-being of children and society. Specifically, this dissertation will investigate Krishnamurti Education using an arts-based qualitative research method: *Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship* (Eisner, 1998).

I conducted research for roughly one month each at two Krishnamurti schools: the Oak Grove School in Ojai, California, and Brockwood Park in Hampshire, England. I made long-term observations of 9 teachers at these two schools. All told, this dissertation draws from 150 hours of observations and interviews with parents, teachers, administrators, and former students. By studying these two schools, I answer the following research questions: 1) How is well-being related to schooling? 2) In two

schools dedicated to the ideas of well-being and self-awareness, what specific strategies and pedagogies are used to help students cultivate self-awareness and well-being? 3) What is the significance of theories and practices aimed at increasing well-being for public schools in general?

In an attempt to compare the educational approaches of the two schools, five underlying principles or dimensions emerged, which both schools share. These five dimensions are: 1) *Safety, Security, and Trust*, 2) *Order, Structure, and Activity*, 3) *Care, Affection, and Attention*, 4) *Intellect, Reasoning, and Meaning*, and 5) *The Sacred, Spirituality, and Religiosity*. These five dimensions of schooling are essential to consider in the development of well-being. Krishnamurti schools, by attending to all of these dimensions, seek to reinvigorate communities of learning. Instead of relying exclusively on techniques, ideology, and methods, they seek to create relationships within a community.

The three themes that emerged from this study inform this dimensional framework by helping us to see how well-being can be encouraged in each of these five dimensions. The three themes of *love, freedom, and awareness* emerged from the observations and interviews; they also appear frequently in Krishnamurti's writings and correspond with research from the Science of Well-Being on the practices that lead to greater well-being and the development of character. The implications of this research for public education and teacher education are explored.

Acknowledgments

Writing this dissertation has helped me to understand one meanings of Donne's oft-quoted line, "No man is an island, entire of itself." I am indebted to the members of my committee Dr. Sarah Pessin, Dr. Paul Michalec, Dr. Janette Klingner, and Dr. Marty Tombari for their guidance, support, and encouragement through the years. In particular, I am very grateful to my primary advisor Dr. Bruce Uhrmacher, whose confidence and trust in me allowed me to chart my own course in this dissertation. Bruce has been a true mentor and colleague throughout my doctoral studies. Laurie Bennett gave me much valuable feedback and criticism throughout my graduate studies—her support was invaluable. Caitlin Lindquist also lent me much support in the final stages of the writing.

I would never have written this dissertation nor even attended graduate school were it not for my father, Dr. C. Robert Cloninger. My father's work figured prominently in this dissertation. This work is something of a family affair as our and family life often revolved around this endeavor—so much so, that my mother and my brother will also find their own lines in this text. All the members of and contributors (including those who are never mentioned) to the Anthropedia Foundation, especially Joseph Muszynski, Peter Hutchings, and Brian Keady, gave me the inspiration, support, and editorial guidance I needed to write this dissertation; I could have never written it without them.

I would also like to acknowledge the life and work of Krishnamurti, whose penetrating vision of education helped me to take a fresh look at educational practice. The vision and elucidation of Krishnamurti and of all the positive philosophers who

proceeded him are the soul of this dissertation. The depth and clarity with which they have written on the eternal laws that govern the world always humble me and remind me of what is most important. I only hope we find the courage to once again pursue well-being in the ways that they have in every era. I dedicate this dissertation to them and to the source of their wisdom.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Rationale

Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation is to consider the role of well-being in schooling. The impetus for this research evolved out of both professional and personal interests. Professionally, I am the President of the Anthropedia Foundation, a non-profit corporation dedicated to health education, specifically helping people to live healthier and happier lives in a state of well-being. Personally, my father, Dr. C. Robert Cloninger, has been involved in the development of a new scientific theory called the Science of Well-Being (C.R. Cloninger, 2004). This dissertation will try to incorporate some of the recent advances in the Science of Well-Being in curriculum studies. The study first began as a purely theoretical work. The goal was to analyze the potential of modern curricular theory to help in the development of well-being using the Science of Well-Being. After working for a year on the development of a curriculum theory focused on well-being, it was evident that an empirical study on the subject would inform the theoretical work already accomplished. The blending of the theoretical and the practical study of well-being and education led to the present dissertation. I decided to look to alternative education for research sites because there were few, if any, public schools that I could identify that focused explicitly on the development of well-being or self-awareness. After searching for some time, I settled on Krishnamurti schools¹. Jiddu Krishnamurti, the founder of the school movement and a prolific writer and thinker of the 20th century stated the fundamental intention of the schools to be the “the flowering of the

¹ I will give a detailed historical and philosophical account of Krishnamurti, his schools, and his life’s work in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

individual” and the development of self-awareness of teachers and staff (Krishnamurti, 1953, 2006a). For this reason, I was confident that his schools would prove to be a fruitful place to investigate the relationship between well-being and education.

As I already stated, recent advances in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and medicine have led to a reexamination of the role of well-being in society (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003; C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000b; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Herrman, Saxena, & Moodie, 2005; Hird, 2003; Huppert, Baylis, & Keverne, 2005; C. Peterson & Seligman, 2004; RM Ryan & Deci, 2001; Richard Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008; C. Ryff & Singer, 1998; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Veenhoven, 2007). There is a growing body of educational theory on the subject of schools and well-being that draws on these advances (Cohen, 2006; Noddings, 2003, 2006; Ruyter, 2004; Spring, 2007), although it is still in the initial stages of development. This educational research considers the role of well-being and human happiness in schools from a theoretical perspective. In fact, few if any empirical research studies in the fields of Curriculum or Educational Psychology have been conducted that explore well-being in schools. This qualitative research study examines two Krishnamurti schools where a strong emphasis is placed on principles and practices that lead to the growth of well-being in the students and faculty. The Science of Well-Being, an emerging theory unifying many fields of science (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006b; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005), will be used to take a critical look at the educational practices of these two schools. A major goal of the dissertation is to understand what guidance the Science of Well-Being can offer at the level of policy, pedagogy, and curriculum that may lead to the augmentation of well-being of students, teachers, administrators, and society-at-large.

Taking Well-Being Seriously

Well-Being conjures images of spas, health food co-ops, new-age bookstores, and yogis. For this reason, the concept of “well-being” has image problems among serious researchers in all fields of study. Those unfamiliar with the concept may well be ignorant of the advances made in the scientific understanding of the development of well-being (Argyle, 2001; C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006b; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Diener, 1984; Diener & Suh, 2000; Felce, 1997; Herrman et al., 2005; Hird, 2003; Huppert et al., 2005; RM Ryan & Deci, 2001; Richard Ryan et al., 2008; C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 1998; Veenhoven, 2007). I do not use the term in the popular sense. Instead, I employ the word in much the same way that it is currently used in the field of medicine². For example, the World Health Organization uses well-being in its definition of health. They state, “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (“Constitution of the World Health Organization,” 2006). This term “well-being” as it is used in this definition of health is close to that stated in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which defines well-being as, “The state of being or doing well in life; happy, healthy, or prosperous condition; moral or physical welfare (of a person or community)” (“well-being, *vbl. n.*,” 1989).

As was evidenced in both the WHO’s use of well-being and the OED’s definition, we can see that well-being is not simply a question of personal “wellness.” At the very core of the concept is the notion that everything is interconnected, so the well-being of society is linked to the well-being of the individual. Personal well-being is entangled

² I believe it necessary to point out that the concept of well-being in medicine is very similar to the conceptions of well-being in Ancient Greek Philosophy and other Ancient Philosophic traditions. In chapter 2 of this dissertation I explore some of the philosophical roots of our understanding of well-being.

with the person's position in society, culture, and our relationships with others. We can not bury our heads in the sand because our own well-being is tied up with that of society as a whole. Secondly, well-being is a state of happiness and prosperity that is not simply a question of physical health or material success, but also of "character" development and "complete" health, which is not merely the absence of disease. In this dissertation I am using well-being to mean a state of positive functioning, psychological health, happiness, and satisfaction with life, which comes about through a harmonious relationship between and among the various aspects of a person³ and the cultural and social context in which the person lives. This conception of well-being is equally important for an individual, a community, or a society.

Well-being has important consequences for any end that a school seeks to achieve. Even if one believes that the only acceptable role for a school in society is to prepare children for jobs in the future, it is important to consider the role of well-being in schools. The business sector has had to make similar considerations. Chronic absence of well-being is a major factor in the lack of productivity and satisfaction of employees. For example, a recent *USA Today* poll showed "the number of work days lost per year" by workers with depression to be 26, followed by cancer at 17, respiratory disorders at 15, asthma at 12, and 11 days for people who suffered from migraine (Stuckey & Gonzalez, 2008). An extreme absence of well-being in the form of depression led to a high absentee rate. Work on emotional intelligence (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Goleman & Cherniss, 2001) and flow states

³ Cloninger (2004) discusses at great length the importance of a harmonious relationship between the three aspects of the person—body, thoughts, and psyche—for the development of well-being. He also relates this to the development of societal well-being as does Hermann et al. (2005). I will discuss this definition of well-being in detail in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

(Csikszentmihalyi, 2000a, 2003) has been widely applied in the business world to try to address the well-being of the employees and management. A recent article in an online business journal explained that each day at the Gallup Organization CEO Jim Clifton monitors the flow of his employees (Marsh, 2005). An entire issue of the *Journal of Career Assessment* was recently devoted to the importance of fostering well-being in the workplace (Russell, 2008). Furthermore, There is also a growing body of scientific evidence from the World Health Organization ("Depression," 2008) and the American Psychological Association⁴ (e.g. G. Alexopoulos, Bruce, M. L., Hull, J., Sirey, J., & Kakuma, T., 1999; G. S. Alexopoulos, Meyers, Barnett S., Young, R.C., Campbell, S., Silbersweig, D., & Charlson, M., 1997; Arean, 1993) that points to the growing dissatisfaction and depression in the world as a whole:

- Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide.
- Depression is the fourth leading contributor to the global burden of disease.
- \$300 billion is spent annually in the U.S. on stress-related compensation claims, reduced productivity, absenteeism, health insurance costs, direct medical expenses, and employee turnover.

Modern life often neglects well-being's importance despite the fact that it is a fundamental human aspiration, leading to dysfunctions that are becoming more and more evident in society.

The Current State of Affairs

Mainstream public schooling focuses almost exclusively on the preparation of workers for the global economy (M. Apple, 2001; Cuban, 2004; Cuban & Shipps, 2000; Eisner, 2002; Hirsch, 1999; Krishnamurti, 1953; Spring, 2007). Since the publishing of *A Nation at Risk*, economists, CEOs, politicians, corporate leaders, and others who support

⁴ See <http://www.apa.org/pi/aging/depression.html> for a long list of research articles.

this agenda in schools argue that we don't do it well enough. In the 2008 presidential election, many interest groups like *Ed' in 08* are taking steps to ensure that American schools are "competitive" in the global marketplace. The rhetoric and the issues bear striking resemblance to those used in the national report *A Nation at Risk*. In this conception of schooling, there is a tacit assumption that learning is training. It is a technical education that ensures that individuals have the sufficient knowledge to operate productively in the workplace. Interest groups like *Ed in '08* argue that there has been a marked drop in the quality of American education and insist on new systems of accountability and standards. They attempt to apply good business principles to the running of school systems. Unfortunately, such policies do not emphasize the well-being of the students and the teachers. Despite the recognition by the business community that well-being is important to successful businesses, the only well-being interest groups such as *Ed' in 08* focus on is the economic well-being of teachers and communities when they recommend merit pay and incentives to maintain high quality teachers.

In a school climate that emphasizes technical education, student well-being is merely an afterthought or a luxury to be addressed once more important issues have been addressed, such as reading and math skills (Cohen, 2006; Cuban & Shipps, 2000; Noddings, 2003, 2006; Spring, 2007). No person can question that such skills are important for the economy and the workforce, but they are inextricably linked with the well-being of the students and society. If we only focus on basic skills, standards, and performance on standardized testing as a measure of a schools success, we merely ignore other underlying issues that impact those goals achievements such as such as character development, vocational training, personal growth, the joy of learning, self-awareness,

democratic citizenship, ecological awareness, and cultural and artistic knowledge. Each of these elements is important and at work in schools whether we like it or not. We are working on all these objectives simultaneously, the question is do we do so intentionally. This is not an either/or situation. The increasingly narrow views of educational policy and administration that have been advanced emphasize an impoverished and short-sighted view of learning and knowledge that ignores student interests, passions, and connections to the daily lives of students (Mathis, 2003). The current system pressures students (and teachers) to memorize information seemingly unrelated to their lives and aspirations (Pope, 2002). Memorization is essential for a rounded education, but rote learning is facilitated when the well-being of students thrives. The problems with this system far outweigh the benefits because it discourages a spontaneous passion for learning that is independent of social gain or success. More importantly, it rarely asks children to question the significance of life (Krishnamurti, 1953). Within this existential void, is it any wonder that so many children drop-out or find school to be a chore? Should it be surprising to see student apathy and violence, or unenthusiastic teachers?

If dropout rates are any measure of a lack of student well-being in schools then by any account, we are still failing many of our children. The most conservative estimates place the drop out rate at roughly 9% ("High School Dropout Rates ", 2008). However, across the 48 states who reported their graduation rates in 2006, a total of 2,649,001 public school students received a high school diploma in 2005–06, resulting in an average freshman graduation rate (AFGR) of 73.4 percent (Stillwell & Hoffman, 2008). This rate ranged from 55.8 percent in Nevada to 87.5 percent in Wisconsin. The fact that there are 73 percent who graduate and roughly 9 percent who drop-out demonstrates the fact that

the definition of drop-out is not “those who do not graduate.” This drop-out rate can be misleading because the figure does not include children who are incarcerated or in other social institutions besides schools such as mental health institutions, residential treatment centers, and hospitals (Western & Pettit, 2002). For example, while the present drop out rate is at an “all-time low” according to US Department of Education statistics, the incarceration rate is approaching an all time high. The United States of America incarcerates more people than any other industrialized nation in the world, 1 in every 100 adults^{5,6} (Warren, 2008). Others have criticized the poor reporting of high school dropouts in schools (Jacob & Levitt, 2004), so by any estimate current dropout rates are low estimates. Thousands of children never benefit from a rounded education, something which clearly does not benefit their well-being or that of our society.

Many curriculum theorists and educational commentators have written about the pitfalls of an approach that focuses exclusively on technical education in preparation for the global economy (M. Apple, 1979; Ayers, Hunt, & Quinn, 1998; Banks, 1981, 2006; Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Bruner, 1996; Cohen, 2006; Cuban, 2004; Cuban & Shipps, 2000; Dewey, 1944; Eisner, 2005; Kohn & Shannon, 2002; Kozol, 2005; Krishnamurti, 1953; Mathis, 2003; Nieto, 1999; Noddings, 1992; Rogers, 1994; Saltman, 2005; Spring,

⁵ With 1,596,127 in state or federal prison custody, and another 723,131 in local jails, the total adult inmate count at the beginning of 2008 stood at 2,319,258. With the number of adults just shy of 230 million, the actual incarceration rate is 1 in every 99.1 adults.

⁶ Due to space constraints I do not have the room to consider the issues of social justice that are associated with this problem in great detail. However, there are definitely issues that need to be addressed around racial inequality. This number masks the racial make up of the prison population. The dropout rate for “non-Hispanic black youth” reached an historic low of 11 percent in 2005 (“High School Dropout Rates,” 2008). However, as Western and Pettit (2002) point out this percentage dropped in part due to the increased incarceration rates among students. For example the rates of black male high school dropouts more than doubled between 1980 and 1999, thus removing them from the civilian non-institutionalized population on which these estimates are based.

2007). By concentrating solely on basic skills, economic competitiveness, and technical education, we neglect a whole host of dimensions of the child and the institution that is schooling. We neglect the social and emotional life, the cultural life, and the spiritual life of children and instead focus solely on economic and material repercussions of what they do. Let me state clearly, however, that progressive educators and theorists who ignore the economic realities of schooling are also walking a very dangerous path when considering the role of education in a country. The divide between the field of curriculum and the businessmen, politicians, economists, and school boards largely responsible for deciding educational policy has simply grown too large. This rift means that much of the research and work done in the field is never applied in the schools and the policy decision being made by politicians, businessmen, and school boards rarely benefit from the guidance of educational theory and research. As Schwab had asked many years ago is the field of curriculum field still “moribund?” (Schwab, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1983).

The widening gap between the field of curriculum and the schools was apparent at that *Milken Institute Global Conference*. The Milken Institute brought together an eclectic group of people from scientists, business executives and philanthropists to journalists, academics and Nobel laureates to address social, political, and economic challenges ("Milken Institute," 2008). More than 3,000 people from 50 countries attended the 11th annual conference. The discussions focused on financial markets, energy, education, health care, media and philanthropy. All the talented and intelligent

men and women⁷ who spoke on education at the conference made an assumption that technical education is the only role of schools in society. However, a singular focus on technical education can easily mask inequalities, cultural differences, and philosophical issues, and problems with social justice (Apple, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 1999; Spring, 2007). I did not hear any perspectives from curriculum theory entering into the discussions at any point. No one was debating the merits of care in the schools, of the importance of wonder and inquiry in the classroom, of the need to address people of various cultures and ethnicities, or of the humanistic implications of schools for the people who work and learn in them. Instead there was discussion of “competitiveness,” “investment and returns,” and the problems of “unskilled teachers.” One of the most striking panel discussions I attended spoke about the importance of early childhood education in preventing crime, disease, and other measures of societal well-being. Arthur Rolnick, the Senior Vice President and Director of Research for the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, discussed a research study that showed how

focusing high-quality resources on at-risk children yields a rate of return of 16 percent. When compared to the control group, the exposed children were more likely to stay in school, the crime rate dropped 50 percent, and students performed better overall in school. Consequently, early childhood education must be viewed as an investment with far reaching, multidimensional benefits. (Rolnick, 2008)

The fact that he had found a compelling argument for the implementation of early childhood education programs was certainly laudable; however, this example demonstrates how strikingly different the discourse is among those making policy decisions and those in the field of curriculum and educational research more broadly.

⁷ Many interesting and valuable points were offered on American schools by men like Eli Broad, Former Colorado Governor Roy Romer, the CEO of Ford Motor Company, Nobel Laureate Gary Becker, Andre Agassi, and many others.

The scientific research showing the benefits of early childhood education has been around for quite some time (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000), but in showing the “rate or return” to be high policy makers in countries around the world took note and began to think about how to implement that science.

In the Kingdom of the Blind...

Eisner speaks eloquently of the need for developing a “critical language” to describe the practices in schools (Eisner, 1998, 2005). He argues that too much of the research we conduct in colleges of Education is irrelevant to what is actually taking place in schools. Like what I had observed during my time at the *Milken Institute Global Conference*, Eisner argues that, “...our propensity to change practice is a function of the attractiveness of a set of ideas, rather than of the rigor of a body of data-based conclusions” (Eisner, 2005, p. 89). Eisner recommends qualitative methods of research to attract people to the ideas from educational research. However he cautions that in arguing for the inclusion of humanistic and artistic methods of research to develop a language for describing schools, we should not look to it as a replacement for the important and valuable work done by the sciences in studying education. He writes,

I wish to emphasize that in identifying the need to create a critical language for describing educational practice, I do so not as a replacement for the equally important need for an educationally relevant scientific language. We need not one but two eyes through which to see and understand what concerns us. (Eisner, 2005, p. 94)

Since Eisner first published this in 1984, there has been a proliferation of qualitative research in curriculum studies, but we now find ourselves faced with a problem of not being taken seriously. There is still a “vast body of data-based conclusions,” but little

that is appealing to the economically minded men and women responsible for policy decisions. Far too often discussions at the AERA or other professional education organizations, we look through “one eye” or the other. We either argue on a moral or philosophical basis or using qualitative terms while disparaging science and statistics, or vice versa. The AERA itself is impressively splintered with a proliferation of interest groups. We do not speak as one voice and it weakens our message. The power of the interests fighting for technical education is derived from the fact that they use so called “scientific” evidence to justify their claims. Many in curriculum never take the time to consider such perspectives and systematically identify the flaws in psychometrics, statistics, logic, and emphasis. We need, as Eisner argues “not one but two eyes through which to see and understand what concerns us.”

All the ideological forces vying for control of the agenda of the school speak eloquently about their domain of interest. Each ideology searches for control of the podium (M. Apple, 1979, 1982; Eisner, 1992; Uhrmacher, 1993) and presently it is the economic engine that speaks the loudest. But none of them can adequately look at the big picture individually. While it is something of an analytical nightmare, it is essential that we try to look in a comprehensive and integrative fashion at all these ideologies and attempt to speak with one voice as the field of curriculum. This certainly doesn't mean that we all must think alike, but we must come to some common grounds with respect to what we want to say. I am not alone in thinking that the next logical step in curriculum theory is something that is more integrative and synthetic; for example, Pinar writes in (1993),

My sense is that the next “paradigmatic shift” in the field will represent not a shift in scholarly function for the field—as the Reconceptualization of the 1970s represented—but a shift to a more conceptually autonomous, intertextually complex effort to understand curriculum. (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2002, p. xvii)

Both policy makers and curricularists have to step back and look in a comprehensive and integrated fashion at the educational system in the United states if we hope to help future generations of this country deal with the complex road ahead. Sometimes in the heat of battle between competing ideologies, the humanity of the process of schooling is forgotten or ignored. The global well-being of our children is not the major focus of the research we conduct—we tend to focus on it indirectly and most of the time inadvertently. It is, albeit indirectly, the subject of any comprehensive curriculum theory; in one way or another each curriculum ideology holds a view of the “good life.” The “good life” being that which will lead to justice and happiness within a society. Each ideology has its own conception of what the proper functioning of the institution of schooling is in the broader society, and in so doing, addresses what would lead to a just society however unintentionally it may be. In this way, the field of curriculum has much to offer those responsible for making policy decisions or building and starting schools. The question is how can we communicate that to those who are ultimately building schools and setting policy?

Lost in Translation

I would propose that the Science of Well-Being is one means that can help the field of curriculum communicate with policy makers, school boards, politicians, and the international community. Doing so may also help us communicate as a field and come to

terms with our common ground (Pinar, 2007)⁸. Understanding the relationship between our children's well-being and schooling can help us build a bridge over the ideological divides because it transcends the arguments being made by the various ideological camps. Well-Being in one form or another is sought after by all cultures, all ideologies—and in effect, by any human being on the planet (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Diener & Suh, 2000; Veenhoven, 2007). It is therefore an important concept that can unify us all while embracing our diversity. Moreover, the Science of Well-Being seeks to integrate scientific, philosophical, artistic, and cultural approaches to research and understanding to tackle the multi-faceted and complex notion of well-being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Huppert et al., 2005). In this way, it can provide a means to help the field find a language that is sufficiently simple, attractive, and persuasive to express the fruits of educational research in the field of curriculum. By suggesting that we would be helped in the field of curriculum by the Science of Well-Being I am not proposing a return to the scientific zeal exhibited by Thorndike and other early figures in Educational Psychology (Eisner, 1998, p. 206, 2005). The ramifications of recent advances in the field of psychology, psychiatry, and medicine concerning well-being, otherwise known as the Science of Well-Being, will do well to help us understand the biological, psychological, and developmental implications of humanistic and progressive educational ideas, but not necessarily proffer strict guidelines or prescriptive recommendations. The Science of

⁸ In his goal of internationalizing curriculum studies, Pinar has sought to create a canon to ease communications among nations. Pinar states on the website for the Center for the Internationalization of Curriculum Studies that, "The internationalization of curriculum studies cannot occur unless nationally-distinctive curriculum studies field attend to their own disciplinarity, understood as studies of those fields' intellectual histories and analyses of their present circumstances. Despite many curriculum scholars' skepticism toward the concept of canon, it may be that these ongoing historical studies and analyses constitute core knowledge of these distinctive fields all students and scholars must study" (Pinar, 2007, p. 1).

Well-Being gives us a means to offer more than moral, philosophical, or political arguments for the use of many of the theoretical advances of the field of curriculum. Of course humanistic and artistic approaches are vital and important means of research and communication, but they can inform and be informed by scientific work. Moreover, our communication must be made in ways that can address the economic and political implications of schooling in a global economy. In this calculus we must consider human capital and well-being, as well as social capital, cultural capital, and economic capital (Cohen, 2006; Spring, 2007).

What is the Difference Between Education and Schooling?

Before I go any further, I would like to step back and differentiate two terms, education and schooling. To differentiate these two terms will require more than simple definitions, so this next section is devoted to that purpose. Frequently education and schooling are used synonymously when discussing public “education.” In this dissertation I am using the terms very specifically.

Learning takes place across the lifespan of an individual. Education is everything that is done to care for the learning of the child and/or adult to help that person to learn. There are various institutions in society that are charged with the duty of overseeing the education of the child. Families are obviously among the most important institutions responsible for education. But there are also public and private schools, government organizations (i.e., family services, residential treatment centers), religions, and community organizations and the community itself. The media, in all its various manifestations (i.e., TV, Radio, Internet, Newspapers), has taken on such a prominent

role in modern society that it would be unwise not to include it. While none of these institutions have been or will ever be perfect, their roles and functions shift and evolve with humanity. For example, the media has never played such an important role as it does now. At the same time during the middle ages no one would have ever imagined that religions would lose the grip they once had on the education of the community. Each of these various institutions has a different role to play in education, but obviously it is not the same role everywhere. Shifting patterns of families, changes in community structure, the bureaucratization of schools and other public institutions, all these variables qualify the role that these institutions play in education. What is sure, however, is that each of these institutions has to keep an eye on the education of the child or adult throughout their life and not simply focus on their own role. Like a good mother or father must be aware of the education of the whole child, so too must a school be concerned with what is best for the whole person (Noddings, 1992).

Modern lifestyles and globalization have brought many changes to the education of the young (Banks, 2006; Cremin, 1988; Cuban, 2001, 2004; Cuban & Shipps, 2000; Diamond, 1997; Gandhi, 1962; King Jr., 1986; Krishnamurti, 1953; Lawton & Gordon, 2002; Noddings, 1992; Oliver, Canniff, & Korhonen, 2002; Olson, 2003; Rogers, 1994; Spring, 2007; Tyack & Cuban, 2001; Whitehead, 1967a). Family structure is very different than it was 100 years ago, for better and for worse. Across the U.S., the school system and the corresponding communities are more segregated than before the civil rights movement (Kozol, 2005). The gap between the rich and the poor is greater than it

has been since the 1920's ("Income Inequality," 2008)⁹. Globalization and the global economy is making more schooling necessary for even the most basic jobs. The falling economy strains an already under-funded educational system and the tax base that supports it. Government institutions, private corporations, and community organizations are increasingly involved in the education of children, from Edison schools to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and McDonalds (Saltman, 2005). Unfortunately, there is little agreement among parents, educators, policy-makers, and academics about various roles that all these institutions should play in the education of children.

Education and schooling are frequently conflated in modern times. Many people consider that one's education only takes place during childhood at school. However, the education of a person is much broader than what takes place at school. Similarly, we also tend to conflate schooling and training (or technical education). When we train something or someone we direct its growth and fit it to a pattern, like we would a vine or a plant by trimming it or tying it to a post. When we train an individual, we usually refer to the process of forming a person's mind by instruction, discipline, or drill—to prepare someone for a test of skill. This training, albeit very important, is certainly not the only role that schools play in education. Schools can do much more than simply prepare children for college or a job.

Schools must do more because when we fail to do so we send all kinds of messages to children about the various domains of human life. Schooling by its very nature a normative enterprise. Value-free schooling is an oxymoron. There are all kinds of messages and values that are reflected in the way we organize our classroom, the

⁹ The top 1 percent of earners in the United States made 19 percent of all income in 2005, up from 8 percent in 1975, according to an analysis by Emmanuel Saez and Thomas Piketty, two economists.

subject matter we teach, the expectations we have, the tests we give, the books we read, at every level of a school there are some hidden meanings conveyed. This of course has been pointed out by many others in the discussion of the hidden or implicit curriculum of schools (Apple, 1979, 1999; Eisner, 1992; Uhrmacher, 1993). If we do not speak about values, then we communicate that values aren't important or are relative, not something neutral. If we do not communicate clearly what is hidden or implicit in schools, we only mask and obscure a sub-text that is inevitably there. In addition to the hidden values, we also pass on perspectives on life, conceptions of world, thoughts on the significance of life, and tools and dispositions that may or may not help an individual work on their search for well-being. It would be narrow-minded to assert that schools, an institution where children spend the better part of their day, are only useful for the conferral of degrees and competencies that will lead them to be productive workers and build a stronger America. Schools are obviously impacting many facets of the child's development beyond their future occupation even if we do not attend these others aspects.

Learning is vital to human existence and it is essential to understand how to create and maintain environments and cultures that can sustain it. The underlying goals behind an educational institution that seeks to train or confer degrees are to some degree at odds with more than global humanistic learning goals that a family might have. We must find a just balance between these two goals. As Olson (2003) contends, the increasingly institutional form of schooling has led us to a dichotomy between human development and social reproduction. This discussion was once framed by Dewey as the tension between the child and the curriculum. Olson also argues that as long as schools are charged with the responsibility for awarding credentials that indicate one's competencies

to perform society's work that it is very difficult to make significant alterations to school structure (Olson, 2003). The system can be "tuned" to be more inclusive and effective, but not significantly changed. Olson suggested that only by distinguishing persons as intentional beings from institutions as bureaucratic agents can we begin to see how the institutional features of schooling can be understood and changed.

At issue here is something fundamental to the fabric of our democracy in the United States, that of freedom and the pursuit of happiness. Fitting a child to a pattern that is useful for careers and jobs may help them to be productive and successful in society, but it is no guarantee that they will grow internally or learn about freedom. The outcomes of education must be much broader than mere training. It should equip an individual with the tools, dispositions, and character to learn throughout his or her life. Why do we want to have a productive economy if not that it leads to a more peaceful and content society. In other words, greater well-being¹⁰.

There is more to a nation than its economy and I should add that the capitalistic system is not the problem in and of itself. Our capitalistic system has its own role to play in the education of children and adults. It is important for capitalism to do its part to increase the well-being of people and at the same time this will help capitalism. There is no need for a revolution to address well-being in our society. Rather, there is a need for a simple reorientation. Being in large part immaterial, well-being is not a commodity that can be bought or sold. Nonetheless there are many ways in which supporting people's

¹⁰ Plato's *Republic* is quite relevant here, because we are touching on a debate about what it is that makes a society just. In a society that is truly just each individual can live the "good life" and flourish in happiness and well-being. This is ultimate end or "good" towards which the educational process is leading us, even if we may never arrive at the finale. There may well be many different perspectives depending on our upbringing, our culture, our times, but all search to live the good life. Money is not useful for its own sake, it must lead to some end in the society. After all, there were periods of human history where the economy didn't even exist.

well-being is important for the economy or opens up new markets. It can and will have great worth in the developing global economy. We must find a manner of improving our modes of consumption to include healthy and educational alternatives, like the changing of the vending machines in schools from junk food to health food. We need to stop feeding people junk in every domain of life. We need to give people healthy food for their minds, their bodies, and their souls. It is in the interest of both corporations, and individual human beings to work on the development of well-being, because what comes around goes around. Education can and should help individuals focus on the growth in well-being; this is the best way to prepare them and our country for the advent of the global economy and all the forces of globalization.

Rationale: Why Well Being Matters

Well-being is a vital issue that merits serious reflection in curriculum studies and in the education of children. It is a subject that can help us to build bridges between policy makers, politicians, and educational researchers because it is an issue that transcends ideological conflict. The fact that this issue has not received much attention until recently is due in no small part to a underlying tension between technical schooling, which I will refer to as training, and schooling that focuses on the development and education of the “whole person” including their social and emotional life, their cultural life, and their perspectives on the significance of life. Well-being is intertwined with the search for the “good life” and the “good society” and as a result it has generally considered, indirectly, in comprehensive theories of education and schooling. Focusing on well-being in schools does not require a radical or revolutionary shift in the fabric of

American society, but rather a reorientation of existing institutions and a shift in emphasis for bottom-line thinking and reductive materialism to patterns of consumption that include healthy and sane alternatives that help individuals grow in maturity, self-awareness, and well-being. This, I have argued, is the best manner to prepare individuals for the global economy and their future. I now turn to some of the reasons why research on well-being and education is important for the field of curriculum.

Dealing with Global Dilemmas

Well-being matters now more than ever. We are currently living in a period of unprecedented change and crisis and we will need to cultivate well-being in order to adapt to the changes we are going through as a planet. The globalization of the world economy, climate change, diminishing supplies of fresh water, the ecological crisis, technological advancement, social injustice, and population growth all have important consequences that must be addressed by our society. A perusal of the UN's Global Issue Agenda does well to make the point.¹¹ Faced with difficult choices and difficult times, we cannot allow ourselves to be crippled by fear, distress, and self-interest or we are likely to make errors at numerous levels. Addressing these problems and dealing with the necessary changes will require much more than economic change or shifts in policy. We need to work on changing ourselves, our lifestyle, and our ways of thinking about and dealing with change (Redlener, 2007). We must "Be the change we wish to see in the world," as Gandhi implored us. In changing ourselves we might be able to avert crises before they start by creating a better society. Moreover, human well-being, both mental and physical, is tied to the state of our planet and our society. Take the madness

¹¹ <http://www.un.org/issues/>

that can ensue during times of war due to the panic and fear or after a natural disaster like Hurricane Katrina or the Tsunami . In the field of education, we must develop an approach that is capable of dealing with these challenges (Maxwell, 2008). This approach cannot simply point out the difficulties people have, but help them to understand how to make positive and proactive changes to avert personal, economic, and planetary crises. The affective education movement succeeded in bringing the social and emotional needs of children to the attention of teachers and parents, but has not succeeded in making major shifts in interpersonal and intrapersonal development in the schools. Moreover, like failed character education models, we are unlikely to have success if we treat the tools and dispositions needed to develop well-being as technical skills to be acquired through drill, rote memorization, or testing. It will require more than a well-being class period in an already crowded curriculum. We need to consider every level of a school's ecology and to ask how well-being is addressed or hampered. That is one main goal of this dissertation.

Changing Hearts and Minds

The radical pedagogy described by Freire or Apple, the multicultural vision of Banks and Gay, the critical race theory of Ladson-Billings, the ecological education of Bowers and Orr, and Noddings's vision of caring schools—all of these curricular theories seek to transform the way people view the world, their relationships, and themselves. If we want people to become culturally responsive, concerned with justice, caring, or ecologically-minded, it is essential that we focus on how to change hearts and minds. If we cannot understand how individuals become ethically astute and facilitate such growth,

then not much else will make any real difference. Without deep internal change, a change of heart, we will never achieve a more just, free or caring society.

Looking to society, we can see that the consciousness of human beings has changed over time, but it is not keeping pace with the lifestyle changes and technological advancements. Moreover, despite much technological and scientific progress, ethically speaking, not much has changed over the last few hundred years. Martin Luther King Jr. says it this way, “Through our scientific and technological genius, we have made of this world a neighborhood and yet...we have not had the ethical commitment to make of it a brotherhood” (King Jr., 1986, p. 269). Scientific ingenuity has brought tremendous changes to civilization, but it has not led to greater peace or tolerance among us, nor has it helped us to end poverty, social problems, racism, or take better care of the earth.

MLK’s words speak powerfully on this subject so I quote him at length:

When the less sensitive supporters of the status quo try to argue against some of these condemnations and challenges, they usually cite the technological marvels our society has achieved. However, that only reveals their poverty of spirit. Mammoth productive facilities with computer minds, cities that engulf the landscape and pierce the clouds, planes that almost outrace time—these are awesome, but they cannot be spiritually inspiring. Nothing in our glittering technology can raise man to new heights, because material growth has been made an end in itself, and, in the absence of moral purpose, man himself becomes smaller as the works of man become bigger. (King Jr., 1986, p. 644)

In this vacuum of ethical “purpose” and materialism it is difficult to inspire individuals to change. “When culture is degraded and vulgarity enthroned”, the social system does not build security but leads people to pull away from a “soulless” society. Thus, people are increasingly isolated and alienated from society. Communities have eroded, and malls, mass media, TV, the internet, and cell phones have begun to attempt to replace vital

communities (Oliver et al., 2002). It is no surprise then that rates of mental illness and depression are actually on the rise despite the fact that we have more medical tools than ever before in human history (Torrey & Miller, 2002; Weiss, 2005). Despite many of our technological achievements, we are still quite primitive in many ways: wars and violence, prejudice, hatred, ignorance, disregard for our environment and self-absorption.

Perhaps it is for this reason that a more humanistic science, informed by philosophy and history, has begun to consider how it can help address these problems (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Herrman et al., 2005). In fact, all the sciences are beginning to converge on the study of human consciousness. Connections and integration are hallmarks of this new approach in science (Alon, 2007; Buchanan, 2007; Buzsaki, 2007; Coleman, 2007; Couzin, 2007; Doyle & Csete, 2007; Ferguson, 2007; Fox Keller, 2007; Goldenfeld & Woese, 2007; Gordon, 2007; Knight, 2007; Lake, 2007; Making connections," 2007; McCann, 2007; Rainey, 2007; Tyson, 2007; Watts, 2007). In studying human consciousness, psychologists have often inferred healthy functioning or development by understanding disease states. As we will see in greater detail in the chapter 2, until very recently mental health has frequently been regarded as the absence of disease (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000b; Goleman, 1995; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005; C. Peterson & Seligman, 2004). From this perspective, the absence of negative emotions is considered healthy. This deficit model understanding of human health is still firmly entrenched in the schools (Harry & Klingner, 2007). IQ testing, learning disabilities, deficit models, punishment and reward, all of these school paradigms, theories, and methods were developed based on the "disease paradigm." Today we know that mental health is much more than the absence of disease (C. R.

Cloninger, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000b; Goleman, 1995; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005; C. Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Human mental health also involves the presence of positive emotions, character development, and cerebral integration and plasticity. In fact research has shown that negative emotions and positive emotions are not governed by the same underlying brain processes nor should they be thought of as a spectrum; there is a different underlying biological responses at work when someone is “feeling good” as compared to “feeling bad” (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000b; Goleman, 1995; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005; C. Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Support and encouragement are not simply rewards that lead to changes in behavior, they interact with the emotional and rational parts of the brain.

Art, culture, and giftedness help us to understand the more profound states of human health (K. Cloninger, 2005). They help give us a vision of human potential and the ethical and spiritual dimensions of life. Great works of art, giftedness of all orders, scientific invention and discovery—these are all facets of human development and consciousness that are not simply the absence of problems (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; K. Cloninger, 2005; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000b; Gardner, 1983, 1994; Spinoza, 1994; Whitehead, 1967b). The brain and the body must function in ways that are not “normal” to produce the Mona Lisa, to write Shakespeare’s Sonnets, or to discover Einstein’s theory of relativity. By studying individuals that are experiencing extreme states of health and well-being we can understand something quite different about human psychology than we do when we study disease (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Gardner, 1983; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In fact, there are principles and laws which govern healthy development that may have nothing to do with why we become ill. The Science

of Well-Being is dedicated to studying these principles of healthy development. The Science of Well-being works from the premise that within every person is a spontaneous need for happiness, understanding, and love (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; K. Cloninger, 2008; Herrman et al., 2005). Everyone asks themselves how they can have greater happiness and reduce their suffering. Even those who inflict pain on themselves find pleasure in it. By understanding healthy development, growth in self-awareness, and the development of well-being, we can begin to address the root causes of the problems which face our society and our planet.

The Science of Well-Being has a particular importance for developing modern educational theories and practices that capable of dealing with the realities of modern life. Other movements in science, particularly psychology, have had a strong impact on educational theory (Egan, 1983; Eisner, 1998, 2005; Elkind, 1999; Fagan & Wise, 2000; Olson, 2003; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2003). Various features in schools and curriculum design have found their impetus in psychology. The push to plan by objectives came out of behavioral psychology's emphasis on observable changes in behavior (Tyler, 1949). Constructivism has been very important in science instruction and in multicultural education (Banks, 2006; Bruner, 1996; Duckworth, 1995; Marie Larochelle, 1998). Social psychology's influence can be seen strongly in the push for self-regulated learners (Zimmerman, 2002). Gardner's multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983) have led to the redesign of whole school programs like New City school in St. Louis, Missouri¹². The Science of Well-Being should also prove useful in analyzing school practices and helping the field of curriculum consider how to articulate its research findings to the general

¹² <http://www.newcityschool.org/>

public (K. Cloninger, 2006b, 2008). Moreover, it can help us to understand how to engender the types of changes in hearts and minds that may catalyze fundamental and radical change in individual consciousness. We stand at the crossroads in these times. It is important that we re-question the fundamental aims and purposes of the education of children so that we can take the road that leads to well-being.

Significance

This dissertation will investigate well-being and education by studying an alternative school movement started by Jiddhu Krishnamurti, a philosopher and educator of the 20th century. Using the Science of Well-Being as a conceptual framework, this study will explore how well-being is addressed in two Krishnamurti schools: one in California and the other in England. Krishnamurti education has received practically no attention in the mainstream educational literature or in the field of curriculum. A search on ERIC reveals only 15 entry's, 3 of which are journal articles and none of which are peer-reviewed. This dissertation represents the first study to investigate the curriculum and pedagogy of Krishnamurti education in the field of curriculum.

Various alternative school movements, like Montessori, Waldorf, or Krishnamurti schools offer concrete alternatives to the emphasis on technical education found in most public schools today. In fact many alternative movements are motivated entirely by the desire to educate the “whole” person and not merely train them for a career in the global economy (Martin, 2002b; Quinn, Poirier, Faller, Gable, & Tonelson, 2006).

Krishnamurti, for example, speaks to the dangers of an approach to education that focuses only on technical outcomes:

Learning has been the ancient tradition of man, not only from books, but also about the nature and structure of the psychology of a human being. As we have neglected this entirely, there is disorder in the world, terror, violence, and all the cruel things that are taking place. We have put the worlds affairs first and not the inner. The inner, if it is not understood, educated and transformed, will always overcome the outer, however well organized it may be politically, economically and socially. This is a truth which many seem to forget. We are trying politically, legally, and socially to bring order in the outer world in which we are living, and inwardly we are confused, uncertain, anxious and in conflict. Without inward order, there will always be danger to human life. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 140)

Such an emphasis on educating multiple facets of a person, both inward and outward, in highly characteristic of alternative school movements. This makes it a fruitful area for research on well-being and education because an emphasis on well-being must wander outside the boundaries of technical education.

Serious Alternatives?

Like well-being, the subject of alternative education is not always taken seriously by public educators or by educational theorists. Few studies have been conducted that systematically research and/or compare alternative educational movements (Quinn et al., 2006). There are a number of reasons why. Generally speaking, funds are limited for research on education (Biddle, 1996). Due to the scarcity of funds most studies, especially large-scale or longitudinal studies, are conducted on the public schools because they school the vast majority of children in the United States. Consequently, there are few studies that have been published on alternative schools in peer-reviewed research journals. A search on ERIC for studies on some of the major players in the alternative education movement reveals 245 peer-reviewed articles on charter schools, 32 on Montessori schools, and 11 for Waldorf schools. Another challenge for those interested

in conducting research on alternative education is that it is an imprecise term that encompasses all education that falls outside of mainstream, traditional education (Martin, 2002b; Quinn et al., 2006). The language of discourse within these institutions is also foreign to that within mainstream education. It is therefore a bigger challenge to study alternative schools because researchers are required to familiarize themselves with the conceptual frameworks that the schools operate from (Uhrmacher, 1997). Finally, many alternative school movements are private. This means that they tend to serve families with the financial means to afford private education. Those concerned with social justice and improving schooling for the poor and underprivileged are therefore not inclined to study such movements because it deals with populations other than those they are interested in researching and supporting (M. Apple, 1979).

Despite these challenges, there is a lot of serious work going on in alternative education. Just like any other school—public or private—each alternative school has its challenges, but there is much that merits serious research. Moreover, there is only increasing demand for alternative forms of education and very little research that demonstrates effective practices (Quinn et al., 2006). The demand for “alternatives” in the form of private schools and charter schools suggest that many parents believe that something is not being addressed in the public system. In a nationwide study of charter school accountability, it was found that charter school principals think a lot about what parents want for their children and try to deliver it to them (Hill, Lake, & Celio, 2002). The authors of the study explain, “For all types of charter schools (new, converted public, and former private), principals think parents most want schools that are small, effective, and adaptive to the needs of students with special talents or disabilities” (Hill et al., 2002,

p. 36). Schools that are small allow for the kind of personal attention, individualization, and relationship that can be lacking in large, impersonal public schools (Cuban, 2004). This dissertation will shed light on one alternative school movement that has not been studied in the field of curriculum.

Mental Health and Curriculum Studies

The mental health of children is receiving increased attention in the schools (Adelman & Taylor, 2006; Herrman et al., 2005; Hurst, 2005; Maxwell, 2008; Redlener, 2007). “Rampage school killings” like Columbine or Virginia Tech have raised the issue of how to deal with mental illness and depression in the schools. Tragedies like Hurricane Katrina or 9/11 present other mental health challenges to schools (Herrman et al., 2005; Maxwell, 2008; Redlener, 2007). The plethora of anti-bullying programs, which attempt to deal with the root causes of bullying and violence in schools, are also prominent in the literature and in schools (Bennett, 2008). Mental health is intimately connected with the well-being of the individual and society. Ensuring that schools are places where children can experience well-being and learn tools they can use to develop their own well-being is one means of addressing mental health in schools. It’s always easier to prevent a catastrophe before it starts. A forest fire can be extinguished with a single glass of water in its initial stages, but if we wait it can take the whole state to put it out. Similarly, large scale societal violence and mental illness has small beginnings in individual children, which schools are in an excellent position to identify and treat (Brener, Weist, Adelman, Taylor, & Vernon-Smiley, 2006). Roughly 12 to 22 percent of all children under 18 are in need of services because they have diagnosable mental

disorders that lead them to have mental, emotional, and behavioral problems (Adelman & Taylor, 2006; Mental health: a report of the Surgeon General. , " 1999). If the definition is broadened to include psychosocial problems or those who are not maturing into responsible adults, then the reality is that more than 50 percent of students in a typical urban high school may manifest significant learning, behavioral, and emotional problems (Adelman & Taylor, 2006). Adelman and Taylor (2006) explain,

For a large proportion of these youngsters, the problems are rooted in the restricted opportunities and difficult living conditions associated with poverty. Almost every current policy discussion stresses the crisis nature of the problem in terms of future health and economic implications for individuals and for society and calls for major systemic reforms.(Adelman & Taylor, 2006, p. 294)

This is of course no surprise to those who work for or are supportive of social justice in America, but the mental health consequences of such systemic injustice and inequities are equally detrimental and may have effects that can last for a lifetime and impact culture. Although this dissertation will study students in a high socio-economic bracket, other alternative schools serving populations of children in low socio-economic brackets have been shown to have major positive impacts on children (Barr, Sadovnik, & Visconti, 2006; McDermott et al., 1996; Smarick, 2008). Further research on alternative schools in any community will help elucidate strategies for assisting the mental health of children in all communities.

The Plan of this Dissertation

As we have already seen, this dissertation will use the Science of Well-Being to take a new look at alternative education to explore how schools can attend to the well-being of children and society. The Science of Well-Being is a new field that can allow us

to explore some of the assumptions of alternative education scientifically. Alternative schools provide a rich source of data for the strategies and pedagogy that can help children grow in well-being. Specifically, this dissertation will investigate Krishnamurti Education using *Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship*. I have chosen to use this method because it places an emphasis on the appreciation of qualities in an educational environment (Eisner, 1998). It also seeks to ensure that the evaluation of those qualities, criticism, is both interesting to read and relevant to educational practice. I examine two Krishnamurti schools: one in Ojai, California, the other in Hampshire, England. By studying these two schools I hope to answer the following research questions:

1. How is well-being related to schooling?
2. In two schools dedicated to the idea of well-being and self-awareness, what specific strategies and pedagogies are used to help students cultivate self-awareness and well-being?
3. What is the significance of theories and practices aimed at increasing well-being for public schools in general?

To answer these questions I will begin with a discussion on the Science of Well-Being, alternative education, and Krishnamurti and his schools in chapter two. In chapter three I discuss the methodology used in the study. In chapters four and five, I provide rich descriptions of each of the two schools I observed during the course of this dissertation and in chapter 6 I interpret and evaluate what I saw in these two schools looking for themes. In chapter 7 I will discuss the themes and implications of the study. Finally, in chapter 8 will give concluding remarks.

Chapter II: Historical Context

Overview

In this chapter I begin by discussing the conceptual framework used in this study, the Science of Well-Being, as well as some of the research on defining and measuring well-being¹³. I cannot examine all the scientific findings on well-being, instead I focus on the research that is most germane to the present study, and to education more generally. I then discuss what is meant by alternative education. I examine many of the prominent philosophies in the alternative school movement. Finally, I focus specifically on Krishnamurti education to help the reader understand the history of that movement and the major components of the philosophy that guide the Krishnamurti school.

What is Well-Being?

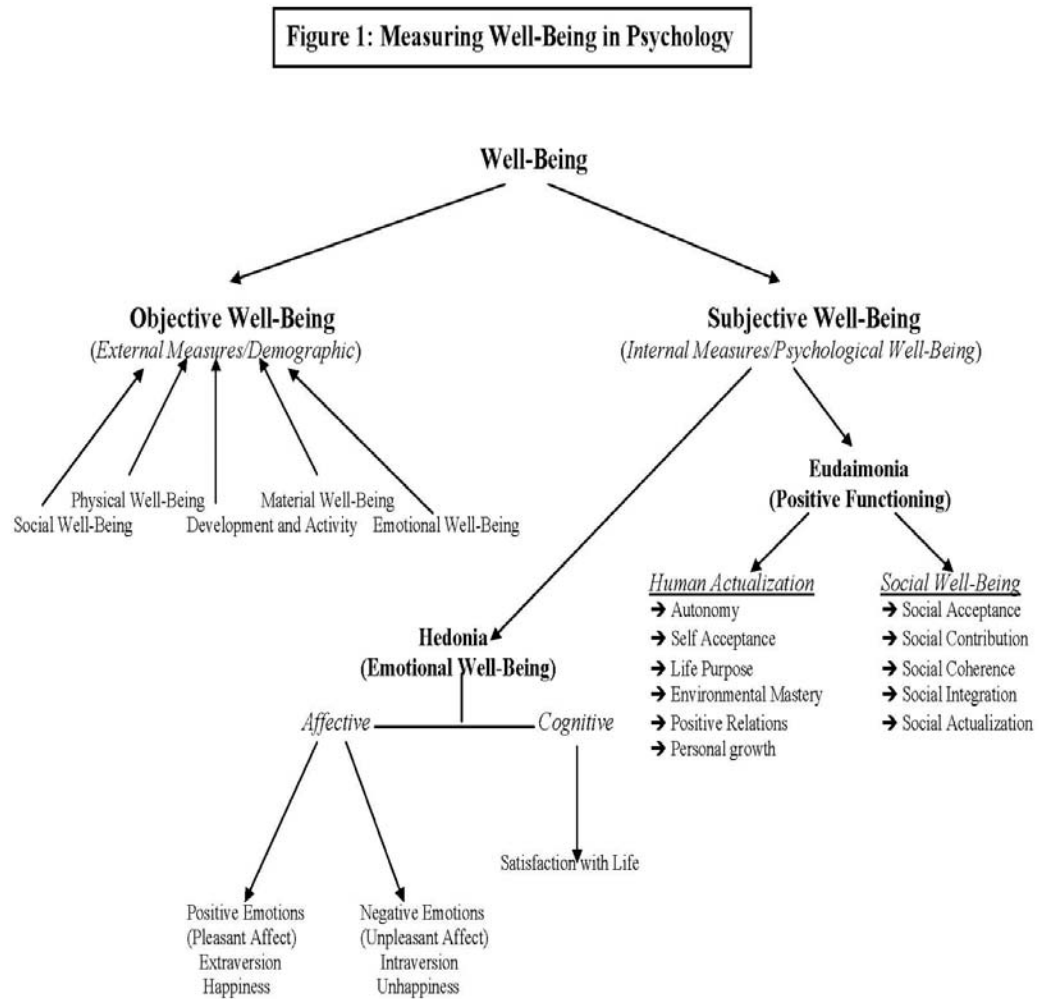
Human beings have been thinking about happiness for thousands of years, perhaps since the very beginning of human civilization (McMahon, 2006). Yet, there is still no definitive agreement on what characterizes this state of being. Kant says in his *Metaphysics of Morals* that “[...] the concept of happiness is such an indeterminate one that even though everyone wishes to attain happiness, he can never say definitively and consistently what it is that he really wishes and wills” (Kant, 1981, p. 27). As Kant states quite aptly, happiness may have no universal definition. It is conceived of differently in

¹³ Joel Spring’s work considered the role of well-being in schools (Spring, 2007), but did not consider definitions of well-being nor the means through which well-being can be cultivated. His work assumed that progressive educational methods are sufficient to help individuals live a happy and long life, but as this review of the research in the Science of Well-Being will show it is far from a given. For this reason, I will spend quite a bit of time reviewing the necessary elements from the Science of Well-Being. Although I will not have the space in this chapter to unpack all the relationships between the Science of Well-Being and curriculum theory, I will do so in the analysis of the data and in my discussion of the conclusions and themes from the research.

different cultures, but it is a universal feature of all cultures (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Diener & Suh, 2000; McMahon, 2002; Seligman, 2002; Veenhoven, 2007). Everyone—regardless of their age, culture, gender, race, etc.—desires happiness, even if they call it by another name.

While philosophers and religions have debated the nature of happiness and well-being for centuries, the concept has received new attention from an unexpected place in recent years—science. Since the early 50's and 60's, particularly in the U.S., scientists have been very interested in attempting to measure well-being and happiness (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Diener, 1984; Diener & Suh, 2000; Hird, 2003; Huppert et al., 2005; Keyes, 2006; Richard Ryan et al., 2008; C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008). The origins of this movement evolved out of the interest in healing from the physical, psychological, social, and moral devastation of the second world war, and preventing it from manifesting again (Keyes, 2006). The search for healing and health led to a new commitment to social welfare, diversity, and a greater appreciation of the individual. This approach influenced many different branches of social thought including the philosophical (e.g., Phenomenology and Existentialism), sociological (e.g., Symbolic Interactionism), and psychological (e.g., Cognitive Psychology) movements that focused on the importance of a person's outlooks, perceptions, and the search for personal and existential meaning (Keyes, 2006; C Ryff, 1989). Research on well-being emerged with this backdrop of humanistic science in the late 1950's to improve social policy and track social change.

There have been three distinct branches of research on well-being in psychology over the last 50 years. These branches or traditions are complementary but distinct (Figure 1). The first branch of study researches what is referred to as “objective



well-being.” Early attempts to measure well-being relied on “objective measures” such as social economic status, housing status, quality of health, unemployment, GDP, marital

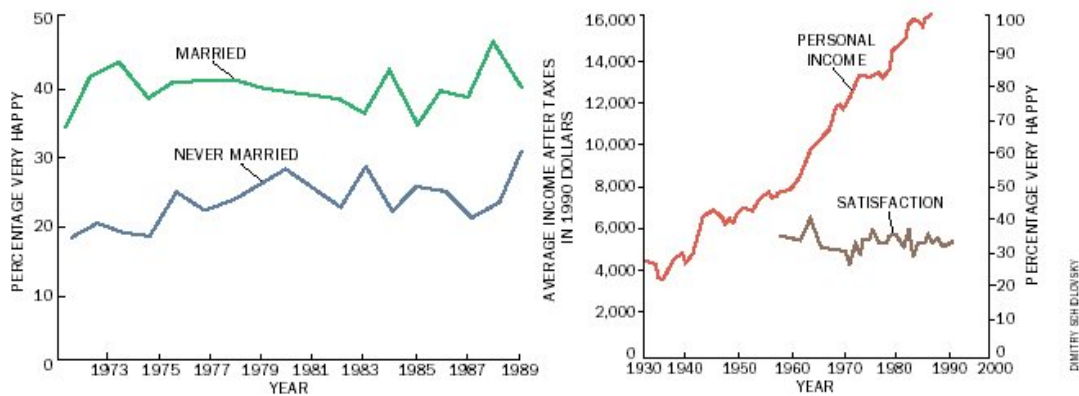
status, educational level, income, and other demographic variables (Diener, 1984; Gasper, 2005). Much as it is today, there was a widespread belief in the 50's and 60's that wealth and prosperity can lead to a happy life; however, as the standard of living has increased, objective measures of subjective well-being have remained stagnant or unaffected and levels of anxiety, depression, and use of anti-depression medication have actually risen. (C. R. Cloninger, 2004 **See Graph 1**; Diener & Seligman, 2004; Veenhoven, 2007). Although material prosperity is correlated with happiness, it does not guarantee its attainment (**Graph 1**). Other studies have shown that beyond a minimal level (50,000 to 90,000 in America according to studies done in 2004) income does not impact reports of satisfaction with life (Reichhardt, 2006). Money may be necessary for happiness up to a point, but it is not sufficient¹⁴. So objective measures, such as a country's GDP, have been found to be insufficient for measuring societal well-being. A widespread interest in finding more valid measures of well-being has arisen from this realization (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

The demographic measures of objective well-being provided a broad understanding of societal well-being, but did not give any account of the level of well-being personally experienced by the individual. Since the mid-80's when Diener developed the Satisfaction with Life scale, research on "subjective well-being" has exploded (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1999; Myers & Diener, 1996). Subjective well-being has been measured in most countries throughout the world (Diener & Suh, 2000;

¹⁴ Similarly, some hope that through advances in modern science and medicine we can develop technologies that might make people happy. For example, many people suffering from depression turn to anti-depressants and other drugs to try to become happy. However, taking medication may do little to affect real change in an individual unless the individual takes steps to change the attitudes and behaviors that led them to depression in the first place (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). Here too, strict medical approaches may be useful, but are not sufficient to promote long-lasting satisfaction and harmony.

Veenhoven, 2007). The idea was simple, we need to consult individual people about their perspectives on their happiness instead of inferring it from demographic variables like income, which are only weakly correlated with people’s own perception of their

Graph 1: This graph shows data on individuals who participated in a survey called “satisfaction with life” inventory (Myers & Diener, 1996). It demonstrates that overall satisfaction with life stays more or less constant despite changes in personal income. On the other side, we see that individuals who have loving relationships in their life (i.e. married) tend to report a greater proportion of positive emotions and a smaller proportion of negative emotions (Myers & Diener, 1996). So love can have an influence on satisfaction with life, but not income.



well-being (Gasper, 2005). However, while the general concept of subjective well-being as it is distinguished from objective well-being is clear, psychologists still disagree on what constellation of variables is necessary for defining well-being, and therefore how to measure a person’s subjective well-being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Diener, 1984; Diener & Suh, 2000; Felce, 1997; Hird, 2003; Huppert et al., 2005; Keyes, 2006; C. Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Richard Ryan et al., 2008; C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008; Veenhoven, 2007). Many important variables are used to try to define well-being, such as number and quality of interpersonal relations, social inclusion, personal development, physical well-being, self-determination, material well-being, emotional well-being, satisfaction, dignity and respect, and self-actualization.

The two main branches of subjective well-being research are referred to as Hedonistic well-being (emotional well-being) and Eudaimonic well-being (psychological and social well-being) (**Figure 1**). Both branches are oriented towards subjective well-being, but they each focus on different aspects of the individual (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2001; C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008). The hedonistic tradition focuses generally on emotional well-being, defined as the presence of positive emotions, the absence of negative ones, and satisfaction with life. The other branch, the eudaimonic tradition, focuses on living a full and deeply satisfying life (Deci & Ryan, 2008; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008)

Diener's work on subjective well-being typifies the hedonistic approach to well-being research. Diener distinguishes between affective and cognitive aspects of emotional well-being (**Figure 1**), namely that there is a difference between how we *feel* about our life, and how we *think* about our life (Diener et al., 1999). Affective hedonic well-being is generally characterized by the presence of positive affect and the absence of negative affect. Many scales exist that measure this, including the PANAS (Positive and Negative Affect Scale) and the Affectometer (Hird, 2003). By contrast, the cognitive subjective well-being of an individual is generally assessed by global measures of satisfaction and/or satisfaction in specific life domains like work, family, or one's health. The most prominent scale measuring the cognitive aspects of hedonic well-being is the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, 1984; Pavot & Diener, 1993). Positive psychology, particularly the work of Martin Seligman began as a strand of the hedonic tradition because of its emphasis on positive emotions and satisfaction with life, however

as the tradition has evolved it has included elements from the eudaimonic tradition (C. Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2002; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

The eudaimonic tradition is more skeptical of people's reports of being "happy" because of the narrow focus of defining happiness as the presence of positive emotions, the absence of negative emotions, and a sense of satisfaction with life. Stated simply, just because someone says they are happy does not mean that they are necessarily psychologically well (Deci & Ryan, 2008; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008). Ryan and Deci (2001) argue that while hedonic well-being may be useful as an operational definition of well-being, it does not help us foster well-being in individuals, whereas *eudaimonia* helps us functionally by providing a means through which an individual can pursue their own well-being. This branch of well-being research believes that one should not necessarily focus on positive emotional states, but rather on living well and the actualization of one's human potential. From this perspective, well-being is not an end state, but a process of realizing one's true nature (Waterman, 2007). This viewpoint finds its origins in Aristotelian philosophy which aimed at a state of eudaimonia¹⁵ or "human flourishing." For Aristotle this means living one's life in accordance with the "highest virtue," which is

¹⁵ The etymology of *eudaimonia* is complex, although it is sometimes translated as happiness. *Eudaimonia* brought together two notions, good fortune and good luck. McMahan (2006) explains, "...*eudaimonia* thus contains within it a notion of fortune—for to have good daimon on your side, a guiding spirit, is to be lucky—and a notion of divinity, for a *daimon* is an emissary of the gods who watches over each of us, acting invisibly on the Olympians' behalf" (pp. 3-4). However, through the philosophy of Socrates and Plato, this *eudaimonic* notion of happiness was revised and critiqued. Socrates and Plato took this notion of happiness and made it attainable by man. McMahan (2006, pp. 36-37) recounts it this way:

Indeed, Socrates's vision entails a thoroughgoing rejection of *all* previous conceptions of what it might mean to be happy...Happiness is not hedonism. Nor is it ultimately to be found in those pathways of misdirected desire that have long deceived men and women in pursuit: good fortune, pleasure, power, riches, fame, even health or familial love...To follow in his footsteps is to leave behind a world in which one's happiness is controlled by the chaos of fortune or the predeterminations of fate. Happiness, Socrates insists, lies within our power.

“the best thing in us” (C. Ryff & Singer, 2008, p. 17). This type of inward maturation or self-realization has been referred to as “psychological well-being” and is the essence of the “positive functioning” described in the eudaimonic tradition (Deci & Ryan, 2008; C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 1998, 2008). There are many different scales designed to measure eudaimonistic well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Keyes, 1998, 2006; C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008). In searching for ways of measuring psychological well-being, psychologists drew on work from developmental and personality psychology (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Keyes, 1998, 2006; C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008). After researching developmental models of actualization,¹⁶ Ryff identified six key dimensions (**Figure 1**) of psychological well-being which represent “frequently endorsed aspects of what it means to be healthy, well, and fully functioning,” (C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008, p. 19) including self-acceptance, purpose in life, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, and positive relationships. Keyes (1998) offered another measure of subjective well-being that focused on relationships with others and the world. He termed this construct “social well-being” (**Figure 1**) which is composed of social integration, social coherence, social acceptance, social actualization, and social contribution (Keyes, 1998).

Integrating the Various Notions of Well-Being

As research on subjective well-being has advanced, many have begun to see the importance of both hedonic and eudaimonic conceptions of well-being. Despite the

¹⁶ Researchers cited in Ryff’s article include: Rogers’ *fully functioning person*, Maslow’s *self-actualization*, Jung’s *individuation*, Jahoda’s *mental health*, Frankl’s *will to meaning*, Erikson’s *personal development*, Allport’s *maturity*, Neugarten’s *executive processes of personality*, and Buhler’s *basic life tendencies* (C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008).

theoretical differences, some researchers have noticed that it requires both hedonic and eudaimonic conceptions to adequately describe well-being (Ryan and Deci, 2001).

Keyes has also tried to develop a scale that examines objective, hedonic, and eudaimonistic factors to assess an individual's well-being (Keyes, 1998). Inevitably we can question what the relationship is between and among all the variables and components of well-being we have seen thus far in this review.

C. Robert Cloninger has spent the last 20 years researching that question (C. R. Cloninger, 2000b, 2004; C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993). He explains that there are essentially four ways we can attempt to measure well-being: positive and negative emotions, satisfaction with life, the expression of virtues, and personality¹⁷. Cloninger argues that these four aspects of well-being tend to converge as one develops along the path to coherence and well-being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). That is to say, people who experience deep satisfaction with life on a regular basis also tend to have a mature personality, a sense of joy, and the expression of virtue present in their lives. That said, there is a great deal of room for divergence when one is not in a deep state of well-being. Cloninger argues that part of the reason for confusion in how to properly measure well-being is due to the lack of a proper understanding of the dynamic relationship between the various aspects of well-being as one moves along the path towards a highly mature or coherent state (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). Understanding the various relationship between and among the various components of well-being is a difficult task that requires scientists to wander outside of the traditional boundaries of

¹⁷ Psychological well-being and positive functioning draw on work from psychiatry and development psychology that discuss the development of personality and the expression of virtue (Keyes, 1998, 2006; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008). There are many insights from psychiatry and theories of development that can assist us in understanding how to foster well-being.

science and look in interdisciplinary ways at systems of variables and not single variables or constructs (Alon, 2007; Buchanan, 2007; Buzsaki, 2007; Coleman, 2007; Couzin, 2007; Doyle & Csete, 2007; Ferguson, 2007; Fox Keller, 2007; Goldenfeld & Woese, 2007; Gordon, 2007; Knight, 2007; Lake, 2007; Making connections," 2007; McCann, 2007; Rainey, 2007; Tyson, 2007; Watts, 2007). The Science of Well-Being is an attempt to understand these dynamic interactions among the complex adaptive system that is a human being in search of well-being.

What is the Science of Well-Being?

In the early years of research on subjective well-being it was largely assumed that income had practically little or no impact on reports of satisfaction with life (Diener & Seligman, 2004; Diener et al., 1999; Kahneman, 2008). However, after doing further research, Daniel Kahneman and Ed Diener were forced to recognize that they had overlooked some important factors, which point to the fact that income is a significant factor on measures of life satisfaction (Kahneman, 2008). They had mistakenly believed the effects to be small because they only made within-country comparisons and not between-country comparisons. As basic needs are fulfilled by a certain income, as is theorized in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the effect of income on life satisfaction plateaus; however, across all countries there appears to be some basic standard which must first be met. Kahneman, the 2002 winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, commented, "We have been wrong and now we know it. I suppose this means that there is a Science of Well-Being, even if we are not doing it very well" (Kahneman, 2008, p. 1). As Kahneman points out here, work on the Science of Well-Being is in its early

stages. It will take years to develop a comprehensive and integrative theory that can explain the interactions and developmental processes necessary for the cultivation of well-being. Still, real progress has been made in developing such a theory (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005).

Simply stated, the Science of Well-Being is the study of the interrelationships between all of the factors that lead to well-being, and the development of practical strategies for the cultivation of well-being in a society, a community, and an individual (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005). As Herrman et al. (2005) explain, “This core concept of mental health is consistent with its wide and varied interpretation across cultures. Mental health and mental illnesses are determined by multiple and interacting social, psychological and biological factors, just as health and illness in general” (Herrman et al., 2005, p. XIII). This means that if society is dysfunctional, an individual’s mental health and thereby their well-being will be adversely affected (Herrman et al., 2005). If our physical health is not well, it is difficult to have positive thoughts or emotions¹⁸.

Another major feature of the Science of Well-Being is the understanding that health is much more than the absence of disease (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000b; Diener, 1984; Herrman et al., 2005; RM Ryan & Deci, 2001; C. Ryff & Singer, 1998; Seligman, 2002; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Veenhoven, 2007). Science advanced greatly over the last century by studying

¹⁸ There is an interesting exception to this called the disability paradox: people with disabilities often are paradoxically high in well-being (Albrecht & Devlieger, 1999). Albrecht and Devlieger contend that , “..for both those who report that they have a good and those who say they have a poor quality of life, quality of life is dependent upon finding a balance between body, mind and spirit in the self and on establishing and maintaining an harmonious set of relationships within the person's social context and external environment.” Thus, greater psychological well-being seems to compensate for less objective well-being.

dysfunction. By understanding the dysfunctions in human biology and health, we were able to gain insight into normal functioning. It was generally assumed in the science of the 20th century that healthy functioning was simply the absence of dysfunction. One prominent example of this type of reasoning in psychology can be seen in behavioral psychologists early assumption that pleasure and pain were two ends of one spectrum (Esch & Stefano, 2004). Punishment and reward were two ways to get to the same result. If we studied the biology and psychology of pain, we would understand the functioning of pleasure. Of course, we now understand that pleasure and pain affect the brain in different ways and rely upon different neurotransmitters and hormones (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Esch & Stefano, 2004). For example, we can be satisfied and happy and yet make painful sacrifices for others, like a mother for a child. So it is not accurate to consider pleasure and pain to occupy opposite ends of the same spectrum. Similarly, to understand the full range of health we need to study healthy functioning, not simply disease functioning (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003; C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000b; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005; Ickovics & Park, 1998; C. Ryff & Singer, 1998; Seligman, 2002; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

We can analyze well-being at a number of different levels. At the level of society (macro), community (meso), or the individual (micro) (Herrman et al., 2005). Problems with individual well-being (micro-level) can lead to problems at the community level (meso) or societal level of a country (macro-level). Similarly meso-level problems can impact the micro-level or macro-level, and so on and so forth. War demonstrates this point. War destabilizes countries and towns, and this leads to a disturbed infrastructure, economic downturn, and poor health services. This in turn results in poor nutrition and

the spread of disease, as well as despair and fear within the people (Herrman et al., 2005). This can lead to a culture of fear in a community, which can in turn impact individual and societal level phenomenon. Psychological trauma in war can sometimes have generational effects due to stress disorders and problems with readjustment to organized society (Cole & Flanagin, 2008). It is a downward spiral. Conversely, but through the same mechanisms, times of peace and prosperity help create environments that are more conducive to the development of physical and mental well-being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Fry, 2006; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005). There is, therefore, a strong link between the protection of basic civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of people and their mental and physical well-being (Herrman et al., 2005). However, growth in individual well-being requires more than excellent environmental or cultural conditions, it requires satisfaction and the development of character and virtue within an individual (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003; C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000b; C. Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman, 2002).

To adequately approach the cultivation of well-being in individuals and society requires a systems-level approach that integrates views from multiple disciplines. Informed by philosophy, art, and culture, the Science of Well-Being integrates research from neurobiology, psychology, anthropology, genetics, social science and economics, education, health sciences, ecology and climate change, and evolutionary biology (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Herrman et al., 2005; Huppert et al., 2005). By addressing the ancient philosophical concerns regarding the “good life” in a scientific and rigorous manner, the Science of Well-Being works to integrate insights gleaned from an understanding of human origins from evolutionary biology and anthropology, with our understanding of

the brain from neurobiology, and research in subjective well-being and positive psychology, as well as our understanding of physical health learned from medicine. By more clearly defining the proper functioning of a healthy human being, we can better facilitate our societal, cultural, artistic, and spiritual evolution (Bruner, 1996; C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Feinberg & Keenan, 2005; Fry, 2006; Huppert et al., 2005; Huxley, 1959; Povinelli, 2000; Premack & Premack, 1996; Rogers, 1972b; Tomasello, 1999; Tulving, 2002; Veenhoven, 2007; Voltaire, 1994).

Exploring the Science of Well-Being

The Science of Well-Being is an interdisciplinary and integrative field drawing on research from numerous fields. This section of the chapter is devoted to exploring some of the concepts from the Science of Well-Being that are relevant to the analysis of educational practice. It is by no means a comprehensive review of all the research in the field, but it will summarize some of the major tenets. Specifically, this section will explore the following concepts from the Science of Well-Being: positive views of human nature and human psychology, character development and the practices of well-being, learning and memory systems, and growth and development of self-awareness.

Positive Views of Human Nature and Human Psychology

As psychology began to make its break from philosophy, the conflicts of the parent were visited upon the child. (Wescott, 1968, p. 25)

Wescott contends that the epistemological debates in philosophy were merely transmitted into psychology when it broke away from the field of philosophy. Although our philosophical and metaphysical views express themselves subtly and implicitly in our

outlook on the world, they are very powerful. Psychological and educational theories are dramatically influenced by philosophical beliefs even if they are never explicitly declared.¹⁹

In his book *Feeling Good: The Science of Well-Being*, Cloninger (2004) sought to systematically explore how different views of human nature have hindered or advanced the various branches of psychology concerned with the cultivation of well-being²⁰. Starting from the basis that health is much more than the absence of disease, Cloninger sought to examine the philosophy of life held by people throughout history that displayed remarkable gifts in art, science, mathematics, politics, and philosophy. He finally settled on a number of individuals who have played a fundamental role in the development of western civilization (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). After analyzing their philosophical beliefs he found that these exceptional individuals held a remarkably similar set of core beliefs. He chose the designation “positive” to signify the positive view of human potential and the constructive role these philosophers have played in the cultural advance of civilization. The individuals who have developed these theories have held a set of

¹⁹ The reader will notice that I use quotes from various philosophers throughout this chapter of the dissertation. I am using these quotes and my discussion of philosophy to highlight certain concepts that are important for the study, but I recognize that I could write entire chapters or even dissertations on some of the concepts they elucidate. My purpose here is not to analyze the philosophical concepts using the tools of philosophy, but rather to deal with the central question of the dissertation on the relationship between well-being and education. That said, I am using the quotes for a number of different reasons. First, I am seeking to look at the philosophical underpinnings of the psychological work I use in the dissertation. Second, I use it to highlight certain points. Lastly, I use the quotes because the philosopher gets at the issues much better than I am capable of doing. For those who are unaccustomed to such use of philosophical thought, I ask for your patience and understanding.

²⁰ As we’ve already seen, much of the modern work on subjective well-being is rooted in the ancient Greek notion of eudaimonia, particularly the ideas of Aristotle. (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Keyes, 2006; RM Ryan & Deci, 2001; Richard Ryan et al., 2008; C Ryff, 1989; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008). Cloninger argues that on the surface Aristotelian views of eudaimonic well-being seem appealing, but a deeper analysis of the Aristotle’s metaphysics and underlying assumptions of human nature reveal dualistic thinking that ultimately impedes the natural development of well-being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). Instead of basing his notion of the development of well-being on Aristotelian thought he turned instead to Plato to see if Aristotle’s teacher had solved the dualistic dilemma.

common beliefs about being, knowledge, and conduct that we can call the positive philosophy (see **Table 1**). Cloninger (2004) argues that the positive humanistic philosophy is helpful for understanding the psychology of happiness and well-being.

This isn't to say that it is the only view of human nature that one can have or that it is the "best." Rather, Cloninger argues it has greater explanatory power for understanding the extremes of well-being.

Table 1: The Basic Assumptions of Positive Philosophy. All positive philosophers have held the same core beliefs about being, knowledge, and conduct.

Being:	Monism (universal unity of being): All things that actually or potentially exist are indivisibly related through a common universal source.
Knowledge:	Wisdom and rationality are the immediate and effortless consequences of self-awareness leading to coherence of rational intuition.
Conduct:	Rational enjoyment of life and selfless love are the spontaneous expression of freedom of will by a self-aware being.

Regarding being, positive philosophers are monistic. That is, they recognize that all that actually or potentially exists is a part of one, interrelated whole. It is truly a universal unity of being that is inseparable. This does not imply that there is no diversity in space and time, but that all things come from a unity beyond the space-time continuum. Using the terminology of quantum physics, this unity and inseparability can be called "non-locality" (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). Modern physics postulates that all things are at some level fundamentally inseparable because there is a universal field of energy from which all material things originate and consequently return (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). In his words, "The appearance of duality or independence of things is an approximation that breaks down when we consider the equivalence of mass and energy, quantum phenomena, or the uniformity of natural laws throughout the universe..." (C. R.

Cloninger, 2004, p. 9). Monism, as Cloninger points out in this quote, is non-dualistic. That is, the positive philosophers are not dualistic in their descriptions of being. All things, including human beings exist in the universal unity of being. For example, the brain and the mind are neither independent nor the same. Rather, they are interrelated aspects of a single source.

Regarding knowledge, positive philosophers assume that human intuition allows the immediate perception of truths, which are aspects of the universal unity of being. These truths are not revealed in a single experience. There is a step-wise increase in awareness of truth over time. Through a slow evolution individuals become increasingly wise and coherent in their understanding of the world. This increase of intuitive awareness of truth is aided by reasoning, but does not depend on it.

Regarding conduct, positive philosophers assume that as one grows in self-awareness it leads to a freedom of one's will from prior conditioning. That is, as we grow in wisdom, we become increasingly fluid, flexible, and able to adapt to the world based on our understanding of the present moment and not based on past experience. In Cloninger's words,

Our will is less and less influenced by the past and increasingly influenced by our understanding of what is true and adaptive in the present. As our awareness of the of the cosmic order increases, our freedom is naturally expressed as rational enjoyment of life, which includes heightened awareness of all our senses (physical and intuitive) as well as selfless love and service to others rather than self-centered motives." (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, p. 11)

An increase in self-awareness leads to freedom and a deeper awareness of the truth, which enables one to be more and more selfless instead of egocentric. A partial list of the positive philosophers can be seen in **Table 2**.

Table 2: A partial list of positive philosophers

Philosopher	Location	Time Period
Antiquity		
David	Israel	1035-962 B.C.
Elijah	Israel	927-962 B.C.
Homer	Greece	8 th Century B.C.
Isaiah	Israel	777-680 B.C.
Jeremiah	Israel	649-570 B.C.
Greek Classical Age		
Pythagoras	Greece	575-500 B.C.
Phidias	Greece	493-430 B.C.
Plato	Greece	428-348 B.C.
Diogenes	Greece	400-320 B.C.
Archimedes	Greece	287-212 B.C.
Neoplatonism and Christianity in the Roman Empire		
Cicero	Italy	106-43 B.C.
Plutarch	Greece/Rome	46-119 A.D.
Clement of Alexandria	Egypt	150-215 A.D.
Iamblichus	Syria	250-330 A.D.
Augustine	Africa	354-430 A.D.
Benedict	Italy	480-547 A.D.
Arabic Golden Age		
Ali	Arabia	660-661 A.D.
Al-Farabi	Turkistan	878-950 A.D.
Al-Biruni	Afghanistan	973-1048 A.D.
Al-Ghazali	Iran	1059-1111 A.D.
Ibn Al-Arabi	Spain	1169-1240 A.D.
Western Scholastic Period		
Peter Abelard	France	1079-1144 A.D.
Albertus Magnus	Germany	1200-1280 A.D.
Duns Scotus	Scotland	1266-1308 A.D.
Western Renaissance		
Petrarch	Italy	1304-1374 A.D.
Boccaccio	Italy	1313-1375 A.D.
Brunelleschi	Italy	1377-1446 A.D.
Leonardo	Italy	1452-1519 A.D.
Enlightenment		
Montaigne	France	1533-1592 A.D.
Pascal	France	1623-1662 A.D.
Spinoza	The Netherlands	1632-1677 A.D.
Voltaire	France	1694-1778 A.D.
Transcendentalism		
Hegel	Germany	1770-1831 A.D.
Lamartine	France	1790-1869 A.D.
Gandhi	India	1869-1948 A.D.
Krishnamurti	India/United States	1895-1986 A.D.

The views of positive philosophy can be contrasted with those of negative philosophy, which can be described as the antithetical views of positive philosophers. The term “negative” is used to denote a direct opposition to the positive philosophy and a negative view of human potential and the destructive role these philosophers have played in the cultural advance of civilization. The views of the negative philosophers are summarized in **Table 3**.

Table 3: The Basic Assumptions of Negative Philosophy

Being:	Dualism (The universe is fragmentary and composed of essentially separate individuals and things with independent causes.)
Knowledge:	Probabilistic and relativistic pragmatism (Human beings are immediately aware only of fragmentary information from their physical senses. There is no absolute or universal truth, only differences judged by the individual according to practical consequences.)
Conduct:	Freedom is the opportunity for individuals to strive to maximize their self-interests and desires for wish fulfillment.

Some negative philosophers have been famous in their own right, although sometimes infamous. Nonetheless several prominent philosophers adhere to the negative philosophy. Protagoras (485-410 BC), David Hume (1711-1776), and Niccolo Macchiavelli (1469-1527) are some of the best known negative philosophers. Ayn Rand and Adolf Hitler are good modern examples of negative philosophers. Negative philosophers regard being as dualistic, knowledge as probabilistic and relativistic pragmatism, and conduct as the freedom to pursue one’s self-interest. Cloninger (2004) summarized the views of negative philosophers in the following manner:

In summary, the negative philosophy is based on assumptions of separateness, self-determination, and self-interest. Throughout history the negative philosophy has sanctioned and encouraged pride, greed, and violence, although sometimes disguised in genteel or self-deceptive terms such as pragmatism or protection of national security. Nevertheless,

negative philosophy is useful because it shows us what is not compatible with well-being. One approach to the path to wisdom and well-being is the progressively complete negation of the assumptions of negative philosophers. (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, p. 19)

Fortunately few individuals have held all the views encapsulated by the negative philosophy. Most of the time, individuals or individual theories only adhere to certain parts of the negative philosophy (like dualism or the promotion of self-interest). In sum, the negative philosophy always leads people away from well-being and can therefore be useful to understand so as to move towards well-being.

The metaphysical views of being, knowledge, and conduct given by positive philosophy are not meant to be an appeal to authority. Modern science has confirmed the underlying views. Cloninger offers a detailed analysis of the evidence for the metaphysical views of positive philosophy in each of these disciplines (C. R. Cloninger, 2004).

As has also been observed in the history of philosophy, psychologists disagree on the importance of the body, the thoughts, and the spirit in the development of well-being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993; Wescott, 1968). Elsewhere I have explored the relevance of these different ontological assumptions in curriculum theory (K. Cloninger, 2005, 2006a, 2006b)²¹. Some psychologists and educators only recognize the physical sensations of the body as real and emphasize the body's role in determining human desires and fears. Others hold views similar to those of rational idealists and humanists, like Kant or Freud, who believe in the separateness of mind and body (mind-body dualism), and emphasize the role of

²¹ Our views of human nature have strong impacts on how we educate children as we will see later in this dissertation.

rationality in shaping character and defining human dignity. A third perspective that can be considered transcendental is that of Hegel, Emerson, and Krishnamurti who think of the human being as a “whole,” and emphasize the role of intuition in the integration of experience. These intuitive aspects of consciousness refer to the awareness we have of the world in the absence of conscious rational processes (K. Cloninger, 2006b)²². An integral part of the Science of Well-Being is a consideration of the whole person and the interactions of the three aspects of the person: body, thoughts, and psyche. C.R. Cloninger (2004) defines the psyche as “the immaterial intelligent part of the person that provides personality with its inward structure, dynamic drive, and creative response to the demands it encounters during development” (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, p. 36, 2006a). Like wave-particle duality, the human being can be considered not as three separate substances, but as one substance or whole that has three different aspects or modes like light (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a; K. Cloninger, 2005, 2006b). C.R. Cloninger (2004, 2006) has outlined comprehensive methods for measuring these three aspects of the human being of human life. As we saw during our discussion of definitions of well-being in psychology, different traditions or branches of research of subjective well-being emphasize different aspects of the human being. There is a relationship between the various aspects of the human being and our well-being. The presence of positive or negative emotions is more linked to the body, the sense of satisfaction with life emphasizes our rational and cognitive processes—thought. Eudaimonic concepts of human actualization are rational (thought-based) and touch on the development of the psyche. The fundamental goal of the Science of Well-Being (Cloninger, 2004) is to

²² I have explored the various perspectives on intuition in the history of philosophy and their relevance to educational theory in other papers (K. Cloninger, 2006b).

understand how individuals progress in their self-awareness of the three aspects of the being along the path of well-being²³.

Character Development and the Practices of Well-Being

As we saw in our discussion of the advances in the study of subjective well-being, the development of character and virtue is an integral part of the Science of Well-Being (C. R. Cloninger, 2000b, 2004, 2006a; C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993; C. R. Cloninger & Svrakic, 1997; C. R. Cloninger, Svrakic, & Svrakic, 1997). The study of human character and virtue is bound up with the search for human dignity in philosophy (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 2008; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008). Cloninger (1993, 2004) refers to three concepts of human dignity in philosophy, which correspond to concepts of human character in psychology that he has called self-directedness, cooperativeness, and self-transcendence. These three traits are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. The simplest claim, made by Locke, Nietzsche, and others argues that human dignity comes through self-determination. Locke, for example, argued that human beings have freedom and responsibility in conduct because they possess self-awareness and reasoning ability. This concept has been developed in psychology as “autonomy,” “internal locus of control,” “agency,” “self-efficacy,” or “self-directedness,” an aspect of human character that can be described as responsibility, hopeful purpose, and resourcefulness (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993; Zimmerman, 2002). The second character trait of cooperativeness can be traced in philosophy to Kant, who argued in the

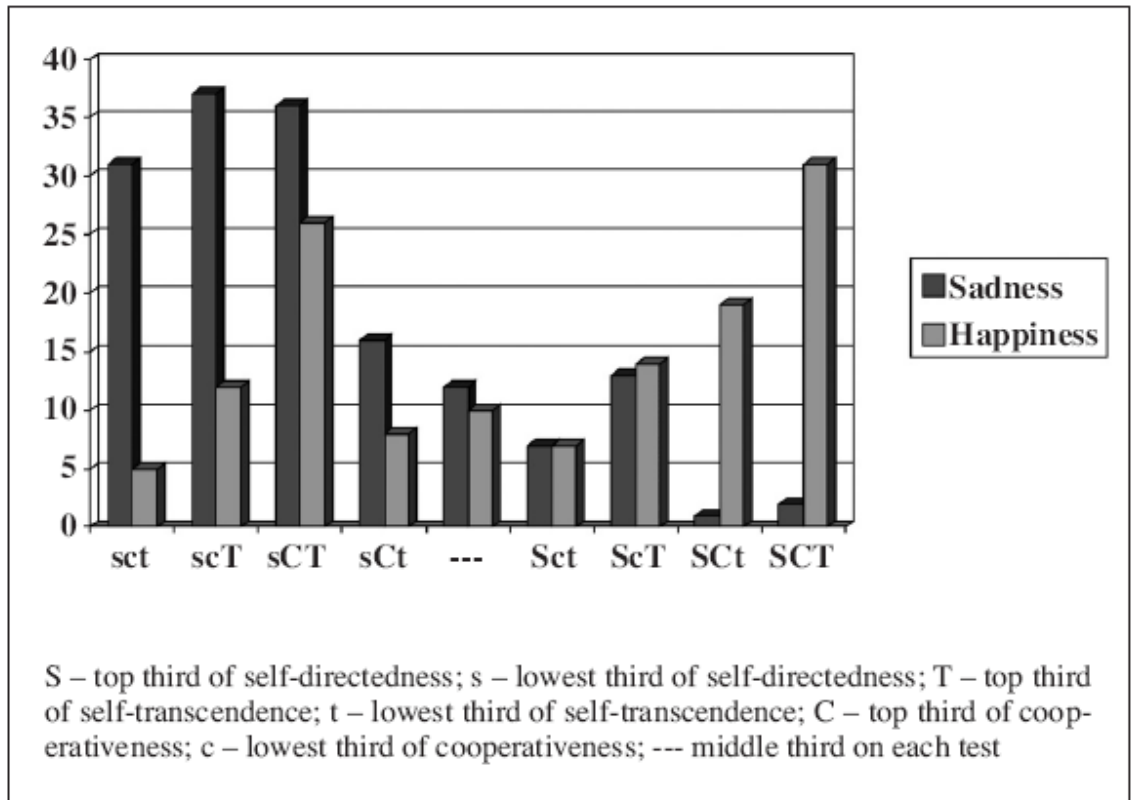
²³ Cloninger (2004) refers to this process of development as the path of the psyche. He argues that in order to continue to move forward as a field, psychiatry must seek to understand the development of the psyche.

Metaphysics of Morals that only a person is an end in itself and never a means (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993; Kant, 1981). Like the golden rule, Kant contends that a rational person must also recognize and tolerate the dignity of others because he or she also deserves the same treatment. According to Kant, fraternity and dignity are based on rationality and freedom of will and that out of respect for other people one should seek to be tolerant, empathic, and cooperative. In the philosophy of Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, transcendentalists like Emerson and Thoreau, and in the work of existential philosopher and psychiatrist Karl Jaspers, we see a third concept of human dignity, that of self-transcendence. According to Jaspers, we are transcendent when we allow ourselves to be spontaneously aware of the universal unity and freedom inherent in being in the world, giving rise to love and faith in what transcends our transient material existence (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993). These three character traits can also be understood as the three branches of mental self-government: executive functions (self-directedness), legislative functions (cooperativeness), and judicial functions (self-transcendence) (C. R. Cloninger, 2000b, 2004, 2006a).

Work on the development of personality has shown that the well-being of humans depends on the expression of these three character traits (C. R. Cloninger, 2000b, 2004, 2006b; C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993; C. R. Cloninger & Svrakic, 1997; C. R. Cloninger et al., 1997). Similar to findings regarding eudaimonic well-being, research from the Science of Well-Being has shown that the process of character development is considered key to sustainable happiness; one must “do good” to “feel good.” Cloninger suggests that character growth leads to increases in self-

awareness, which is essential for the development of well-being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a). Furthermore, work in positive psychology and positive psychiatry has shown that it is possible to improve one's character thereby increasing well-being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a; Seligman, 2002). Randomized controlled trials have shown that one can effectively enhance well-being in students and the general population (C. R. Cloninger, 2006a; Emmons & ME, 2003; Seligman, 2002). Cloninger has also developed a scale for evaluating growth in personality by measuring character and temperament that he calls the TCI or *Temperament and Character Inventory* (C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993; C. R. Cloninger & Svrakic, 1997). The test has been translated into 9 languages and its validity verified throughout the world (e.g. Brändström et al., 1998; Gutiérrez et al., 2001; Pelissolo et al., 2005). As we have already discussed, the character traits are self-directedness (i.e., responsible, purposeful, and resourceful), cooperativeness (i.e., tolerant, helpful, compassionate), and self-transcendence (i.e., intuitive, judicious, spiritual). Research has shown that high scorers in all these character traits have frequent positive emotions (i.e., happy, joyful, satisfied, optimistic) and infrequent negative emotions (i.e., anxious, sad, angry, pessimistic) (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; 2006a; see also **Graph 2**). In contrast, studies on the relationship between depression and character have shown that when a person lacks character development they are more susceptible to the emergence of the conflicts that can lead to a downward spiral of thought into states of depression (C. R. Cloninger, 2000a, 2004, 2006a; Farmer, Mahmood, Redman, & al, 2003; Tome, Cloninger, Watson, & al., 1997).

Graph 2



Graph 2: Taken From (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a). Cloninger (2006a) explains his table: Our findings are illustrated in Figure 1. Using the TCI, we distinguished people who were in the top third of self-directedness (S), cooperativeness (C), and self-transcendence (T), from those in the lowest third (s, c, t), or in the middle third on each test (-). About a third of people who were low in self-directedness were depressed. The percentage of those low in self-directedness who were happy was 5% if people were also neither cooperative nor transcendent, and increased to 26% if they were both cooperative and transcendent. Furthermore, if self-directedness or cooperativeness was high, but not both, then people did not differ much in mood from those with average character profiles. If both self-directedness and cooperativeness Figure 1 Percentages of people with prominent sadness or prominent happiness, according to their character profile were elevated, then happiness was much more frequent than sadness (19% versus 1%). Finally, people who were elevated on all three aspects of character had the highest percentage of happiness (26%). In other words, the development of well-being (i.e., presence of happiness and absence of sadness) is correlated with the combination of all three aspects of self-aware consciousness.

These character traits can be developed through various practices in one's life and encouraged by therapists, counselors and teachers (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a; K. Cloninger, 2008). Cloninger (2004) has identified 3 essential practices that can lead to such growth: letting go, working in the service of others, and growing in awareness²⁴. There is a tendency to think of letting go as mere indifference to events in our lives, but it involves much more than blissful ignorance. Letting go means not engaging in all the conflicts the world sends at us both internally and externally. We must come to terms with the motivations of our actions and the forces that propel us in our life to stop engaging in such struggles and conflicts. This practice of well-being works to develop a sense of freedom, determination, and hope that leads to growth in the character trait of self-directedness. Working in the service of others, the second practice of well-being, is self-explanatory but sometimes difficult to put into action in one's life. Many studies have shown that people who practice making acts of kindness or service on a regular basis experience a greater sense of satisfaction with life (C. R. Cloninger, 2006a; Seligman, 2002). Working in the service of others helps us to step back and put our life in perspective. It helps us to cultivate kindness, love, and forgiveness, which leads to growth in the character trait of cooperativeness. Growing in awareness of the world around us is a life-long work. By listening to the psyche and taking the time to contemplate reality and the meaning of truth, we can grow in awareness of ourselves and others and deepen our understanding of our place in the world. This process of

²⁴ The Anthropedia Foundation has collaborated with Dr. Cloninger and a body of health experts in a variety of disciplines to develop resources for education, health care, and therapy that can work on the development of well-being. These resources focus on the three practices of well-being and on other practical exercises that can encourage well-being. I have worked on the development of these resources as a part of the foundation work and am presenting some of that work here. For more information on the Foundation, it's methods and approach, and the nature of the resources visit AnthropediaFoundation.org.

transcendence, as described by Jung and others, allows us to grow in understanding of faith and of the features of existence that extend beyond the narrow confines of the self, like culture, ethics, and spirituality. Growing in awareness helps us to work, therefore, on awareness of meaning that is greater than oneself, which leads to growth in the character trait of self-transcendence. Understanding and developing character is essential for the development of lasting well-being. Up to the present, consideration of the ramifications of personality development in the field of curriculum theory has been limited.

Learning and Memory: The Brain, the Body, and Well-Being

Up to this point in the dissertation, I have primarily discussed the intellectual understanding of well-being. As we have seen, any serious approach to well-being must consider the whole person: body, thoughts, and spirit. Having dealt in some detail with both the thoughts and the spirit, I will now turn to the body. The Science of Well-Being draws on research in genetics, neurobiology, evolutionary biology, physiology, and medicine. I will focus this review on describing some elements from evolutionary biology, neurobiology, and physiology that will be useful for the evaluation of educational practice. I will begin with the evolution of the brain.

The brain is a magnificent organ, allowing us to be aware of the world and our experiences without effort. What is somewhat counterintuitive about the brain and perception is that a significant portion of what we perceive is filtered (Vitaly & Charles, 2006). If we were aware of everything we perceive through the senses, we would be horribly distracted all the time. Only part of the data arriving to our brain is perceived

consciously. Much if not all the sensory data we receive is stored within us in a variety of memory forms (Goguen, Ramachandran, Myin, Humphrey, & Harth, 1999).

Fortunately the brain has developed memory systems to handle the storage of everything that we learn through experience. Each of these memory or learning systems in the brain is important. In the development of well-being, it is essential that we understand how each system works, and how the various systems can work together in harmony so that we may learn how we can work to improve them. The integration of the brain and its learning systems is the goal. Considering that the brain organizes our experiences of the world, the integration of the various brain networks can help us to live a better life and to better adapt to all the difficulties we encounter in our daily life. Before explaining the memory systems in the brain, I will begin with a brief survey of neuroanatomy and a discussion of learning behaviors taken from a number of different sources (C. R. Cloninger, 1994, 2004; MacLean, 1990; Tulving, 1987, 2002).

The brain is organized hierarchically²⁵. This hierarchy reflects its evolution. In the development of the nervous system over the course of evolution, the central nervous system of animals underwent three dramatic shifts, or reorganizations. The first was the evolution of a central nervous system (CNS) itself. Prior to the development of the CNS, the functional operations of animals' nervous systems were not centralized. This occurred slowly in the evolutionary process, but with the origin of reptiles the central nervous system had become more complex. In modern snakes and lizards we can

²⁵ As I cited above, my discussion of the evolution of learning and the brain is based on a number of different articles cited in the final sentence of preceding paragraph. For the sake of the reader in an already complex topic, I have crafted this paragraph without specific references. Those interested in learning more about the complexity of functioning and the debates in neurobiology about the evolution of the brain are encouraged to read the aforementioned articles.

observe something resembling the brain stem and limbic system in human beings, which regulated basic needs like hunger, thirst, sleep, temperature control, fight-or-flight response, and other basic functions of the organism. The structures within our own brain responsible for controlling these functions are extremely similar to those in the brains of reptiles. The basic nature of the reptilian brain did allow for conditioned responses to environmental stimuli, demonstrating the form of learning by habit. A reptile will search for its prey even when it's out of sight, which shows the development of intentions and skill. This portion of our brain is sometimes referred to as the reptilian brain, and as you might guess, it's fairly small. With the evolution of mammals, the situation becomes more complex. The old mammalian brain, which is still more or less small compared to our brains, allowed for more complex brain processes like emotion, nurturance, and play. In our own brains, these types of behaviors and thoughts are regulated by what we call the limbic system, or the emotional brain. The limbic system still regulates many of our automatic functions like breathing, heart rate, hunger, and temperature control, but other structures evolved such as the amygdala, which is quite important for emotional regulation. As mammals continued to evolve, primates began to display more complex behavior, such as knowledge, reasoning ability, and the development of culture. At this point, the cerebral cortex had evolved and encompassed the limbic system. This is the familiar image we think of when we think of the brain, with its spongy meridians and oval shape. The most recently evolved part of the brain—that which evolved with the origin of human beings—is the pre-frontal cortex, the front most part of the cerebral cortex, which is slightly enlarged in humans as compared to other primates such as gorillas or orangutans. This portion of our brain has to do with self-awareness,

adaptiveness, and decision making. Bear in mind, this description is a bit of an oversimplification, but it is a helpful way to begin to understand these basic elements of brain structure. What is interesting to point out about this hierarchical structure is that the brain is not organized in the most efficient way possible. That is, our brain did not evolve to its present state in one generation, rather it evolved from what had been present before in evolutionary history, so there were adaptations in structure and function of the brain that needed to happen to facilitate communication between the various aspects of the brain. This modularity of form and function has important consequences on learning and memory in the brain, as we will see a bit later.

In psychology it is now commonly understood that there are three major memory systems in the human brain: procedural, semantic, and episodic (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Tulving, 1987, 2002) (**Table 4**). As highlighted in table 4, the three memory systems account for three different types of memories. For example procedural learning, as its name implies, deals primarily with learning procedures like habits, skills, and behaviors. This type of memory is often implicit or unconscious; interestingly, humans never exhibit pure procedural learning as would a snail. Humans always experience events (even the most mundane) on multiple levels. Semantic memory deals with facts, beliefs, rules, and strategies. Such memories can be declared or stated. Semantic memory also deals with propositional or theorem-like thinking, which is hierarchal. For example, based on x, I believe Y; or if x, then y. Semantic memory is useful for long-term storage of facts and conditional beliefs. Finally, episodic memory gives rise to an abstraction of intuitions. Episodic memory accounts for our ability to remember an event in a particular spatio-temporal context. This memory system matures around the age of 4, which is why we

have so few recollections of early childhood. Researchers working on episodic memory realized that this type of memory is more accurately described as “auto-noetic”²⁶ (Tulving, 2002). Episodic memory is autobiographical in nature and involves self-awareness. It is what allows human beings to travel in space and time in their mind: that is, to recollect different events in different points in time as if they were present then and there.

Table 4: Table four is adapted from a paper I have previously written (K. Cloninger, 2006a). The types of learning are derived from the correspondence between certain pedagogical and curricular strategies and the functioning of the memory systems in the brain. There is a correspondence between acquiring skills and habit through procedural learning and rote learning techniques.

Memory Systems and the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory				
Memory	Content	Description	Type of Learning	Dominant Brain System
Procedural <i>Anoetic</i> ²⁷	Habits, skills	How to do something	Rote learning	Basal ganglia
Semantic <i>Noetic</i>	Facts, beliefs, rules, and strategies	What has been learned; propositional; theoretical	Conceptual and propositional learning	Medial temporal cortex
Episodic <i>Auto-noetic</i>	Recall of events in a spatio-temporal context	When and where it was learned; narrative and autobiographical; intuitive	Constructivism; awareness of self and part-whole relationships; creative invention	Prefrontal cortex

Many experiences involve all three of these networks simultaneously. However, these different systems of memory can be dissociated from one another. For example, people suffering from Alzheimer’s may not be able to remember when they learned to play the piano (episodic memory), but they can still play it (procedural and semantic).

²⁶ *Noesis* is one of the Greek words for perception or understanding and is related to *nous* or mind. Auto refers to self. Thus, literally translated, "auto-noesis" refers to perception or understanding of self.

²⁷ *Noesis* is the Greek word for perception or understanding. Tulving is using the term in three different ways: anoetic (no perception), noetic (perception), auto-noetic (self-perception).

Episodic memory allows you to declare when and where you learned something (Feinberg & Keenan, 2005), whereas the declarative or semantic memory system only allows you to know that you learned it. There are various medical disorders in which one of these three memory systems stop functioning while the others continue to function normally such as Sacks' "Lost Mariner" (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Damasio, 2003; Sacks, 1985).

Each of these three systems corresponds to different processing networks (**Table 4**) in the brain (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Feinberg & Keenan, 2005; Tulving, 1987, 2002). Moreover, there is a link between types of learning and the memory systems as I show in **table 4**. The procedural memory system deals largely with the limbic system, and particularly a region called the basal ganglia. The semantic memory system involves the use of the medial temporal cortex (part of the larger cerebral cortex). The episodic memory system depends primarily on the pre-frontal cortex, as well as the hippocampus (a part of the limbic mid-brain), which is also part of the semantic memory system. The left prefrontal cortex is more involved in encoding episodic memories and retrieving semantic memories, whereas the right prefrontal cortex is more involved in the retrieval of episodic memories. This anatomical position reflects well the scientific understanding of the relationship between episodic and semantic memory.

The brain, however, can be best understood as a small-world network. The Internet is a typical example of a small-world network. There are many dense connections that form modules (like Internet Service Providers), and they are connected by superhighways, like the backbone of the internet (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). Just like a computer network, if we are connected to other computers in our business, information

can circulate in a quick and efficient manner. With the advent of the Internet, large scale information transfer occurs across vast distances in essentially the same amount of time as small scale transfers: a signal coming from an international location may arrive at the same time as one from across the hall, because both are traveling at extremely high speeds. As a result, each node or module in the internet is connected to every other by a small number of steps. In much the same way, the brain operates like a “small-world” network where any computer in the world is essentially as close as a neighboring computer in a home or office. This allows the brain to shift its connections rapidly, globally, and reversibly several times a second. The result is that the brain functions in a quantum-like manner, in which every part is interdependent and closely connected with every other part. However, there are certain networks within the brain, or modules that are more important for certain functions that carry out specialized aspects of information processing. Thus, the brain is modular and hierarchical, and at the same time operates like a small world network with quantum-like properties (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). There is simultaneously specialization of function and deep interrelated functioning (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). There are distinct psychological and physiological properties such as the continuous learning of habits and skills, the theorem-like or propositional nature of semantic memory, and the development of self-awareness. The various memory systems are therefore qualitatively distinct, dissociable, and at the same time interdependent in normal functioning.

As I began this discussion by saying, it is essential for well-being that we learn how our brain can function in an integrated and harmonious fashion (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). It is important to point out that much like with the internet or computers, there

can be problems with connections that cause the computer to crash or prevent a person from getting online. One very well-studied type of short circuit involves two structures in the old mammalian brain called the amygdala and the anterior cingulate cortex, which interact with the temperament of the person (MacLean, 1985; Paus, 2001; L. Pezawas, A. Meyer-Lindenberg, E.M. Drabant, B.A. Verchinski, K.E. Munoz, B.S. Kolachana, M.F. Egan, V.S. Mattay, A.R. Harriri, D.R. Weinberger, 2005; J. Pujol, A. Lopez, J. Deus, N. Cardoner, J. Vallejo, A. Capdevila, T. Paus, 2002). Cloninger (2004) describes temperament as the emotional core of human personality, which obviously strongly impacts the quality and pattern of our relationships. The relationships we form with others can often take place quickly and in unconscious ways because our emotional reactions are regulated in the ancient limbic system of the human brain (MacLean, 1985). At the same time, people have the capacity to become self-aware of their emotional reactions and their feelings by means of communication between the emotional and rational brain that is regulated by the Papez circuit, which connects the anterior cingulate cortex with the hypothalamus, thalamus, and hippocampus (Papez, 1937). The anterior cingulate cortex is important in the regulation of emotional drives, cognition, and motor behavior (Paus, 2001). In fact, its size and its connections with the cortex and the limbic brain is strongly moderated by one of Cloninger's (2004) temperament traits called Harm Avoidance (Paulus, Rogalsky, Simmons, Feinstein, & Stein, 2003; L. Pezawas et al., 2005; J. Pujol et al., 2002). This trait is related to the way we handle stress. When people feel emotional stress from sexual, physical, or mental trauma it can precipitate a very strong emotional response at the expense of higher cortical processes, which effectively short-circuit or hi-jack the function of the rational and self-aware parts of the

brain. In other words, in moments of stress, the emotional brain can short-circuit the rational brain.

As this example shows, the emotional and rational brains do not necessarily operate in harmony on a frequent basis, particularly in moments of stress or anxiety. Research on emotional intelligence (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2007) and flow states (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 2000a) speak to the importance of gaining an understanding of both the rational and emotional aspects of consciousness, as well as an equilibrium between the two. The emotional intelligence of a person is a characteristic of the limbic system of their brain, which influences nearly every system of the body through the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis²⁸ (Chrousos & Gold, 1992; C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Matthews et al., 2007). The limbic system, as we have just seen, is in constant interaction with the rational brain or higher cortical processes that underlie rational thought. One of the keys to the development of well-being is an understanding that the cognitive and emotional life of a human being is a complex and dynamic process that depends on the inseparable interplay of the body, the thoughts, and the spirit of the person as a whole.

²⁸ The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis is stimulated during periods of stress (Chrousos & Gold, 1992). It leads to the secretion of cortisol and adrenaline, which in the short term is helpful for survival. Long-term periods of stress, however, are not healthy and can lead to various problems throughout the organism. The activation of the sympathetic nervous system and the fight-or-flight response causes many of the objective changes we see in humans during periods of stress, including high blood pressure, increased heart rate and respiratory rate, as well as pupillary dilatation. Long-term activation of these physiological systems is linked to depression and many other problems. The HPA axis communicates with many other areas and systems of the brain such as the limbic system, which controls mood and motivation; the amygdala, which generates fear in response to danger; and the hippocampus, a region of the brain involved in memory formation. Therefore, disruption of this system is also thought to cause mood changes, motivation, fear response, and memory formation. In addition to the regions of the brain, the HPA axis also communicates with glandular systems in the body that produce reproductive, growth, and thyroid hormones. In periods of stress, the body turns off these hormonal systems, thereby disrupting reproduction, growth, metabolism, and immunity.

The Science of Well-Being, Self-awareness, and Education

Throughout this review of concepts from the Science of Well-Being, research and theory has stressed the importance of becoming more aware of all the various facets of a person. This can otherwise be stated as becoming aware of the three aspects of the person: body, thoughts, and psyche. This search for self-understanding distinguishes human beings from all other animals. Huxley (1959) expressed this poetically by stating that human beings could be described as “evolution conscious of itself.” While some animals may be aware of their environment to the extent that they can respond adequately to it for survival, only human beings display self-awareness (Povinelli, 2000; Tulving, 2002). Some great apes can learn to recognize themselves in a mirror, but all human beings do so spontaneously without a mirror (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; Povinelli, 2000; Tulving, 2002). Clearly animals like chimpanzees, even elephants and dolphins, possess self-awareness. This may even extend further down the evolutionary scale, but few people, if anyone, would argue that self-awareness is most fully developed in human beings. Due in no small part to the human capacity for self-awareness, psychologists and psychiatrists alike have argued that it is healthy and normal for people to try to understand themselves and the world better (Frankl, 1959; Jaspers, 1951; Jung, 1933; Kohut, 1984). We all have a spontaneous desire—one could say an irresistible need—to understand our nature, including a drive for greater self-awareness. Our drive for greater self-awareness helps us to learn how to live better by recognizing what motives give rise to well-being and what leads us to a lack of well-being and suffering. A person’s self-awareness varies greatly, even within the same person over time and in different situations. Over the course of his career, Cloninger (2004) began to perceive a link

between learning and memory systems and the development of human personality. The hippocampus—a portion of the limbic system of the brain—is partially responsible for episodic memory. There is now evidence that new neurons develop throughout adult life in regions of the hippocampus that have dense connections to the prefrontal cortex (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). The type of neuronal regeneration that is observed in regions of the brain responsible for episodic memory is a relatively rare occurrence; for example, the networks that store long-term declarative (semantic) memories, such as factual information, do not display this regeneration. Based on this data, Cloninger (2004) came to the following conclusions:

These findings about self-aware consciousness have accumulated gradually over the past three decades, with a more rapid increase recently as a result of improved methods of brain imaging. As the data accumulated, I began to consider with increasing seriousness the possibility that individual differences in self-aware consciousness were a crucial aspect of personality development. Self-aware consciousness seemed to offer a fundamental explanation for the importance of factors unique to the individual in personality development and of the substantial resistance to change of character and related cognitive schema. The plasticity of the hippocampus and its role in self-awareness also suggested a crucial role for growth in self-awareness as a means of experiential transformation of personality (p. 54).

Cloninger began to describe personality development as a stepwise process of growth in self-awareness. Cloninger's work tells us that individuals can grow in their degree of self-awareness over time (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). More specifically, he has shown that the self-aware consciousness of a person progresses through a hierarchy of stages that leads to increased levels of wisdom and well-being.

There are three major stages of self-awareness along the path to well-being, as summarized in **table 5**²⁹ (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). In addition to Cloninger's stages of self-awareness, I have added the types of learning that correspond to each of these stages as I have previously discussed in another paper (K. Cloninger, 2006a see **table 5**). Learning at each of these stages of awareness is distinct. The different forms of learning have been recognized to some degree in education, but the development and the neurobiology of these methods have not been widely appreciated (K. Cloninger, 2006a). Each stage of self-awareness can be discussed, along with their corresponding learning types. It is important to note that although the various forms of self-awareness are referred to as stages, growth in self-awareness is not necessarily a linear process; moreover, the organization of self-awareness into three categories is not intended to reduce what is a very complex reality, but rather to simplify it into terms suitable for discussion and scientific observation.

Self-awareness has a great deal to do with pre-verbal outlooks—that is, our worldviews, our intuitions, as well as our beliefs and attitudes—all of which shape the way we see ourselves and the world around us. Our understanding of self and the world is primarily subconscious, and individuals gradually become aware of these subconscious processes. With this in mind, let us examine each of the three stages of self-awareness and the corresponding learning experiences.

²⁹ In his later work, Cloninger has argued that this stage theory is at best an approximation for a dynamic process that is constantly transforming. The following stages should be thought of as a guide and not as a definitive description of the reality of the development of the self-awareness of the person.

Table 5: This table was adapted from a paper I wrote previously (K. Cloninger, 2006a), which examined the relationship between learning and self-awareness. The type of learning was associated with the stage of self-awareness through deduction and an understanding of the underlying neurobiological processes.

Stages of Self-awareness and Learning			
Stage	Description	Psychological Characteristics	Type of Learning
0	<i>Unaware</i>	Immature, seeking immediate gratification (<i>“child-like” ego-state</i>)	Rote Learning: Drill and repetition; Obedience and Tradition;
1	<i>Average adult cognition</i>	Purposeful but egocentric able to delay gratification, but has frequent negative emotions (anxiety, anger, disgust) (<i>“adult” ego-state</i>)	Self-directed, self-organizing discovery learning; Constructivism; Hypothetico-deductive experimentation;
2	<i>Meta-cognition</i>	Mature and allocentric Aware of own subconscious thinking (mindful) Calm and patient, so able to supervise conflicts and relationships (<i>“parental” ego state</i>)	Meta-cognitive dialogue and experimentation; Intersubjective dialogue; This may include certain extensions of constructivism;
3	<i>Contemplation</i>	Effortless calm, impartial awareness Wise, creative, and loving Able to access what was previously unconscious as needed without effort or distress (<i>state of well-being</i>)	The science of integrated intelligence: the unification of wisdom, intelligence and creativity; Creative invention by means of contemplation and intuition;

As educators we are rarely faced with the mental health of the extremely sick, but people with severe personality disorders and other psychoses may exhibit little or no self-awareness (i.e. stage 0, or a state of no self-awareness like many animals). That is to say, they possess little or no awareness of pre-verbal outlooks or beliefs and interpretations

that lead individuals to act and feel (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). People in this stage of self-awareness remain totally ignorant to the subconscious stream of their awareness. People with little self-awareness are often impulsive, doing what pleases them and avoiding what they do not like. This type of attitude toward life is frequently described as “childish” or “immature.” However, while it is rare to see someone’s entire personality marked by this stage of self-awareness, most people have zones of their being in which they display childish or immature behavior.

Rote learning and traditional learning—which emphasize ritual and obedience to authority—do not foster growth in self-awareness, and thus correspond to stage 0 of self-aware consciousness. At stage 0, theories of mind view individuals as “uncivilized,” or as empty vessels (*tabula rasa*) into which ideas must be instilled. Such conceptions of the human mind and the corresponding curricular and pedagogical goals do not seek to help children grow more aware of themselves and others, but rather to condition the brain and work on memorization. This type of instructional methodology seeks to impose and instill values, facts, and traditions through repetition, drill, and recitation. While recitation, repetition, and drill may be important tools, which could potentially help foster self-awareness, if used improperly and exclusively, with little or no regard for individual students, they may result in little or no growth in self-awareness. It is important, however, that we use this form of pedagogy as the accumulation of facts and knowledge of this type is essential for an active and productive life.

The first stage of self-awareness is typical of most adults most of the time today (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). Most adults are capable of delaying gratification to accomplish their goals. However, they may remain egocentric and competitive. Distress with life is

frequent, especially when people don't get their way or are denied something to which they are attached. Thus, an average adult functions well under good conditions but will have problems when faced with stressful situations. At the first stage of self-awareness, people are capable of letting go of their negative emotions if they choose to calm down and exercise their patience. This allows them to refine their view of themselves and the world, and to move towards a more mature and coherent understanding of life. While they may not be able to change the content and tone of their subconscious, pre-verbal outlooks, they can choose not to attend to it when something more important needs to be accomplished. Theories of mind at this level of self-awareness view the mind as filled with schemas that are based on their experience in life and under genetic control.

The type of learning that corresponds to stage 1 of self-awareness is self-directed and self-organizing, such as discovery learning and constructivist learning. However, because of the hierarchical organization of self-aware consciousness, learning at each of the stages of self-awareness includes all the preceding aspects of learning. Whereas rote learning combined with obedience and tradition does not foster self-awareness, often to learn adequately at a higher level, one must utilize some of these more basic learning techniques. Nonetheless, self-directed and self-organizing learning—such as discovery learning and constructivist learning—will help people reach this stage of self-awareness. Students at this stage may display remarkable acquisition and memory of details, but still think about the information at a very superficial level. Indeed, while they may possess deep historical or factual knowledge, this knowledge remains abstract and disconnected from their personal narratives or perspectives. This trivializes learning and at its worst reduces it to a ritual (Pope, 2002). Learning that helps foster the first level of self-

awareness also includes hypothetico-deductive experimentation (**Table 5**). When using this form of experimentation, one makes a hypothesis and tests it in a rigorous and methodical way that is deductive and linear in fashion. Piaget considered this to be one of the most mature forms of human thought. This type of experimentation can foster stage 1 self-awareness because it represents a skill necessary for delaying gratification and persevering towards a defined goal.

Good parents are examples of people operating in the second stage of self-awareness. They are “other-centered” and capable of calmly considering the needs and viewpoints of their children. The balance and equanimity necessary to be “allocentric” in this way leads such people to increasing personal satisfaction and harmony in their relationships. Furthermore, this state is only possible for people who possess insight into the nature of the thought processes within of themselves and others. The second stage can be described as “meta-cognitive” awareness, mindfulness, or “mentalizing” (Cloninger, 2004). This awareness of one’s own mind, or thinking about thinking, greatly facilitates a growth in self-awareness, which thereby leads to greater fluidity and flexibility. This increased fluidity and flexibility in one’s life reduces dichotomous and egocentric thought. That is to say, people in this stage of self-awareness are able to observe—in order to understand—their own subconscious thoughts and those of others, without judging or blaming themselves or others for their own problems. In this sense, individuals in the second stage of self-awareness possess a theory of mind grounded in the fact that each aspect of reality is part of indivisible whole. A small number of people achieve this stage of self-awareness in their maximum thoughts under good conditions, but most people do not experience this without special training to help them understand

their own thought processes. Self-observation is, however, easily learned (and taught), making it practical to incorporate into education as a way to facilitate self-awareness.

The types of learning experiences that help foster the second stage of self-awareness include meta-cognitive dialogue and experimentation. Based on years of clinical and experimental work, Cloninger (2004) argues that most people do not spontaneously become aware of the nature of their own thought processes. This is mostly due to the fact that people are unaware that they have any ability to regulate their thoughts. Most of the time, people simply react to their thoughts, often in an emotional way, without questioning whether they might have some control over them. Inter-subjective dialogue can help facilitate this aspect of self-awareness: the Socratic dialogue, for example, enables discussions about deep and meaningful aspects of life such as the nature of love, truth, time, and beauty. Such discussions require one to rely on his or her intuitions of these concepts, which are infrequently based on their own life's experience. It is important to address such intuitive conceptions in classrooms even at younger ages. I have written about such classroom activities with children as young as 8 or 9-years-old (K. Cloninger, 2005, 2008). Constructivist classroom techniques can be slightly modified to address such development, which can help an individual to move towards an active awareness and purification of our intuitions (Torff & Sternberg, 2001). Such learning can also facilitate movement toward the second stage of self-awareness (K. Cloninger, 2006b). Learning that is oriented around meta-cognition does not exclude other types, such as rote learning or discovery learning; rather it deepens and extends these pedagogical techniques. Children evidently sometimes need to memorize information, and as Duckworth (Duckworth, 1995) has pointed out, to reinvent the wheel;

however, when memorization is combined with a more coherent learning type such as meta-cognition, it becomes possible not only to retain this information, but to understand the processes that allow one to learn and discover new aspects of life.

Cloninger refers to the third stage of self-awareness as contemplation, because it refers to the direct observation of one's outlook. The outlook is pre-verbal and directs one's attention and provides the frame of reference for organizing expectations, attitudes, and interpretation of life events. This direct awareness of our initial outlook allows us to enlarge our awareness, by accessing previously unconscious material. It thereby enables us to let go of wishful thinking and unfounded expectations, and helps us to impartially question our own most basic assumptions and core beliefs about life, meaning, and existence. Because it involves direct awareness of shifts in perspective, which characterize the state of an individual's spirit or psyche. Like the second stage of self-awareness, the third stage is rarely experienced.

Learning that helps foster the third stage of self-awareness has hitherto not been employed in schools, at least not on a large or public scale. I have chosen to describe learning at this level as the science of integrated intelligence or the unification of wisdom, intelligence, and creativity. Learning at this level involves creative invention by means of contemplation. In a 1972 article entitled *Working from Within*, Pinar wrote,

Like some modern painters, my students and I have come to feel that we rarely need to refer to subject matter outside ourselves. We work from a different source. We work from within. (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2002, p. 331)

Such internal vision is precisely what is required to help foster the third stage of self-awareness.

I endeavored throughout the description of the various stages of self-awareness to demonstrate that they are neither purely independent nor do they follow a linear sequence of stages. People are capable of being very self-aware in certain aspects of their lives, and more or less unaware in others. Thus, self-awareness and its development within each stage (i.e. working to mature the weak or immature aspects of each stage) is non linear in nature. Presenting the development of self-awareness in three stages like this does slightly oversimplify the reality of this dynamic process of self-awareness. For example, in personal relationships I may be unaware of my emotions and recognizing that of others, whereas within my intellectual life I may display deep self-awareness. An individual who displays high levels of self-awareness in every domain of this life could spend most of his or her time in stage 3, but such individuals in society are exceptionally rare. Such an individual would display a high degree of integrative brain functioning. With this in mind, I would emphasize that each of the learning networks in the brain is important and is appropriate in its own context. This conclusion is similar to work done by Olson and Bruner around the four “folk pedagogies” (Bruner, 1996; Olson, 2003; Torff & Sternberg, 2001). Do not understand me to say that one must never memorize facts or be obedient to certain authority figures in order to reach this stage. I am saying, however, that such techniques that only engage the more evolutionarily primitive brain functions alone will never lead to deep growth in self-awareness.

The various stages of self-awareness and the learning and memory systems involved are intrinsically intertwined, similar to the corresponding neurobiology. In the third stage of self-awareness, there are aspects of each of the preceding stages. However, there is a progressive sublimation of meaning and context; that is to say, the same

experience lived by different individuals at different stages of self-awareness may look similar at a superficial level, but at deeper levels the experience is not the same. Someone who is completely egocentric does not experience life in the same way as someone who is completely allocentric; nevertheless, both find pleasure in what they do, only by different mechanisms. For one, immediate gratification brings pleasure; for the other, it is service to others. Thus, both still involve the pleasure centers of the brain and the more animal-like limbic system, but the pleasure of an individual event is modulated by the self-awareness of the higher functioning of the brain (the pre-frontal cortex and the cerebral cortex). Similarly, a comprehensive education must offer means to develop an integrated vision of these multiple aspects of the brain. People need skills and habits, but they also need an understanding of self and an understanding of their own thought processes. Even if it is not possible for all people to be in the third stage of self-awareness at all times, schooling can give children experiences which show them the potential of their own development. These peak experiences can serve to light the way ahead of them and show them the reality of their own potential (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Maslow, 1994). To neglect any one of these learning systems is to ignore the healthy functioning of the brain. I chose to end the review of the Science of Well-Being with the discussion of self-awareness because it is truly the unifying thread and focus of the development of well-being. Cloninger (2004) went so far as to state that “the Science of Well-Being” is synonymous with the study of individual differences in self-aware consciousness. The process of become more aware of the whole person is an extremely important and lifelong goal, one that is embraced by many alternative schools movements.

A Brief Roadmap to Alternative Education

When looking for a rich environment to study well-being in education, alternative education is a natural choice. As we have seen, the Science of Well-Being looks at the whole human being as she moves along the path to greater well-being and happiness. The current emphasis in mainstream education is on preparing students for the global economy to maintain our economic competitiveness in world markets (M. Apple, 1979; Cohen, 2006; Eisner, 2005; Molnar, 2005; Noddings, 1992, 2003, 2006; Olson, 2003; Pope, 2000; Robertson, 1998; Saltman, 2000, 2003, 2005; Spring, 2007). The mainstream emphasis, while not necessarily opposed to the development of well-being, does not focus on the development of the well-being of the whole person. For this reason, I decided to explore an alternative school movement with such an emphasis. What follows is a brief overview of what classifies as “alternative education.” Afterwards I will focus more specifically on Krishnamurti education.

What Counts as Alternative Education?

The word “alternative” has many meanings in common usage. Unfortunately the term “alternative education” is similarly imprecise. There is no common definition used in the study of alternative education (Hadderman, 2002; Martin, 2002b; Quinn et al., 2006). For some it means schools for students who are “at-risk” of dropping out or whose needs are not being met in traditional classrooms. For others it refers to private school traditions like Quaker, Waldorf, or Montessori schools. There are a number of terms we could use if we wanted to be more precise and avoid ambiguity. For example, we could distinguish “philosophical alternatives” like Waldorf or Montessori from the

“at-risk alternatives” (Hadderman, 2002; Martin, 2002b). The term “philosophical” is apt because there is a broad diversity in the philosophical underpinnings of the various alternative schools. Some alternatives schools have been inspired by “person-centered approaches” (Forbes, 2003; Rogers, 1972b, 1974b, 1994). Such a title could also include school movements like open schools or progressive schools. However, as Martin (2002) points out, not all progressive schools could be qualified as “person-centered,” thus this term falls short of being comprehensive.

Various authors employ terms like “non-traditional,” “non-conventional,” or “non-standardized” (Martin, 2002b; Quinn et al., 2006). These terms have baggage as well. There are negative connotations associated with the words “non-conventional” or “non-standardized.” What’s more is that they are imprecise: as a school, they may appear radical and in fact be quite traditional or vice versa (Martin, 2002b; Quinn et al., 2006). Alternative schools sometimes describe themselves as “holistic,” “progressive,” or “authentic,” but they do not always mean the same things. In effect, more study is needed to find a common definition for alternative education and to identify the principles and approaches that best support student learning and development in these alternative contexts (Forbes, 2003; Hadderman, 2002; Martin, 2002b; Quinn et al., 2006; Uhrmacher, 1997). It is in this direction that this study is moving. For the purposes of this dissertation I will employ the term “alternatives,” following Martin (2002), to describe this collection of approaches, philosophies, movements, and schools.

Martin (2002) provides a summary of the most prominent types of alternatives. She identifies 8 major forms of alternative education giving a brief synopsis of the

various approaches and resources for those interested in further study. These 8 major forms are

1. Democratic and Free Schools
2. Folk Education
3. Friends (Quaker) Schools
4. Home schooling, Unschooling, and Deschooling
5. Krishnamurti Schools
6. Montessori Schools
7. Open Schools (and Classrooms)
8. Waldorf (or Steiner) Schools

This list is certainly not exhaustive, but it does give the reader a broad look at the diversity in the area of alternatives³⁰.

Like many other fields of study, the divergence of opinions and philosophies represented in these various movements presents a formidable challenge to any person looking for common practices or agreed upon definitions (Forbes, 2003; Hadderman, 2002; Martin, 2002b; Quinn et al., 2006; Uhrmacher, 1997). Work has been done by Martin (2002), Forbes (2003), and Miller (2000) to develop theoretical frameworks that cut across these various areas. Forbes (2003), for example, examines the philosophical and psychological underpinning of “holistic education” in addition to exploring its sociological implications in terms of Bernstein’s competencies. Forbes explores the “six founding authors” of Holistic education, who he deems to be Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Jung, Maslow, and Rogers. In the conclusion to his vast and erudite book, he concludes that, “Insofar as any conclusion can be reached from this book, it is that holistic education is a true alternative to mainstream education with a carefully thought out philosophical foundation” (Forbes, 2003, p. 282). As is the case for many of the 8

³⁰ Other movements could include charter school movements, core knowledge schools, schools based on a Reggio Emilia approach, Paideia schools, and the Essential schools.

forms mentioned above, rich philosophical and psychological legacies have given birth to such movements. The problem with understanding what goes on in these schools also stems from its philosophical strength. There is something of a language barrier. The emphasis and goals in alternative schools can be so different from that of more mainstream education that it may be difficult for researchers to make quick comparisons with public schools or to conduct research (Quinn et al., 2006). Quinn et al. (2006) and Uhrmacher (1997) have also considered how to look at practices in these schools or learning environments, and they compare such work with practice in the public school systems. Obstacles aside, Uhrmacher (1997) concludes that public schools and curriculum theorists have much to learn from such environments.

What is Krishnamurti Education?

One of the movements discussed above is probably unfamiliar to most readers, that of Krishnamurti education. A search on ERIC reveals a total of 13 entries on Krishnamurti (Chandler, 1994; Currie & Breadmore, 1983; Ingalls, 1994; John, 1975; Khare, 1985; Martin, 2002a; McAvoy, 1987; McLaughlin, 1972; J. W. Peterson, 2000; E. Raiola, 1995; E. D. Raiola, 1986; Smith, Roland, Havens, & Hoyt, 1992; Unusual School Designed to Last a Century," 1977). There are only 3 journal articles, and none of them are peer-reviewed. Compare this to a similar search on Montessori in the ERIC database and you find 1059 publications, 698 journal articles (43 of which appear in peer-reviewed journals), and 41 books. To my knowledge, no research studies have been conducted on Krishnamurti education in the field of curriculum³¹. Yet Krishnamurti was

³¹ During my visit to a Krishnamurti school, one teacher commented that I was the first person from “outside of the community” that had ever taken the time to examine the educational practices “so deeply.”

one of the most important thinkers of the twentieth century. In 1984 he was awarded a peace medal from the UN. Furthermore, many prominent intellectuals, philosophers, scientists, and psychologists have commented on the impact Krishnamurti's philosophy had on them: Iris Murdoch, Aldous Huxley, Jonas Salk, Joseph Campbell, Kahlil Gibran, Leopold Stokowski, David Bohm, Henry Miller, Rollo May, George Bernard Shaw, the Dalai Llama, even Van Morrison, Bruce Lee, Deepak Chopra, and many others (Evelyne Blau, 1995). Presently there is only 1 Krishnamurti school in the United States, which helps to explain the relative obscurity of the movement in American research journals; still his ideas have been very influential in a number of different areas of research including theoretical physics and humanistic psychology. All told, there are presently nine schools worldwide, one school in England, one in the United States, and seven in India (some of which offer collegiate degrees). The rest of this chapter will consider Krishnamurti, his philosophy, his life's teachings, and his educational vision. I will begin with some biographical information.

Who is Krishnamurti?

For two years I have been thinking about this, slowly, carefully, patiently, and I have now decided to disband the Order, as I happen to be its head. You can form other organizations and expect someone else. With that I am not concerned, nor with creating new cages, new decorations for those cages. My only concern is to set men absolutely, unconditionally free. (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 7)

Few of us, I suspect, could imagine what it would be like to be a religious figure. Fewer still might imagine refusing the role once it has been acquired. Both of these improbable facts are true of Krishnamurti, who at the age of 32, stunned his followers when he disbanded the Order of the Star and severed his ties with the Theosophical

Society³² (Lutyens, 1990). In 1929 several thousand people gathered for an annual address from Krishnamurti in Ommen, Holland. Krishnamurti, who had been named after the Hindu deity Krishna, calmly explained to those present that “truth is a pathless land” and that the religious movement which declared that he was the new “world teacher” was a “cage” like the many other cages that divide men—like nationality, class, authority, and tradition³³. He considered the Order of the Star to be a distraction for the Order’s followers from what is most important in life. In this speech, Krishnamurti would spell out some of the fundamental aspects of his philosophy and chart the course of his life’s work—to set people “absolutely, unconditionally free” (Lutyens, 1990). Krishnamurti was a radical, to say the least, but he was not interested in social or political revolution. He believed that such revolution was generally only reactive and did not lead to fundamental change. It is not freedom to be able to choose a different course if we have been conditioned to think in a pattern or formula by our religion, our country, our culture, or social class. For Krishnamurti, what is needed is to be radical about the transformation of our consciousness—only then could we be truly free.

After disbanding the Order, he returned all the money and gifts of land that he had been offered, and without any followers (and consequently little money), he set out on his own. Krishnamurti would spend the rest of his life traveling the world talking to anyone

³² It is interesting to point out that another educational movement was started by a major player of the theosophical movement, that of Waldorf education and Rudolf Steiner. Steiner was the head of the Theosophical Society in Germany. In 1911, when Annie Besant founded the Order of the Star and made Krishnamurti its head proclaiming the coming of a “world teacher” Steiner broke his ties with Theosophy. This was the beginning of Anthroposophy and later Waldorf Education.

³³ Krishnamurti’s “cages” bear a striking resemblance to the barriers to social justice identified by the civil rights movement, radical pedagogy, multicultural education, and critical theory. It is important to recognize, however that it is 1929 that he is writing and speaking about these concepts. Krishnamurti was a true visionary who was well ahead of his time.

who would listen to him about the need for a “radical” transformation of the individual. He had no official affiliation with any caste, religion, or any other tradition, creed, or group. He had no permanent home, but when he was not traveling, he often stayed in Ojai, California; Brockwood Park, England; or in Chennai, India. He did not want any followers; he was not a guru. Lutyen’s explains:

He did not want people to follow him blindly and obediently. He deplored the cult of gurudom and Transcendental Meditation brought from India to the West. Especially, he did not want disciples who might create another religion around him, build up a hierarchy and assume authority. All he claimed for his teachings was that it held up a mirror in which people could see themselves exactly as they were inwardly and outwardly, and if they did not like what they saw *change themselves*. (Lutyens, 1990, p. xv)

At times, he was so adamant about not being an authority figure that in public talks he experimented speaking behind a screen so that people would only be attentive to what he was saying (Evelyne Blau, 1995; Lutyens, 1990). He eventually dispensed with the practice, but it serves well to demonstrate his modesty. He was shy by nature and had little desire for public notoriety or fame. He never engaged in mass marketing or publicity for his works or writings. One reason he is not as famous as some of his admirers, like Joseph Campbell, Aldous Huxley, or Iris Murdoch, is that his notoriety was spread only by word of mouth; people would merely stumble across his writings or dialogues.

Numerous biographies of Krishnamurti have been written (Clarke, 1977; Holroyd, 1991; Lutyens, 1975, 1983, 1988, 1990)³⁴. Krishnamurti was born into a Brahmin family in colonial India. His mother had died when he was young, and his father was forced to

³⁴ He lived a long and busy life, so I will not attempt to summarize it all here. Interested readers may consult the many biographies that have been written.

move to Madras where he took a job at the Theosophical Society³⁵. One day, entirely by chance, Krishnamurti—who by all accounts looked like anything but a “world teacher”—had a random encounter with a high-ranking theosophist, C.W. Leadbeater, on the beach near the grounds of the Theosophical Society headquarters in an area of India now known as Chennai. Krishnamurti’s father was poor and he and his brother had been living on the beach in a shack. They were infested with lice, malnourished, and generally unsanitary. Leadbeater was completely convinced upon meeting him that he was the “world teacher” the theosophists had been waiting for and arranged to take over the boys’ education. Together with Annie Besant, the prominent journalist and social worker turned head of Theosophy, they raised and educated the boys. Annie Besant eventually took legal custody of both Krishnamurti and his brother after a legal battle with their estranged father.

At first, Krishnamurti was regarded with skepticism by many in the Theosophical society. He was said to have a poor aptitude for academic work and rarely spoke. At some point in his childhood there was even a question as to whether or not he was mentally disabled (Lutyens, 1990). With time, Krishnamurti became a charismatic speaker and spoke with a sense of “intrinsic authority.” George Bernard Shaw publicly praised the prowess of the young teacher (Evelyne Blau, 1995; Lutyens, 1990).

As part of his duties to the Order of the Star, Krishnamurti and his brother kept a very busy schedule. As a result of their tireless schedule, Krishnamurti’s brother had fallen ill and developed tuberculosis. Krishnamurti had been a sickly child, missing sometimes as much as a year of school. It was his brother’s turn to be sick and for

³⁵ Today, the old Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Madras, now known as Chennai, is the site of one of the largest and most respected Krishnamurti schools in India.

Krishnamurti to tend to him, as he had been tended to throughout his childhood. The brothers had been traveling and it was suggested that rather than going directly home that they pass through the Ojai Valley in California, an area close to Santa Barbara that was known for its restorative qualities (Lutyens, 1975, 1990). The brothers enjoyed a freedom there that they had never known. They took hikes and spent time in the avocado and orange groves of the beautiful Ojai Valley. They eventually moved into a small pine cottage, which even after the dissolution of the Order, Krishnamurti owned throughout his life (Lutyens, 1990). While in Ojai, Krishnamurti had a transformative peak experience that completely revolutionized his own thinking, and which would set the stage for his decision to sever his ties with the Theosophical Society. After his brother died suddenly some time later, Krishnamurti grew even more skeptical of the Theosophical Society, who had promised him that his brother would not die because his role was “too important” for humanity (Lutyens, 1990). On the 2nd of August, 1929, two or three years after his brother’s death, he would make the proclamation that “truth is a pathless land” and definitively sever all ties with Theosophy.

There is some difficulty characterizing a person like Jiddu Krishnamurti. His early life was mythologized to a large degree because of his position in the Theosophical Society. After dissolving the Order of the Star, Krishnamurti would proclaim that he was unimportant, it was rather his message that should be listened to. “It is the teachings that matter, not the man,” he would say (Lutyens, 1990). What is sure is that Krishnamurti was a tireless speaker and prolific writer and activist. Except for a 3 to 4 year period during the beginning of World War II, he never stopped giving lectures and public talks.

He was the subject of radio shows, TV shows, and documentaries³⁶. He wrote books and accepted many private meetings with prominent figures from around the world.

Krishnamurti also held a special interest in the education of children. He wanted to reach people before their minds were dulled or conditioned by the prejudices of the societies into which they were born (Lutyens, 1990). Besides his public life, one of his greatest legacies is the school movement he founded.

An Overview of Krishnamurti's Philosophy and Thought

Krishnamurti was a prolific writer and spoke throughout his life to thousands of people. There are the books he wrote (e.g. Krishnamurti, 1953, 1954, 1969a, 1970a, 1987, 2006b), collections of his dialogues and public talks (e.g. Krishnamurti, 1969b, 1970b, 1973a, 1989, 2003, 2006a; Krishnamurti & Bohm, 1999) and the hundreds and thousands of audio tapes, videos, and transcripts one can find at the various Krishnamurti Libraries, Archives, and study center's such as those in Brockwood Park in England, Ojai, California, and Chennai, India. The list of publications and writings is too long to innumerate here and can easily be found online through a Google search or by visiting the foundation websites³⁷. As a part of this dissertation I read through most of his books and many of the collections of his speeches, dialogues, and talks. Faced with an absolutely astounding number of writings and transcripts, I had to make a decision for how best to review his life's work and philosophy. As I progressed in my review, I found that I was not the first who had been faced with the dilemma of trying to find a way to summarize the major tenets of Krishnamurti's immense corpus.

³⁶ He has even been fictionalized. He was the teacher of the Young Indian Jones in the TV series.

³⁷ For the Krishnamurti Foundation of India see <http://www.theschoolkfi.org/>, in England see <http://www.kfoundation.org/>, and for the United States see <http://www.kfa.org/>.

Towards the end of his life, Krishnamurti's chief biographer and longtime friend, Mary Lutyens, was trying to find a way to summarize the chief elements of his philosophy and life's work. Krishnamurti and his supporters would call these elements "the teachings." After giving it some thought, Mary Lutyens decided to ask Krishnamurti directly to describe the "core of the teachings," which he did and since that time this short summary of his philosophy is used by the foundations and biographers to encapsulate Krishnamurti's overall philosophy and thought. I decided to use the same approach in this section.

Krishnamurti's Core Message

What follows is a description of the "core" ideas of Krishnamurti's philosophy written by himself. As it is relatively short and in Krishnamurti's own words, I quote his response in it's entirety here for the reader:

The core of Krishnamurti's teaching is contained in the statement he made in 1929 when he said: 'Truth is a pathless land'. Man cannot come to it through any organization, through any creed, through any dogma, priest or ritual, nor through any philosophic knowledge or psychological technique. He has to find it through the mirror of relationship, through the understanding of the contents of his own mind, through observation and not through intellectual analysis or introspective dissection. Man has built in himself images as a sense of security—religious, political, personal. These manifest as symbols, ideas, beliefs. The burden of these images dominates man's thinking, his relationships, and his daily life. These images are the causes of our problems for they divide man from man in every relationship. His perception of life is shaped by the concepts already established in his mind. The content of his consciousness *is* this consciousness. This content is common to all humanity. The individuality is the name, the form and superficial culture he acquires from his environment. The uniqueness of the individual does not lie in the superficial but in the total freedom from the content of consciousness.

Freedom is not a reaction; freedom is not choice. It is man's pretense that because he has choice he is free. Freedom is pure observation without

motive; freedom is not at the end of the evolution of man but lies in the first step of his existence. In observation one begins to discover the lack of freedom. Freedom is found in the choiceless awareness of our daily existence.

Thought is time. Thought is born of experience, of knowledge, which are inseparable from time. Time is the psychological enemy of man. Our action is based on knowledge and, therefore, time, so man is always a slave to the past.

When man becomes aware of the movement of his own thoughts, he will see the division between the thinker and thought, the observer and the observed, the experiencer and the experience. He will discover that this division is an illusion. Then only is there pure observation, which is insight, without any shadow of the past. This timeless insight brings about a deep radical change in the mind.

Total negation is the essence of the positive. When there is negation of all those things which are not love—desire, pleasure—then love is, with its compassion and intelligence. – (October 21, 1980) (Krishnamurti, 1996, pp. 258-259)

As is rather clear from this statement, Krishnamurti's major emphasis is psychological transformation. I choose the word "transformation" carefully because this does not imply "evolution," which as we will discuss in a bit, Krishnamurti did not believe applied in the psychological domain. This statement is simple to read and short, but it is quite dense with concepts. What follows is a line by line analysis of the statement.

"Truth," Krishnamurti tells us, "is a pathless land. Man cannot come to it through any organization, through any creed, through any dogma, priest or ritual, nor through any philosophic knowledge or psychological technique" (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258).

Throughout his life, Krishnamurti implored people to realize the dangers of ideology, authority, and power. He regarded the ideological warfare waged in the name of religion, nationalism, or philosophy as a plague on the very soul of humanity. It constantly deadened our capacity to face the world anew and to look with our eyes and not simply

rely upon the images we have seen in the past. Instead of relying upon technique, method, or creed to understand the “Truth,” Krishnamurti offered another strategy:

[Humanity] has to find it through the mirror of relationship, through the understanding of the contents of his own mind, through observation and not through intellectual analysis or introspective dissection”
(Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258).

Only through relationship, self-awareness, observation, and inquiry could an individual reach towards an understanding of the Truth that transcends us all. Krishnamurti regarded the “religious, political, [and] personal [...] symbols, ideas, [and] beliefs” as security blankets we rely upon so that we do not have to face the truth of existence. We seek psychological security because it is difficult to face the brutality, violence, and ignorance of the human condition and the madness it has caused in the world.

According to Krishnamurti, all of this ignorance, conditioning, and security-seeking limits our freedom. Creativity and imagination in thought are rare things he warns. As a result, we are constantly relying upon the past to understand the present. Our thoughts are always in the past and we always react to our life in old patterns of thought. Krishnamurti would argue that “Freedom is not a reaction; freedom is not choice. It is man’s pretense that because he has choice he is free” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258). This would of course logically lead people to question Krishnamurti on the nature of freedom. He explained that, “Freedom is pure observation without motive; freedom is not at the end of the evolution of man but lies in the first step of his existence” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258). Krishnamurti was well aware of the conditioning forces of reward and punishment and encouraged people to liberate themselves from that dynamic. By so doing, he believed that people could act in freedom. He did not think that one

gradually became free from the limitations of conditioning. In his words, “Freedom” is “without motive;” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258). Freedom needs to be discovered right from the beginning of what we think otherwise our choices and actions will be conditioned responses that reflect our fossilized behaviors of the past. Krishnamurti encouraged people then to observe the contents of their own consciousness because “in observation one begins to discover the lack of freedom” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258) Such observation can lead one to a state of “passive” or “choiceless awareness” of our daily existence, where we are not operating based on what we remember from the past or based on what we want in the future, but rather from a direct intuition of “what is” in the present.

A recurrent theme in Krishnamurti’s work that cuts across everything we have discussed so far is what he calls “psychological time,” which flows from “what was” to “what should be” (Krishnamurti & Bohm, 1999). In the core of the teachings he states,

Thought is time. Thought is born of experience, of knowledge, which are inseparable from time. Time is the psychological enemy of man. Our action is based on knowledge and, therefore, time, so man is always a slave to the past. (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258)

Krishnamurti is referring here to the fact that we have past experiences stored as memories that shape our lives. If we don’t live in the past, we live in what we think the future should be based on our past experiences. Very rarely, he argues, do we ever really consider “what is.” We are, in fact, thoroughly conditioned. We assimilate beliefs, are taught to conform, and swallow dogmas. Our culture teaches us to think and behave in certain ways, and to accept certain behaviors or ideas without considering their meaning and implications. In short, we are conditioned, just like a computer is programmed. As

thought is always stuck in the past or on the ideals we have of the future, Krishnamurti argues that thought is fundamentally limited. Our reliance on thought leads us to constant conflict and struggle. At one level, there is no psychological evolution (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258). We may believe that our thoughts are free of influence, but even the words and images we use to think are given to us by our culture, not to mention the numerous sub-cultures that we inhabit daily. Who has not found themselves talking like a good friend after spending weeks, days, or just hours with them? Krishnamurti explained that we must simply observe this fact and move forward. There is no evolutionary process, we must simply free ourselves from the past. Of course, not all conditioning is problematic. At some level, all of our experiences condition us. Because the human brain is a sponge for memory, it is difficult to avoid being conditioned by our experience of the world. Nonetheless, caution and awareness is needed because we must account for the fact that our prejudice is immense after being conditioned by so many different aspects of society. We must become aware of how we are conditioned to be free.

One of the few ways we can free ourselves from the problems that arise from conditioning is to become self-aware and increase our self-knowledge. Thought itself is a movement of experience, knowledge, and memory taken as a whole. The accumulation of thought through experience, with all of its memories and images leads to the creation of our own internal narrative. This narrative, this image we have of ourselves, can be considered to be the “self,” the “me,” the “ego.” It is an amalgam of everything we have experienced and all of our conditioning. By increasing our knowledge of the self we can be less restrained by the narratives in which we live and that we write for ourselves.

Moreover, we can see that what we think of as the “me” is in fact nothing more than our experience. In Krishnamurti’s terms,

When man becomes aware of the movement of his own thoughts, he will see the division between the thinker and thought, the observer and the observed, the experiencer and the experience. He will discover that this division is an illusion. Then only is there pure observation which is insight, without any shadow of the past. This timeless insight brings about a deep, radical change in the mind. (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 258)

By becoming aware of this dualism and transcending it within one’s own consciousness a “deep, radical change” of the mind can take place. This leads people to real “intelligence” as Krishnamurti described it. When there is the absence of what is created by thought psychologically, what remains is love, which is compassion and intelligence. The intelligence to which Krishnamurti refers is not the typical conception we may see in say Gardner’s definition of intelligence. Krishnamurti explains, “Intelligence and the capacity of the intellect are two entirely different things” (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 115). He continues,

[...] we use intellect to convey the whole human capacity for thought. Thought is the response of memory accumulated through various experiences, real or imagined, which are stored as knowledge in the brain. So the capacity of the intellect is to think. Thinking is limited under all circumstances, and when the intellect dominates our activities in both the outer and inner world, naturally our actions must be partial, incomplete. This brings about regret, anxiety and pain. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 115)

Krishnamurti draws a clear distinction between the notion of the “intellect” and “intelligence” by reemphasizing that intellect is related to thought and that thought is inherently limited and divisive. However, as one becomes aware of the

whole nature and movement of the intellect and thought, one can begin to investigate what intelligence is. Intelligence is the capacity to perceive the whole. Intelligence is incapable of dividing the senses, the emotions and the intellect from each other; it regards them as one unitary movement.

Because its perception is always whole, intelligence is incapable of dividing man from man and of setting man against nature. [...] The very nature of intelligence is sensitivity, and this sensitivity is love. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 116-117)

This capacity to perceive the “whole” is different in quality and function to the intellect that is linked to thought and the activity of memory, ideology, and creed. In this notion of intelligence³⁸ is creativity, sensitivity, and love. It is not “brainless,” nor “heartless,” it is a perspective of the whole of life and thought, including our emotions, intellect, and compassion.

The notions Krishnamurti speaks about in the “core of his teachings” are simple to hear, but difficult to understand. Many of those who listened to him understood the sense of what he was saying, but found it difficult to apply in their daily life. The many transcripts of dialogues and talks demonstrate the struggles that people had trying to put his teachings into action. Despite the challenges in undergoing a “psychological revolution,” Krishnamurti offered many persuasive arguments for its importance. Faced with unprecedented global crises and problems in the world today, Krishnamurti’s call for radical inward change is more relevant than ever. Luytens (1990) told an interesting story in regards to this. While speaking with a reporter in Washington, Krishnamurti explained that,

If man doesn’t radically change, fundamentally bring about a mutation in himself, we will destroy ourselves. A psychological revolution is possible now, not a thousand years later. We’ve already had thousands of years

³⁸ There are many interesting parallels in the thinking of Krishnamurti and Eisner. Eisner’s emphasis on criticism being the “reeducation of perception” (Eisner, 1998) is very similar to that of Krishnamurti when he speaks of intelligence. In his book *Reimagining Schools*, Eisner wrote about the importance of teachers being able to explore the nuance of their own teaching. What he called the “teacher’s ability to read the meanings that are found in the qualities of classroom life” (Eisner, 2005, p. 93). He also wrote on that same page that, “Grasping these patterns of context and modifying one’s decisions almost cybernetically, as patterns change, might depend on a kind of intelligence and a form of knowing that differ in kind from the kind of intelligence and form of knowing carried by words.”

and we're still barbarians. So if we don't change now we'll still be barbarians tomorrow or in a thousand tomorrows. (p. 213)

Lutyens (1990) continues her story by stating, "If one then asks: how can one person's transformation affect the world?, there is only K's own answer to give: 'Change and see what happens'" (p. 213).

Krishnamurti's Educational Vision

For the purposes of this dissertation, I will take some time to highlight the important books and dialogues that explain Krishnamurti's educational vision. I spend a lot of time giving a broad overview of Krishnamurti's educational theory as presented in his book *Education and the Significance of Life* (Krishnamurti, 1953).

In 1953 when his book was first published, Krishnamurti had spent years traveling the world. During his travels, he observed wherever he went that human nature was extremely similar. He found this to be especially true of colleges and universities. He writes, "we are turning out, as if through mold, a type of human being whose chief interest is to find security, to become somebody important, or to have a good time with as little thought as possible" (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 9). "Conventional education" he argues is in no small part to blame. By instilling a belief in "success," people have a fear of going against the norm or of being unsuccessful. As he explains,

The urge to be successful, which is the pursuit of reward, whether in the material or in the so-called spiritual sphere, the search for inward or outward security, the desire for comfort -- this whole process smothers discontent, puts an end to spontaneity and breeds fear; and fear blocks the intelligent understanding of life. With increasing age, dullness of mind and heart sets in. (Krishnamurti, 1953, pp. 9-10)

Krishnamurti believed that most of us allow ourselves to be lulled to sleep, because we seek comfort. We seek to avoid conflict. This search for security kills the spirit of adventure within us and makes us afraid to be different from our neighbor or different from the established pattern of society. Moreover, Krishnamurti explains that we are only "falsely respectful of authority and tradition." There are those who reject the established patterns, he adds, but the few who do engage in violent revolt, which is nothing more than a reaction to the established order, do so without understanding and without freedom. Reacting to an established pattern, like a teenage child rebelling against her parents, is not freedom because we are still operating according to the pattern.

Krishnamurti encouraged a different kind of revolution—that of a "deep psychological revolt of intelligence." Those who revolt against the established orthodoxies tend to repeat the mistakes of the past and create new orthodoxies, including more ideologies and more opposition. In thinking that they are free, they merely react to the established order and re-create a new pattern of thought that one day we will once again revolt against. "Reaction only breeds opposition, and reform needs further reform"³⁹ (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 10). Instead of reacting to the established pattern through violent revolt, Krishnamurti advocates an "intelligent revolt" through psychological transformation (Krishnamurti, 1953). The key to this transformation is self-knowledge, an awareness of one's thought and feelings. In his words,

It is only when we face experience as it comes and do not avoid disturbance that we keep intelligence highly awakened; and intelligence highly awakened is intuition, which is the only true guide in life.
(Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 11)

³⁹ This argument is similar to that made by Tyack and Cuban about school reform (Tyack & Cuban, 2001).

This of course is the intelligence to which Krishnamurti referred to in the core of his teachings. In his estimation, education in industrialized nations does not encourage this kind of intelligence (Krishnamurti, 1953). Krishnamurti questions, what the ultimate goal of an education that leads people towards conformity is? In this system people are left wondering, “what is the significance of life?” Why do we struggle for in existence? If we are only educated to get a better job, to gain recognition, to be more efficient and more powerful, then our lives will be shallow and empty.

Krishnamurti thought the major goal of education should be to help people appreciate the “higher and wider” significance of life (Krishnamurti, 1953). If we are highly educated, but lack the capacity for “deep integration of thought and feeling” then, “our lives are incomplete, contradictory and torn with many fears; and as long as education does not cultivate an integrated outlook on life, it has very little significance” (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 11). The trend towards specialization and technical education, he believes, has led us to fragment life, and this fragmentation impacts our consciousness. For Krishnamurti, it is imperative that we understand the meaning of life as a whole. In this way, we are not merely conforming to a pattern, but able to think intelligently about life as a whole. Krishnamurti writes, “We cannot understand existence abstractly or theoretically. To understand life is to understand ourselves, and that is both the beginning and the end of education” (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 14). Education is not merely acquiring knowledge, but to understand the significance of life as a whole. But the whole is much more than the sum of its parts; it cannot be approached through the part. By encouraging fragmented thinking, modern education is leading people to be “mechanical and deeply thoughtless.” It awakens people “intellectually,” but “inwardly

leaves us incomplete, stultified and uncreative.” Krishnamurti is deeply concerned with a unified creative individual, capable of dealing with the complexities of modern life. To him,

Education should not encourage the individual to conform to society or to be negatively harmonious with it, but help him discover the true values which come with unbiased investigation and self-awareness. When there is no self-knowledge, self expression become self-assertion, with all its aggressive and ambitious conflicts. Education should awaken the capacity to be self-aware and not merely indulge in gratifying self-expression. (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 15).

In this way schools can help the individual to transform herself and to be in touch with a higher meaning in life, which would allow them to discover values for themselves and not merely conform to the viewpoint of an ideology or an authoritarian figure.

The individual is the key to the transformation of society; without transformation and radical revolution of individual consciousness, society is doomed to repeat the patterns of the past indefinitely. In words that echo the Delphic oracle, Krishnamurti claims that

The ignorant man is not the unlearned, but he who does not know himself, and a learned man is stupid when he relies on books, on knowledge and on authority to give him understanding. Understanding comes only through self-knowledge, which is awareness of one's total psychological process. Thus education, in the true sense, is the understanding of oneself, for it is within each of us that the whole of existence is gathered. (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 17)

“The right kind of education,” should help children to learn techniques that will help them be successful in society, but it should also accomplish something far more important: “it should help man to experience the integrated process of life” (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 20).

Krishnamurti believes that the right kind of education should not be concerned with any ideology, even if that ideology makes promises of a Utopia. All ideologies, he argues, are based on systems of thought. No matter how carefully they are thought out, they only serve as a means of conditioning the individual into some kind of pattern. They never succeed in awakening the kind of intelligence necessary to adapt to life, which is constantly changing. "Education in the true sense," Krishnamurti said, "is helping the individual to be mature and free, to flower greatly in love and goodness. That is what we should be interested in, and not in shaping the child according to some idealistic pattern" (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 23). Krishnamurti feels that only love can allow people to be creative, tolerant, and understanding of one another because in love there is instantaneous communion "on the same level and at the same time." Krishnamurti believes that people who have a deep understanding of the whole of life, and are therefore intelligent, are a threat to governments, organized religions, and authoritarian forces of all orders. This is why he believes that these groups have taken over the education of children. As teachers trying to help children grow and learn in ideologically charged institutions like schools, there is pressure to put away the love they feel for children, and consequently, teachers frequently have "dry minds and hard hearts."

Krishnamurti believes it is the obligation of schools to help children to create new values. But this is not simply a matter of implanting existing values in the mind of the child, to make her conform to an ideal, to simply condition a child without awakening her intelligence. By helping children through love and freedom to discover the whole of life, the children themselves would awaken their intelligence and thus think creatively—capable of discovering values for themselves. In this way, it would not be necessary to

use discipline as a means of compelling children to conform to certain set of ideals, values, or norms. Large, impersonal, and overpopulated classrooms force teachers to use compulsion, coercion, and conditioning to maintain order,

but with the right kind of educator and a small number of students, would any repression politely called discipline, be required? If the classes are small and the teacher can give his full attention to each child, observing and helping him think, then compulsion and domination in any form is obviously unnecessary. If in such a group, a student persists in disorderliness or is unreasonably mischievous, the educator must inquire into the cause of his misbehavior, which may be wrong diet, lack of rest, family wrangles, or some hidden fear. Implicit in right education is the cultivation of freedom and intelligence, which is not possible if there is any form of compulsion, with its fears. [...] cooperation between teacher and student is impossible if there is no mutual affection, mutual respect. (Krishnamurti, 1953, pp. 32-33)

So it falls upon the educator to examine his own thoughts and feelings and put aside those values which are brought for his own security and comfort. In this way, an education can help a child to question for herself the values they hold and not be tempted to force them to conform to the teacher's way of thinking about life.

If one understands deeply, one will encourage the student from the very beginning to awaken insight into present-day individual and social values. One will encourage him to seek out, not any particular set of values, but the true value of all things. One will help him to be fearless, which is to be free of all domination, whether by the teacher, the family or society, so that as an individual he can flower in love and goodness. In thus helping the student towards freedom, the educator is changing his own values also; he too is beginning to be rid of the "me" and the "mine," he too is flowering in love and goodness. This process of mutual education creates an altogether different relationship between the teacher and the student (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 106)

Krishnamurti envisions a teacher-student relationship where both the teacher and the student teach and learn together about the whole of life. In this spirit of learning, both the

teacher and the student are free to flower in love and goodness through self-transcendence.

Krishnamurti's Other Writings and Discussions on Education

Krishnamurti spent decades discussing and elaborating on this educational vision. He developed schools that tried to implement this philosophy of education and spoke to parents, students, teachers, administrators, university professors, university students, and politicians about his goals for education and the dangers of technical education. Many of the conversations he had with teachers, parents, and students were recording on tape or video. Some collections of these educational writings have been published (Krishnamurti, 1969b, 1970b, 1993, 2003, 2006a), although a large portion of them have not yet been released. I was given access to some of this archival material, which I will use as it becomes relevant and appropriate during the descriptions of this dissertation⁴⁰.

Krishnamurti wanted very much to help foster an educational culture and environment where students could truly blossom and transform society through their own mutation. However, he knew that one of the most fundamental aspects of “right education” was finding and educating the right teachers. As Krishnamurti had a very busy travel schedule, he decided that to stay in better touch with the schools he would write letters. Krishnamurti wrote as many as 72 letters to his schools. Krishnamurti explained in his first letter that

These letters are not meant to be read casually when you have a little time from other things, nor are they to be treated as entertainment. These

⁴⁰ The subtlety and nuance of these discussions, while interesting, would demand an entire dissertation to properly explore. In fact, there are literally hundreds of discussions and talks that would be fascinating for curricularists to study. Those interested in this dissertation and Krishnamurti would do well to consider investigating the archives in England, the US, and India.

letters are written seriously and if you care to read them, read them with intent to study what is said, as you would study a flower by looking at the flower very carefully—its petals, its stem, its colours, its fragrance and its beauty. These letters should be studied in the same manner not read one morning and forgotten in the rest of the day. One must give time to it, play with it, question it, inquire into it without acceptance. Live with it for some time; digest it so that it is yours and not the writer's. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. x)

These letters were written for teachers, administrators and parents at the various schools around the world so that they could have a way to contemplate and study the ideas and vision that guide the schools. They are simple and to the point, but rich in concepts that must be carefully studied as Krishnamurti explained. A sampling of some of the titles are as follows: Total Education, Goodness, Leisure, Fear, Knowledge, Responsibility, Learning, Radical Change, Diligence, Security, Comparison, Psychological Wounds, Habit, Beauty, Capacity, Integrity, Problems, Status, Sensitivity, Self-Centredness, The Art of Living, and Words. There are 72 letters, each on a different topic. Once again, the preponderance of letters makes it difficult to attempt a short summary. I will bring up these topics as they become relevant in the descriptions and interpretations of the dissertation.

Krishnamurti and the Field of Curriculum

In many ways, he was well ahead of his time. What I find most fascinating about Krishnamurti's educational vision is that it anticipated much of the curricular theory that would come later. Those who have studied the field of curriculum might have already noticed this from the descriptions above. We can see in Krishnamurti's educational philosophy elements of Nel Noddings' Care Theory. In the introduction of her book *The Challenge to Care in Schools* (Noddings, 1992), Noddings forcefully supports a

reorientation of educational practice: “I will argue that the first job of schools is to care for our children. We should educate all our children not only for competence but also for caring. Our aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and loveable people” (p. xiv). A similar emphasis on caring and love can be found in Krishnamurti’s writings on education. For example, in *Education and the Significance of Life* Krishnamurti speaks of what is essential in teaching:

What is essential in education, as in every other field, is to have people who are understanding and affectionate, whose hearts are not filled with empty phrases, with the things of the mind. If life is meant to be lived happily, with thought, with care, with affection, then it is very important to understand ourselves; and if we wish to build a truly enlightened society, we must have educators who understand the ways of integration and who are therefore capable of imparting that understanding to the child. (Krishnamurti, 1953, pp. 76-77)

Similarly, Krishnamurti speaks not of care but of love at many points throughout *Education and the Significance of Life*. For instance, he spoke of the importance of love in psychological transformation:

Only love and right thinking will bring about true revolution, the revolution within ourselves. But how are we to have love? [...] A man who is caught up in the pursuits of exploitation, of greed, of envy, can never love [...] Without love and right thinking, oppression and cruelty will ever be on the increase. [...] Without a change of heart, without good –will, without the transformation which is born of self-awareness, there can be no peace, no happiness for men. (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 66)

As Krishnamurti continued to lecture on education for many years, he always emphasized the importance of teachers being compassionate and affectionate with students. He spoke of the importance of attention and listening in the classroom. In his *Letters to the Schools*, Krishnamurti wrote of care and attention:

This care implies attention. Attention is to watch, observe, listen, learn. There are many things you can learn from books, but there is a learning

which is infinitely clear, quick and without any ignorance. Attention implies sensitivity, and this gives depth to perception, which no knowledge, with its related ignorance, can give (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 125-126).

In this discussion of care and attention, Krishnamurti certainly anticipates many of the concepts that Nel Noddings (1992) brings to the discussions in the field of curriculum studies.

We can see another clear parallel with work by critical theorists and multicultural education, such as the work of Banks, Apple, or Ladson-Billings in the areas of ideology, authority, power, race, class, and curriculum (M. Apple, 1979, 1982; M. W. Apple, 1999; Banks, 1981, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 1999). Banks, for example, states clearly one of the major premises of multicultural education, "...knowledge reflects the social, political, and economic contexts as well as the personal biographies of historians, social scientists, and educators" (Banks, 2006, p. 11). Such sentiments about the influence that race, culture, nationalism, and personal biographies are quite common in Krishnamurti's writings on education. Numerous examples can be seen in *Education and the Significance of Life*. Speaking of the relationship between nationalism and race consciousness Krishnamurti explains,

Nationalism, the patriotic spirit, class and race consciousness, are all ways of the self, and therefore separative. After all, what is a nation but a group of individuals living together for economic and self-protective reasons? Out of fear and acquisitive self-defense arises the idea of "my country," with its boundaries and tariff walls, rendering brotherhood and the unity of man impossible. (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 70)

Krishnamurti spent most of his life trying to help people transcend nationalistic and racial conflicts. Like Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., Krishnamurti was interested in a

brotherhood of man. Krishnamurti focused on the causes of such division in consciousness:

One of the chief causes of hatred and strife is the belief that particular class or race is superior to another child is neither class or race conscious; it is the home or school environment or both, which makes him feel separate. In himself he does not care whether his playmate is a Negro or a Jew, a Brahman or a non-Brahmin; but the influence of the whole social structure is continually impinging on his mind, affecting and shaping it. (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 73)

For Krishnamurti it was only the societal conditioning that led people to be racist or prejudiced against people of another culture or class. He expressed this discontent with racism and classism in other writings:

What real basis is there for differentiating between human beings? Our bodies may be different in structure and color, our faces may be dissimilar, but inside the skin we are very much alike: proud, ambitious, envious, violent, sexual, power seeking, and so on. Remove the label, and we are very naked; we do not want to face our nakedness, and so we insist on the label -- which indicates how immature, how really infantile we are. (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 74)

He regarded such thinking as “infantile” and “immature” and thought that education should seek to prevent people from falling into such traps. These quotes show the same type of trenchant analysis so common today in culturally responsive pedagogy, critical race theory, and critical theory⁴¹.

In his support of ecological awareness and human connections to nature, we can also see an anticipation of the ecological education movement. For example, in one of his letters Krishnamurti writes:

⁴¹ As I've already pointed out there is also a strong similarity between Eisner and Krishnamurti in terms of their educational goals. We can see a parallel with Eisner's work on curricular ideologies and educational criticism (Eisner, 1992, 1998, 2005). Much of the description of reeducating perception, of being attentive to qualities and not simply quantities or science for its own sake are also similar.

If the educator is really concerned, as he must be, then he has to help the student to find out his relationship to the world, not to the world of imagination or romantic sentimentality, but to the actual world in which all things are taking place; and also to the world of nature, to the desert, the jungle or the few trees that surround him, and to the animals of the world. Animals, fortunately, are not nationalistic; they hunt only to survive.) If the educator and the student lose their relationship to nature, to the trees, to the rolling sea, each will certainly lose his relationships with humanity. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 194)

We can see the emphasis Krishnamurti places on ecological awareness and its importance in attaining his overall vision of understanding the whole of life.

Krishnamurti also advocates inquiry and self-discovery as a major feature of his educational approach, foreshadowing the work of developmentalists (Duckworth, 1995) on inquiry-based learning and project-based learning. In other branches of psychology that have influenced education, the commonalities with Krishnamurti's vision are equally obvious. Many of the humanistic psychological ideas of Rogers concerning the freedom to learn resemble Krishnamurti's aims in education, like the notion of reunifying thinking and feeling that was discussed earlier (Rogers, 1972a, 1974a, 1974b, 1994). That said, Humanistic psychology was also partly inspired from Krishnamurti's work. For example, Rollo May supported Krishnamurti, having commented on the back of some of his publications: "These calm searching thoughts of an eastern thinker pierce to the roots of our western problems. A profound and fresh approach to self-understanding and deeper insights into the meaning of personal freedom and mature love."⁴² Finally, in his commentary on the narrative qualities of the self and culture's impact upon our personal narratives, his writings bear a striking resemblance to the work of Jerome Bruner and other cultural psychologists (Bruner, 1996).

⁴² Taken from the following website on 8/20/08 <http://www.kinfonet.org>

What is perhaps most fascinating of all, however, is that much of the work that Krishnamurti did in each of these areas still has a great deal of relevance and could provide guidance for new directions in each of the respective curriculum areas. Krishnamurti saw broad connections between all of these areas and his goal of teaching for inward flowering and having a global perspective on life. The scope and depth of Krishnamurti's work has yet to be widely appreciated in the field of curriculum. This dissertation will also demonstrate how his ideas anticipated much of what we know understand from the Science of Well-Being about fostering well-being and happiness in students.

The Current State of Krishnamurti Education in the World

As I have discussed previously, there are currently nine Krishnamurti schools worldwide. This dissertation will investigate the Brockwood Park School in England and the Oak Grove School in Ojai, California. I did not have the means or time to travel to India. However, it is worth pointing out that the movement has flourished there. There are 7 schools in India: the Uttarkashi Education Center in Uttarkashi, the Rishi Valley Education Center (KFI), the Rajghat Education Center in Varanasi, The School (KFI) "Damodar Gardens" in Chennai, Bal Anand, Mumbai (KFI) in Mumbai, the The Valley School (KFI) or the Bangalore Education center in Bangalore, and the Sahyadri School in Pune.

There is no formal, codified training program or certification method for teachers like in Montessori or Waldorf education. During my stay in Brockwood Park I learned that teacher development is an area of active development in the Krishnamurti

community, but again Krishnamurti did not support a method of any kind in his schools, so each school approaches training in their own way. Each school is unique and tries to employ K's vision differently.

As we've already seen, there are no studies on Krishnamurti schools in the primary literature of the field of curriculum or educational studies. The Krishnamurti Foundation of India does, however, print a journal that presents studies and insights from the Krishnamurti schools. The journal began in 1995 with the intention of providing a forum for teachers at the Krishnamurti schools to discuss and debate educational issues in the schools with one another. The website of the journal states that,

There has long been a divide between those who teach, and those who research and write about school education. Thus when a teacher can find the time to reflect and record his or her own discoveries, it has a special significance and value. The Journal of the Krishnamurti Schools is a unique response to the need for teachers writing on school education. Articles in the Journal broadly cover the areas of philosophy and practice in education. The authors of the articles have been deeply moved by questions of life and education raised by the philosopher J. Krishnamurti, and their ongoing enquiry into such questions is reflected in their teaching and writing. This aspect of the Journal widens its scope and relevance to far beyond the classroom, indeed to the heart of learning and life itself. (India, 2008, p. 1)

Like many features in Krishnamurti education, the journal does not necessarily conform with standards set by the educational research communities in Europe or America. The goal of the journal is tied up with Krishnamurti's teachings and his intentions for the schools, which consists of learning about life itself; therefore less emphasis is placed on the rigors of scientific or humanistic research in education. Nonetheless, there are many interesting articles, both theoretical and practical. The authors share their experiences, triumphs, failures, and their ideas with one another in a collegial and critical manner. Its

readership is undoubtedly within the Krishnamurti community itself, but it is an important way for the community to examine itself.

A Final Word

The major goals of this chapter are to familiarize the reader with the theoretical framework used for analysis and the nature of the school sites that will be examined in the study. It serves as a global introduction to the ideas of both. As the dissertation proceeds, I will use other literature not reviewed here to help elucidate the descriptions, interpretations, and evaluation of the study. It seemed wiser to review such literature in context, rather than covering it in a more abstract way in this review. With this broad review complete, I now turn to the methods used in this dissertation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Educational Connoisseurship and Criticism

Thirty years ago, Elliot Eisner argued that there is an intimate relationship between the assumptions and procedures employed to assess the effectiveness of a school and its programs (Eisner, 1977). He explains that if our evaluation systems are narrow and short-sighted, then school programming will be as well. In the 1970's, the majority of methods used to evaluate schools emerged from a paradigm similar to that employed in the natural sciences with an emphasis on discovering laws and mechanisms that would help explain how to educate with scientific precision. Eisner argues that we need a broader, less parochial view of evaluation that includes more artistic or humanistic forms. This would in turn effect school programming, allowing for a wider variety of forms. Eisner proposed a new method, not as an "alternative" to scientific evaluation, which he deemed to be both valuable and necessary, but to help broaden and supplement the existing scientific evaluation methods (Eisner, 1977). He termed this new method *educational connoisseurship and criticism* (**from here forward** educational criticism). Since that time educational criticism has been used in a variety of circumstances in the field of curriculum and beyond. Moroye (2007), for example, lists over 40 educational criticisms that have taken place on a variety of subjects at major universities across the country, including Stanford, Columbia University's Teachers College, Princeton, University of Denver, University of Oregon, and Arizona State. Suffice it to say that educational criticism has indeed proved useful in broadening educational evaluation and has been shown across the country to be a valid method for educational investigation.

Why Use the Method for this Dissertation?

I chose this arts-based, qualitative research methodology for three main reasons. First, the nature of this study is by-and-large exploratory (Creswell, 1994, 1998). I do not have hypotheses that I am seeking to verify, nor am I trying to validate previous findings from other educational works. Instead, I take a new look at alternative education using the Science of Well-Being in an attempt to understand how to improve educational practice and address well-being in the schools. For this reason, qualitative research is most appropriate because the research conducted in this dissertation is exploratory and not explanatory (Creswell, 1994, 1998). Qualitative inquiry is flexible and allows for the emergence of important variables and hypotheses instead of seeking confirmation for fixed hypotheses as is often the case in quantitative research.

Secondly, well-being is not a skill that can be taught in the same way as basic math. It is a subtle state that requires attention to much more than test scores, classroom engagement, and obvious features of a school. Educational connoisseurship and criticism emphasizes the appreciation of subtle “qualities” in a school. Connoisseurship, Eisner explains, is “the art of appreciation. It can be displayed in any realm in which the character, import, or value of objects, situations, and performances is distributed and variable, including educational practice” (Eisner, 1977, p. 63, 1998). Like the sensitive palette of an experienced chef, the goal of the educational connoisseur is to appreciate the qualities of educational experience that may escape a novice observer. In her role as an educational critic she can attempt to communicate that experience to another. Criticism here refers to “the art of disclosure” (Eisner, 1998, p. 86). As Eisner explains succinctly,

the aim of educational criticism is “to lift the veils that keep the eyes from seeing by providing the bridge needed by others to experience the qualities and relationships within some arena of activity” (Eisner, 1977, p. 50). While a connoisseur may never express the enjoyment that she derives from an experience, it is the job of the critic to disclose this experience by allowing another person to have a sense of what it is like to see the world through her eyes. This approach fits well with one aim of this dissertation, which is to help teachers, parents, administrators, and policy makers appreciate and understand the importance of well-being in the schools.

Lastly, Krishnamurti and Eisner have similar sentiments about the role of education and evaluation in society. Eisner describes the role of criticism in educational criticism as the “reeducation of perception,” following Dewey’s description of criticism in *Art as Experience* (Eisner, 1998, p. 85, 2005). This is very close to the goal of Krishnamurti education, which is to help individuals see “what is” and not rely upon the images we have accumulated in the past through thought (Krishnamurti, 1953, 1973a, 1996, 2006a, 2006b). It only made sense to use a research method that fit with the spirit of the educational goals of the research sites. I am not implying that this will give undue emphasis to something in Krishnamurti education, rather that other more restrictive methodologies may be incapable of addressing certain features in Krishnamurti education.

Employing Educational Connoisseurship and Criticism

Theoretical Frameworks Used in this Dissertation

To aid my observations, interpretations, and evaluations of Krishnamurti education, I draw upon two different theoretical frameworks. The first of the two frameworks, the Science of Well-Being has already been explored in detail in chapter two. I will use this theoretical framework primarily in the interpretations and evaluations I make of the two Krishnamurti schools examined in this dissertation. While it is potentially useful to help guide my observations, I want to first paint a portrait of the schools themselves without trying to analyze or interpret what I see through the lens of the Science of Well-Being.

To help guide my observations and descriptions of the schools I draw on a second theoretical framework that Eisner calls “the ecology of the classroom” (Eisner, 1988, 1998, p. 72). This ecology describes some of the major dimensions of schools, which can help guide observations by making them more systematic. Eisner identified these dimensions as the intentional, the structural, the curricular, the pedagogical, and the evaluative (Eisner, 1998, p. 72). Uhrmacher and Matthews (2005) propose expanding this framework to include two other dimensions: administration and school-community relations. Each of these dimensions can be used to help with educational connoisseurship. *The intentional dimension* refers to the goals and aims that a teacher, a classroom, or a school may have. *The structural dimension* refers to how a school is organized in concrete ways, like space and time. What is the layout of the school or the classroom, how are the desks arranged, what is the schedule of the day, how long are the periods, and so forth. *The curricular dimension* refers to the content and subject matter

discussed in a school, as well as the activities employed to help get students interested in learning. *The pedagogical dimension* concerns how teachers teach. For instance, what approach do the teachers in a school take to help deliver the curriculum to students? *The evaluation dimension* refers to the processes by which the performance of students, teachers, and schools is assessed. Assessment reflects the priorities and values of those who control the school system. *The administrative dimension* of course refers to how the school is managed and administrated by the principal, school board, or others. *The dimension of school-community relations* is almost self-explanatory. There are ways in which the dynamics of the broader community effect what transpires in the schools and vice-versa like in moments of tragedy or triumph. Eisner chose the term “ecology” in reference to these dimensions of the school because they are in dynamic interaction with one another. If one is changed, either intentionally or unintentionally, it may impact all the others (Eisner, 1998; Uhrmacher & Matthews, 2005).

The Structure of Educational Criticism

Unlike scientific research methods used in education, there is no definitive form that educational criticism must take (Eisner, 1977, 1998), but there are four major dimensions Eisner recommends examining in an educational criticism: description, interpretation, evaluation, and thematics (Eisner, 1998). These four dimensions refer to the dimensions or features that all educational criticisms should examine, although they are to be taken more as guidelines than a fixed form. Like a great work of literature, there is no prescriptive structure that one should employ. Moreover, description, interpretation, and evaluation can easily blend together in an educational criticism, but to

ease the description of how each feature is addressed, I treat them in this section as if they are discrete.

One of the great powers of an artistic research method like educational criticism is its ability to vividly depict a classroom, a school, or any other subject of study. The goal of *descriptions* in educational criticism is to help an individual live vicariously through the observations of the researcher (Eisner, 1998). Eisner explains that “the descriptive aspect of criticism is a type of portrayal of the qualities that one encounters without getting into—very deeply, at least—what they signify” (Eisner, 1977, p. 42).

Chapters 4 and 5 will provide rich descriptions of the two Krishnamurti schools I visited, Brockwood Park and Oak Grove School respectively. These chapters give the reader a global sense of the look and feel of the schools I visited during this study. They will consist primarily of description. The goal is to look at the intentions and operations of a school where the aim is to yield students who are self-aware and in a state of well-being. I’m going to look at the intentions of the school itself, the structure of the program as a whole, as well as three or four teachers at each who exemplify life at the school. I am interested in revealing how the teachers’ intentions and operations relate to their understanding of the overall philosophy of the school. Krishnamurti’s descriptions of the goal(s) of education were not prescriptive in the classroom so that many interpret them differently. Each of the teachers I examine has a different understanding of why what they do fits with Krishnamurti’s intentions. For some teachers, their understanding of is reflected in the structure of the classroom, for others it can be more easily seen in their curriculum and pedagogy. I will attend to all of these dimensions of the ecology of the classroom in order to try to reveal these intentions and operations.

In educational criticism it is essential not only to vividly depict the life of the schools, but also to extract its meaning. To use Eisner's terms, the role of *interpretation* in educational criticism is not only to give an "account *of*," what has been seen, but also to "account *for*" what has been seen (Eisner, 1998, p. 95). The role of the interpreter is to place what has been seen in some context, "to explain, unwrap, and explicate" (Eisner, 1998, p. 97) the life of the school. As my aim is to elucidate the role of well-being in education, I intend to interpret what I observe at the school in the context of the Science of Well-Being. I also incorporate relevant curricular theory as well as Krishnamurti's own writings where appropriate to help the reader understand the significance of what is depicted. Chapter 6 focuses primarily on interpretation and description, and employs a thematic approach to cut across the observations and descriptions of the two schools in chapters 4 and 5.

While providing descriptions and interpretations of schools is interesting in its own right from a historical point of view, one of the major aims of educational research is the improvement of educational practice. Eisner argues that the role of educational research is to evaluate the educational value of school practices and the experiences they provide to students (Eisner, 1977, 1988, 1998, 2005). If research cannot provide an appraisal of the quality of what is taking place in school life, its utility is questionable at best. By attending to the dimension of *evaluation* in educational criticism, the educational critic ties research to the improvement of educational practice.

By describing, interpreting, and evaluating the school or classroom being observed, a fourth dimension often emerges, *thematics*. The particular features of the educational context being studied often touches on themes whose relevance extends well

beyond it (Eisner, 1998; Uhrmacher & Matthews, 2005). These themes can be compared to generalization in quantitative research studies, although it is arguable whether or not any qualitative research is “generalizable” in the strict sense of the statistical term (Creswell, 1994, 1998; Eisner, 1998). Qualitative studies do not frequently employ the random sampling necessary to make such “formal generalizations” although it can help us to touch on meanings and universal features of experience like those provided by a folktale, proverb, or myth (Eisner, 1998). Like great works of art, educational criticism can address issues that transcend the particular context it studies. Chapter 7 of this dissertation attends to the evaluation and thematics of this educational criticism and its implications for the well-being of children and society.

Research Design and Questions

This dissertation investigates the relationship between well-being and education. The first two chapters address the issue theoretically. The following chapters empirically consider the relationship between well-being and education by studying two Krishnamurti schools. In this section I explore how I conduct this study and answer my research questions.

Three interrelated research questions guide this dissertation:

1. *How is well-being related to schooling?*
2. *In a school dedicated to well-being and self-awareness, what specific strategies and pedagogies are used to help students cultivate self-awareness and well-being?*
3. *What is the significance of theories and practices aimed at increasing well-being for public schools in general?*

1. How is well-being related to schooling?

I answer this questions, in part, during chapters 1 and 2. In chapter 1 I discuss this relevance head on. In chapter two I conduct a thorough review of subjective well-being research, as well as research on the Science of Well-Being to set the stage for my discussion of the relationship in chapters 6, 7, and 8. That is, I return to the second half of this question in greater detail once I begin to interpret and evaluate, and engage in thematics in chapters 6 and 7. By analyzing and evaluating the educational practices in the Krishnamurti schools using the Science of Well-Being as a theoretical framework, I can better address how well-being is related to schooling.

2. In two schools dedicated to well-being and self-awareness, what specific strategies and pedagogies are used to help students cultivate self-awareness and well-being?

To address this second research question, I resided in each of the two schools for about a month. I spent six weeks in Ojai and 3 weeks at Brockwood Park. I spoke to a large sample of students, parents, administrators, teachers, and other staff. All told, I spent 150 hours in classrooms, meetings, and school assemblies in both schools. I also interviewed parents, teachers, alumni, and had many informal discussions with community members. Additionally, I made extensive observations of classrooms, lunches and dinners, staff meetings and conversations, school assemblies and meetings. I collected as many materials and documents as possible; I took photographs and made classroom recordings and films of the environment and campuses of the schools. In short, I studied as many dimensions of the ecology of the schools as possible to help identify the practices and approaches that might lead to the development of well-being⁴³.

⁴³ Out of a spirit of respect and consideration for the participants in this study I took care to protect people's confidentiality, so I do not use any person's real name in this study.

3. What is the significance of theories and practices aimed at increasing well-being for public schools in general?

By interpreting and evaluating the practices, theories, and approaches used in the two schools I visited through the framework of the Science of Well-Being, I offer a number of themes and organizational frameworks that can help all schools, public and private, to work on cultivates practices and strategies that will engender well-being in children (and adults). As Uhrmacher (1997) explains, studying alternatives is an area ripe with possibilities for educational research. In the absence of many of the formal strictures of mainstream public education, teachers, parents, and administrators are free to develop strategies and practices never seen in public schools. Many of the practices at Krishnamurti schools look superficially similar to those in public schools, but the ecology of the school gives those practices different meanings. By exploring not only the subject matter, but the entire approach employed at these Krishnamurti schools, there is much that public schools can stand to benefit from, especially analyzed through the perspective of the Science of Well-Being. The themes and practices gleaned from this study provide practical guidance and alternatives for public schools to consider.

Data Collection and Analysis

When I initially began my dissertation research it was my intention to develop a theoretical framework and curriculum theory capable of dealing with the issue of well-being in schools. When I attempted to write the theory, I had already recognized that in various ways, both consciously and unconsciously, each curricular theory and many

alternative school movements had already attempted to address well-being. I decided to modify my original proposal and to conduct the present research study described below.

The Sites

When looking for school sites, there were very few that explicitly worked towards well-being. As I began to unpack the ramifications of the Science of Well-Being for schooling, I found myself saying things that strongly resembled Krishnamurti's own language on education and schooling. I had been aware for some time of Krishnamurti and his schools, but it had been years since I had read *Education and Significance of Life*. I decided to reread it, and after doing so, I was convinced that his movement was the closest to the ideas I had been developing. I promptly researched the Krishnamurti schools around the world. I contacted the Krishnamurti foundation and discussed the prospect of conducting research at the school. I proceeded to draft a letter to the school and the foundation. After spending several weeks in Ojai, I had been told by many different parties at the school and in the foundation that I needed to go to the Brockwood Park School in England. I had not intended on studying two school sites, but having been already impressed by what I had seen in Ojai, I was intrigued by the vaulted praise that Brockwood was given by those who had taught there or visited. I contacted the interim director of the school and submitted another letter of intention to perform research.

The primary participants in this dissertation are teachers. I did not speak formally with any students during this study. I did however have the opportunity to interview parents, administrators, people from the broader community around the schools, and adult

former students as well. In a table below I detail the observations and interviews I conducted while at both schools.

Observations, Interviews, and Artifacts

As stated previously, I spent six weeks in Ojai. During that time I made long-term observations in four teacher's classrooms and interviewed each of them. This was certainly convenience sampling although the teachers who felt the most comfortable having me observe tended to be those who had the most experience and who were used to speaking about their teaching. This aided the quality of my observations and interviews. One of the classrooms I observed was team taught by two teachers, Anney and Darla; the others were single teacher classrooms Katherine, Todd, and Wouter⁴⁴. I conducted one formal interview with each teacher I observed and I conducted many informal interviews throughout my observations. I initially began with a formal interview schedule, but it quickly became apparent that it was not a good method for the Krishnamurti schools. The schools emphasize relationship and community. A formal interview only seemed to make people tense and feel compelled to answer in artificial ways in an attempt to speak to my research goals. I decided not to use a formal interview schedule, instead I tried to have a conversation with the interviewee and paid close attention to each of the dimensions of Eisner's ecology of the schools. Eisner and Powell (Eisner & Powell, 2002) used a similar approach during their study on the role of art in social science. I simply asked questions relevant to well-being and the various dimensions of the ecology of the schools described above. I started each conversation (interview) by asking the

⁴⁴ I was only able to observe Wouter for 3 class periods because he was subsequently made interim administrator due to the resignation of the principal during my stay.

participant to tell me about how they got involved in the school and then prompted them to speak to about their intentions, curriculum, pedagogy, classroom structure, and evaluation strategies. I recorded the conversation, transcribed them and coded them for use in the dissertation.

I also collected as many artifacts as possible to help me with my descriptions. I snapped photos to help with the initial descriptions. I attended staff meetings, school assemblies, and a school field trip. My presence slowly became known across the entire community around the Oak Grove School, and many people offered to participate in the study. I conducted numerous interviews with parents, former students, and others who knew Krishnamurti, who worked for the foundation, and some who taught at other schools around the world like those in India. Both in Brockwood and Ojai, I would review my notes at the end of each day to ensure that any relevant details I had neglected to note during the observations were included.

Brockwood Park is a boarding school where students and teachers live together on a large property. During my three-week stay, I took meals at the school and spent free-time there conversing with people and recording my observations. This allowed me to observe every aspect of the activities at the school from laundry, sleeping, and playing, to eating, studying, and all-school assemblies. I made long-term observations of 4 teachers and interviewed each of them. I followed the same interview protocol as I described above. My observations were more sporadic depending on each teachers schedules. At Brockwood too, I was fortunate enough to be allowed to attend staff meetings, staff dialogues, and school assemblies. All told I conducted 22 interviews in Brockwood including teachers, alumni, people associated with the foundation, and former teachers. I

have included a table of all the observations and interviews made during this dissertation (Table 6).

Table 6: Data Collected During this Dissertation

The Oak Grove School	Observations	
	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Observation Period</i>
	Katherine (7 th Grade)	7 Days (30 Class Periods)
	Todd (4 th Grade)	4 Days (29 Class Periods)
	Anney (Pre-K)	4 Days
	Darla (Pre-K)	4 Days
	Wouter (10 th /11 th Grade)	4 Days (8 Class Periods)
	Derick (12 th Grade)	1 Class Periods
	Jessica (7 th & High School Math)	5 Class Periods
	Bill (10 th grade and Physics)	1 Class Periods
	Kathy (1 st -8 th Art)	3 Class Periods
	Reyna (1 st -8 th Spanish)	5 Class Periods
	Arty (1 st -8 th Music)	4 Class Periods
	<i>Staff Meetings</i>	<i>Observation Period</i>
	All School Meeting	1 Meeting (1 Hour)
	Staff Meetings	5 Meetings (8 Hours)
	Community Dialogue	1 Meeting (1 Hours)
	Parent Meetings	2 Meetings (3 Hours)
	Interviews	
	<i>Interviewees</i>	<i>Number of Interviews</i>
Teachers	9	
Students (Alumni)	5	
Parents	4	
Administrators	2	
Foundation/Community	7	
Brockwood Park Educational Center	Observations	
	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Observation Period</i>
	Angela (ESL Classes)	5 Class Periods
	Aashika (Math)	5 Class Periods
	Raj (Math/K-Class)	5 Class Periods
	Colin (Physics/K-Class)	5 Class Periods
	Maria (Art)	4 Class Periods
	Freya (Care for the Earth)	4 Class Periods
	Adam (Psychology)	1 Class Period
	Antony (Business)	1 Class Period
Clyde (Woodworking)	2 Class Periods	

Brad (History)	1 Class Period
Jim (K-Man Film)	1 Class Period
<i>Staff Meetings</i>	<i>Observation Period</i>
All School Meeting	5 Meetings (8 Hours)
Staff Meetings	3 Meetings (6 Hours)
Prospective Meetings	2 Meetings (5 Hours)
Student Meetings	2 Meetings (2 Hours)
Interviews	
<i>Interviewees</i>	<i>Number of Interviews</i>
Teachers	11
Students (Alumni)	3
Parents	2
Administrators	2
Foundation/Community	4

I also collected extensive archive materials from the Krishnamurti foundations in the US and England. I was given access to hundreds of transcribed dialogues between K and parents, teachers, and students from both Oak Grove and Brockwood Park. I was truly overwhelmed by the vast quantity of audio and video recordings and the accompanying transcripts. I could surely do a dissertation entirely on an analysis of these materials alone. Additionally I collected whatever literature I could get my hands on such as pamphlets, handbooks, surveys, studies, and curricular materials.

Data Analysis

It took three months to write up all of my observation notes and to transcribe the interviews I conducted during my stay in Oak Grove and Brockwood. I then proceeded to code the transcripts and notes in preparation for writing descriptions and for identifying themes. I entered all of this the data into an electronic qualitative data analysis program (NVIVO). As Glesne (1999) points out , the initial coding of my data occurred during my observations while I was organizing the data each day. I began by

typing up some my notes, organizing that into folders, and reflecting on the day in a journal. This practice was one of the most important parts of my data analysis because each day various themes and ideas would emerge from the data. Once I had finished collecting the data and typing everything out, these reflections served as a guide for me in the coding of the transcripts. The codes I used were related to themes from Krishnamurti's writings, the Science of Well-Being, and my background in curriculum studies. The formal coding I used consisted of persistent themes or ideas that emerged from the data (Glesne, 1999). Examples of the codes I used include, "honesty," "inquiry," "self-understanding," "safety," and many others. For a complete list of the codes identified in this dissertation please see **Appendix B**. I began with the 58 codes listed in **Appendix B** and then looked for relationships among the codes until I identified major themes. Taking these codes and considering their relationship to one another and the science of well-being I eventually developed the two frameworks used in chapter 6 (See **Table 9** in chapter 6) and chapter 7 (see **Table 10** in chapter 7). After identifying codes and persistent themes in the data, I set out to write vignettes that encompass all of the emergent themes and give the reader a palpable sense of being in the schools. I tried to tell a story using those vignettes that might lead to the improvement of educational practice in all schools. With time, these small themes coalesced into the vignettes included in chapters four and five and the analysis and themes in chapters six through eight.

The description I have just offered of the data analysis might make it sound like this process occurred in linear, sequential steps. The reality of it, however, was not so simple. I grappled with the observations and readings I did each day over the last year

while writing this dissertation. I had moments of insight and then refined those insights; I also occasionally re-questioned the entire basis of the study as a result of my observations. The final act of typing things out and coding them in NVIVO served only to ensure the validity of what I had surmised through my own experiences of the two schools I visited. I went to the data and tried to see if the interpretations and evaluations I made fit with the data. After spending the time to code everything, I was certain that it did and then I set out to write everything down. The writing itself might also be considered a phase of data analysis as it forced me to go even deeper into the data and weave a coherent narrative.

The Voice of the Educational Critic

Educational Connoisseurship and Criticism is unusual insofar as it seeks to study schools and classrooms as an art critic would study exhibitions. The attention to the gestalt and not simply the details is highly valued. Moreover, the connoisseur utilizes an expertise that is not entirely based or dependent on the data presented in the study. Educational criticism relies on the fact that the educational researcher has a deep and subtle appreciation of the qualities of educational environments. Eisner wrote of the voice of the educational critic:

To make educational value judgments requires not only the ability to see educational subtleties occurring in the classroom and to be able to interpret their meaning or explain the functions they serve, it is also to have a background sufficiently rich in educational theory, educational philosophy, and educational history to be able to understand the values implied by the ongoing activities and the alternatives that might have otherwise been employed... The critic uses what he or she sees and interprets in order to arrive at some conclusions about the character of educational practice and to its improvement. (Eisner, 2005, p. 44)

As Eisner describes here, the appreciation that the educational critic demonstrates comes not only from a theoretical understanding and a general understanding of the primary literature of the field, but also from personal experiences and the subjectivity of the researcher herself. This also means that the voice employed in the writing of educational criticism can be highly varied depending on the individual critic and their own background. Take, for example, Eisner's own narrative voice. In the following excerpt used later on in this dissertation Eisner employs strong, critical language to stimulate the imagination of the reader:

It does not require a great leap of imagination or profound insight to recognize that the values and visions that have driven education during the first quarter of the twentieth century are reappearing with a vengeance today. We look for "best methods" as if they were independent of context; we do more testing than any nation on earth; we seek curriculum uniformity so parents can compare their schools with other schools, as if test scores were good proxies for the quality of education...What we are now doing is creating an industrial culture in our schools, one whose values are brittle and whose conception of what's important narrow. We flirt with payment by results, we pay practically no attention to the idea that engagement in school can and should provide intrinsic satisfactions, and we exacerbate the importance of extrinsic rewards by creating policies that encourage children to become point collectors. Achievement has triumphed over inquiry. I think our children deserve more. (Eisner, 2002, pp. 6-7)

Eisner most certainly could have used a less animated and provocative tone in this article, but his narrative voice stimulates the reader to think; it gets the reader animated about the point being made (It is also more interesting to read!). Other writers and critics like Nel Noddings (1992) or Deborah Meier (2002) use a similarly emphatic narrative voice.

I am discussing the voice of the educational critic here because as the reader will see in the following chapters, at times my own voice comes through strongly. Perhaps, not so much in chapters four and five—although my own perspectives most certainly

inform my descriptions; but in chapters six, seven, and eight I sometimes use very strong language. Take for example my statement on page 325: “Unfortunately fear is all too commonplace in our schools, whether it be through fear of punishment and disciplinary action, or the fear of disappointing teachers or failing exams.” I use a phrase like “all too commonplace” to emphasize the point, to get readers to think about the ideas and issues I am discussing. There are many different interpretations one may make of “all too commonplace.” I intended it to mean that although it may not happen all the time, it happens too much. In this manner I am making an evaluative or interpretive statement and inviting the reader to question their own values and assumptions about fear in the schools. At times I also refer to other literatures that are not directly related to the data I collected during this study to elucidate other perspectives and values regarding what I am describing and evaluating. For example, during this same discussion on fear in the schools, I use the Science of Well-Being to discuss how fear impacts the brain and the body. While the biological implications of fear were not directly measured during this study, this literature presents other possible interpretations that the reader might not have otherwise considered. Some readers, especially those unfamiliar with Educational Criticism, may find it surprising to read a strong voice or to read about theories or philosophies that weren’t directly related to the data collection, but this method encourages and embraces such personal expression as a research tool.

Limitations of the Research

I want to stress that this is only the first of what would certainly need to be many studies on Krishnamurti education. As such, my major aim is to deal with the intentions

of the school and how those intentions are operationalized. To evaluate how it is received by the students and the impact it has on their lives would be too large of a scope for the current study. Future studies will need to consider the received curriculum and other outcomes from those who attend the Krishnamurti schools. This dissertation will include some exploration of the hidden dimension as it pertains in the intentional and operational curriculum.

A second major limitation pertains to the fact that I was only able to observe two of the 9 Krishnamurti schools around the world, being unable to visit any of the schools in India. I chose to study Ojai and Brockwood because they are most easily compared with our own educational system. The Indian schools are older and would certainly be an interesting avenue of future study. All the Krishnamurti schools around the world are English speaking so such a study would be possible by someone who does not speak any Indian dialects.

A third limitation in the study was the duration of my visits. Due to the fact that both schools were considerably far away from where I live, it was difficult to stay longer in either location. More time in each location would certainly have revealed other subtleties that I was unable to observe during my stay.

Finally, while I was observing the Oak Grove School in California the principal of the school announced her retirement. Initially this was planned to be effective at the end of the school year, but due to a number of factors she was asked by the trustees of the foundation that runs the school to leave at the end of the week she announced her retirement. Needless to say, this created some measure of turmoil and confusion in the school. Initially I considered this to be entirely a limitation of the study, but it actually

proved to be an interesting time to observe the school. Nonetheless, the chaos did force me to reschedule some interviews and observations and in general impacted my observations in both positive and negative ways. I hesitate to include it here as a limitation, but the reader should be informed of the fact that it may have limited the kind of observations I was able to make during my stay in Ojai.

About the Researcher

My interest in well-being and its relevance to psychology, health, and education is both a professional and personal interest. I currently work as the President of the Anthropedia Foundation, a non-profit health education foundation dedicated to helping people live healthier and happier lives (www.anthropediafoundation.org). On a personal level, my father is Dr. C. Robert Cloninger who has been a pioneering researcher in the Science of Well-Being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004). Anyone who knows my father knows that it is difficult to get to know him without getting to know his work. My father is a tireless intellectual and researcher. Family meals throughout my life consisted of intense conversations on the latest results of my father's twin and adoption studies on the genetics of personality, or his new discoveries about the relationship between the brain and personality. The discussions we had at the dinner table, on trips, or other family occasions shaped my own intellectual development and my thinking on the role of learning in life. On these occasions, my family (and the numerous visitors from around the world who worked with my father) would frequently debate the relationships between modern scientific descriptions of development and religious or artistic descriptions of the

same underlying principles. As a result, well-being has been an area of inquiry for me since I was a young boy (whether I liked it or not!).

Fortunately for me, I did like it. After finishing my undergraduate degree in biology and philosophy at CU Boulder, I decided to go into education instead of medicine or research. After teaching for a few years and attending graduate classes at the University of Colorado at Boulder and the University of Denver, I was convinced that the work my father had done in psychiatry would be of great utility in the field of curriculum. While studying and teaching, I also helped create the Anthropedia Foundation, and we began implementing the Science of Well-Being in a number of different areas, including the production of documentaries and films, music, and a health education DVD series. I also believe—and not simply because my father has been a major player in its development—that the Science of Well-Being should prove instrumental in creating more humanized educational environments for our children and generations to come.

Some may presume that my relationship with my father could potentially inhibit my research efforts; however the reality has proven the opposite. My experiences help me tremendously with the translation of the Science of Well-Being and his other work in psychiatry into the educational theory. The relationship also enables me to have deeper insight into his thinking, not to mention affording me the luxury to converse with him about his ideas and not simply rely upon his writings.

In my role as an educational connoisseur and critic, my thoughts, interpretations and evaluations have evolved out of my experiences as a teacher and tutor in both public and private schools, as well as teaching and mentoring I did in teacher education. The teachers I worked with in the Teacher Education Program at the University of Denver

shared their passions and desperations with me. I was amazed, shocked, and sometimes horrified to listen to the stories of neglect, violence, and thoughtlessness that they were confronted with across Denver's public schools. From the hundreds of other accounts I have read or heard about in books, studies, and educational conferences, I am well aware that such experiences are not isolated to the Denver area. I proceeded with great interest in this dissertation to examine alternative systems to see what advice and guidance they might provide us with to help reform our public schools. I still receive emails from my former students telling me of their experiments with helping their students to work on well-being in the classroom. It became apparent to me during that time our educational systems and the ideologies that support often prevent us from looking at the human beings involved in the process. Of course the systems can change, but I am more interested in seeking ways to help people change. By helping individual teachers work on self-transformation and the flourishing of their own humanity, I believe we will be able to ensure that no matter what the system, children will be met with caring and competent human beings whom they may wish to become. William Pinar once told me at a conference that he was inherently distrustful of institutions. At the time, I didn't understand the full ramifications of this statement, but after working on this dissertation I admit to sharing his nervousness regarding institutional forms of schooling.⁴⁵

I should also point out that prior to this dissertation I had no relationship or association with the Krishnamurti schools or foundations. I am very interested in

⁴⁵ Many other researchers and thinkers have expressed similar reservations (Apple, 1979, 1982; Cohen, 2006; Cuban, 2004; Cuban & Shipp, 2000; Dewey, 1944; Eisner, 2002, 2005; King Jr., 1986; Kliebard, 2002; Kohn & Shannon, 2002; Krishnamurti, 1953; Meier, 2002; Miller, 2000; Molnar, 2005; Noddings, 1992; Pope, 2000; Rogers, 1972; Saltman, 2000, 2003, 2005).

Krishnamurti's educational ideas, but I remain critical and interested in learning more. I was intrigued by the educational intentions and thought it would be an ideal environment to conduct research on the development of well-being. I had been aware of the movement for some years, but I had never observed the schools. I would describe myself as a warm critic of the schools, and I am grateful for how accommodating the communities and schools had been to me during the research.

In order to counter some of my own biases I used member checking (see **Appendix A**) and triangulation to ensure the validity of the conclusions I drew from the data. The preponderance of data made this easier as I had multiple data sources to check my own biases against. I learned a great deal from this research that informed my own viewpoint.

Chapter 4: Brockwood Park School

The Structure, Aesthetics, and Environment of Brockwood Park School

It is difficult to appreciate Brockwood without having a sense of the beauty of the environment around it. I had arrived in Heathrow and taken a train southwest from London to Petersfield, where I took a cab ride into the school. The following vignette describes that drive and my first encounters with the place.

Driving in from the Petersfield train station, a taxi takes me west on the winding roads through the hills of the Hampshire countryside. I was reminded upon my arrival in Petersfield by the cab driver that this is Jane Austen country. She lived here and wrote about the surroundings. Her final resting place at the cathedral of Winchester, the ancient capital of England, is only 20 minutes away.

Nestled in the English countryside an hour southwest of London, the Brockwood Park school is situated on a 40 acre estate halfway between Winchester and Petersfield. The remote countryside around the school is peaceful and calm, mirroring the fabled demeanor of its founder, Jiddu Krishnamurti.

It takes a while to arrive at the school; we pass many farms, but eventually we come upon a simple road sign reading, "Brockwood." Lining the expansive driveway, there are throngs of flowering plants, pine trees, beeches, and cedars. The carpeted fields of yellow rape seed flowers stretch to the horizon in every direction. The cab driver told me that in this part of England it is possible to walk undisturbed for hours.

The taxi turns left and struggles up the hill until we come upon the front gate. He drops me with my bags in the cul-de-sac in front of the Adult Study Center, where I'll be

spending the night. Standing in front of the brick path that leads to the ivy-covered stone building, I hear only the cackling birds.

After getting my key, and putting my luggage in the room, I decide to steal a moment and take a solitary walk before making myself known to the faculty. The landscape around Brockwood can only be described as pastoral, with its huge vast fields of yellow, brown, and green. The landscape is peppered with purple trees, copper beeches, which sharply contrast with the green. Sheep graze in the fields that surround the school. I step over a fence and walk through the fields with lambs grazing on either side of me. From the field, I turn to catch a glimpse of Brockwood Park school, the large Georgian mansion, with its white walls, pyres, and chimneys. The house has purple flowered vines growing across it above the central back door. I am also impressed by the gothic-styled water tower the lies just to east of the mansion. Both it and the western wall of the immense organic garden are composed of red brick, which adds yet another color to the landscape. The south lawn of the school, which is directly in front of me is a huge green parcel with two “football” nets on either side. The south lawn connects with the fields where the lambs graze—an idyllic pastoral scene. The kids are outside playing football, running around enjoying the sunny day.

The solitude of the area lends it an appeasing quality that I sensed the moment I arrived. It is still and gorgeous. On my long plane ride I had been reading some books by Krishnamurti that discussed Brockwood and its surroundings. In one book he wrote of the silence of Brockwood and its effects on a person:

To go for a walk in the fields with the cattle and the young lambs, and in the woods with the song of the birds, without a single thought in your mind, only watching the earth, the trees, the sheep and hearing the cuckoo

calling and the wood pigeons; to walk without any emotion, any sentiment, towards the trees and all the earth: when you so watch, you learn your own thinking, are aware of your own reactions and do not allow a single thought to escape you without understanding why it came, what was the cause of it. If your watchful, never letting a thought go by, then the brain becomes very quiet. Then you watch in great silence and that silence has immense depth, a lasting incorruptible beauty. (Krishnamurti, 1987, p. 115)

The “immense depth” of the “silence” around Brockwood certainly has an impact on my own thinking. I seem to be in an untamed nature, cared for, ordered, but simultaneously left wild and pure. While walking, I remembered a conversation I had with Mary Zimbalist, one of Krishnamurti’s constant companions in the latter part of his life. With a smile on her face, she told me that,

It was natural for him to like beautiful places. It was one of the things he thought young people should do. Whatever the good of beauty is, was tremendous for him. I think, though he never talked directly about it, I’m sure that consciously or ever so unconsciously, he thought that children should grow up with a sense of beauty. In fact without his having said it I’m certain of that and it’s true for all the places his schools are in. (Mary Zimbalist, personal communication, March 8, 2008)

Walking in the wooded fields around Brockwood, her words ring true. Having now walked with the sheep for half-an-hour, I decide to count them and take a rest. I make my way back to my room at the Centre to rest after my trans-Atlantic flight.

A Note on Krishnamurti’s Schools and Beauty

The beauty of the areas he chose for the schools is an essential aspect of Krishnamurti’s schools. It has a subtle but important impact on the life and culture at Brockwood Park. There is almost no location in Brockwood Park that does not have large windows. The architecture of the place lends itself to the community members having a sense of the nature they are situated in. The weather and the location has an impact on

the mood and attitudes of the staff and students. Many staff members told me that I had “come at a good time” where the “weather is brighter and we are all in a different space.” The long winters would sometimes bring tensions and problems to the forefront as everyone is living in closer quarters. The weather even imposes simple physical constraints on the activity and freedom of movement of everyone in Brockwood park. Nature plays an important role in every aspect of life at the school.

The Intentions of Brockwood

In chapter 2 we discussed how Krishnamurti’s fundamental aim was to set human beings totally and unconditionally free. The founding of Brockwood Park in 1969, was one step in this direction. He was interested in schools because he felt that young people had not yet been fully conditioned by society and it would be better to catch them before they were too set in their ways. Not surprisingly, Krishnamurti did not elucidate his intentions for the schools in typical fashion. The work in print regarding education is mostly slightly edited transcripts of talks, dialogues, discussions, conversations etc., many of which were with staff at students at his various schools. Speaking with one of the teachers who worked at Brockwood for years, he explained that

...the schools are for both the educator and the student. Sometimes, privately, he would say that really the schools were more for the educators as they were more committed to transformation than the students. Also, he said clearly that it was not about individual transformation. If you were concerned with individual transformation that was too small and essentially self-centered. However, if you were interested in the transformation of humanity and worked for that then you yourself might change. Whenever he spoke of intentions it was in this sense of transformation and it was about the intentions of Brockwood as a place for learning and for awakening intelligence.

While much of the talks and dialogues Krishnamurti gave at Brockwood were focused on the specific situations he encountered there, in his book *Education and the Significance of Life* Krishnamurti did speak to the role of education in society and of how he felt the schools were failing humanity. One can have a clear perspective on his intentions for the schools from both talks and books (see for example Krishnamurti, 1953, 1970b, 2006a, 2006b).

A fundamental aspect of Krishnamurti's philosophic vision is inquiry. It is even in the culture of his schools to debate whether or not those involved understand Krishnamurti's intentions for education. Bill Taylor, director of Brockwood Park⁴⁶, speaks to this point:

The question is always in the air: are we doing what K intended us to do? And what does that mean exactly? How does that translate into living with the students, into classroom practice, into all of these things? (Bill Taylor, Personal Communication, May 8, 2008)

Krishnamurti, or "K" as people frequently call him in the communities around the schools and the foundations⁴⁷, left lofty intentions for his schools. Not unlike the criticisms a person may hear of John Dewey's educational philosophy, I encountered many people in Brockwood and Ojai who expressed that K was short on details and concrete guidance for how to set up a school, plan a lesson, or create a curriculum. He did at one point write a series of letters to the schools (Krishnamurti, 2006b). These were actual letters sent regularly and were read out in the schools when they were received. He did not set out a philosophy of education explicitly. Most of his comments are very

⁴⁶ Mr. Bill Taylor was on sabbatical during my visit to Brockwood, but we had a chance to do an interview.

⁴⁷ People at Brockwood Park School, as well as the Oak Grove School in California frequently used "K" when speaking about Krishnamurti. This was common practice. One would occasionally here him referred to as Krishnaji, which is a suffix used in India to give respect to the person whose name is uttered.

direct, almost personal responses to situations at the time and are more often challenges and invitations to inquiry rather than assertions of a philosophy. His statements about education are set within the vast scope of his “teachings.”

Krishnamurti did not proffer any teaching techniques or curricular prescriptions, nor did he give any method of any kind; he rather spoke about the principles that would help an individual to transform herself and society—the same core concepts he applied to every topic he spoke about—and stressed the importance of inquiry into such matters. The lack of explicit direction from K on particulars has left room for much, sometimes acrimonious, debate about whether or not the schools are doing what he intended. Many people, even those within the community itself, believe that K’s educational intentions have yet to be fully realized. Raj, a veteran teacher and former head of Brockwood, explains that the subject of intentions must be treated with great subtlety:

The questions of intentions being realised or "reached" is a subtle one. We often confuse intentions with aims or objectives. Intention is what you start with while aims and objectives are where you are trying to get to. There were different things he said at different times, toward the end of his life he spoke with some of the Brockwood staff, when he said that at Brockwood he felt there was a group of people who did have the spirit he wanted. But he was never satisfied and he made impossible demands. "Can the student be completely transformed the moment he crosses the cattle grid (drives into the grounds)?" That is what he wanted to see. In those terms we have not begun yet. The whole notion of success is challenged by him. "These schools exist for the transformation of the consciousness of mankind" So the intention is to change humanity totally. If we had been successful, I am sure the world would have noticed it.

We must therefore be delicate in speaking of “success” or the realization of intentions at Brockwood. The current director of Brockwood Park, Bill Taylor, shared the following story with me that speaks to this point:

Mary Cadogan, [...] in Europe she is probably the person who knew K better than anybody else and has had the longest relationship with him. She's about to turn 80, and she's worked for the foundation for 50 years. In one of the discussions where she's talking about working with K somebody asks her, "Did Krishnaji feel that the schools were a success?" and she burst out laughing [...], and then she says, "No. No, he didn't." "No, sorry the question was did he feel satisfied with the schools," she burst out laughing again, and she says "No," and then she said, "Well of course he never felt satisfied with anything, but he continued to work with them." The way she put it, she said, "he felt that there was some creative flow that wasn't quite happening." (Bill Taylor, Personal Communication, May 8, 2008)

Even during K's lifetime, it was questionable whether or not Brockwood Park or any of the schools were accomplishing the intentions K had set forth. Yet K and those around him continued to work on realizing the intentions of the school. Bill Taylor discusses his sentiment on this matter:

...So, are we doing it [the intentions]? I think we are up to a point, but we have nothing to feel too complacent about, you know, we've got to keep exploring, we've got to keep working at it. I think the beauty of it is that clearly it's not a methodology, it's not like Steiner or Montessori. He didn't tell us how in that sense. He pointed out things. He pointed out some of the obstacles. He pointed out some of the things we should be doing. And we endeavored to do that and sometimes in some individuals, it's happening quite a lot and in others it's not. (Bill Taylor, Personal Communication, May 8, 2008)

The lack of a concrete method is a challenge for the school. It is part of what makes Brockwood Park distinctive, but simultaneously those who work and administrate the school must always be on their toes; they have nothing "to feel too complacent about." Krishnamurti was adamant that method would not lead anyone to a good outcome in the schools:

I believe volumes have been written about educational ideals, yet we are in greater confusion than ever before. There is no method by which to educate a child to be integrated and free. As long as we are concerned with principles, ideals and methods, we are not helping the individual to

be free from his own self-centered activity with all its fears and conflicts.
(Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 21)

Instead of relying on method, Krishnamurti encouraged teachers to be scientific in their study of students and to focus on forming strong relationship:

If the teacher is of the right kind, he will not depend on a method, but will study each individual pupil. In our relationship with children and young people, we are not dealing with mechanical devices that can be quickly repaired, but with living beings who are impressionable, volatile, sensitive, afraid, affectionate; and to deal with them, we have to have great understanding, the strength of patience and love. (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 27)

By focusing on creating loving relationships and carefully observing students, a teacher would be better served than by focusing on method or technique.

Another side of this regards the vacuum left by Krishnamurti's death. Although he would never say what to do, he was a very strong leader for all involved in the education at the school. Bill Taylor explains:

We did depend on him. There's no doubt that we depended on him in the way that you might on a parent or a benefactor...after his death, it was this kind of clear watershed and the feeling, quite an intense feeling at that, was, "Okay now we're going to have to do it ourselves, we need to make it work ourselves if it's going to work." We can't always refer back to him. After that several things have come up, one has been how do we talk about this school to other people, how do we present this school to the outside world? If you look back at the prospectus that was around at the time when Krishnaji died or just after he died, it's largely Krishnaji talking, there are 5 or 6 pages of quotes. It's really *Education and the Significance of Life, the Beginnings of Learning*, then a little bit of our text. Then about ten years ago we realized no, we got to put this in our own words and we have got to be able to talk about it in a way that's real for us. So now it's all our own text with a few quotes from him. (Bill Taylor, Personal Communication, May 8, 2008)

In the current prospectus, a single page devoted to the educational intentions of the school. It reads:

The intentions of the School, stated in Krishnamurti's many public talks and books, can be summarized as follows:

- To educate the whole human being
- To explore what freedom and responsibility are in relationship with others and in modern society
- To see the possibility of being free from self-centered action and inner conflict
- To discover one's own talent and what right livelihood means
- To encourage excellence in academic studies
- To learn the proper care, use, and exercise of the body
- To appreciate the natural world, seeing our place in it and responsibility for it
- To find the clarity that may come from having a sense of order and valuing silence. (Orr, 2006, p. 3)

The old prospectus booklet, however, explained the educational intentions of Brockwood by drawing from several of the letters that K had written to the schools, as well other works (Krishnamurti, 1953, 2003, 2006b). The first quote in the old prospectus is as follows:

[The schools] are to be concerned with the cultivation of the total human being. The centres of education must help the student and the educator to flower naturally. The flowering is really very important; otherwise education becomes merely a mechanical process oriented to a career, some kind of profession. Career and profession, as society now exists, are inevitable, but if we lay all our emphasis on that, then the freedom to flower will gradually wither. We have laid far too much emphasis on examinations and getting good degrees. This is not the main purpose for which these schools were founded. This does not mean that the student will be inferior academically. On the contrary, with the flowering of the teacher as well as a student, career and profession will take the right place. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. ix-x)

Krishnamurti was interested in helping both the students and the teachers to “flower in goodness,” which he thought demanded “excellence in behavior, in action, and in relationship.” He felt passionately that the flowering of goodness did not lie in knowledge of subject matter or academic disciplines. It “exists outside these and when

there is this flowering, career and other necessary activities” are impacted by it. In Krishnamurti’s estimation we presently emphasize careerism and subject matter to the point of disregarding the flowering altogether. The goal of the Krishnamurti schools is to bring the two together, “...not artificially, not as a principle or pattern you are following, but because you see the absolute truth that these two must flow together for the regeneration of man” (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 29-30).

The old prospectus also reads, “We begin primarily with you, the student, and the educator who is helping you to know yourself. This is the function of education” (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 123). Krishnamurti placed great emphasis in his educational philosophy on self-awareness in order to attain these aims. Mary Zimbalist, who is also a trustee at the Oak Grove School and the Brockwood Park School, put it this way:

He was both very strict and very liberal about education of children. He wanted them to understand, I mean obviously you have to learn to do mathematics and all those things, but he wanted them to understand principally their own minds, that self-understanding, which really was a key to what he was teaching all of us. Be aware of what goes on in the self. Understand not just human nature generally, other people, but really the immediate thing which is your own consciousness, thought. And watch yourself and then you will change. (Mary Zimbalist, personal communication, March 8, 2008)

For Krishnamurti the key to understanding the whole of life is simply to watch the content of our own consciousness. In the stream of thought that constantly echoes through our head, we can see all the forces of condition, the suffering of the world, all the influences of ideas and ideologies that impact us. In K’s words,

Surely a school is a place where one learns about the totality, the wholeness of life...It is a place where both the teacher and the taught explore not only the outer world, the world of knowledge, but also their own thinking, their own behavior. From this they begin to discover their own conditioning and how it distorts their thinking. This conditioning is

the self to which such tremendous and cruel importance is given. Freedom from conditioning and its misery begins with this awareness. It is only in such freedom that true learning can take place. In these schools, it is the responsibility of the teacher to sustain with the student a careful exploration into the implications of conditioning and thus end it. (Brockwood Park Prospectus, 1989, pg 4)

By exploring the content of our own consciousness we can understand the forces of conditioning that we are subject to, and free ourselves from them. Our pain and suffering is not as unique as we would sometimes like to think, Krishnamurti would say, because everyone all over the world is lonely, greedy, jealous, angry, insecure, violent, and judgmental. We have the feeling of being unique, but often we are simply following pre-made tracks, patterns of thought, and recipes for living that we have not freely chosen, much less examined. K stressed the importance of understanding these problems that we all share. Furthermore, K explained that

It is the concern of these schools to bring about a new generation of human beings who are free from self-centred action. No other educational centres are concerned with this and it is our responsibility, as educators, to bring about a mind that has no conflict within itself and so end the struggle and conflict in the world about us. (Brockwood Park Prospectus, 1989, pg 4)

To be free from “self-centered action” is a tall order. We are all trapped in conflict and thus cannot end the struggle in our own lives and the world. One of the keys then to psychological transformation is attentiveness and self-awareness. Through our own psychological transformation we will change the world because, in K’s word, “we are the world.” For this reason, self-awareness was and is a major emphasis in Brockwood Park.

Another important intention discussed by K and valued at Brockwood Park is what Krishnamurti referred to as the creation or cultivation of the “religious mind.” This, of course, is a highly specialized use of the term because K spoke endlessly about his

discontent with organized religion in general. This intention is discussed in the Staff Handbook and another document that summarizes the program and approach at Brockwood, which we will discuss later. It is obvious that K's personal experiences with the Theosophical society and the Order of the Star left him particularly weary of religious systems, dogma, and religious ideologies of any kind. He likened the dangers of religions to that of strict governmental control of education:

The right kind of education is not concerned with any ideology, however much it may promise a future Utopia...It is because we ourselves are so dry, empty and without love that we have allowed governments and systems to take over the education of our children and the direction of our lives; but governments want efficient technicians, not human beings, because human beings become dangerous to governments—and to organized religions as well. That is why governments and religious organizations seek to control education. (Krishnamurti, 1953, pp. 23-24)

So what then is K's conception of the religious mind and why does he consider it an important intention for the schools which bear his name? Krishnamurti explains,

The religious mind does not belong to any group which calls itself religious. The religious mind is not the mind that goes to churches, temples, mosques. Nor is it a religious mind that holds to certain forms of beliefs, dogmas. The religious mind is completely alone. It is a mind that has seen through the falsity of churches, dogmas, beliefs, traditions. Not being nationalistic, not being conditioned by its environment, such a mind has no horizons, no limits; it is explosive, new, young, fresh, innocent. The innocent mind, the young mind, the mind that is extraordinarily pliable, subtle, has no anchor. It is only such a mind that can experience that which you call God, that which is not measurable. (Krishnamurti, 2006a, p. 17)

For K, the religious mind is a mind that is free of the forces of conditioning and thus fluid and pliable, which allows a person to be attentive to the most sacred dimensions of life.

Elsewhere K explains that the religious mind encompasses the scientific mind, so it is not

superstitious or irrational, but rather applies to the same scientific rigor to the study of the internal aspects of human life and human psychology (Krishnamurti, 2006a).

What is perhaps more interesting about K's educational philosophy is that despite all the complexities of K's vision, the heart of the message is incredibly simple, "...a school is a place where one learns about the totality, the wholeness of life." This simple phrase is what you see first when looking at the current prospectus. But, K cautioned, "...the whole cannot be understood through the part; it can be understood only through action and experience" (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 20). Krishnamurti is clearly suggesting that we need to be active and not merely philosophize or create lofty statements that do not amount to action. This is the spirit that drives Brockwood Park. We will see later on in this dissertation how various teachers "act" in different ways and understand K's intentions differently. However, for now I'd like to return to the discussion of the intentions at Brockwood Park.

I heard often during my stay at Brockwood that "K's educational intentions have not been reached yet" in the schools he started. However, as this last quote points out, this is hardly the point, for in this particular case the end in is the means. As Mary Cadogan says, "Well of course he never felt satisfied with anything, but he continued to work with them." K had said it this way, "And that is what we intend, and we are going to do it. It isn't just an idea floating in the air, and we are not trying to succeed or not succeed. We want to do it and we shall do it, and that's that. Right?" (Krishnamurti, 1969b). Those working at the schools may never feel "satisfied with anything," but nonetheless, they continue in "action" and grow in "experience" of the "whole" and what

it means for educating children. At Brockwood Park, both the staff and students are constantly learning about the significance of life, together.

A Brief Tour of Brockwood Park's Learning Programme and Campus

On my first day at the school I noticed a document posted on the bulletin board in the front hall of the school entitled, "Brockwood is a Place for Learning." It was rather inconspicuous, posted in a corner, but it is a well conceived summary of the program of Brockwood (**Table 7**). It begins by reframing the school's intentions, outlining the approach that flows from those intentions, and then illustrating point-by-point how Brockwood attempts to support the intention and the approach (Table 7). Although the intentions have been reframed, they are not different from those we have already seen: An Understanding of Oneself in Relationship, a Global Outlook, a Concern for Humanity and the Environment, Mind, Heart and Body in Harmony, and a Religious Spirit. However, on this slender piece of paper, the author continued by describing the approach taken at Brockwood to foster the intentions of the school (Table 7). The list is exhaustive and does well to explain the current approach employed at Brockwood to attain the educational intentions of the founder. Many of the buzz words that you may hear when listening to conversations, classes, and meetings at the school are all present in it: inquiry, conditioning, fear, care and attention, nature, global, cooperation, responsibility, community, authority, punishment and reward. To deepen the exploration of everything that is found in this document, the rest of this section will explore some of the facets of the program that it describes.

Brockwood is a co-educational boarding school with around 60 students, aged 14 and over. Tuition at the school, including food, room, and board is £14,200 or \$28,400 (I am told this is on the low end of the boarding schools in England)⁴⁸. The student body is international, with students coming from 25 different countries. Because of this cultural diversity, the staff tries to ensure the culture in the school is not dominated by any particular national or ethnic perspective. All cultures are valued and the students have numerous opportunities to learn about other cultures and other languages. The school also employs 30 or 40 teachers to maintain the student to staff ratio as low as possible. Classes most frequently range between four and six students, and there is plenty of adult supervision and contact outside of the classroom. There are three terms each roughly three to four months long.

In this tower of Babel, the school's primary language is English, as is the case for all the K schools throughout the world. I was not able to find any specific references to the rationale for this policy. It seems to have more to do with the fact that K's primary language was English than the favoring of the dominance of English in the world. The school offers several levels of ESL (English as a Second Language) classes and students are encouraged to speak in English as much as possible.

The school does not have an air of formality. On the contrary, there is a decidedly relaxed atmosphere. It is not unheard of to see students walk around in their pajamas and slippers or to see kids teasing one another like brothers or sisters would. That said, there is a dress code, which is very loosely enforced and is described as "tidy casual."

Everyone in the school greets one another and knows each other. Students and staff

⁴⁸ Coincidentally, all "live-in" staff at the school are paid the same salary. The gardener, the teachers, and the administration all receive the same amount.

address one another by their first names. There is no anonymity at the school. A visitor is instantly spotted, like a stranger in a small town. A statement in the prospectus describes the ambience of the school:

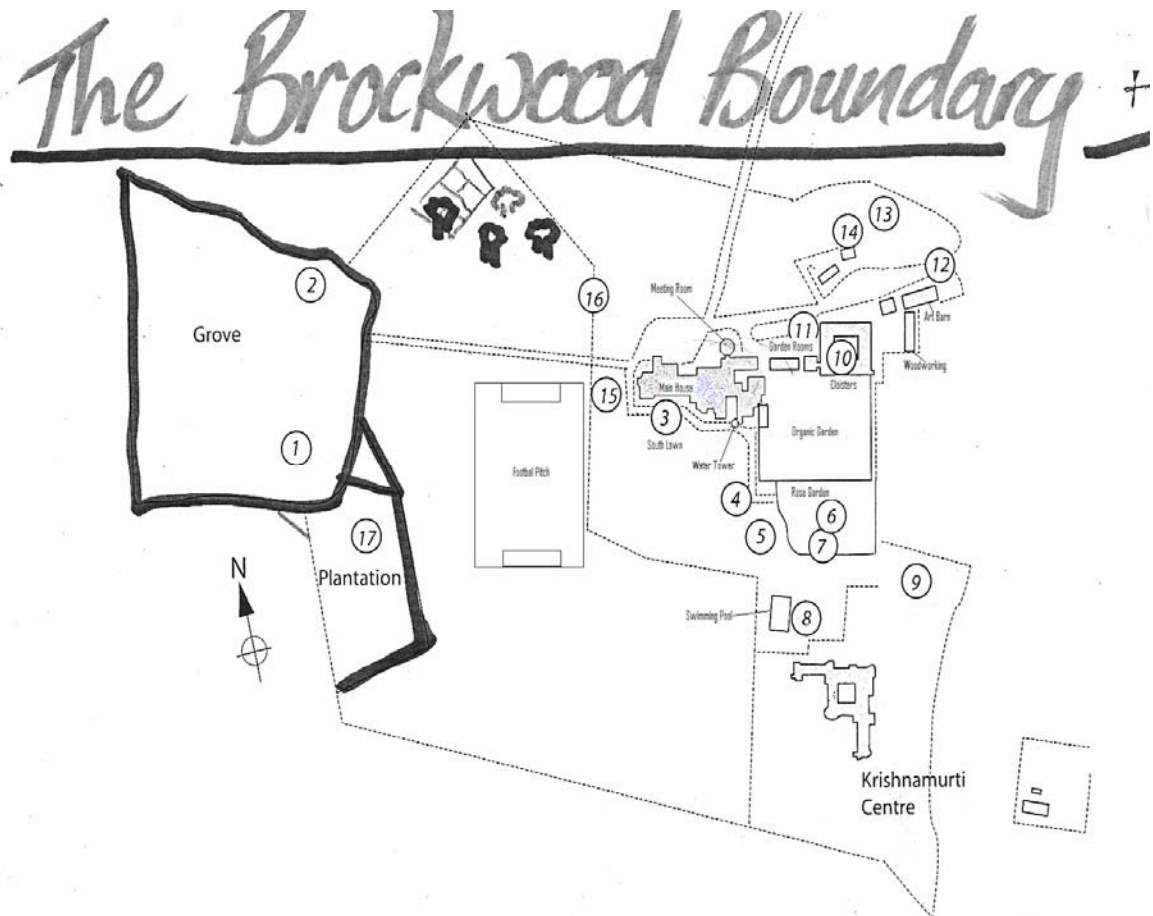
...it has the feeling of a large multi-cultural family rather than a boarding school. There is an atmosphere of friendly equality and, as in any family, young people and adults help with the day-to day decision-making and care of the grounds and buildings. Working together in this way nurtures a spirit of responsibility, co-operation, and affection.(Orr, 2006)

Table 7: Brockwood is a place for Learning - Version 3.3

<p>THE EDUCATIONAL INTENTION of Brockwood is to assist both students and educators to develop</p>	<p>THE APPROACH is through</p>	<p>Brockwood supports the intention & approach by providing:</p>
<p>An Understanding of Oneself in Relationship A disposition to observe and understand one's own values, motives and actions in relationship; freedom from internal conflicts and contradictions and to discover one's talents and find what one loves to do in life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Self-reflection and inquiry and a capacity for direct observation and perception ●Inquiry into the nature of conditioning ●an understanding of the movement of fear, pleasure and sorrow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●a small school with small classes ●a beautiful rural environment where all students and staff are involved in the care of the buildings and grounds ●an ethos of care and attention to the needs of both students and staff
<p>A Global Outlook An integrated approach, that is not parochial or nationalistic, to learning about the world and responding to the challenges humanity faces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●a non-fragmentary approach to life ●questioning one's thinking and behaviour ●care and attention to relationship ●a direct working contact with nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●opportunities for inquiry and dialogue regarding all aspects of life ●a broad curriculum that provides for the usual subjects but goes beyond to include specially designed courses linked to the intentions
<p>A Concern for Humanity and the Environment A view of humanity as part of nature and a sense of care for each other and the planet upon which we live</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●awareness of global issues and exploring a response to them ●taking responsibility for one's actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●activities that focus on mind, heart and body ●individualised programmes and timetables that allow for the pursuit of individuals' interests and the development of talent
<p>Mind, Heart and Body in Harmony A mind that learns how to think on any subject, move from fact to fact and discern and synthesise what is important, a heart flowering in goodness and an active & alert body</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●a spirit of co-operation ●participation and involvement in the community ●order not based on authority or compulsion ●an ability to live and work free of punishment and reward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●an international community concerned with overcoming obstacles to understanding each other and with good relationship ●student involvement in decision- making and in the day to day operation of the School
<p>A Religious Spirit A non-sectarian, non-denominational mind that can explore the present with energy and move from the known to face the unknown</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●the acquisition of appropriate knowledge and skills ●a healthy diet and care for the body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●a framework for leisure and for silence.

I witnessed many examples of the spirit of responsibility, cooperation, and affection, as the reader will see as the chapter unfolds.

The lay-out of the 40 acre campus can be seen in the map below:



The “main house,” (the number 3 on the map) the late Georgian Mansion, is the center of activity of the school. Meals are eaten there; there is a library, a large meeting room and water tower where science classes are held. The female students and some staff sleep in the main house and all the major school assemblies and events are held in this building. Krishnamurti lived in this house when he visited Brockwood. The male students sleep in the “cloisters,” (number ten on the map). The two small buildings in between the cloisters and the main house are referred to as the “garden rooms” because they overlook

the large organic garden. Some classes are held in the garden rooms as well as another room called the “cloisters” classroom. Art classes and woodworking are taught in two barn structures on the Northeast side of the campus.

Krishnamurti was very concerned with the “total” development of the student as a human being. He wanted the schools to attend to every facet of the student and their lives. The staff are told in their handbook that, “This means that the staff, as educators and *in loco parentis*, must be concerned with all the aspects of the day-to-day life of the students and that education must therefore extend well beyond the confines of the classroom.” Students and staff prepare meals and eat together, live together in the same buildings, take trips together for both education and recreation, and tend to the duties and tasks at the school together. Through this constant interaction, the students and staff become part of a very close community.

Students are also given a great deal more freedom when it comes to making decisions about their learning. Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and growth. As a part of this process, students plan their “individualized study programs” and sometimes create their own classes. Students are encouraged to take a genuine interest in whatever they are doing so that they might discover “their talent.” Students are not grouped by age, but by interest and ability, although the ability levels often relate to their age. The classes offered at the school are quite diverse (**Table 8**):

Table 8: Course Offerings at Brockwood Park

<p>There are numerous “exam” classes offered:</p>	<p>There are also “non-exam” courses that students may take:</p>	
<p>Mathematics, Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Psychology), English Language and Literature, History Geography, Business Studies, French, Spanish, Art, Music, English as a Second Language Proficiency.</p>	<p>Choir Singing, Cooking, Drama, Dance, Ecological Building, Guitar, Inquiry Time, Japanese, Jewellery Making, K-Class (Introduction to Krishnamurti), Music History and Theory,</p> <p><i>***This does not include the classes that the students decide they want to create and study.</i></p>	<p>Nature Education and Gardening, Personal Health, Philosophy, Physical Education, Piano, Pottery, Practical Environmental Education, School Band, Sound Recording, Life After Brockwood, Woodwork, Yoga.</p>
<p>Workshops are offered by “friends and visitors” to the school throughout the year. Examples include:</p>	<p>Bee-keeping, Open Dialogue, Body Awareness, Problem Solving, Chinese Cooking, Electronic Music, Creative Writing, Language Trips in Europe, and Song-Writing.</p>	

As one can see from this table, the curriculum at the school includes all the basic requirements for entry into the various international University systems, however the curriculum far exceeds these basic requirements with the “non-exam” courses offered. Students are free to chose the courses they want to study, but they must come to an

agreement with an adult, what they call the student's "tutor," who is responsible for their learning and overseeing their life at the school. The students have more freedom in choosing courses similar to the freedom a student in college would have. Some students take a heavier class load than others depending on their goals and what they hope to take away from Brockwood. In addition to the student's tutor, there is also a counselor on staff who works with students, especially as they plan for "life after Brockwood." The vast majority of the students who attend Brockwood continue on with their education, but it is optional for the students to take the exam courses that will help them to pass the qualifying examinations.

There are exam classes offered in all the traditional subjects as well as other non-traditional subjects like psychology (**Table 8**). These exams include "A-level" or "AS-level" course. The A-level (Advanced Level; AS stands for Advance Subsidiary) is a General Certificate of Education qualification in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, usually taken by students during the optional final two years of secondary school. These examinations are usually taken by students age 16-18 in years 12 or 13 of the UK's educational system. The school also offers a long list of "non-exam" courses. These change over time depending on student interest and the skills and strengths of the staff. This does not include the classes that the students decide they want to create and study. Additionally, throughout the year "friends and visitors" to the school host workshops and other events (**Table 8**). This adds some variety for students and also helps the school to save money and still offer a wide variety of experiences to the students.

The "learning program" that each student follows is individualized. There are "core" program requirements for incoming freshman, and students who intend to go to

the university must follow some exam sequences, but there is quite a lot of flexibility. Students are encouraged to follow their own path in choosing their classes and may opt out entirely of any exam courses, although this is a relatively rare occurrence. The students are not graded on anything. The desire of the school is to remove all conditioning through reward or punishment and to eliminate and comparison between students. For students to succeed at this school, they must do so of their own volition. There is no pressure put on students to succeed or get “good” marks. Rather, each individual student is encouraged to focus on their own learning and decide how to push their personal boundaries. The students are strongly supported in this by their “tutors” and by the school counselor. There are narratives written about each student that communicate the student’s progress to their parents, but no formal grading takes place.

Concerning rules and behavior at the school, the expectations are made clear through agreements and through discussions. At Brockwood, they compare this to the rules set up in a family when they live together. Each student and parent interested in attending the school receives what is called an “Open Letter” as a supplement to the prospectus. Parents and students are informed that, “As with any family, there are certain rules and agreements about behavior.” The students and parents read this agreement and then sign it before the decision is made to attend the school. There are explanations about the rhythm of the day, sleeping times, but also guideline concerning the vegetarian diet that is required by all students, the interdiction on all forms of passive entertainment such as TV and video games, the prohibition of alcohol and drugs including cigarettes, and guidelines concerning sexual relationships. All students are discouraged from engaging in “exclusive relationships” that may cause them “to be unavailable socially to

the rest of the community” because the goal of the school is for everyone to be in relationship.

To facilitate learning about the nature of the community and what it’s like to live there, students and their families are encouraged to visit the school for up to 2 weeks to make sure that they would like participate in this kind of community. This is very important to those in the Brockwood community because they believe that it is only in this atmosphere of familial love and informality that everyone can flourish and work towards the intentions K had for the school.

The school days are long and busy, but there are many opportunities for relaxation and fun in the evenings and over the weekends. Each day begins at 8:00 am with morning meeting. Students and staff gather and spend ten minutes in silence together. Then they have breakfast, from 8:10 to 8:45 am. After breakfast all the staff and students perform “morning jobs.” They clean up the entire school and the grounds around the school. After morning jobs classes begin until lunch time. Then classes resume until tea time. Afterwards, there are a couple more class periods before dinner begins. Lights are to be out by 9:30pm and sleeping by 10:00 pm. Much like a college campus, not every student has a class each period. Students are left time for leisure and study. Although students and staff work very hard all week, the students can take dance classes, drama, play outdoor or indoor games, read, or catch up on homework. The school has a gym with workout equipment and a shed full of bicycles that they can ride provided they wear a helmet. Students can also work on the computers in the Computer Room or spend time in any of the beautiful corners of the 40 acre property. On the weekends, some students

take the buses and trains and explore the various towns within a short distance from the school. London is only an hour and a half away by train.

At the end of each week, the staff members have a meeting before the all school assembly. There are also what are called staff “dialogues” where staff members discuss an issue that has come up in the school or themes from Krishnamurti’s writings and discussions. Although the school atmosphere is generally harmonious, the staff meetings and dialogues I observed during my stay seemed to be the forums in which stay voiced grievances or debated how to enact the intentions of the school. Krishnamurti encouraged people to always question and push at authority and patterns of thought. Staff meetings at the school reflect this culture of skepticism and irreverence. Teachers and administrators may debate the nature of freedom at the school, or how to deal with certain aspects of school life. I was fortunate to be able to observe this debate because it helped me to elucidate some of the issues and frictions that arise when trying to implement K’s intentions.

A-typical Day at Brockwood Park

Brockwood Park is designed for relationship. The ecology of the school is in dynamic interaction. This is essential for fostering the kind of education Krishnamurti envisioned. The staff are specifically told in their handbook that “as educators and *in loco parentis*, [they] must be concerned with all the aspects of the day-to-day life of the students, and that education must therefore extend well beyond the confines of the classroom.” Therefore, looking at isolated classrooms only obscures the broader dynamics of the school because the education is not “confined” to the classroom. For

these reasons, the rest of the description of this school will not look at isolated classrooms, but rather at a whole day in the school. The following vignettes depict a day at the school. I draw on excerpts from my observations at the school and interviews with the teachers during my stay to create this day. Rather than starting at the beginning of the day, I start in the middle of the day before the weekend and pick back up on the morning of following “Monday.” While I describe only what I observed during my stay at the school, I am cutting and pasting together vignettes from my entire stay at the school to reconstruct a day in the life of a student at Brockwood. No details have been invented, only taken out of temporal sequence. Imagine the following description as if I, the researcher, am the student in the classroom and you are following me throughout my day. There are different students in each class, but I am ultimately most interested in focusing on the teacher and their instruction.

Getting Intelligent About Sex

K-Class

Monday, Fourth Period

12:00 to 12:45 pm

“Have you ever asked why human beings give such extraordinary importance to this one thing, to sex?” Pedro reads out loud from a Krishnamurti book with a slight Spanish accent. “Throughout the world it is much more important than money, much more important than religion. In the West it is talked about freely, exposed. In the East is kept behind locked doors, whether one is married or not. Why, do you think, has it become a thing of such colossal importance?”

The students are in a circle on the bright white carpet in the Study. Some are laying on the floor, others are sitting casually on the love seats and chairs with their legs hanging over the side arm. The atmosphere is familial. Raj has taught at the school for more than thirty-five years. Raj is Indian. He relatively tall man, with short, wavy black hair. His professional dress complements his calm and serious demeanor. His presence garners respect at the school. He holds an advanced degree in Mathematics from Oxford and has helped to develop the programs and structure of the school over the last thirty-five years. He has worked as the director of the school and taught math since he first arrived. Today he is teaching K-Class, a class on Krishnamurti and his work. In speaking of his intentions in the classroom, Raj explained:

I think it is important to recognise that the kind of attention the students give to the K-class and the communication that exist between us is based on all that happens outside the classroom, the relationships we have developed through different kinds of contact both formal and informal. It involves self-revelation and requires a level of trust. It is the atmosphere that everyone together is building that allows an exchange of this kind, not some technique I am using or some special skill.

As the class continues, Raj stops Pedro and asks the kids, “have you ever asked why we give such extraordinary importance to sex?” A second later Julia stumbles in the classroom five minutes late. A slender Italian girl with braces and a very loud voice, she stares at Raj and says, “I’m sorry I’m late.” She grabs a book from the stack and asks a friend what page they are on.

Another girl in the class responds to Raj’s question, “It’s for the pleasure, I think. Yeah, we could elaborate on it more, but ultimately people want to have fun.” Everyone nods their head.

Raj calmly clears his throat as he looks around the room to see if anyone else has anything to say. No one else speaks up, so he begins again, "Okay, let's keep reading. Where were we? I don't remember what I say in the different classes anymore," Raj says with a soft voice and a humble look in his eyes, "they all blend together." Raj keeps conversations going from class to class and frequently refers back to them. Today they are continuing a discussion they started on sexuality. He reads the questions that people were asking Krishnamurti in the dialogue and Pedro, the boy from Guatemala, reads K's parts. Raj reads slowly, but not monotonously, "*Questioner: (1) maybe it's because of the pleasure; it is something you can have without money. Questioner: (2) could be that people have a lot of energy in them, which they haven't used on other things, and therefore they use it in this direction?*"

"Krishnamurti: Go on, push at it, create together, contribute! Don't just sit there and let me do all the work!" Pedro has trouble putting some "umph" into it.

Raj continues slowly reading, "*Questioner: it may be an escape from a sorrow, or a problem.*"

"Krishnamurti: So look at it! We've been working together, understanding together, communicating. You said sex has become so important because of the pleasure, the surplus energy, as an escape from the daily routine. Now is that what is happening to you? I don't say that you are having sexual affairs, I'm just asking: is that what your mind is groping after? -- seeking pleasure, escaping from the monotony of school, of learning, and therefore your mind goes off, creating images?"

Pedro finishes the paragraph and Raj interjects, "Okay, I think we should stop there. What is your answer? The students at that time suggested it was an escape, it was

pleasurable, and it was a way to get rid of energy. What do you think? Why has sex become so important?"

Raj is very intentional about paying close attention to students and their perspectives. He describes this as "twin track learning." He explains,

Sometimes you call it the outer and the inner. So that you are learning about the outside world, about the external world, but you're also learning about the inner world. Your motivations, your desires, your feelings, and understanding why you do the things you do and why human beings behave the way they behave.

By paying close attention to the inner life of his students, Raj can help them learn about a subject and about themselves simultaneously. K-class is one place where a greater emphasis is placed on "inner" learning.

The students are reading from a book of dialogues that Krishnamurti had with students at Brockwood Park over the years. They are participating in the legacy of the school in this class by debating Krishnamurti's philosophy together. The students do not take any notes in this class. They do not have any notebooks or folders, just the Krishnamurti books that are present in the room's library. The atmosphere of the Study, with all the ornate wood paneling lends itself to introspection. You could hear a pin drop in the room while the kids sit and think about the question. Slowly Pedro's brow furrows. He squints at the page while the others sit actively pondering, "I agree with his point that it's an escape from the daily routine, but I don't think it's wrong."

"I don't think he's saying it's wrong, he pointed out right from the beginning that we're not looking at this regarding whether it is right or wrong, but rather that we are looking at it," Raj replies.

“I don’t know, he’s saying that, but at the same time he is criticizing, like, seeking pleasure is good, but it is an escape from reality. So it’s like its wrong,” he shrugs his shoulders and looks down. “I don’t know...”

Raj looks over at Pedro and thinks for a minute. “This is an interesting and difficult point, when you read Krishnamurti,” Raj says, “because firstly we want to look at what is actually happening, it may be right or wrong, but first we are only going to look at it, that is to say without judging it, without saying it is right or wrong. Why is it that I'm so interested in sex, let me see without judging myself. Maybe it's that I'm bored. Later on you might see that the reason you are doing it is not a good reason, or it may be a good reason, but we don't know. Whatever the case, the first step is to look at it without judgment. I think he said it didn't he at the beginning something about this.” Raj grabs his book and searches for the page. The kids stay calm and focused. They barely move at all in fact. “I can't find it, but I think we read that for a bit when he said something about this. So that is the first thing. Listening to things and that what he is saying, he says, without passing judgment. Now sometimes he will say this isn't okay, but the first thing is to see it. So what would you say?” Raj looks around the room.

The kids look around at each other and Alicia in a very thick Spanish accent speaks up, “I think more that it is an escape from the routine. Just to do something different, because if you are escape it means you don't like your everyday things.”

Alicia, a Spanish student from Barcelona is still working on her English.

Raj thinks about what she has said for a second and then repeats what she had said out loud, “Okay, so just to do something different. Some people don't do it to escape;

they just want to do something different.” He nods his head as if to imply that it sounds like a reasonable statement.

Another student from Germany, Laura, adds her voice to the discussion, but with an Irish accent, “I think we're missing the most important thing, which is if you have a partner that you really love, and you really love back it is just something that people share that kind of brings them much closer together, as you already mentioned, and its something where you don't have to talk anymore and it is just based on feelings—on passion or love, I don't know.” She is slightly uncomfortable speaking, though she does so despite the tinges of worry in her voice, “I think that is the most important aspect of sex and not escaping from reality or doing something different. That's my opinion.” Laura kicks her legs as she speaks. She's laying on the floor. Her head nods strongly to emphasize her opinion.

“Right, so why then has it become a problem, why is it a problem?” Raj asks in response.

Laura responds immediately, “I don't think it is a problem. I think it is a problem that it is being commercialized and that people are starting to have sex when they are really young and they don't know anything about prevention that for me is a problem, but not sex.”

Raj seizes the conversation immediately, “That's it! It isn't a problem, but why then does it become a problem. Why can't we deal with it? Why in this area does it get so difficult?” Raj pauses between thoughts. “I'm trying to think of something different. Ok, suppose that diseases, yeah, that could be a problem, you go to India, there is typhoid or malaria there so you don't make it a problem, you say I will get a vaccination or boil

water and then you do that and so you say to yourself, 'I'll be safe.' So you say, 'okay maybe I'll get it,' and its not a problem even though there are some difficulties there.' But why has sex, I mean for the whole world, become a problem?"

Laura thinks about what Raj has said for a minute, and responds, "You know, I think that with younger people sex is seen as like, entering adulthood or just being more of an adult than before. I think that is one of the reasons that people or like teenagers are doing it earlier. 'Cause they want to see..."

"To see themselves as adults. So you're saying that the fact that people are doing it when they are not ready for it, that is one problem." Raj finishes her sentence hanging on every word.

She replies, "Yeah," Laura shakes her head avoiding direct eye contact.

Raj continues, "That's one way it can be a problem, that people aren't ready for it. I mean do you say that is there some point when people aren't ready for it?"

As Raj shows here, he is also an astute observer of his students. He frequently finishes their sentences if they are struggling with a word. He is incredibly attentive to them as a matter of principle because it is essential for their personal development and their academic learning:

These two tracks, the inner and the outer, are related. They interact with each other. Say I'm teaching maths, and I will learn about maths because I'm teaching maths, and I will try to put stuff across the best way I can, but I also know that I'm also establishing a relationship with the students. I'm also watching them very closely. This is to see how they are so that I know what's happening with them, so that I understand some of their inner being. This way I am very attentive to each individual in the room.

Raj believes this is why he never has any need for "discipline" or "anything of that nature" because he knows his students and is constantly seeking to be in deeper

relationship to them. The students serious and introspective searching during this class is demonstrative of this fact.

Pedro raises his voice, “I agree with her that we are looking to feel more like adults, but also it is a way of getting respect from friends. Maybe because of insecurities, I don't know...”

Alex, a student who has remained quiet up until now, shares his own feelings about what his friends are saying, “I think one of the problems is that sex will provide such a strong feeling inside of us and all this feeling in us—maybe hate or I don't know it could be danger—you know, it could provoke, could make you maybe do things that you wouldn't do if you were normal.”

Raj continues to repeat what he understood the students to say, “So somehow sex can make you do dangerous things that you wouldn't do otherwise is that it?”

“Maybe,” Alex says, “Maybe it is an escape.”

“Okay, craziness, huh? So you think sex can drive you crazy to make you do things you don't want to do?” Raj raises his eyebrows as he asks the question and smiles.

“Not that it necessarily has to, but it could,” Alex says. Laura speaks up again, “Of course when you are having sex, we were talking about it in human development, it is a completely different part of your brain that is working. If you ask the person now, and just before the person is going to have sex, the answer would be completely different because the brain isn't working the way it usually is.”

Raj once again builds on a thought the kids had begun:

We should certainly recognize that we have urges and sex isn't the only one like this. We can have violent urges and other things you can lose your temper, your cool, and attack somebody even though sometimes you

say I don't want to. This, it seems to come from some deeper part, sometimes they call this the animal brain, the part of us that leads us to react instinctually and not rationally. These usually come in when we feel threatened and attacked. Sex as a strong an urge as these reactions. It is important for us to understand about ourselves, isn't it, that we have these urges. So we have these urges, and therefore what would you be responsible for recognizing that there are these things in people and sex is one of them and they can lead us to an irrational judgment. They can, in certain circumstances, they can become stronger than our rational impulses.

Raj continues, "But then, sex becomes a problem when, lets say, there is no love.

Instead of saying that it's when we want to share our love or emotional contact, but then there is rape or pornography then its a problem."

The look in Laura's eyes suggests she had an insight, she gets very energetic and starts to speak, "I think that rape or pornography is about satisfying something inside of yourself, that you don't have or feel you don't have like some emptiness that you have to satisfy."

Alex agrees, "Yeah, I don't think those things are related to sex. I think rape or pornography, it may be some scientific who said it, but they said when someone rapes someone it has to do more with power, to feel power, its not to do with sex or love."

Raj moves his head up and down signaling his agreement, "Its not about pleasure or feeling for the other person. That's what I've also heard, rape is usually a question of dominance or power rather than--"

Alex interrupts him, "Pornography can be like a business or something that you do."

Raj summarizes, "So because it's a business we call it sex and not love so its not called that way."

Pedro adds, "Rape and pornography of course it is sick, the deeper purpose of sex is different maybe emotional, but it is also depends on the maturity of the person. For one person it might be about feelings for another its about physical pleasure. Then, like of course, with pornography its more like a business, I mean, rape is more of a psychological thing more of a power thing. So its personal thing. It depends on us."

Raj sits thumbing his chin and adds, "We haven't said much about advertising. It seems to rely heavily on sex to sell things doesn't it? Why should sex sell stuff, even food or cars?"

"Hmmm," the kids make their deliberation audible, but nobody has anything to say.

Raj keeps the discussion going, "So why do you think Krishnamurti is saying all these things. Why are we talking about this?" The kids sit quietly and don't say anything. The clock on the wall moves from 12:25 to 12:27. Raj smiles and waits patiently then he looks at them and asks if they want to know what he thinks. They nod their heads and he begins,

See, I would say we are doing this to understand ourselves, to understand what we are capable of, to understand that our urges have their own strength. People may feel disempowered, emotionally needy, there are all kinds of things happening. The more we understand all these things that are centered around sex, the better position we are in to understand what is happening inside ourselves. I mean you know, I remember when I was your age, around the guys, and guys get kind of, you know, its macho or something to have sex, you must have sex. Who was it, wasn't it this group, someone had said that for their friends if you haven't had sex you weren't worthy, they would be looking down their noses at them. So you have all these pressures, so understand these pressures then you will be in a better place to resist these pressures, when you need to resist them through your own intelligence not because someone else is telling you that this is what you should do or shouldn't do, when it is ok or not ok. Does that make sense?

The students sit with all attention directed towards Raj. You could tell that they are processing everything he is saying.

After giving them some time to reflect, Raj directs the class to begin to read the dialogue with Krishnamurti again. Although the kids hadn't read that section before, they discover that the lines that they now read echo the sentiments that they have just been expressing. They read about all the subtleties around affection, tenderness, sex, violence, pleasure that go along with a serious discussion of human sexuality and its abuses in modern times. Krishnamurti tells the former Brockwood students in the dialogue that they “need affection as [they] need sunshine, rain and clouds.” However, he asks them to question why? Why they need it and why they seek it? The final paragraph they read speaks to the kind of intelligence that Raj had just been talking about,

If you have deep affection yourself for everything, not just for one, but for everything -- love for the trees, the birds, the flowers, the fields and for human beings-- if you really feel that way, will you even occasionally say, ‘I wish someone would show me affection’? Isn't it only when there is emptiness inside you that you want the others to be with you? So you've learned something haven't you? Your mind now is actively observing, looking intelligently, and you see that where there is no affection in oneself, you want affection from others. That is translated as sex, relationship, and when that emptiness within seeks a relationship through sex and through a constant companionship, and you become jealous, fearful, angry. You follow? Please see all the consequences of it. So sex isn't the problem. The problem is to have an intelligent mind and in the very observing of all this it becomes highly intelligent and this intelligence will deal with sex. I do know if you follow? Have you understood it?

A Family Get Together

Lunch

12:45 to 2:00 pm

The kids line up outside the dining room in the hall waiting for the food to be served. It is apparently a new phenomenon that had begun shortly before my arrival as many of the teachers and staff comment on the fact that “the line is weird.” At the front of the line is one of members of the Krishnamurti Foundation Trust. Each day, like clockwork, he stands waiting for the food to be served, sometimes impatiently when those on kitchen duty are late. Today we are eating curried cauliflower and chickpeas. Two huge pots are brought out, one with rice and another with the curry. There is also a salad bar. All the food at the school is vegetarian. Each student signs an agreement at the beginning of their stay that stipulates that they must maintain a vegetarian diet during term time. One line on the agreement explains, “The school adopts a vegetarian diet out of a general respect for living things and in keeping with the wishes of the founder.” Almost all the vegetables we are eating today were grown in the garden on campus by the students and staff members. All and all there are about 80 to 90 people eating here today. Everyone files in the dining room and takes a seat at one of the long monks tables in the dining room. Some sit outside at plastic tables or on the grass as the weather is nice, and a few even eat on the couches in the sitting room. There is a general trickle of people into the room. Once the vast majority of people have taken a seat, there is a little metal bell that rings and a French student stands up, “Sorry to disturb your meal,” she says, “today the history class will be meeting in the blue room because of the exam in the library. It will be the same time. Also, anyone interested in going to the Aidan

Woodcock charity concert should make sure to tell Aashika or Brent. That's it, thank you."

While we are eating, the staff, the mature students, and the students mix together. There are no cliques by age or grade at the school. The smallness of the community prevents that type of interaction. The buzz of the talking is loud, even with the acoustic treatments that have been placed on the ceiling. People laugh, discuss, and play. After the meal, people bring their plates into the kitchen to be cleaned. A small team is there doing the dishes. Some of the kids go out to collect the pitchers, plates, and glasses that still remain outside. A few kids start throwing water on each other from what is left over in the pitchers. Other students are running around on the field playing football (American soccer) or just enjoying the sunny day. It takes some students longer than others to finish their lunch and some students come in to wipe the tables. They lift up the plates to clean underneath. It's close to two o'clock now, and some kids start to leave to go to their next classes. Not every student has a class every period of the day each day. It is organized more like a college schedule in America. However, many students have days where they have class in every period.

Relationships in Math

Maths AS Level

Fifth Period

2:00 to 2:45 pm

The teacher Aashika waits impatiently putting her hands over her brilliant eyes and occasionally peaking. She says with a firm tone of voice, "I gave the answer away. I'm going to keep quiet now for at least five minutes. Sorry!"

"No worries" Heidi says.

“Okay now, independent learning! Enough leaning on the teacher,” feeling guilty, but trying to be encouraging, Aashika says all of this with a hint of stress and continues to hide herself. The class is being held in the Rose Garden on this beautiful sunny day. All ten kids have their notebooks and are arranged in a circle around Aashika. The kids try to figure out the problem that she has just asked them. They said it was too hard and she accidentally answered one of the questions for them, so she decided to stop speaking “for at least five minutes.” The students are studying factorization and they were trying to figure out how $(a^2 - b^2)$ can be rewritten so that it is in two sets of parentheses. Aashika had begun this class by going through a review of factorization. She drew a few problems out on several pieces of paper and walked the students through all the necessary steps they would use to make the problem, making sure that they knew how to take each one. She solved the problem for them after they did not do it on their own. Aashika gave them a new problem and is trying now to keep quiet.

Aashika’s father has been interested in K for the last 55 years. She grew up learning about K, and she met him as a child. Her father had organized the talks K gave in Calcutta. Aashika had attended a Catholic school in India out of what she called “rebellion” from her parents, but once she finished her undergraduate degree in Physics and Math, she applied to Brockwood for a teaching position. This was in the late 90’s, when she was 21. Her application had been denied because they felt she was too young and needed to have more experience in the world before coming to teach at Brockwood. She did some work at Stanford and then finished a Ph.D. in Manchester, England. This allowed her to come down and visit Brockwood and she began to reconsider coming to work at the school. After she worked on a post-doctorate and took a University position

in India. After being asked to apply by the school, she had decided to give up her academic research and teaching and come instead to teach at Brockwood.

Like Rudy, an Indian girl who is something of a tom-boy, the students all sit and try to solve the problem. Rudy is discussing the problem with the French girl Paulette sitting right next to her and she says, "But if you make $7x - 13$ it doesn't make sense." Paulette shows her how she arrived to this conclusion.

Aashika laughs so that her students can hear her. She is still pretending to cover her eyes. Aashika is wearing a colorful sari. As she holds her hands over her eyes the many bracelets she is wearing clink together. She has long black hair, dark-colored eyes, striking facial features, and a contagious smile which beams as she covers her eyes. A few more minutes pass and most of the students have found an answer to the problem. The relationship between Aashika and her students seems almost informal in this class period, but it is a unusual day. Nonetheless, it reveals much about how Aashika relates in a very personal and close way. Aashika considers this essential to her role as a teacher in a diverse school:

What I do is I first establish a kind of relationship with a student so that I know who they are. I think that's very important, because what's happening here very often is not just mixed levels, but mixed abilities within the same level. And a lot of it relates to different cultures as well. So they have a completely, each one has a different way of absorbing what you're doing. So it's very essential for me to get to the students individually.

By understanding the children individually she can anticipate their needs and work towards their personal interests and passion. Once this relationship is established she can build on that foundation. She explains that, "...once that relationship is established between us then the beauty of the subject can gradually be opened even within the

restrictions of the syllabus.” In this way she can deepen the meaning of what is learned in the classroom. When she feels that her exam-based curriculum is too restrictive, she tries to find engaging ways to get the students to learn the material that is needed,

I would just take them to the Rose Garden and we would watch videos on math and DVDs on fractals or something. Just to get them out, and we go down to the Rose Garden and try to analyze how the leaves arranged themselves on the stem and how and try to understand why it's exactly 106° apart, because they want the maximum amount of sun for each leaf. So the leaves and the flowers are all doing math. So I'm trying to develop a theme for numbers as patterns.

In this way Aashika communicates knowledge and disciplinary expertise, and at the same time she manages to engage her students and be attentive to their social and emotional development by conducting class like she is doing today. The kids are arranged in a circle sitting cross-legged or laying down. “Okay, collective brainstorming minus the two adults in this group. Well, Peter are you 18?” He says yes and Aashika changes her statement, “Ok, minus these three adults.”

Alicia looks at Aashika and points, “She's also 18 and I'm 19.”

Wide-eyed, Aashika asks, “Oh my goodness, are you 18? And you're 19? Okay, minus these four adults.” The students start to talk a little bit about each other's ages. It is refreshing to watch this kind of interaction between the teacher and the students. It very much has the feeling of an older sister sitting with her younger sister and her friends talking about life and enjoying each other's company. Heidi, a young student from Germany was discussing her age and Aashika overheard, “Are you fifteen, Heidi?”

“No, I'm 16.”

“Oh, she's 16, you're a big girl,” Aashika says dripping with irony.

Alicia turns to Heidi and says, “Well, I'm 19 so don't worry about it.”

Heidi smiles back at her and says, “You look 15!”

“Heyyyy!!!”

“Its a compliment,” Aashika says.

Alicia gets more serious and explains, “Well it depends on where I am, sometimes people think I'm 23.”

Heidi looks peeved, but she manages to defend herself, “Well I think the last four years no one ever said I was 15.”

Alicia laughs at her, “I think I said it to you. I said she was 15, why don't people guess your age?”

Heidi blows her bangs out of her eyes, “People think I'm older.”

“Okay, well that's good,” Aashika says to move the class back towards the math they are working on. “It doesn't make a difference one year of an age anyway.”

“Yes it does!” Rudy says.

“Noooooo,” Aashika says jokingly, but trying to demonstrate disapproval of the way her students are behaving.

“How old are you, Aashika?”

“Okay, lets see if I can put it into a puzzle,” She laughs, as do the kids at this idea. After thirty seconds, she gets a little glimmer in her eye, “I'm a multiple of a prime number.”

“Are you 44?” Rudy asks.

“44!” Aashika says pretending to be offended, “What is 44?”

Rudy smiles nervously, and feeling slightly guilty, blushes.

"Thanks a lot, Rudy." Everybody gets a good laugh out of it. "I feel great now Rudy, thanks a lot."

"32!" Giselle says to try to sooth her.

"Is 32 the multiple of a prime number," Aashika says ironically.

"Yes," Giselle says without thinking, "What a minute, noooooo..." she whines.

"16!" Heidi shouts. The kids laugh at her.

"She's not 16!"

"Okay, I'm sorry I asked this question in the first place," Aashika smiles widely, crosses her arms, and then pretends to make a fuss again.

"No, no, no, no, no, no..." the kids shout. They are really enjoying this.

"Well that's 4 times 4?"

Aashika looks at Heidi and says, "I said a multiple of a prime number."

"Well, is 11 a prime number?" Aashika nods her head, "so 11 times 11 is..."

"121!" Giselle says, laughing out loud.

Aashika makes a grimace, "I said a multiple, not a square!"

"34!" a young man from Guatemala shouts out.

"Yes, how did you know?" Aashika comments.

"How old is she?" Peter asks Paulette.

"34," Aashika says, "how did you know I was 34 Julian?"

"I don't know, I just guess." Julian is from South America and is still working on his English.

"Is 34 the multiple of a prime number?" Heidi asks.

"Yes," Aashika says, "which one?"

The students do not answer and Heidi asks, “So, what is the prime number?”

“17.”

“17 times 17 is not 34!” Heidi says, dead serious.

“No, times 2, as I just said,” Aashika says emphatically, “You have to be precise. I said multiple, not square. Okay in how many years will I be a square? Oh my god, and I don't mean shape. Let's not go into any details that will make me nervous or self-conscious!”

“In fifteen years,” Heidi says waiting for Aashika to calculate.

“In fifteen years? No that's not correct.” Aashika says.

“I mean the shape.” Everybody laughs and Aashika shakes her head, “Heidi, you are henceforth dismissed from this class and you are to go back in your sick room. Ok, that is the puzzle for later. Have you guys solved the question I asked you to do. Can you submit them to me so I can check them now.”

Aashika is simultaneously very lax and strict with her students. The kids obviously enjoy spending time with her and joking around together. They are also learning math. Today is an unusual day. They are sitting outside in the beautiful weather in the Rose Garden after being cooped up indoors for several months. The kids are having some difficulty concentrating. The kids are actually ahead of schedule on the syllabus and are working well above their own grade level, so Aashika is being very lax and spending time with her students. The affection is palpable. It is not just coaxing or a way to pass the time, there is real relationship here. It feels so much like sisters and brothers. It is quite interesting. Walking out of the class, a few students pull me aside; they all know I am doing research, but they wanted to be sure that I knew, “Aashika is a

cool teacher and she's great to talk with if there are any problems. She's great." Aashika seems to like to learn from her students as well. She tells me how important it is to learn from one's students,

We are mirrors for each other. In fact half the time they tell me what to do. It in terms of the knowledgebase you have it. In fact, they can sometimes tell me how they learn better. They may say "hey invite us to the board more often." Or, or can you just give us a whole lot of practice problems and not just talk to us about it. So this is happening for the first time for me that the students are actually guiding me how to teach, although all my life I had the kind of teachers who lack humility. I said to myself while I've been teaching since I was an undergraduate since my freshman year, I know what I'm doing. So I think dissolving that whole ego business in a way and being very, very open just creates a different kind of inspiration. It creates a space for inspiration teaching in a way.

It is clear that today, that "whole ego business" was not a big issue in her relationships with her students who loved learning as much about her as they did about the mathematical formulas.

Little Seeds Will Grow

Care for the Earth

Sixth and Seventh Period

2:45 to 4:15 pm

"It was nice, yeah, it was good," Peter tells Jonas. He just finished taking a big exam and is walking past Freya and the few students who have arrived on time on his way to the cloisters.

Freya overhears this and turns to him, "Well, how did it go?" Freya asks placing her hand on his shoulder briefly.

"The exam, yeah it was good, it was so good." Peter is beaming with joy.

"Really?" Fran says.

With a mischievous grin on his face, Peter looks back at Freya “You look a bit surprised Freya, did you think I wasn’t going to do a good job?”

She blushes slightly and says, “Well, you don’t often see people coming out of the exam saying, ‘yeah, that was fun.’”

“It was actually fun because in the first one I didn’t do very well in the first section. I came out thinking oh my God, but on this one I knew I did okay and I felt like I knew the answers on most of them. I feel good anyway.”

“Are you done?”

“Yeah, that’s the only one I’m doing”

“And the others?”

“They were happy. Actually, yeah they did well. I have to run now I’m late,” with that Peter runs off.

Freya looks around at her students and says, “Where is everybody? Where is John and David?”

“David was in the library the last time I saw him, but I don’t know where he is now,” one student replies. Freya asked two students to pick everybody else up. During this time Freya asks me a question, “Do you know what this class is about?” I tell her that I would like to hear about it and she explains that there are four different Brockwood courses that have nothing to do with “subject matter per se. These are things that hopefully at some point everybody will do. There is K-class, Inquiry Time, Human Development, and this course, care for the earth.” The point of this class is “to have a moment during the week where they would spend some time working outside. Rather than just being academic all the time.” Her goal is to get the students to experience nature

and to spend time outdoors. She tells me, “This way they can get their hands in the soil and begin to have a sense of connection to the natural environment around them. They each have their own plot, where they can do planting, benches, etc. They can do whatever they want really, or they can work in the vegetable garden with Derwent or they can work at Inwoods where we have another vegetable garden.”

Freya has full head of long red hair and a big smile. She’s stand maybe 5 feet 4 inches tall and is always wearing jeans. When she is spending time with the students and her back is turned one might not pick up that she is teacher because her relationships with students are so intimate and close. Her closeness with the students is helped by the fact that Freya was once a student at Brockwood. Freya attended Brockwood as a child and then came back six years later as a mature student. Her father was an ardent follower of Krishnamurti and she had grown up speaking about K with him. As a child, she had discussed the possibility of coming to the school. When she turned 16, she decided that she wanted to apply. She explains that,

I applied to come as a student and spend 4 and a half years as a student, and I was very aware at the time that this could be some of the best years of my life. This is such an incredible place. I loved it so much. I was also quite aware that I would most likely want to come back as a staff member and I went away to do various things and I came back about 6 years ago now. Initially I spent 3 years as a mature student running the vegetable garden, teaching electives, and various things, and then I wanted to become a staff member. It wasn’t easy to get accepted, but eventually I got accepted.”

The students have all come back now and nobody can find David so Freya decides to go ahead without him, “Okay, lets have a moment of quiet and then we can start.” The five students sits quietly some on the brick walls that line the garden area and others on the bench that looks on the vegetable garden and greenhouses. Some kids close

their eyes, others just stare blankly at the sky or the trees. In the silence, the sound of the birds is incredible. I wonder what the kids are listening to or thinking? The wind is blowing and there are clouds scattered throughout the sky. The kids appear to be used to this practice. They are not simply going through the motions, they take it pretty seriously. After a minute, Freya says, “Okay, let’s get going. Its been raining a little bit, but you’ll have to water today. When you water, where do you water? Do you remember?”

“The roots.”

“The roots yes, I’ve seen some people watering different things, you need to give a lot of water right at the roots. A jet of water right there,” she points to a plant she brought out of the nursery, “You don’t need to water the rest of it. Gemma, your plot with the soy beans, I’ve been tending to them a little bit, but it needs some more care.” The students ask what they should do and Fran helps them find a task, “Jorge, you are going to work on potting the lavender if you don’t have anything to do with your plot. Jonas, digging. Iwan, the same.”

Iwan asks what he should dig up. Freya explains simply, “Well, anything you see that isn’t lavender you can take out.”

Freya turns to me and says, “First they seed the plants in the greenhouses and then they put them in their plots.” Just then she notices someone walking towards us, “There’s David, the little monkey. Where’ve you been?” she shouts over to him.

As he approaches he tells her, “I’m sorry, I was studying for my exam, it took longer than I thought. Can I keep going?” He gets a rather pathetic look on his face as he says this. Freya feigns discontent and gives him a grimace, but eventually caves to his

sincere request and tells him, “Study hard and do well, I don’t want to hear later you didn’t have enough time.”

“Okay, thanks.” He scurries off. During the exam periods, it is a frequent practice to allow students to skip class to study for a pressing exam. It often “makes the difference between an A or a B on the exam.”

As we walk around, Freya is slightly flummoxed by my presence. She confesses that she is not sure what I want to see, “We’re not doing anything formal, only kids working on their plots.” Many of the teachers told me something similar throughout my visit to Brockwood. These comments are revealing, because much like the climate in the United States, schools in England are under increasing pressure to perform academically. The teachers are used to outside visitors who are evaluating their formal instruction time with students as a part of government requirements. Freya had read my research description, but had anticipated that I would be more interested in formal instruction and less in the global features of the school. However, many of Freya’s job descriptions at the school fall outside of the normal boundaries of academic learning.

Freya has a number of different jobs here at Brockwood, she teaches this class, but she is also in charge of the “pastoral care,” that is tending to the boarding students and their living conditions. She is something of a big sister or mother figure for many of the students. Speaking with her about her job here, Freya tells me how meaningful she finds her work at the school:

My work has meaning and I even feel very blessed that I’m in a situation where my work is as varied as it is. It would be nice if I didn’t have quite as many responsibilities as I do, but it’s varied, meaning that part of my work and part of my life is to have intense serious discussions about life, to play sports, to work outside in the garden with students. I do feel it’s

important, so I don't really struggle with the class, even though it's a compulsory class and can be difficult at times, I don't struggle with the sense that it's an important thing. Actually for students to be exposed to having their hands in the soil in all the different seasons, to that sense of the wondrous miracle that this little seed will grow. All of that I feel is meaningful, and then being a tutor, I feel is totally meaningful. Having a sense of working with these young people and realizing that their lives are at such a crucial moment and at such a crucial point of sort of either closing them off, or helping them flower in goodness—goodness may be a little bit over the top—but at least open themselves to life rather than be in a place where they could potentially build walls in order to cope with life. And, yeah so, [she pauses and reflects on her words] I tend to feel very *rewarded* working with the students.

It is easy to see the reward or joy that Freya feels when she works with her students. She treats them like younger brothers and sisters. She can be firm, but she treats them with respect and holds high expectations of their behavior and their work. It is important for her, in this class, that the students learn about flowering—both inwardly in their life and outwardly in the garden.

With the rest of the time I have in this class, I decide to shadow Freya around the garden. It is very big and the kids are spread out throughout the whole area. The kids therefore work largely independently and are occasionally supervised by Freya. One student from Barcelona, Jorge, has been working on his plot for a little while and then asks Freya to show him how to pot the lavender seedlings. Instead of just showing him, Freya asks Jorge to work on a few himself and that she would watch him do it and tell him what he is doing wrong. After showing her, Freya decides to do it once and asks him to observe her. Right at that moment, Fran turns her back to look for some special soil for Jorge to use and a bee flies over towards him, landing on the table. Jorge is very impulsive and high-energy. As the honeybee flies over, Jorge freaks out. Jorge becomes scared and he takes a hand brush and gives the bee a good whack and barks at the same

time. With her back turned, all Freya heard was the sound of the broom hitting the table. Freya turns around with a concerned expression on her face, “What happened?” she asks.

"I killed a bee," he says.

With the tone only a worried mother might display Freya asks Jorge, “Why did you do that, he hasn't done anything to you! Honeybees are totally harmless unless you seriously disturb them. They are essential for the flowering of many plants as well. They are friends, not enemies.” Fran is truly in shock, she cannot accept that Jorge had just killed a bee. Fran goes to see if the bee has survived. She takes a ruler and delicately flips it over trying to help it recover. “Let the bee rest, Jorge, don't do anything else to it or any other bee for that matter. Okay, you've done enough in here, why don't you go out to your plot and check on the plant you were working on.” Jorge shrugs it off and goes on about tending to his plot. He knows that he has crossed a line with Fran and he sulks for a little while. Jorge is a very empathetic person, but his emotional nature and impulsivity has a way of getting him in some difficult positions at the school.

Fran walks around for the next 10 minutes simply stunned by this action. She is deeply affected, her eyes wide open, and in a slightly introspective state. She does not take any punitive action or yell, she just tries to calmly consider why Jorge would have done this. She is nonetheless truly affected by it. She walks over and helps the girls who are working on their plots. Freya tries hard to model care for the earth to the students and it is clear that Jorge's action has gone counter to that spirit.

One girl is struggling to train a vine to run up a bamboo shoot. Freya comes over and tells her, “You'll need some twine to get that plant to stand up properly. I wonder why we left it like this?”

“We didn’t have enough time last time you remember?”

“Right, I remember now. There is some twine over there. Judy may not like that we are touching her garden, but it needs to be done.” After this, Freya walks over to see how the weeding is going on the other side of the garden nearest the cloisters, “How’s it going?” she asks.

“Good. I’m just working. Make sure you get the roots. What will happen if we don’t?”

“It will grow back.”

“Good. Have you cut your grass, you should cut your grass.”

“ I think Marco won't be happy, I'm going to take out his weeds.” At this point, one of the other girls who has been working in her plot yells over to Freya to say that she is almost done. “Should I bring the fuchsia?” Fran asks her student.

“I think I still need more time.”

“Okay, right, tell me when you're ready.” Fran is still a bit stunned.

“It’s tough, because it's so dry!” The girl screams in response.

“Just do your best, that’s all we can do.” Freya says this to her student, but it almost sounds like she is reassuring herself about what had happened with Jorge. With this, she shakes off Jorge’s actions and continues to supervise her “little seeds” for the small amount of time that remains. She tells them when it is time to go and the students put the tools away and head off to their next class.

Dealing with the Facts

ESL Class

Eighth Period

4:15 to 5:00 pm

“So far we've been talking about the difference between facts and opinions and in working out how to distinguish between the two and we decided that there were descriptive words that indicated opinions, like what?” Angela asks in a thick Australian accent. Angela has long gray hair and appears to be in her 50's.

“Beautiful.” one of the four students in the class says in response.

Another student says, “Old.”

“Could it be that your car is old but it was made last year? How do we know a fact is a fact?” Angela responds to her small class. Although she is relatively short, Angela has a commanding presence in the classroom. She teaches in such a way that demands respect and attention.

“It can be proved.”

“Okay, it can be proved. So what's an opinion?” She asks again.

“It's a description, but we can't prove it.”

“It's a thought or feeling that we can't prove.” Angela says. “Good, so what's a word that looks like a collective opinion, like a lot of people have an opinion, it can be an individual thing, but also a lot of people's opinions?”

“Ummmm...”

“We've heard the word already it was on the board.” Ann points to the white behind in her this small classroom. They are all seated in a circle in this small “garden room.” There four students total in the class, 3 from Spain and 1 from India. There are

two boys (one Indian and one Spanish) and two girls. The young girl from India gets very excited and shouts out, “Bias!”

“Bias, so bias means what, can it be good or is it always bad?” Angela pushes the students to decide.

“It’s a feeling...” one boy from Barcelona starts to say. “We have different feelings about people or things, I don’t know.”

“So it’s not a rational thought. It is often based on feelings. We also now that different cultures have different biases. Good, well now that we reviewed what we did last time, let’s get going again. So you went away and you found different opinions and different facts and newspapers and we didn’t get all the way through it; we stopped in the middle.” The kids pull out their binders and look for the sheet that she had handed out. Their binders are thick with assignments. Angela, in addition to teaching ESL, is also Head of Curriculum at the school. She is extremely thorough in planning a class. She is very structured. Each of the classes I had a chance to observe consisted of a very specific lesson that she had prepared and typed-out beforehand. Despite this very structured classroom planning, Angela does not feel like she has all the time she’d like to plan. She does not feel like she can make her curriculum as extraordinary as what Krishnamurti had envisioned. She thought when she had first accepted the job “that there would be a whole style of teaching and of education worked out that would include a lot of inquiry in the classroom [...], so I suppose I was surprised that it was so traditional in lots of ways.” Of course since that time, she has come to think that the school has other strengths like its way of “relating” to students and not just “teaching” them. Despite this, Angela has been a staunch advocate of increasing the amount of planning, and teacher development at the

school to help the staff at Brockwood work on understanding the developmental needs of students, pedagogical strategies, and curriculum planning.⁴⁹

There are only 4 students in the room during the class so the ambiance is quite intimate. The room is more or less 10 feet by 10 feet. The walls are yellow and the external wall is covered in windows that overlook the a car port that houses many bikes that the students can ride. There are two conference tables arranged in a T. Angela sits at the bottom of the T and the students are all sitting on the right side. It feels more like a tutoring session than a class. It is not possible to be anonymous in this environment.

The students read newspaper articles and are required to identify opinions and facts. They work diligently and efficiently. I still have yet to see any behavior issues since I arrived at the school. On a whole the students feel safe and secure in this place. This environment engenders trust and respect. The students and Angela freely flow between subject matter and their personal lives whether it is the way they slept the night before, the quality of the food at lunch, or their perspective on politics or the environment. The curriculum and pedagogy in this class is, however, very traditional—as all the classes I’ve observed at Brockwood have been.

“Do you think it was easier to find facts or opinions in the newspapers?” she asks now that the students have been working for a few minutes on the assignment.

“If it was easier to find facts,” the young girl from India, Rudy, explains.

⁴⁹ There has been some measure of strife among the faculty this year regarding the role of teacher technique and pedagogy in the classrooms at Brockwood. Angela commented that many of the teachers at Brockwood have little or no formal educational training. Of course, because K denigrated methodology of any kind some view this as a strength and not a weakness of the school. It is a complex debate that I will return to later on in this dissertation when interpreting and evaluating my experiences at the two schools.

The girl from Spain, Alicia, observes that she “saw so many opinions because I looked at advertisements.” Then she reads some examples for the class. The kids are definitely learning English well at the school, and with precision in this class. Angela gives a steady diet of grammar, vocabulary, and uses drill, rote learning, and essay and journal writing to help the students learn it. Having moved through the exercises she already gave them, she hands out another sheet for them to work on.

“Right, I just gave you a reading from an American newspaper. What you want to do here is underline the sentences that contain facts and circle the sentences that contain opinions. In this case, some sentences may have neither fact nor opinion,” Angela laughs a bit as she says this and then explains why she is laughing, “You’ll see, so have a read of it. It's about *Area 51*, which is about a place in the US where they think the American government investigates UFOs. Have a read and see what you think.” The students read the article and start underlining and circling. While reading, a young man from Spain asks Angela what “cover up” means. She looks at him, “Do you know what you think it means?”

“No.”

“Cover means they're pretending to not know something and pretend that they don't know what it means. Does it make more sense now?”

“Yes.”

They keep silently reading and underlining. It is clear that all the students in this class are not exactly at the same level of learning in terms of writing and speaking English. It is another complexity of Brockwood Park that they have so many different nationalities represented at the school.

Rudy asks Angela if she is still leaving at the end of the year. She says, "I hope you are not going to leave. I love this class." Angela looks down at the table briefly and looks at her, "I am going back to Australia because my daughter's 18 and needs her mother. She said her brother's going to be taking care of her but that she needs her mother. So that is why I'm going back. I really like it here and I like all of you, but I'm afraid that my daughter needs me and I cannot say no." As this is happening, the kids briefly stop working and then resume going line-by-line through the article. Angela and the kids examine each of the sentences to see whether or not they got the correct answers.

After the activity, Angela had decided to do something different than "the usual," she says, "Just to finish off this bit with a little quotation from a small article from Krishnamurti's *Book of Life*. And it's actually from my birthday, March 26. The book is organized by dates, and I said to myself that I'd look real quick in the *Book of Life* to see if I could find a section about fact and opinion. I opened the thing up and I had happened to turn to my birthday. And there it was, an article about fact and opinion. I'll read this. It's just a very short abstract which is very interesting:

Are we afraid of a fact or of an idea *about* the fact? Are we afraid of the thing, as it is, or are we afraid of what we *think* it is? Take death, for example. Are we afraid of the fact of death with the idea of death? The fact is one thing in the idea about the effect is another. And my fate of the word *death* or of the fact itself? Because I'm afraid of the word, of the idea, I never understand the facts and never look at the fact, I'm never in direct relation with the facts. It is only when I am in complete communion with the fact that there is no fear. If I am not in communion with the facts, then there is fear, and there is no communion with the fact. So long as I have an idea, and opinion, a theory, *about* the fact; so I had to be very clear, whether I'm afraid of the word, the idea, or the fact. If I'm face-to-face with the fact, there's nothing understand to about it: the fact is there, and I can deal with it. If I'm afraid of the word, but I must understand the word, go into the whole process of what the word, the term, implies.

It is my opinion, my idea, my experience, my knowledge about the fact, that creates fear. So long as there is verbalization of the fact, giving the fact a name and therefore identifying or condemning it, so long as thought is judging the fact as an observer, there must be fear. Thought is the product of the past; it can only exist through verbalization, through symbols, through images. So long as thought is regarding or translating the fact, there must be fear. Thought is a product of the past; it can only exist through verbalization, through symbols, through images; so long as thought is regarding or translating the fact, there must be fear.

So what do you think that means?” Angela looks at the students.

“What does communion mean?” one of the Spanish boys asks.

“Communion means like being in kind of a direct relationship with something. You could say it's even closer than just having a relationship. Its like, a very very intimate close relationship with almost no separation between the two,” she places her hands palm to palm as she says this, “So what do we think? Does it make sense?”

“Yes.”

“This is a little like K class, but we can talk about it since in came up in this class, it will be good for your English and even if it isn't it will be interesting. [she laughs] The idea that we are afraid of death is clear, we're all kind of afraid of it because, well, why do you think we're afraid of death?”

“I'm not afraid of death,” the one Spanish student, Paul, who hasn't spoken yet in this class says defiantly, “Because I think when I die, the world will continue to exist. The reality will always be there.”

The other Spanish boy, Iwan, chimes in, “Well, I think it is the idea of not knowing what's going to happen.”

“Anyway, everybody has to die. One should not be in the fear of it. We should live. We should live longer than this. I’ll be dead, we’re living with that fear and we want to get rid of it.”

“What do you think Alicia” Angela asks.

“Yes.”

They all laugh at her response. She blushes and says that she agrees with Rudy, the Indian girl, “That’s what I meant to say.”

“What about something like exams? Do you think were afraid of the idea of what exams are?”

Alicia, more serious this time, says, “The results,”

“Consequences,” Rudy says.

“Is that an idea? Is it about the opinion or about the fact?”

“It's just a fact because if we don't do well on the exam were going to fail.” Rudy replies very quickly.

“What's failing going to feel like?” Alicia says.

“Well, we are going to do the same thing again, and then there will be left back. People who are successful at the exam are promoted and the people who don't are left behind, and nobody wants to be left behind,” Rudy explains matter-of-factly.

With this response, Angela launches into a deeper point, “Those are facts aren’t they? but maybe the idea of being left behind is kind of an opinion or a projection of what it may feel like to be left behind, but the fact is that we will be left behind, but the opinion is that it's going to be a terrible thing or, well, we don't really know. In fact, it may not be a terrible thing. It may be the best thing that could ever happen to us. Sometimes that

happens to us too. It turns out to be a good thing for us. So that is why we at Brockwood try to expose about this whole situation. We have all these ideas about each other, ideas about who each other are and what kind of people they are. But we're here to discover something more immediate. We here to discover something about relationships between people, the way we can relate to those people without all those ideas. We're looking at facts and opinions and everybody has biases from our conditioning, family, past, what our mother and father thought. But yeah...[pause] Is there another way of being, a way to come to people without all that background?" She looks at the clock and checks to make sure there time. The kids seemed very engaged by this discussion, although they don't have much more to say. Angela senses this and decides to move on with another activity.

She launches seamlessly back into the subject matter of the class and gets back into learning words in the context of reading. As she begins to start this lesson, Paul begins to sing a song in the back of the room. The kids don't even flinch. He begins to whistle and the kids still don't flinch. It would seem as though it happens all the time—spontaneous song.

"Okay, so what I want to do now is go back to discussing reading. You are all learning vocabulary still, so what one should always be aware of—when you're reading something and you don't know a word for instance—is what is called the word family. When I talk about word families what am I talking about? For example, approximate." Angela stands at the board and writes down the word in a table. What is the word family of it?"

"Where the word comes from?" Rudy says hesitantly

“Yes exactly, so let’s set it up in the table. The word approximately, where does the word approximately come from?”

“Approx?”

“Approximate?”

“I’m not talking about the root. What is it? It’s an adverb right?” Angela says,
“So what’s the adjective?”

“Approximate,” Paul says.

Angela rights in a table like this one on the board:

Verb	Noun	Adverb	Adjective
To approximate	Approximate	Approximately	Approximate
	Activity		
	Progress		
			Strange
			Informative
			Toxic

The kids continue until they figure out all the words in the word family: verb, noun, adverb, and adjective. The goal of the lesson is to show them that they can figure out what a word means by looking at the root working backwards to verb, noun, and adverb. With this she rights some more words in the table above like this and turns them loose to figure it out. A few minutes pass and she says to them, “If you really want to know English well and you should since I’ve been brainwashing you for quite some time now—some of you for five years—then every time you hear a word you don’t know, you should sit down and write out the whole verb family.” Angela is very strict with her class and at the same time, kind and compassionate. After they finish this activity, she moves onto a worksheet that asks the kids to figure out whether not you put in make or do before

different words. For example, she says, “Do you ‘make contact’ or ‘do contact.’” She then writes a list on the board for them to consider:

Contact
an example
a Fortune
sense
an appointment
a pass
a suggestion
an offer
a profit

She begins this lesson by going around to each student individually, calling on each and asking for the answer. Once she is confident they know more or less how this game works, she starts calling out all the names on the sheet. When they don't know she answers, the rest of the time the kids shout out when they know in unison most of the time. She does this because time is running short and she wants to get through it. As she does this, her face looks discerning and understanding. She stands with her hands on the table, hunched over looking at them, peering over her glasses, word after word she calls them out and waits for the students to answer. As she finishes the sheet, she says, “Okay, class is over. Enjoy tea time.”

Each day at five o'clock a snack is brought out with tea for everyone to take a small break. Today is Monday, which is like a “Friday” since their weekends are Tuesday and Wednesday. After tea time today, the kids have free time to work and the staff have a meeting before the all school meeting takes place at the end of the week. The staff meeting begins between 5:15 and 5:30 pm and go until 6:30.

All School Meeting

6:30 pm

In Brockwood the weekends are Tuesday and Wednesday. At the end of the school week before students are turned loose, the entire school meets in the creatively titled "meeting room." The room is octagonal in shape with a circular floor plan. It seems to have been designed as a rotunda, not unlike the model of a church or baptistery, with wooden floors and wooden ceilings. The building itself, however, is entirely secular. Approximately 80 chairs are arranged in two concentric circles. There are tall windows that stretch, the full height of the walls, all around the rotunda so that natural light pours in, inundating the room with a sense of nature. There is a white circular carpet in the center of the room with eight cushions to accommodate some people who might sit on the floor. Above our heads, where the wall meets the ceiling, begins a set of 8 wooden triangles which form the structure of the octagon which finishes in a single point at the center of the pointed roof. One has a sense of connection with nature in this hall. As one walks into the meeting hall you are struck first by circular rug and the concentric rings of chairs, then subsequently by a huge projection screen, which hangs on the back wall and is used for slide shows, overheads, and movies. There's also a pure black grand piano, which imposes itself on the eye of the viewer in the back of the room. The contrasts between the white walls, the black seat cushions, the wooden floor and roof, and the white rug are quite strikingly and leave one with a sense of order and structure in the room. This is a place of meeting, a place of equality, silence, and discussion.

As the students file in the room, silence of the spaces broken by the reverberation of the noise of chairs and footsteps as people enter. Until that point, I hadn't noticed that

the acoustics of the room had been studied such that wherever one speaks you are heard everywhere. As we gathered in the meeting room waiting for everyone to arrive, various people are talking and chatting, and the buzz echoes throughout the room creating a constant reverberation. One had the feeling of being saturated in the sounds as though in a huge cathedral, where the constant resonance washes over you like a blanket of sound.

Staff, students, visitors, and teachers alike, all made their way into the meeting room. One can feel the excitement and the energy at the end of the week. It is the students who take attendance at the meeting and call everyone to order. The kids alternate in this duty. The student on a duty, a young girl from America, holds a clipboard with all the names of people in the school and simply calls out the name of the person and waits for a response. "David?" "Yes." "Paul?" "Here." "Laura? [no one answers], Laura!" "She'll be here in a minute," someone shouts. The process of taking attendance and getting everyone settled requires ten minutes. The students not present of their own accord have to be chased down and told to come because this is the one opportunity in the week where they are sure everyone is together. People continue to arrive and most of the chairs are now full. The student who's taking attendance looks back down the list to see who wasn't present at the first call and goes back through to make sure that everyone has arrived. Once the school director has seen that everyone has arrived and settled in, he begins the meeting. It is apparently customary for the director to run the meeting, although like many aspects of Brockwood, I am sure that this changes from time to time and may depend on the situation and the director.

The current director is Adam. Adam has taught at the school for many years, he's studied Krishnamurti, and he teaches currently psychology. He has a warm smile and

presence, he is very mild-mannered, and he does not speak much. This is true even when he is spoken to, and he has a tendency not to make eye contact. Adam's leadership style is very laid-back. As director, he seems to focus on building consensus and to really listen to all the different perspectives of the staff. Today, Adam begins by thanking everybody for their participation in the OFSTED inspection.⁵⁰ Adam says to the entire school,

Generally it was a very good inspection from our point of view. I think many of the things we consider to be the best in Brockwood were considered to be the best by the inspectors. Some of the things they found which they were more critical of had to do with the paperwork. They were more to do with the administration and with making sure that we check on the things that happen and more of doing that sort of thing. So I think your parents gave very good feedback, you gave very good feedback, they were very happy with the classes and with the pastoral care. So I think most of the things that we consider to be very important, they also thought were going very well. But there are some procedures that we need to tighten up on, which I'll mention in a minute, but generally speaking, our feedback was very, very good. The second thing all those of you who've applied for scholarships can you come up and see me in the study after this meeting? And I'll be able to give you an update. The third thing is the school camera, does anyone know where the school camera is?

Everybody around the room thinks about it. Some shout out the places they think it might be, but they cannot really determine who the last one to use it was. It feels like a huge family searching for the remote in the couch. After that, Adam announces the movie that will be playing tonight in the meeting room. Every Friday night a movie is projected in the meeting room. In the 3 weeks I was there, very few students actually attended the movie, but I imagine that this might be due more to the good weather than to anything else. In any event they always put the movie on nonetheless.

⁵⁰ The Office for Standards in Education or OFSTED, came into being on April 1st, 2007. They are responsible for the evaluation of all schools in the UK based on national standards in education.

Adam explains the contents of the film with a somewhat monotonous tone of voice, “Tonight's movie,” he says, “you may remember that a few weeks ago that we had a kind of documentary about a woman who was working in Africa and who became very suspicious of some medical trials were being carried out by multinational company.” The students nod their heads in acknowledgement. Adam continues his talk,

In a week or so this time one of the trustees of the school, Rajesh, will be coming on a visit and some of you may have heard him talking about the company he works for. He works for a multinational pharmaceutical company. And he would like to use his time here, and one possibility would be for him to talk about the reality of him working for a multinational company. It might be useful for general interest but also for those who are in business studies, and also those who are doing psychology organizations so that will be in a couple weeks time. But tonight's movie is called Michael Clayton, and it has a similar theme—also about someone who becomes very suspicious of the work which multinational companies are doing. In particular, their use of weed killer and the way that this particular weed killers promoted. So it's a thriller, and it's quite exciting.

The students all fiddle around in their chairs as he says this, but the room remains relatively silent and attentive. Adam brings up a few issues regarding the swimming pool on campus regarding safety and the need to avoid any “unnecessary tragedies.” He also points out that it is near the adult study center and that “the silence of the place needs to be respected.” However, a final issue he raises has to do with student’s behavior at the school. Adam says, “The third thing is to do with sunbathing. Now, this is a very big topic. I know it's very warm and the temptation to strip off [he pauses for emphasis] must be incredibly strong [he says quickly, with a dry wit].” The students all laugh at the phrase he used to describe this, “But although I know you all know the rules here, it makes life simpler sometimes if there are very clear rules about what is right and what is not right, for some of your activities.” Some of the students scoff at the first part of this

comment. However, Adam is quick to add a qualification, “But we also feel that words like intelligence, appropriateness, sensitivity, are the approach that we would like to take. We do not want our life to be dominated by a whole list of rules. And this is an opportunity for you to see the depths of words like those three I mentioned. And there are probably a whole lot more that we could use, but the important ones for now are intelligence, appropriateness, and sensitivity. And I’m afraid, in some cases, you should not be surprised if staff members talk to you about whether not a particular behavior is appropriate, and I hope that you will see this all for yourselves.” Many of the students, particularly one group of girls, had been sunbathing in small bikinis out on the south lawn earlier in the week, which gave some teachers pause and some students reason for excitement. This kind of thing leads to discussion about romantic relationships at the school. The staff and students are encouraged to be very respectful and kind with everyone within the community. Exclusive relationships of any kind are discouraged in the school agreements and sex between students forbidden. However “exclusive” relationships do still take place at the school and it is difficult to prevent. During my stay at the school, I saw many couples in the students at the school. Some of whom would kiss in public places. It is testament to the school that students feel comfortable enough to behave this way in front of adults, but there are clearly boundaries that might need to be enforced to avoid the jealousies, comparisons, and eventual frictions in this small intimate community that may come from exclusive relationships. It is certainly an important balance that needs to be considered at the school.

Adam addresses this issue respectfully but clearly, “I think this opens up quite a discussion about sunbathing and stripping off, but also about safety. I was also told that

some of you were playing football in bare feet, and it may seem a very simple activity, but it may easily lead to a broken bone and another trip to the hospital. As we have said umpteen times please do not use bare feet in the house. And there are probably other situations where bare feet are not appropriate.” The students continue to listen with attention during Adam’s discussion, “So okay, I hope you can work them out yourself but you may need reminding from time to time. And I will put up some guidelines about clothing, but I think it’s much more than that. It’s not just guidelines or rules. It’s more about using this place in an intelligent way and being sensitive to other people. Okay, Carvallio or Martin, would you like say something about safety around the pool?”

The meeting continues for quite some time after this, something like a half an hour. The students and teachers discuss safety issues around the pool and how they should be very careful over there. Raj has lost the keys to his car and tells a pathetic tale of not being able to leave the property as a result. They continue to speak about the OFSTED report, and deal with small issues like doing the laundry or cleaning the kitchen. Each time new visitors are present at the school such as prospective teachers and students who will be visiting the school, their presence is announced. You can often see students trying to figure out who a new visitor is, when they cannot remember.

At one point during the meeting, one teacher points to the huge stack of dirty dishes and trash in the meeting room, which she brought to “illustrate” the fact that people are not cleaning up in the house. This leads to a somewhat confrontational discussion between her and the students. To help diffuse the situation, one teacher adds, “I’m sure that some of this mess is due to teachers as well. We should just all do our best to pick up after ourselves.” The woman who brought this issue to the groups attention

feels unsatisfied with the relative apathy shown to this issue and gets somewhat upset, “No!” she screams, “I don’t feel that we should treat this so lightly. This is unacceptable. It is someone’s job to go around and pick things up and we cannot just allow this mess to continue.” The tension in the room builds and people get very silent. Angela says to the teacher, “I understand your frustration. Can we all agree to make a bigger effort to keep this tidy and clean around here?” The students acknowledge the comment and agree to do so.

This incident reveals the differences in the staff about the appropriate responses and consequences for students who do not follow the rules. However, like Adam’s discussion around sunbathing, it is rare for there to be mandates or dictates of behavior to students. There is an agreement and behavior expectations, but few punitive consequences for students who break the rules. The goal at the school is more consistently on awareness and self-directed behavior than on behavioral guidelines and detentions. It is only when problems seriously escalate or endanger other students that such actions are taken. Rather through relationship and discussion such problems are addressed. Some teachers told me that this does not always lead to a change in behavior and that they feel this is a failure of the school. There is a continuous debate among the faculty on this issue.

After a few other minor issues are discussed, the student who called attendance looks at Adam to see if she has permission to end the meeting. With a head nod from Adam, the student says to the assembly, “Let’s take a minute of silence now please.” The room falls dead silent. The student who called attendance sits watching the clock. The second that a minute had passed she stood up and half of the students rose to their feet

and began to exit room. Some quickly packed a bag and went off to the train station to visit their family; others went to dinner.

Monday Night at Brockwood

After dinner time

7:30 to 9:00 pm

It's Monday night at Brockwood. The light of the sun still stays with us. We have finished eating dinner and people have been running about outside. During dinner, a large crowd ate outside and others remained in the dining hall. The dining hall is a place of family and friends. One can almost forget at times that we are in a school. Teachers and students intermingle, and people converse and enjoy the beautiful weather after a long and bitter winter. One adult student and a student sit at the large piano in the living room and practice a song together. Outside two students sit with guitars and play. Meanwhile other students and some teachers finish the dishes in the Rota room. Kids are playing Frisbee and throw a ball around outside. The students wander in and out from their rooms, conduct their chores, while others go into the meeting room to watch *Michael Clayton*.

It has been a long week and everybody is tired, teachers and students. The kids and the teachers are very happy that summer is here. Even the sheep in the pastures seem happy. Out in the field yesterday a group of sheep decided to dance in the ashes of an old fire and kicked up quite a bit of smoke. Everybody watched the sheep in amazement. One can sense that the students and the teachers are keen observers of the environment around the place. The song that is sung in the living room is a bit solemn, but beautiful. It sounds a bit like a sad Natalie Merchant. The young girl has an amazing voice. The

mature student taps the keys with passion and closes his eyes as he coaches the girl a bit in performance, her dream.

One has a sense of freedom in this place. It is not like the claustrophobic feeling we have sometimes in our large public high schools; it is not huge, impersonal, sterile, and dictated by do's-and-don'ts, and police officers. Here in this small, personal environment everybody is known and people are valued for who they are. Thoughts and feelings are expressed when circumstances in the school are felt to be negative for the students, but the students have to police themselves unless they endanger themselves or others. There are things stated as rules, but frequently the kids will not pay attention and they are not punished. On the surface of it, it is clear that this can be abused. Students can begin to feel entitled, but the risk seems to be worth it because the kids feel empowered, respected, and understood as a result of this. Life at the school is not always smooth, but all in all everyone get along quite well. The kids feel free to express themselves in any number of ways. Since I arrived, I've already been befriended by 4 or 5 different students. They have welcomed me, want to know all about me—where I come from and how I am getting along. At first I thought this was perhaps unusual, but then I realized that the students do this with all the adults here. The students live with the adults, so they are not just teachers, they are people. When this relationship comes into the classroom, the ramifications are deep. There is a palpable sense of proximity between the students and the teachers. In fact, this was the intention of this place, that the teachers would give of themselves and take it as something religious, an experience of the sacred. The teachers are paid a meager wage and asked to live in this place, where the essentials of their life are cared for (food, shelter, etc...). In this way, you don't have people taking

this as a job, it is truly for teachers who want to live in this type of relationship with students. The effects of this kind of relationship need to be watched for long periods of time to see examine its development and expression, but the difference is palpable in the atmosphere of the “house.” It is difficult in a single class period to see how this is taking place, nonetheless even in a single class you can tell that there is a different kind of relationship going on. It effects the mood and feelings in the room, the body language shifts, and the energy and activity of the room feels different as well.

It is really quite beautiful to watch this little concert experience happening organically. Another student with a guitar has wondered in and begins to accompany them. A few minutes later, a small crowd of interested kids have congregated around them to celebrate their talents. Some watch in admiration, others just sit and enjoy the music. There is a very warm feeling in the room. A few more students wander in. In the background, out the window one can see a few kids just laughing and playing around. They are rocking back and forth and then launching into full laughter. The sun has almost totally set. The lights have been switched on, but some kids still hang on outside waiting for the last bits of light to fade away. The sheep continue to graze. However, with the last drips of sunlight running behind the hills, the kids admit defeat and begin to come back in. Most of the kids have retreated to their rooms or to the film. A few more kids wander into this quant concert. The teacher in charge of getting the kids to bed on time this evening blows through the room, closes up the doors and makes sure that the kids are relatively settled. With that, I pack up my belongings and make my way to my room for the weekend.

Morning Meeting

8:00 to 8:10 am

Each morning before breakfast, the whole school gathers in the meeting room to have what is called Morning Meeting. The basic idea is that everyone comes together as a group and to meditate together. Not everyone participates, but everyone who comes sits quietly and reflects if they do not meditate. The morning meeting is not considered optional, but during my stay there was frequently only 50 to 70% of the student body that would attend. Nothing is done punitively to enforce attendance at the meeting. Rather it is left to the tutors to speak with their individual tutees when they do not attend.

Attendance is not taken. Everyone comes into the meeting room, takes a seat on the chairs or on the cushions in the middle of the room and sits quietly for ten minutes.

Everyone in the school knows that as soon as the door is closed they should not enter.

Sometimes, weather permitting, morning meeting takes place in the Grove. Immediately following the morning meeting is breakfast.

Every so often tutors meet with their tutees and touch base on what is happening. During my stay at the school I attended one such meeting. One of the students in the meeting had not been attending the morning meeting on a regular basis. His tutor asked him why and he explained that he didn't enjoy the compulsory nature of it. He explained the rationale for Morning Meeting to the student in the following manner, "It is too bad if it has become only a tradition now because it used to mean something. It's about knowing yourself, to see yourself as you are without any compulsion to judge. Just to sit quietly. To see the mind as it is without controlling it or blocking it or its spontaneity, just sitting with it. If you wake up really happy, angry, or sad, you can just sit there

without judging it. And in doing that, K said, the mind can become ordered, the mind can become quiet, so without the search for control, without judging. We just watch and observe and in this way the mind can become more still, more ordered. Another reason, K said, is corporate action. It's a McDonald's or anything like that, but to sit together as a whole school. It's difficult to measure it, but it seems to bring a feeling of cooperativeness and a feeling of family. Anyway, I don't bore you with this, but I thought it's important to know why we're doing this, it is not just the daily grind. If we don't know why it is what it is. And it becomes a grind."

The students seem to take this notion seriously and debate it with him a bit. The student who has skipped it consistently still remains skeptical, but tells his tutor that he is glad that he took the time to explain it. "I just don't like that we are forced to do it. It doesn't make sense to me," he explains. His tutor says that he respects that, but that before he can form an opinion about it he has to participate in it. Before breaking up the meeting, the tutor decides to read one passage from K in the *Beginnings of Learning*, a set of dialogues that K had with teachers and students at Brockwood while he was alive. "Let me read this to you," he says, "K said it this way,

Look, sit absolutely quietly without a single movement so that your hands, your eyes, everything are completely quiet -- what happens? Somebody has read a poem and you listen to it; while you were going to the room you watch the trees, flowers, you have seen the beauty of the earth, the sky, the birds, the squirrels, you've watched everything around you. And when you've watched everything around you, you come into the room; and you don't want to look out anymore. I wonder if you follow? You're finished with looking out (because later you'll go back to it), you finish by looking very carefully at everything as you came in. Then you sit absolutely quietly without a single movement; then you are gathering quietness without any forcing. Be quiet. And when you leave, when you are teaching or when you are learning this or that, there is this quietness going on all the time.

He's talking about the quality of looking, of attention, that you're bringing to the meeting. There is already this quality because you bring this quality with you. You're 'gathering quietness without any forcing.' When you're in morning meeting, you're gathering quietness, which doesn't sound very K, you're gathering something.”

One of his tutees, Julie says, “Well yeah, if there's a moment of silence, it seems to be there to rest the day.”

Morning Meeting is an essential part of the day for many of the students and teachers at Brockwood Park and is a part of understanding the religious spirit that K discussed in his intentions for the school.

A Walk in the Grove

Inquiry Time

1st Period, Thursday Morning

9:30 to 10:15 am

As is traditional during inquiry time, the whole school gathers together in the dining room and living room area of the main house. All students and staff sit on the couches and at the tables. Attendance is called, as it always is when there's an all school event. At this meeting, as in everything I've attended this week, some students are absent because they're studying for exams. Usually inquiry time is an opportunity for open-ended exploration and discussion of a particular concept or an issue taking place at the school. Teachers take turns running this at the school. Today, Raj is sitting in a rocking chair towards the back of the sitting room. The whole room is looking towards him. There is a roughly circular form to the crowd. Speaking in a very calm and affectionate voice, but with an air of rationality, he very quietly states, “I know today is a day when

everyone is worried about exams and doing last-minute review. And some have the feeling that maybe we can use this time to study and catch up on all the studying that we didn't do, because last-minute revisions are always useful. But I think that there are also other things that are quite important. It's quite important for us to come together as a community and not forget that we're always here in a circle together. That we're always here together, living and working together." Raj continues to speak in a low, calm voice that is rather soothing to everyone. As it is still early in the morning, some are still waking up.

Raj continues his speech:

Just sitting down together is probably enough to remind us that we're also doing things together. And even during exams, it's very easy to get into a frenzy, in a turmoil about exams. To get very focused, with your mind chatting away, and yet one of the things we're saying here is that actually, actually it doesn't help to put yourself under pressure. It's very easy for us to get worked up about our exams. For us, getting ourselves worked up for the exam isn't helpful because the worry and the pressure won't even help us with the exam. So we thought today that what we would do is go for a short walk. Just around the block, not just to be outside, but once again to be in contact with everything that's around you. That's one of the things that helps to quiet the mind, its contact with nature and to walk around the block and come back to the Grove."

The room starts to buzz a bit with excitement about a walk and some time in the Grove.

Many of the students and teachers are smiling. Raj speaks up to try to hold their attention a bit longer, "So once we do our tour around the block we'll spend whatever time we have, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, and just be silent in the Grove. And just taking in the beauty of the Grove and appreciating the silence. So this is the part about being in nature, and just the value of silence. So we set off, we will go down through the portal, go around and come back to the Grove. As soon as we enter the Grove, we should be

completely silent. So you can walk around or sit down somewhere or look around you or whatever, and then I will walk around and I'll tell you at some point that it's time to go." Everybody starts to talk now as Martin and harsh discuss for a few minutes, the route that everyone will take. Everybody stands up and moves towards the door.

The beginning of the walk took place on the Brockwood Park campus where we walked past the adult study center until we found the country roads that wind around the property. As we walk, everybody enjoys this time together outdoors. You can hear laughter, stories, and silence. We follow a road that loops us back to the other side of campus near the art building and from there we walk all the way past the front entrance of the school, into the field, and finally into the Grove. The sun had been covered during our walk, as it had been for the last few days, but just as we enter the Grove it came out from behind the clouds. The sun's warmth and brilliance is comforting and everyone breathes a sigh of relief.

Passing through the gate that stands at the opening of the Grove we are met by Raj. Who models the silence and calmness that he had discussed at the beginning of inquiry time. The gate has a pulley with a large weight attached at the end of it that ensures the gate is closed each time someone enters. Raj is standing underneath the tree that guards the front gate. This tree is such that we are literally inside its branches; Raj stands there quietly whispering to everyone that walks in to quiet themselves down and to walk in silence. As we walked, people slowly assumed positions on the various benches that are stationed throughout the Grove, while others climb into trees or sit at their bases. One student sits down and puts his head on a branch, closing his eyes and like a lizard sunning itself, he takes in the sun. Raj continues to walk around to remind everyone of

the importance of silence and calmness during these moments we are spending in this beautiful Grove. There's no pressure or judgment, just Raj walking around quietly reminding everyone about the point he was making when we discussed it in the sitting room.

There is a tremendous peace in this countryside. This is especially true in the Grove. The Grove is truly full of beauty. The exotic flowers and plants are amazing, rare, and gorgeous. There are flowers of all colors purple, pink, yellow, red, blue, as well as a handkerchief tree with its beautiful leaves weeping off the branches. Behind the Grove, one can see the long fields of yellow rapeseed and blue linseed. The Grove is full of azaleas, redwoods, and flowering plants of all colors and shapes and sizes, not to mention many different varieties of trees including Redwoods, Maples, Pines, and Oaks. Many birds come and take sanctuary here in the Grove. One hears them as one walks. There are so many different bird songs in this place that it is impossible to count. I have the feeling that it might be what it would be like to be in a rain forest—with birds and insects flying by and little animals scurrying about.

Not all the students are perfectly silent during this time in the Grove, but everyone is taking in the beauty around them. Some sit on benches contemplating the fields and the trees, some close their eyes, some stare intently on a flower or a tree or bush. I found a space to sit at the foot of a redwood tree. I was simply amazed to see 60 high school age students actually making an effort to appreciate the silence and beauty of nature together as a group. They were still silly kids, with problems and judgments and the issues that we all had at their age. However, these kids had a kind of mindfulness about the sanctity of this place, the sanctity of the nature around us. I couldn't help but wonder

what it would be like if everyone had a sense of connection with nature in this way—how different our world might be right now if we did a better job fostering this sense of connection in children. The feelings we were having in this place were so pleasant that no one really wanted to leave. Raj came walking by at this time to say, "Time to go, if you so desire." He continues walking through saying this to people. Most of the students begrudgingly stood up and left because they had exams or classes to attend. On the walk over to the Grove, both teachers and students expressed to me how nice it is that an entire school, during the middle of a tumultuous exam period, would just take a break and go on a walk to appreciate the calmness and sanctity of nature.

It's true that there are many opportunities for silence and appreciation of nature at the school. This includes morning meeting, care for the earth, and a brief periods of silence before classes, even if the students are not compelled to participate. All of the students, at one time or another will have an experience of silence at Brockwood. They are not forced to ascribe to any dogma or spiritual teaching, simply they are asked to quiet themselves down and to understand themselves. With any luck, such moments of silence, and union with nature might lead some to begin to understand the "religious spirit" that K had spoken of so eloquently when he was still alive. We cannot compel students to be quiet or to engage in meditation or contemplation, but we can do it ourselves as teachers and give opportunities through which the students can participate if they so desire. In this way, students can have an opportunity for themselves to question what spirituality and the religious spirit are. In this way, at least they know, what that mode looks and feels like by being exposed to it in little doses here and there during their time at Brockwood. It is an optional experience that students have an opportunity to

explore if they choose to do so. This is like giving children the opportunity to have peak experiences.

Art, Care, and Wonder

Art Exam Class

2nd and 3rd Period, Thursday Morning

10:15 to 11:55 am

Walking on the eastern side of the Brockwood campus just before the road you come upon a modest red barn. The structure is not full of cows, hay, or horses. It's not that kind of barn; it's an "art barn," a barn where students study art. In and of itself, the place has a certain intrigue, but the nature of the classroom and the intentions of its steward were far more captivating than the novelty of the environs. But, I'm getting ahead of myself.

The barn was built in the traditional manner with large oak beams fastened by joints and dowels. The odd pitch of the roof, the gorgeous flowering bushes, the old wood construction: nothing about the place feels modern. The barn is actually two stories with students working on both levels. The upstairs is used more for quiet work and the downstairs for normal class periods.

Entering the main room, I'm immediately struck by the natural light penetrating through the many windows of the barn. One half of the room goes up all the way to the roof, the other is stopped by the balcony that forms the floor above. There is music playing on a small radio, Sarah McLachlan's "Angel." The room does not feel much like a classroom, it's more like an artist's studio in the Upper East Side of Manhattan..

Maria is the “artist in residence,” although she would brush off the term. She insists that

I don’t think of myself as an artist...Sometimes I think I’m a little girl playing teacher-teacher. [She laughs] It used to happen more of the time than it does now, but quite often I’d stand up in front of a class. I don’t like to stand up in front of a class generally, but when I have, I’ve caught myself thinking, oh my god, what am I doing? These kids are listening to me and they’re making notes about what I say, this is mad! Who am I to tell them what they should know?

Such modesty was quite characteristic of Maria and her approach in the classroom.

Maria creates a very welcoming atmosphere in the classroom that feels much more like a workshop or studio where a variety of artists come to work on their own projects than a formal class. The room is covered in art work. There is almost no place on the floor or walls that does not have a painting, collage, or photograph on it. It is almost...

Chaos...Creative chaos. Actually I love it. I do love when things are organized and it’s nice to be able to find what you’re looking for in a place where it’s meant to be, but the truth is I can’t deny that the art barn says a lot about me, just like their desks say a lot about them, or their cubbyholes do, or their...[She pauses and collects her thoughts] I’m a kind of cluttered and intense. I collect lots of stuff and I’m not so good at organizing it and keeping it tidy. I tend to let it go a bit. I love it when they work all over the show, you know, because for me that feels very much—it’s a judgment on my part—it just feels very creative. It feels like there’s stuff happening with energy being generated. I love that you go into the art barn and that there’s skeletons that hang from the ceiling and lab coats pinned on a board and a painting half finished hanging up and paper all over the floor, and paint on the tables...Really, it would be nice if I could keep it a bit more orderly, but I feel it’s very expressive of me and of what’s happening in there. It feels productive. There’s a lot happening. There’s a lot of work going on, and most of the students tend to be like that.

Much as Maria describes, the art barn is brimming with artistic work. She already mentioned the paint, the paper, the skeletons, the lab coats, and the paintings, but she neglected to speak about the rows of collages, the shelves full of pottery with fabric

laying on top, the plastered models of tea cups, tea bags, spoons, and forks. There is even a mannequin with its head twisted backwards, wearing a colorful blouse and a sign around its neck, which states "Please be GENTLE with me. I'm sensitive (and I'd like to stay that way!). Thank you." The room is truly "creative chaos." Rows of halogen lights and daylight fluorescents add even more light to the room and of varied qualities. There are wood boards with sketches and paintings taped on them, chairs strewn across the room, large pieces of cloth and felt draped over bulletin boards and room dividers, easels, lamps, desks, shelving, closets, desks, and much, much more.

The kids slowly trickle into class. There is no fixed precise beginning to class, during my visit. Some of the students are late since the walk around the property had taken a bit longer than anticipated. Once they had all arrived, it was clear that they are all exhausted from studying for and taking exams. The goal of the class today was to figure out what the composition would look like for the exams they are taking soon. The kids have to pick a theme that will work for the exam and begin to practice it so that when the day comes take the exam their ready to re-create their whole process.

"Okay so we're going to do a mind-mapping experiment today," Maria says.

"What is mind-mapping?" one of the student asks.

"Well, this is a "mind mapping" session on the exam because I was told the other day by a friend that 'brainstorming' is no longer PC, because it's a term used for epileptics in the event that they have a serious seizure. So mind-mapping is the preferred term. So you're going to do some mind-mapping" Maria laughs as she says this.

"Seriously?" the students say. "Do we really have to work today Maria?" The kids are truly broccoli with eyes. Mostly they're overloaded with information. You can

see it on their face. One young lady from New Zealand, has laid down on the table and put her hands over her eyes. Each student had their own way of demonstrating her tiredness. Another girl comes to class at this point and she walks over and starts getting to work. Then Maria, takes out a large piece of butcher paper and is writing down all the ideas that the kids can come up with about the various words the exam gave for their compositions. The teachers sit there and just “mind map” with the kids on how to make a composition. They write down all the ideas that can around the two terms that have been chosen for the exam, “erode” and “dissent.” The class is entirely female and the girls are a bit giggly and slap-happy. One of the students whispers something to Maria about how they had already chosen a different idea before, but that it did not work out. Maria laughs for a minute and says quite loudly, “That was then, this is now! Live in the moment people!” Maria is quite intent on helping the students prepare for their exam.

Maria comes from South Africa. She is fairly tall, caucasian, but with a darker complexion, with beautiful, curly, black hair that is so thick it fluffs up and defies taming. She dresses casually and comfortably. During my time here in the barn she usually wore sandals, jeans, and a blouse of some kind. While she still lived in South Africa, Maria was teaching, but as she said she just, “fell into it.” She came to abhor the conditions of teaching in South Africa. It was palpably different when she came to work and live in Brockwood Park.

The more I was here, the more I felt that this place is just a huge resource and just a huge opportunity. It’s wide open...And everything I felt, and I still feel, everything is very open, and if you have initiative, and if you have ideas and you want to do things, you can do them, and you can do them with support as well. And especially having come from growing up in South Africa and schooling there, where you just, you’re limited to doing things just because you don’t have the physical resources, or the

personal freedom or safety to be able to leave the grounds and go for a walk. Something like that is not possible in south Africa, and schooling is quite different. And I still feel as though that's the case very much. I think that's the thing I love most about what I do here is that I feel I can do anything. Any ideas that I have, you can make it possible.

At Brockwood Park, teachers are valued as autonomous professionals who have the freedom to create their own curriculum and teach in whatever way they see fit.

Maria told me that the previous teacher had a very open approach to art teaching, "which means that the students would come and she would let them do whatever they wanted to do." It was an open class for all of them. Some of the students "really liked that and some of them didn't really like that. It was a total mix." Maria was uncomfortable with the looseness of the former teacher and decided that she wanted to change the way class was conducted. For her, art had "always been a serious subject." She took it as seriously as any of her other subjects like Science, Math, or History. Maria explains,

It's not just about raw talent. It's something that you can actually learn and improve. Of course some people are naturally very gifted and they just have a total gift, but others aren't, but they can learn. So it's those I felt I really wanted to be able to encourage, because the ones that are naturally gifted are always going to do it anyways and they're always going to be great at it. That said, they can get better as well.

It was very important for Maria that the students felt that they were encouraged to take art seriously and to feel that they are learning and not simply figuring out whether or not they have an artistic gift. In her words, "I wanted to try and break down some of these notions of what it is to be good and also to make everyone feel like they could do something."

Maria focuses her students on finishing projects that she develops throughout the course of the year. The project work in the exam classes can be likened to tiles on a roof, each project overlapping with the previous projects and allowing the students to work on several different works of art at once.

It is difficult to document the kind of work that the students are doing in this class because it is so individualized that it is difficult to describe. A running transcript might be boring, but there are many features that are quite impressive. What follows is brief descriptions of her classes with excerpts from an interview I had with her.

One intention Maria has for her classroom is to show the students that they can enjoy themselves and that they can be totally absorbed in art. This also allows the students to work on self-awareness and personal maturity. In her view, art is very therapeutic. Maria thinks that “you get very involved in what you’re doing, and everything else sort of falls away, and you can put a lot of time, energy, passion, and thought into it so that can really encourage your creativity in all kinds of ways.” In her estimation art is not only good for coordination, but also encourages confidence and helps people to move beyond competition and into self-directed work.

One of the features of Maria’s class that so thoroughly impressed me was the relationships between her and her students. She takes the time to speak with each student in every class period. She guides them individually and asks them to think for themselves about the projects that she assigns them. This alone would garner attention in the overcrowded and underfunded public schools today, but the nature of the relationships in the art barn were much deeper. Reflecting on this, Maria says,

...you get to know them all so well, and through art it's the easiest. I think art is the best subject to teach because you see what they make, what they do, and it tells you something immediately about them. And you start to see patterns. It's so much about personality, the way they work, the way they clean the table, the way they clean their brushes, it tells you so much, because you get that insight, you talk to them about it, you get to know them better, it's really great in that way. I do love that. I guess it's like with all classes here, you really get to know the students well, so it just immediately means that because you know them, and you really like them or care about them, everything is just so much smoother, you know, and they give you a hard time and they drive you mad, but that is the nature of relationship. There's one student who asks me before the beginning of every lesson he comes to ask me if he has to come to art today, and it just makes me so mad, but then in some ways I can appreciate the fact that he has the audacity to ask me that because I know he feels comfortable enough with me to—and he knows it irritates the hell out of me, but I appreciate that we have the kind of relationship where he can be honest with me and say I just don't feel like it, I don't want to do anything actually, I just want to hang around.

At times, listening to the conversations, I almost forget that we were in a classroom or that they were engaged in a formal class environment. Today, for example, we were sitting in the barn and Maria was talking with Mary and Betsy:

Betsy bristles, looks at Maria and Mary, and says, "I hate my hair. It is just impossible. I can't deal with it anymore. I'm going to cut it off."

Mary, her cool eyes a bit sunken, strokes her thin, dishwater blond hair, touches Betsy's hair and says, "I'd never cut it if I had it." Her body language screams the dissatisfaction she has with her hair.

"I don't know, I like having thick hair" Maria said looking at both of her little ones, "Sometimes it drives me crazy, but your hair is beautiful." She caresses Betsy on the shoulder and looks at her with care in her eyes. Betsy perks up, as does Mary and they continue to work on their projects. "You know we could play baseball with this." Maria grabs the huge plaster replica of a spoon that Betsy has been working on and grips it in her hands. Assuming the stance of a professional baseball player, her arms held in tension, the fierce look of determination in her eyes, she keeps her eyes solidly on the imaginary ball and swings. The crowd goes wild! The students cheer her on and laugh.

As we sit students work on their artwork. Occasionally some traditional Chinese music comes on and bles out of the speakers, then it dies off at almost random moments. The girls explain that the music is meant for massages. Mary's mother uses it for her practice in Wales.

After a few rounds of chant Betsy says in a sarcastic tone, "this song reminds me of winter."

"It's because we listened to it all winter." Maria says. "That's all we had for three months [she laughs] we listened to it over and over again."

It was really touching to watch students and teachers relate this way—almost like sisters or a mother with her children. Reflecting on her relationship to her students, Maria said,

With the exam class, I think I'm very much myself, and I let them know all my insecurities and everything about me. So I don't hold the line of being a teacher, even though they treat me like I am to some extent because they keep asking me about things, but with the other classes, it's different. I do a bit of acting, not acting, but I feel like I'm the role. I'm the teacher and I'm holding the line really. Particularly with the core classes, even though I'm still my self and I still give them personal experience and I still talk to them. When I talk to them one on one outside of the class it's totally different, but when there are ten of them sitting there I tend to take on the role of being the teacher. I think of myself as the teacher somehow or try to be that what they seem to want, because they do seem to want that...[With the exam class] I'm just with them so much and dealing with them so much, they just know and see. They can see when I don't know what to do and they can see when I do. And also because they, really the whole environment is so much more, how do I say it? They're self motivated learners, they'll be there despite whether I'm there or not. Sometimes they'll tease me and say it doesn't matter if you come. You know, I guess it's because they already feel like I'm just more of a facilitator, an ideas generator, a supporter, an encourager, someone to give them guidelines rather than someone to actually teach them something...I guess it's a bit motherly. I push them. "I know you don't want to do it, I know you hate doing it, but you're going to do it, and you're going to do it well. There's no point in getting it into your head that you don't want to do it now." Yeah, I push them.

In this supportive and trusting environment, the kids are free to express themselves.

They're in the nest and they are held and encouraged. They try out their wings and take little excursions away on their own all the time knowing that they can come back when

they want. This type of relationship empowers the students to explore themselves. They are encouraged to be themselves, act like themselves, and to investigate their “self” through art. The artwork at Brockwood is praised by the community and by the examiners who come to evaluate the exams each year for being very expressive and personal. As Maria explains,

Each person’s work is so individual, and so much a part of who they are and been themselves even that in itself is sacred. And is valuable and worthwhile. People’s ideas come from their experience, come from their emotions, their thoughts, their memories. That’s very important as well, so there are no bad ideas. I try to encourage them to express themselves and you know, anything that they gain through that is worthwhile.

A quick look at the artwork that hangs around the classroom reveals this approach. Students have been working on portfolios of their work this term. One female student from New Zealand has done an entire study of windows in sketches, painting, and photographs. The photographs were all personally related or places she had visited or wished to visit. The captions from her portfolio relate to her own experiences in painting and her life. One caption was written at a 45 degree angle on one corner of the page, it reads like this,

Here I took a photo of
myself in a similar stance to
Ana Maria in Dali's Person at a Window!
I painted in oil, using the same media, and kept
in mind the textures used by Dali. The view I am
looking out towards is very special to me, although this is our
library window it is also the view from my bedroom
last year. It has been the victim of many a
daydreamer, including myself.

Maria tells me that her students have said that the way they receive the visual world has changed. They see the world in terms of art works now. They go on holiday and take photos for Maria of places they visit and people they meet because they were taken with it. As Maria said, "It's changed the way they're actually looking, just receiving the world." Their work is very personal because it is a way for them to explore themselves, which is being encouraged by the relationships they form at the school and the ethos of the community. The students are encouraged and expected to develop a language to explain what they're doing, and in learning to explain what they're doing they are "actually understanding more about why they're making the choices that they are making and why they're wanting to do things."

Another student Claire is preparing for her exam and Maria explains how it works, "They give them some words, really some ideas, and they have to choose one. So the word Claire chose was 'peel.' The idea of the painting is peeling truth." Claire smiles with satisfaction. "So she began by painting this portrait of a crying baby and then she painted this beach. So the inside will be the baby and the outside will be the beach. So she is going to paint the beach and then peel it back and underneath will be the crying baby—so paradise versus the reality. It's very deep." Claire looks at me and just smiles

widely. Her friend across the table said, “You are very deep.” “Claire responds, yeah, I am very deep, and I like it.”

The class I am attending presently is an “exam class.” The students are taking national exams where they are expected to be proficient on a host of art standards. Maria does not allow the exam to dominate her instructional practices and her classroom environment. They try to satisfy the needs of the state mandated programs, and do it independently, in the style of Brockwood Park.

You heart has to be in it if you want to do it, you know. An art exam is a difficult thing to do because you have to swallow it. You have to say, “okay I’ll do what these people want me to do, I’ll take their values as truth,” and it’s quite hard to do that, because it’s something that you’re making. It’s not like math or science or history where you are giving answers, it’s actually of you. You put yourself into it so you feel like you’re serving yourself up, your heart on a platter to be marked. That’s hard. They give you four objectives for each project and within each objective are five plans, or marks. There’s specific wording, very subtle. Confident. Accurate. You know—

After Maria grades the exams, two external examiners come and moderate the marks that she makes on student’s work. They display all the work for them. “They’ve got all our marks. They go through everything. They spend a day here and they moderate it, and they take us up or down or agree. And it breaks my heart that they all won’t get A’s because the amount of effort and enthusiasm that they put into it deserves that, and I told them that.” Maria expresses her frustration with the exam format on several occasions. If she tells her students that, “their work is ‘amazing and wonderful,’ they just take it as an opinion, whereas the marks they receive they take as fact or truth.” By taking the students to museums and having them look through examples of famous art that was popular, she educates her students to understand the limitation of the testing system.

I point out to them, for example, this is an incredibly famous work of art. This artist is very famous, made a fortune of money and is world loved. Would this pass the A-level art exam? They look at it, whatever it is, and they say, “Oh, clearly not.” Eventually they can see that value doesn’t come from a grade, but ultimately that’s what they value, you know. And they can say that they don’t care, but I think it takes a lot to just get whatever you get and say I don’t care, I put my heart and soul into it.

The pros and cons of such a system are apparent, but Maria finds ways to help the students hold the experience in perspective and not simply teach to the test. She pushes the students to take it seriously and to make it into an activity where they push themselves to perform well on the test. No doubt the examiner’s pen will deal a few crushing blows to the self-esteem of the students in this class, but all and all such experiences are important for the students. They need to learn how to deal with the evaluation systems they will be judged by in “life after Brockwood.” Whatever the case, my trip to the Art barn during this exam class is an object lesson in the importance of relationship, joy, and wonder in a classroom.

Chapter 5: Oak Grove School

The History of the Structure and Intentions of Oak Grove School

Many people during my stay expressed how different each of the Krishnamurti schools are around the world. The first schools Krishnamurti founded were in India during the 1930's. Krishnamurti did not develop a method, thereby leaving a lot of freedom for each school to define itself based on the school's understanding of his intentions. Brockwood Park was founded in 1969. During the 1970's two schools were founded in India and one in the United States in Ojai, California. The man charged with helping to found the school in Ojai was a former principal and teacher at the Rishi Valley Krishnamurti school in India. R.E. Mark Lee is now the director of the Krishnamurti Foundation of America, which is located on the same property as the Oak Grove School. Mark Lee is currently in the process of writing the history of the founding of the school and was gracious enough to allow me to interview him. The history that follows is based largely on this interview and school artifacts I gathered during my visit to Oak Grove School.

Much like for Brockwood Park, K was a very integral part of the founding of the Oak Grove School. Mark Lee explains the process of getting the school started:

We spent a whole year interviewing teachers, parents, children, setting up a small group of interested educators. What we foresaw as the structure of the school, how the intent would work in the school. It was all theoretical, all on paper, but we had all these discussions and dialogues and we set it all down because we needed something to actually base the school on to begin with, not just good intentions. Then K came each year and we had discussions with him. He even met some of the perspective teachers. He met some of the prospective students and their parents. Then when we opened on September 15, 1975, we started with two children, two teachers and no money. But the lead up to the opening was an exhaustive process where we looked at everything we could in advance as much as possible.

The ideas that the school established at the period have born fruit. The school now has a student body of 200 students from pre-k through high school and about 30-40 staff members.. Reaching this state was a tremendous challenge. Lee explains that

K said reinvent education and don't take anything for granted, which meant we looked at everything, quite literally. We took him at face value, and we did exactly that. We reinvented the school application form, the staff application form, we looked at everything to see what was the right way to start. A brand new, important educational experiment. K said the school should start and not fail. It should last for 500 years and it should be a non-institutional project, that is he saw this as not establishing something that would survive based on it being simply an institution with buildings and with traditions and a form and an order, and a history that was based on something that was static.

Krishnamurti's goal was to develop a learning community where teachers and students taught and studied together. He wanted something that resembled an institution in terms of its stability, but not something rigid and inflexible. He referred to an analogy of a rock in the middle of the river, "the river will flow around it and over it, but the rock is solid. It is anchored, it is anchored to the earth, which means you're capable of making changes." It would be capable of withstanding all the pressures of culture, tradition, and society, remain firmly rooted and solidly based, but without becomes deeply rigid, dogmatic, or ideologically driven. This required a great deal of thought and attention. Every aspect of the ecology of a school, the curriculum, schedules, expectations of faculty, expectations of students, accreditation, everything that is needed to establish a credible school had to be re-envisioned from start to finish. At the same time Krishnamurti did not want the school to be experimental. He wanted to revolutionize education but not gamble with the students' education.

One of the distinguishing features of the Oak Grove School is that K wanted to foster a close working alliance with parents. Mark Lee explains:

He said that education must be a unified environment for children between the school and the family and the home, so that the children are not divided with separate values, with separate environments so the school and the families will work together. Children won't be torn between them and that's such a typical thing in American Education and we've got multitudes of environments that children have to learn to cope with. So our resolve was not to do that.

This proved to be a formidable challenge to the integrity of the school throughout its history. By more deeply involving parents, it led to a completely different climate in Ojai as compared with a school like Brockwood where parents were relatively uninvolved. At the same time however, it was precisely this lack of involvement that Krishnamurti had hoped to address in Ojai. It is both a strength and a weakness of the school that the parents are more directly involved.

In the past and the present the Oak Grove School displays the spirit of inquiry. There is passionate involvement of parents, teaches, and administration, which creates some measure of difficulties and tensions. Mark Lee describes this spirit during his tenure as director:

It was one of constant inquiry, constant questioning, and fearlessness to explore things. There were no invested interests. On the part of the trustees or the faculty or the parents. This was...it created a wonderful spirit in the school, but it was hell in terms of keeping things together. It was like herding cats. You know, you can herd dogs, but you can't herd cats and this was very much like herding cats mentally speaking because everyone was all over the place all of the time. So the spirit of inquiry was fertile. It was invigorating, it was inspiring, but we had a lot of difficulty with practical things. Getting meals cooked, getting the beds made, getting the classrooms ready. You know, it's a classic old world dilemma that comes up. The question of freedom and inquiry and what it does with a group of people who are attempting to live together to work together and have a very, very serious intent.

The spirit of inquiry borders on irreverence at times and this can lead to a tension between freedom and order in the school. During my stay in Oak Grove there was a fair amount of upheaval due to the resignation of the principal. It ignited as a discussion among teachers and parents in the school about the nature of K's approach and the general climate at the school. The teachers would debate with one another how to implement K's intentions or question the kind of instruction going on around the school. Even students at the school debate the nature of the freedom at the school. K emphasizes that freedom of choice is not everything when it comes to freedom because we are conditioned by our society and our education to make certain choices. So real freedom is not freedom of choice, but freedom from the known—freedom from our conditioning. Nonetheless because students have more freedom they explore it in various domains. Mark Lee mentioned a story of some students and their homework:

You have this overlay of K's teachings, so students come to you and say well if homework is not freedom, I can't reconcile doing homework with the intent of the school because...and you get into a lengthy discussion about order and freedom and it's practical application and you get a multitude of interpretations of all of this. And as you start adding larger groups of parents it can become complex. Parents come with their expectations. They've all ready K, they've all explored these issues for themselves. They've had good experiences in this school, terrible experiences in that school. So they bring all that and it's a constant management of all this input. Trying to bring consensus to all of that.

The Krishnamurti schools exist in a fragile balance between consensus and inquiry.

When "herding cats" as Mark Lee expressed above, there are bound to be some scratches.

The Oak Grove School, similar to Brockwood Park, places a high premium on creating an atmosphere of "total psychological security." This was deemed to be especially important because this school was meant to work with young children. The

children who attended the Oak Grove School would learn how to think, how to listen, and how to learn. Krishnamurti spent a great deal of time investigating and inquiring into this issue with the parents, teachers, and others involved in the formation of the school. In the first ten years of its existence, from 1975-1985, there is something on the order of 250 talks and discussions with K that are recorded and catalogued in the archive in Ojai.

Mark Lee recounts the kinds of questions K would discuss with everyone:

What is the art of listening? And how does a teacher do this with children of any age? How do you help a child to look? What does it mean to look? And we're not just saying 'seeing things,' but looking in the deepest, broadest sense of being able to see, both outwardly and inwardly, with all the psychological ramifications of that. How does a child learn? Well the child is learning subjects, the child is learning from the environment, he is learning from his peers, and he's learning from his teachers, but he's not learning from his own life, from his own day-to-day living so how do you teach a child to learn by himself or herself.

Krishnamurti always focused on the principles of educating and not the particulars of curriculum. This was no exception. He was trying to encourage the whole community to consider what the education their children received should look like.

In terms of leadership style, the Oak Grove School would try to use non-hierarchical administration. The goal was on forming consensus among all parties involved. This proved difficult over the course of the schools 30 year history. The school started of in a small building on the east side of Ojai near the Pine Cottage where Krishnamurti would stay when he visited, what was called Arya Vihara, now the Krishnamurti retreat. In '77, the pavilion was built on the present day campus and was designed as a one room school house. During these times, consensus was easier to establish, but eventually it proved more and more challenging. Mark Lee explains how this challenge developed:

We, at the beginning, decided on the consensus model for decision making, and we ran it to the ends of the earth. I'm a world class expert on consensus, and we suffered greatly with this as an ideal. And we exhausted it. Such that after ten years it was virtually abandoned, it was taken up again later in the next administration, and it was used for several years then, but it was then abandoned again, that it no longer works for us. And for multitudes of reasons, but essentially what we finally decided on was an administration that had a school head and that there were groups of people who worked with the school head for all kind of planning, curriculum, in short all major decisions on the running of the school. We tried having consensus thought for quite some time, but this was of course this was when the school was very small. We started with 2, next year we had five, then fifteen, and we just kept growing like that, but we still grew very slowly in ten years. When I left at ten years we had only about 75 students so that's how very slow our growth rate was, and it was because the competition for students in this valley is fierce, so we had a very limited pool. It was not possible to continue to expect people to move here and reestablish their lives simply to have their children in the school, although many did, but not enough to make the school grow to its potential as fast as we would have liked. We also were constantly raising money so we didn't have resources to build new buildings quickly if we had been successful in the usual sense of selling the numbers.

The administration would grow “organically” with the people who came and always with an emphasis on inclusion and not hierarchy. To this day there is still a school head.

There have been seven directors over the last 32 years, with the 7th retiring during my visit. Today there are 200 students, but enrollment has increased over the last five years.

There was even some fear five years ago that the school might fold due to a lack of enrollment. There had been a similar scare at Brockwood as well in years past. The causes for this in Ojai, as Mark Lee explained, are numerous. One large contributing factor is the fact that there are nine high-caliber, private and boarding schools in the Ojai valley. This is a staggering number when you consider that the population of the valley is only 30,000 people. The beauty and calm of the area attracts many people in search of

education and relaxation. “There are more yoga studios than bars in downtown Ojai,” someone commented during my stay.

Considering his long standing observation and presence near or at the Oak Grove School I had asked Mr. Lee what had remained constant during all the years he has observed the school. He answered that,

I think the adherence to high standard, to college prep work in the upper school, to the concept of not having grades in the lower school. These structural things, and then of course intentions and the sort of psychological atmosphere which dictates the curriculum. Minimizing competition, minimizing testing, and at the same time giving children the skill of taking tests, but doing it in a way such that it is an integral part of the learning process and is not as it is in other schools, a dreaded horror. So our own version of this started from the beginning and continues to this day; these are fundamentals. Also, we’ve always adhered to state standards and accreditation standards.

As it turns out, the very first year of the school, the idea of adherence to state standards was presented to K and the board of trustees, and a decision was made to adhere to the educational standards of the state. A decision that the school has followed ever since. As Mark Lee says,

That was my intention that this school should provide the highest level of academic education for children. No compromise. From the very beginning, the board resolved to this and K was absolutely behind it. And he always spoke about this when he spoke to parents and faculty. We stand for high academic achievement. But not succumbing to the usual methods of achieving it”.

Like Brockwood, I was certainly surprised by how traditional the curriculum of the school appeared to be on the surface. They remained somewhat traditional in the sense of offering the standard liberal arts curriculum. Pedagogically some teachers at the two schools I observed did use progressive pedagogical techniques, but there was not a

consistent emphasis on inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, or experiential education. It was not at all uncommon during my observations, especially with older children in middle school and high school in Ojai, or generally speaking at Brockwood Park, to observe lectures, reading from textbooks out loud in class, and other traditional features of classroom life. In my descriptions of Oak Grove I tried to show the whole range of potential classroom experiences. This included showing some of the commonplace features of the classrooms I observed, but also some of the atypical experiences that children might experience as we will see in Katherine's classroom.

Krishnamurti's Statement of Intent for the School

Krishnamurti spoke at great length about his vision of the school with all the parties who were responsible for the school throughout his life. For the purposes of helping the reader understand the global vision of the school in Ojai, I would like to briefly examine Krishnamurti's description of the intent for the Oak Grove School. I already thoroughly examined Krishnamurti's general intentions for all of his schools in chapter 2 and 4, but it is still of some interest to explore the statement of intent that K wrote with those involved in the founding of Oak Grove School. The original "Intent" was written by Krishnamurti in 1975 when Oak Grove School was founded. It was subsequently revised by Krishnamurti and the school staff in 1984 to its present form. As it is relatively short, I quote it in its entirety for the reader below:

It is becoming more and more important in a world that is destructive and degenerating that there should be a place, an oasis, where one can learn a way of living that is whole, sane and intelligent. Education in the modern world has been concerned with the cultivation, not of intelligence, but of intellect, of memory and its skills. In this process little occurs beyond passing information from the teacher to the taught, the leader to the

follower, bringing about a superficial and mechanical way of life. In this there is little human relationship.

Surely a school is a place where one learns about the totality, the wholeness of life. Academic excellence is absolutely necessary, but a school includes much more than that. It is a place where both the teacher and the taught explore not only the outer world, the world of knowledge, but also their own thinking, their behavior. From this they begin to discover their own conditioning and how it distorts their thinking. This conditioning is the self to which such tremendous and cruel importance is given. Freedom from conditioning and its misery begins with this awareness. It is only in such freedom that true learning can take place. In this school it is the responsibility of the teacher to sustain with the student a careful exploration into the implications of conditioning and thus end it.

A school is a place where one learns the importance of knowledge and its limitations. It is a place where one learns to observe the world not from any particular point of view or conclusion. One learns to look at the whole of man's endeavor, his search for beauty, his search for truth and for a way of living without conflict. Conflict is the very essence of violence. So far education has not been concerned with this, but in this school our intent is to understand actuality and its action without any preconceived ideals, theories or belief which bring about a contradictory attitude toward existence.

The school is concerned with freedom and order. Freedom is not the expression of one's own desire, choice or self-interest. That inevitably leads to disorder. Freedom of choice is not freedom, though it may appear so; nor is order, conformity or imitation. Order can only come, with the insight that to choose is itself the denial of freedom.

In school one learns the importance of relationship which is not based on attachment and possession. It is here one can learn about the movement of thought; love and death, for all this is our life. From the ancient of times, man has sought something beyond the materialistic world, something immeasurable, something sacred. It is the intent of this school to inquire into this possibility.

This whole movement of inquiry into knowledge, into oneself, into the possibility of something beyond knowledge, brings about naturally a psychological revolution, and from this comes inevitably a totally different order in human relationship, which is society. The intelligent understanding of all this can bring about a profound change in the consciousness of mankind.

Here we find many of the persistent themes discussed in great detail in chapter 4 such as teaching the whole child, the need to address more than the intellect, the need for excellence in life and not only academics, the need to examine conditioning and thought to be truly free, psychological transformation, the understanding of freedom and order, and a focus on (without dogma, creed, or ideology) an understanding the sacred. One point that is subtly different in this statement is that “a school is a place where one learns the importance of knowledge and its limitations.” Here Krishnamurti explains that to understand the limitations of knowledge, we must place ourselves in contact with the world around us. We must observe a child, with wonder, love, and hope. K states this as looking at “the whole of man’s endeavor, his search for beauty, his search truth and for a way of living without conflict.” Through self-knowledge and real contact with the world, moving beyond information, a psychological transformation can occur that can revitalize our relationships with people and therefore society.

The Structure, Nature, and Aesthetics of Oak Grove School

The Ojai Valley

Ojai is about an hour north of Los Angeles on highway 101, near Santa Barbara. The valley is known for its regenerative qualities for those who are sick and serves as a respite for those seeking to escape the madness of city life. An entry from Krishnamurti’s journal describes the ride into Ojai from the airport:

On the drive from the airport through the vulgarity of large towns spreading out for many, many miles, with glaring lights and so much noise, then taking the freeway and going through a small tunnel, you suddenly come upon the Pacific. It was a clear day without a breath of wind but as it was early morning there was a freshness before the pollution of the monoxide gas filled the air. The sea was so calm, almost an

immense lake. And the sun was just coming over the hill, and the deep waters of the Pacific were the color of the Nile, but at the edges they were light blue, gently lapping the shores. And there were many birds and you saw in the distance a whale. [...] And you went along and turned to the right, leaving the sea behind, and after the oil wells, you drove further away from the sea, through orange groves, past a golf course, to a small village, the road winding through orange orchards, and the air was filled with the perfume of orange blossom. And all the leaves of the trees were shining. They seem to be such peace in this valley, so quiet, away from all crowds and noise and vulgarity. This country is beautiful, so vast – with deserts, snowcapped mountains, villages, great towns and still greater rivers. The land is marvelously beautiful, vast, all-inclusive. (Krishnamurti, 1987, pp. 124-125)

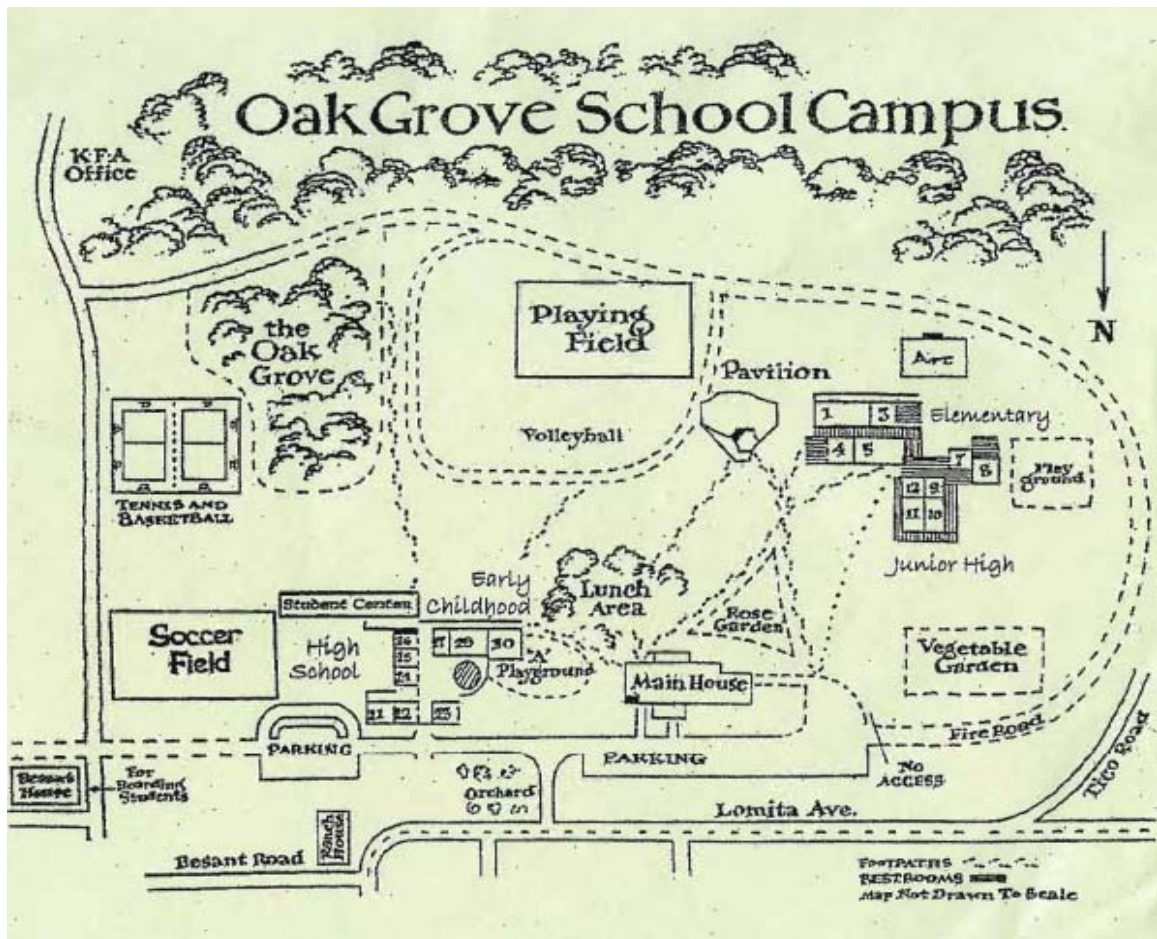
Krishnamurti had chosen to come here with his brother to try to help him regain his health. The Theosophical Society established an institute in Ojai in 1926 called Krotona, which still exists to this day. It is located on the same mountain as the Oak Grove.

It was more than Theosophy that had attracted Krishnamurti to the Ojai Valley however. It was also its staggeringly beautiful scenery. The orange groves and avocado trees dominate much of the landscape. It is similar to the flora and biome of southern France. This similarity in appearance is matched by great similitude in cultural features. People in the valley appreciate food, relaxing meals with friends and family, cultural and artistic events, wine, and natural beauty. Jobs and the “vulgarity” of our big cities come second in this place. Stores and shops close early, and after 10 o’clock at night, the area is silent. The stars are brilliant when the fog hasn’t rolled in from the ocean. In the mornings, there is frequently a thick mist that burns off as the day reveals itself. The weather is generally pleasant most of the year. The 9000 or so people who live in Ojai have little interest in leaving—it is a truly idyllic environment.

The Oak Grove School Campus

The structure of the Oak Grove school campus is extremely unique. It feels much more like a camp than a school. The campus is vast (150 acres in total) and is situated in a huge oak grove. The campus is surrounded by beautiful mountains, which are snowcapped during colder times. While Krishnamurti was still alive, he used to hold talks and discussions in the grove in February and March of each year. After the decision had been made to build a school in Ojai, the foundation thought it fitting to build the school on the property surrounding the Oak Grove. The wooden buildings or classrooms are designed to blend into the natural landscape.

The Main house is located in the center of the campus in the northern most extreme. It is where all the administrative offices are held as well as the kitchen. The pre-K and kindergarten building connects with the high school and is located on the eastern most part of the campus. It is a two-minute walk from the Main house to this building. Separating the Main house and the high school, as well as the elementary and junior schools is a vast field—part of which has a soccer field on it, the rest is open. The kids can run around, meander, walk, and play.



All told there are approximately 200 day and boarding students who attend Oak Grove School. The student to faculty ratio is small 7:1, with an average class size of 14. There are currently 37 staff members at the school. The tuition ranges from \$6,500 for 1st grade to \$15,000 for high school. Boarding at the school costs an additional \$16,500. The curriculum itself is fairly standard and designed to accommodate the state and national standards. The pedagogy, however, is based to some degree on Krishnamurti's philosophy. I hesitate to say 'entirely based' because as many as 30% of the teachers at the school have read or heard little, if any, Krishnamurti.

The Program Goals and Design at Oak Grove School

The school has a “philosophy of teaching” statement; . this is where the rubber meets the road so to speak. The school tries to distill this intention into 3 related goals:

- 1) Intellectual depth/aesthetic and environmental sensitivity
- 2) Social responsibility and emotional stability
- 3) Physical vitality and knowledge of the human body

The first goal is multifaceted, both intellectual and sensitive. The school attempts to address it through excellence in academics and experience in music, drama, and the arts, as well as ecology and outdoor education. The second goal is more related to human relationships, and social and emotional development. The school’s program attempts to address this goal through close, personal relationships: relationships between teachers and students, the school and the home, and self-understanding and self-awareness—particularly the observation of oneself and his or her conditioning. The third goal relates more to the human body and is sought through sports, games and exercise, outdoor experiences like hiking, camping, and gardening, as well as health education and a good diet. By focusing on the intellectual and sensitive development, social and emotional growth, and physical/corporeal growth, the school hopes that individual teachers and students will be able to consider the “deepest enduring questions of humanity” related to the significance and sanctity of life. Similar to Brockwood, this places an emphasis on safety and security, eliminating competition and comparison, and proximity to nature and reflection.

One of the significant differences between the program at Brockwood and the Oak Grove School is that there is very little, if any, deliberate focus on Krishnamurti and his teachings. There is no formal curriculum for presenting him to students and no student is required to study K. That said, no one is *required* to “be interested” in K at Brockwood either, however there is greater exposure. In contrast to Brockwood, the Oak Grove School places a greater emphasis on ecological awareness, and less on silence and meditation. The high school was built towards the end of K’s life in the eighties and so the culture at Oak Grove was generally focused more on younger children. The focus on studying K at Brockwood is more abstract and may not be the best means of addressing such young students in their exploration of the sacred. Moreover, Brockwood ensures that each student who wants to attend the school is doing so by choice after having considered whether or not the school feels like a good fit for them. Younger students do not have such choices about attending school so a deliberate focus on K may therefore feel more forced and authoritarian. Out of respect for individual freedom and the need for students to inquire into such issues of their own accord the Oak Grove School rarely if ever speaks about K directly.

Four Branches of the Oak Grove School

In seeking to find a way to describe the Oak Grove School to the reader, I decided to focus on four different classrooms. I am cutting across the age range of the school. I examine five teachers, Anney and Darla who teach early childhood education, Todd who teaches fourth grade, Katherine who teaches seventh grade, and Wouter who teaches many sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Each classroom description draws on

interview data, classroom observations, and classroom artifacts. For further detail on the data used in this dissertation please refer to chapter 3.

Anney and Darla

Introduction

Anney and Darla are lovely people. They are both full of smiles and good cheer, especially when they are not too busy keeping up with the kids around the grounds of the campus. Anney is tall with long black hair. She wears glasses that tint with the sun. Darla is a bit shorter than Anney with dishwater blond hair. Both teachers dress casually and comfortably in jeans or khakis with a blouse and a sweater. Anney first came to Oak Grove School sixteen years ago after moving here from L.A. with her three children, who all attended Oak Grove. She has a M.A. in early childhood education and has taught preschool since the early 1980's. She began teaching at Oak Grove in the early 90's, then became director for 8 years of a local co-op, which was a parent run, educational community that operated a community preschool. As director there, she added an infant and a toddler program and a parent education program.

It was there that she met Darla. Darla was a parent, who, Anney explains, "clearly had a gift for working with young children." When Ellen Hall became involved with Oak Grove School, she asked Anney if she would expand the early childhood education program at Oak Grove. Anney brought Darla from the co-op with her, and hired another co-op parent as the oak grove kindergarten teacher. Now Anney and Darla work with the 3 and 4 year olds and share a classroom in the school. The early childhood

program includes 70 children between the ages of 0 and 5 and is housed next to the high school.

Both Anney and Darla are well-liked by parents and staff alike and are almost always together at school except when they are teaching their separate school groups. Having worked together closely for many years (Anney served as Darla's teacher mentor), they tend to think quite similarly about educating children. During my discussions with them they would often finish each other's sentences or hold similar opinions on a wide range of issues. For this reason, I have chosen to discuss my observations of them in the same section of this chapter.

Right From the Beginning: Intentions in Anney and Darla's Classroom

The early childhood program at Oak Grove offers infant and toddler, preschool, and kindergarten classes. There are three preschool groups and two toddler groups, as well as an infant group. All of the early childhood programs also include parent education, and that Anney explains is essential:

Our feeling is that the more you involve the community, the family, and the school community, the more powerful and effective you can be. That was Krishnamurti's feeling also, that you don't just take children out of context and educate them but you invite the whole family to be integrated into that.

The simplest way to encourage this is to create "non-separation" programs that include parents with their babies and parents with their toddlers in the curriculum and pedagogy of the classes. Anney and Darla believe that parents are woefully unprepared culturally speaking by our society for parenthood. They are unprepared for "what has just happened and what is about to happen, and for changes in family life and personal life."

Young families often live far away from extended family and feel unsupported and isolated. So the infant and toddler programs are designed to attend to this. Oak Grove provides an environment that is child-centered and allows children to make safe choices within that environment. It's a safe, nurturing environment, physically and emotionally, which allows parents an opportunity to sit back, watch, listen, and reflect. In fact, parents are asked not to chat but to use this as a unique opportunity to get to know their own child and other children at a similar developmental stage of life.

Such experiences can have a strong impact on a young parent's life. It helps parents to reexamine their unquestioned beliefs about parenting from their own upbringing and societal expectations. By including the parents in the learning, they can stand back and observe others working with children and learn language and responses that are respectful to young children. Anney and Darla offer a very "transparent," open classroom that invites parents and other adults in the lives of these children to come in and share their passions, but not to intervene in the kids' time or dominate the space. Anney and Darla are particularly interested in culturally diverse experiences that parents might bring to the children that can help them become more sensitive to other cultures.

One of the major features of the program is consistency in speech and action right from the beginning of the program. They never "baby" the children. Right from the start they speak to the children as respectfully as they would speak to anyone else. Anney and Darla explain that we often view babies as somehow "dull." We diaper them, prop them up, and create technology to hold them in this position. In short, we treat them as passive recipients of these interactions rather than as active participants, thus missing

opportunities for joyful relationship-building. Anney explains that the program they offer takes another approach:

Instead we encourage families to observe and to actually be very present with them so we can see who they are. Let them show that to us rather than deciding, well, I'm really outgoing, so we're gonna go to parties a lot, but maybe you got a baby who runs to tuck their face into your shirt every time another person comes around. Seeing how they're different from either who we want them to be or need them to be and then trying to support that by being attuned in as profound a way as possible. We model all this to parents.

In addition to trying to understand the child's temperament, part of this modeling for parents includes how to support facilitating children's own conflict resolution. The teachers support such skill learning from the earliest age. For example, with toddler issues they do not encourage the parent to solve, fix, or rescue the child, but rather to be present with the kids in conflict, knowing that conflict is an inevitable part of early childhood and life. They try to be aware, close to the child, and to anticipate the problems, thereby allowing them to use those problems as learning opportunities. Anney gave the example of problems with children in sharing toys. Parents will often say, "I'm going to put this up on the shelf if you can't share it," or you often hear people saying, "Share, you have to share!" She explains,

Kids don't know what that is, it's our concept, but they do learn it through relationship, through experience. I've been playing with Kevin and it feels really good to play trucks with Kevin and now he wants the same truck I want. Is the truck more important or is my relationship with Kevin more important? There's a lot of back and forth and see saw in all that learning, but it really is our curriculum -- it's relationships between kids and between adults and children.

As Krishnamurti discussed at length, relationship is essential for learning about one's internal life. At this tender young age, children may not be able to deal with abstract concepts, but they can learn through relationship.

Another essential feature of their classroom relates to helping children understand how they feel before they have the language skills necessary to communicate feelings.

Darla contends that children have similar issues, fears, and concerns as adults. She explains that

Kids have this beautiful gift at being very transparent and not necessarily always being clear where the concern or the fear or the conflict is stemming from because the power of words is still developing and so when you don't necessarily have the vocabulary you still have the behavior.

Darla observes that children compartmentalize everything and compare things with their prior experiences to try to understand and categorize their experiences. This helps them to make sense of the world and find meaning. "This friend feels safe, this friend doesn't feel safe," or "I feel I can move in close or this feels like I need to stay away." Helping kids to articulate these emotions and feelings is essential to the learning that takes place in early childhood education. Darla shares with me that

One of the greatest things is when you do a lot of the naming of feelings and emotions and you help create sort of an emotional vocabulary for kids. When you get it wrong, I love it because you'll see a kid, you know, you'll say, "oh wow, you seem so sad" and there's big tears and frowning faces and they'll say, "I'm nooooot sad, I'm fruuuustrated."

By correcting children and also allowing them to correct misconceptions, teachers and students can learn together about emotional expression and understand themselves in the process. This process is totally organic and spontaneous, but by becoming aware of it, Anney and Darla can exploit it as a curricular and pedagogical strategy. Once again

through relationship, the teachers are able to make deep connections to their students and help them to understand themselves and to begin to articulate their experiences and what they feel. With these intentions in mind, let's turn to some vignettes that illustrate some of these ideas in classroom experiences.

A Playful Life

The kids are sitting in a circle on the small pavilion in the playground behind Anney and Darla's classroom. Anney's assistant Marla is sitting with them. The playground is covered in sand. It is made to blend in with its environs; it is brown like the trees around it. The kids are sitting around eating and Marla is totally relaxed, seated Indian style and slightly hunched, so that she can see the children at eye level. I find Anney sitting on the ground next to the slide. The playground has a magnificent view of the mountains, the oak grove, and the campus.

A man who looks and sounds like he is of German descent—with long dishwater blonde hair, and European styled eyeglasses—is standing next to an older woman with leathery skin. He notices me standing there and continues speaking to his son. He smiles a lot. He is also wearing a bag over his shoulder with a lot of Beatles patches. It is easy to see that he and his son are related because they have the same hair and facial features. The father keeps telling the son that he must leave, "I need to take your grandmother somewhere, Jonas."

Anney walks up and introduces herself to me, "Ellen mentioned you were going to come. Let me tell you a little bit about our curriculum. The school day for us is from 8:30 am until noon. Right now, as you can see, Jonas and his father are saying goodbye.

This is a big part of our curriculum at this age. Just the act of saying goodbye to parents - - dad and grandma are here with Jonas." The father plays a game of hide and seek with Jonas and the kids start screaming and become afraid. Dad seems slightly uncomfortable. Anney is concerned that he is scaring the kids and getting them riled up and mentions to Jonas's father that it might be good for him to stop and leave now. Without much convincing he agrees and tell Jonas that he's going to leave. Jonas screams, "Daddy, are you really going to leave?"

"Yes, Jonas. I have to take your grandmother somewhere."

"Well okay," Jonas says.

At this point Anney comments, "Jonas, are you going to play with Clarissa?" He shakes his head up and down fiercely and goes to play. Anney leans over and explains to me that she encourages the parents not to play with children at school, since school then becomes a place where "I play with Daddy so his good-bye will be much harder. There is kind of a struggle with parents because they tell kids what to do all the time and tend to do everything for them. We spend a lot of time in the beginning of each day with the kids and the parents, and it is our hope that the parents will just hold the children, and watch and observe them. This way we can work on the relationship between parents and kids. My assistant Marla, for example, has two kids here. So there are actually many parent teachers here because it is a natural growth process from parenting to teaching."

Another struggle in parent learning is a desire to do everything for their child when children are infants, parents need to do most things for them so it becomes a definition of competence as nurturing parents. Toddlers and preschoolers, however, need to assert their autonomy and initiative. We ask parents to sit on their hands and let

children help themselves. “I can do it all by myself!” is a powerful and essential experience at this age. As Anney explained to me, “We try to allow them to do a lot of things on their own so they have the opportunity to develop competence. It's really a big moment for them to be able to do something.”

One of the major aspects of curriculum and assessment in Anney’s classroom revolves around play at this age. Kids make sense of the world through their play, working on verbalizing what they are experiencing, acting things out and “trying it on” through play. There is a natural evolution of social play—from “parallel play” through sophisticated “cooperative play.” Children generally begin by playing with one child as they start to navigate the complexities of peer relationships. Once they are successful with one friend, they can extend that comfort and those social skills to three-somes, which are more difficult. Anney explains it this way,

As kids’ relationship skills and understanding grow, we begin to see three and four and five children sharing one idea and negotiating different viewpoints. Playing in a group is what sets school apart from home. School may be the child’s first experience of putting down a toy and finding it gone when s/he comes back or of feeling the pleasure of group play.

"In many ways these children are just coming out of the womb of the home," she tells me.

"Children at this stage notice differences a lot, too. They take in information and develop a sense of reality." Anney and Darla do a lot of anti-bias work to make sure that the kids have room for difference in their lives. Children at this age notice differences and categorize what they notice, which can result in what is known as “pre-prejudice.” The intention at Oak Grove is to work pro-actively to counteract the prevailing biases in

society. Anney explains, “We challenge prejudicial statements like ‘he has weird, slanty eyes’ or ‘indians are mean’ and exclusionary behavior like ‘no girls allowed up here!’ by creating curriculum to support broader thinking about differences.”

As Anney tells me this, two children are playing house to my left. One is cooking. The other is getting things to cook. They smile and laugh as they do this, but they are quite serious about it. “For kids to be able to create play together, they feel like they have a sense of ownership. It’s a big deal,” Anney says. During other parts of their day, they may feel as though adults make all the decisions. When two kids are playing, the goal is to empower them to make their own choices and to work together independently and harmoniously. Children are frequently given scripts by parents which come from the adult need to feel comfortable. Examples are “let the younger kid do it” or “she had it first, give that back.” This is really misguided in Anney and Darla’s opinion. Telling the kids what they should do and how they should compromise in play removes their freedom. Instead of this, Anney does not intervene, she simply narrates what is going on. This way she can help the children to move from “parallel play” to “cooperative play.” She feels her job is to stay close, keep the children and equipment safe, and make sure they each have an opportunity to express themselves. In a conflict situation, each child is given the chance to express their own perspective and to hear the perspective of the other child. The teacher supports this process, which culminates in restating their points of view and asking what the children think should happen next. Together the children come up with a solution about how to solve the problem—often a solution that seems ridiculous to adults—but feels fair to them. Making a decision together about what they want to do builds powerful relationships with each other and

with the teacher, who kept everyone safe. Resolving one's own conflicts is also a giant step in their growing feelings of independence.

As Anney tells me this, two young girls who have been playing house on one end of the playground get into a struggle with Jonas. Jonas has a lot of presence on the playground because he is strong for his age, older than many and is an only child at home. He has been playing next to other children, aware of them but not with them, partly because he doesn't know how to get into play with others. Jonas wants to shovel; he is shoveling sand and moving it to A special location he has dedicated to sand disposal on the other corner of the playground. At some point he loses his excitement for this game, which was created by the girls, and he starts putting sand in the little house where the kids are cooking, and it upsets them. Anney runs over, gets on her knees so as to be at eye-level with the kids and asks, "What's happening? Do you want to bring sand in the kitchen, Jonas?" He shakes his head, and the little girl to his left gets upset. She pouts and stomps her feet a bit. Anney looks at her and says, "Would that be okay with you, Annabelle?"

"Okay, I guess? But he can't put it anywhere, he needs to put it here." She points over to the box next door.

"Is that going to be okay with you, Jonas?"

"Yes!" He runs and starts placing the sand in the spot Annabelle designated. The kids play a little while longer. At this point, Anney gives the children A five-minute warning. Whenever she speaks to the children she squats down, and she explains to me that squatting down low is very important, "because kids feel like adults tower above them. It's another thing that makes them feel powerless or dominated." She turns to me

and explains that the five-minute warning is important for the kids who are “engrossed in work that will be interrupted by our adult agenda.” Transitions are challenging and warnings help them prepare and anticipate what is coming next. “There’s a lot of need to give kids time, because transitions have the potential to be very chaotic.”

At this young age, the curriculum and learning is fundamentally about relationship. Things arise naturally from the interactions between students and teachers. Separation from parents and attachment to teachers and peers are primary curriculum at this age. Curriculum planning includes teachers placing certain objects in the room in inviting ways to pique student inquiry and creativity. As kids explore, teachers narrate that exploration and discuss what comes up as it arises. However, while children are beginning to master things like pre-reading and pre-math skills, the major focus in the classroom stays on supporting their relationships. It stays on helping the children begin to move from external control to learning internal self-control. It stays on helping them become aware of their own perspective (“My idea”) and that of others (“Her idea”). It stays on setting consistent limits and providing clear non-punitive consequences when those limits are ignored. It stays on taking responsibility for their own self-help needs like shoes, socks, sweatshirts, lunchboxes, noses and toileting. Because they are so young, they cannot communicate their problems easily (which is of course challenging for adults, too!). So when there is a dispute, the teachers narrate what they see and hear and help the children come up with their own solutions. “This gives each child a chance to feel valued, heard, and also competent,” Anney explains.

The kids have now come back into the classroom from the playground. The layout of the classroom is simple. It is one huge room that is only subdivided by the

different activities the children can engage in. There is also a loft where kids can play. Underneath the stairs leading to the loft is a small area with lots of blocks and shelves with many games and activities. In fact, the whole room is lined with shelves of classroom materials, books, and toys. The students have cubbies where they can keep their belongings and there is a small kitchen.

Jonas and Annabelle, the same two children who conflicted on the playground, have now come inside and are sitting under the stairs in the corner of the room. As the two kids walk under the corner Annabelle points out something she was working on this morning, "Nobody take my work. This is my work." Jonas points to some bricks that he's building with made from cardboard, "That's mine, don't touch it." Remembering the mishap on the playground this morning, Jonas and Annabelle protect their work and stare at each other suspiciously.

The room is organized by stations, and the kids play and dance around all of them. Kids take turns playing different games and doing different things at the various stations. There is a marble station, a play-dough station, a block station, A reading station, and others. These stations change throughout the year depending on the season and what is happening in the community and the world. The classroom equipment is built small in scale, so that the kids feel comfortable and at home. The tables are low, the chairs small, the kitchen even has a short counter, stove, and burner for the kids to engage in real cooking with close supervision. Things are set up in the classroom so that children are free to explore what they are ready to work on and whatever they might enjoy. Except for some basic ground rules that ensure the safety and security of children and the environment, teachers don't tell children what to do.

While playing airplane, Jonas decides to build a runway in a hangar. Anney turns over a low standing table for him. The table has two stickers on it and Jonas points to them and says, "That's the gas station." The hangar is on the other side of the circular green road in the middle of the room, and made with two pieces of wood that are curved and flat on the bottom. Jonas moves his hands like an airplane zooming around the room, making airplane noises. At about the same time, Stefi takes out a bunch of baskets with syringes, fire helmets and two rubber gloves and throws them on the floor from a shelf.

Jonas stops playing with his airplanes and cars and runs over. "I want to play with this and this and this and this."

It feels like a showdown is coming. Anney and Marla clearly anticipate that something is going to happen. Anney runs over and sticks a hand in between them to prevent them from hitting each other. "I'm going to keep you safe." Anney asks the two children, "Stefi, is it okay if Jonas plays with this?"

"You can play with this if you're nice," Stefi says.

"What does nice mean to you? What do you mean by that? What you mean by nice?" Jonas asks.

Another young girl, Azalia, comes over and starts to play near Jonas' hangar. Jonas loses interest in talking with Stefi and begins to use tape to create a runway that ends at the gas station. Azalia is standing on the upside-down table. Jonas sees this and seems upset. He runs over, grabs her hair and pulls hard. She starts crying immediately. Azalia's mother, Marla, pulls her daughter close and holds her tight. Both Anney and Marla quickly intervene and remind Jonas of the rules. "There is no pulling hair or hitting, it hurts our body," Marla says in a firm but soothing voice.

"Has anyone ever pulled your hair, Jonas?"

"No," he says his eyes looking away from her.

"Good, because it really hurts. Look how upset Azalia is. It has upset her, it seems."

Jonas stares over at Azalia, who still has her head buried in her mother's chest. He seems to be considering the consequences of his impulsive action, thinking about how she felt, but he still has not figured out how to handle it. Anney says to Jonas, "Maybe in a little bit, when Azalia is less scared, you could talk about what happened."

Anney explains that interactions like this illustrate that a major part of what happens in the classroom is keeping kids safe. There are a few authoritative comments, but they are more like discussions and observations. The authority in the room is not at a psychological level, but at a functional one. The goal is for the students to begin to consider their behavior and its consequences and to begin to learn self-control. Adults ensure that no one gets hurt or does anything to harm another child. The kids continue to zoom around the room and play at different stations. The noise is constant. The kids throw things on the ground. Teachers follow behind and help keep order, anticipate problems and connect with kids.

After some time, kids are getting a little hungry and say so to Marla. She asks them if they have a snack. Anney hears this and says, "Maybe we could make hot cocoa?" The kids get really excited at this, and they all move over to the miniature-sized kitchen designed to give the kids a sense of confidence and independence in cooking.

"Who wants to have some honey?" Marla and Anney ask the children. The school does not use refined sugars at all.

"Me, me, me, me, me, me..." the kids say.

One little girl, Marty, was the first to come around, and they give her some honey.

Marla announces, "Okay, Marty's done now."

"Look," Marla says, "Pablo wants to show us what he has in his bag." Pablo cannot speak yet, but he is smiling so wide that everyone, including the kids, thinks he is just adorable.

Marty, a recent arrival to the class, is still integrating into the group. Marty tastes the honey in the hot cocoa, says she does not like it and gets a little pouty. She wanders around the room doing her own thing. After this, the kids move around and are drawn to the various stations. Whenever there are behavior issues, teachers are present to narrate what is happening and help make connections between kids and between teacher and kids.

After a little while it is getting close to the time for kids to leave. The teachers give a 5-minute warning, then announce, "It is time to clean up!" Anney leans over to me and says, "Transitions are times when kids learn to anticipate what comes next." After "Good-Bye Circle," my mom will come pick me up. The kids start to clean up the room. The carpet-sweeper job is quite popular and kids fly across the room, taking turns using the simple device. Each child wants to try it out. Kids throw away trash, wipe up the tables and throw away wrappers.

It is time to leave for the day now. The kids are called to "Good-Bye Circle" after they clean up. They meet in the middle of the room where a circular green rug marks the spot where the circle takes place. They are asked to sit at the edge of the rug, as is the daily ritual. Marla reads from a book for a few minutes. As she reads, the kids "oh" and

“ah” and ask questions. They all want to sit on Anney's lap at the same time, and they even fight a little bit about it. Anney stays calm and manages to pull the two kids struggling to be closer to her onto her lap. They start to sing the goodbye song, and despite the small aggression, Anney continues to sing, "Good—bye—Marty, Good—bye—Annabelle, it's time to say goodbye." Slowly the parents arrive and take their children away. The children embrace their teachers as they leave. It is evident that they care very much for the teachers.

Todd

Introduction

I first met Todd in the main house at Oak Grove School. The Krishnamurti communities are really like small towns. People are friendly, but are somewhat skeptical of newcomers. They are always looking out for the best interest of the teachers, students, and staff first. Todd, however, is an extremely genuine person and did not hesitate to walk up and introduce himself to me. He had read my research proposal and was “intrigued,” he said.. He looked me right in the eyes. His limpid expression said much about his character. He was clear, honest, direct, and made few assumptions about people, especially upon first meeting them. Todd is probably 50, but is in great physical shape. He has short gray hair and he always wears his reading glasses around his neck with a cord. It came to my attention during our conversation that he is currently the dean of the lower school. He offered to talk with me or help in any way that I could. We agreed that I would observe his class for a week.

Todd has lived a rich and varied life. He currently works at the school, but also runs his own plant and landscaping business. He is fluent in Spanish and had lived for some time in the Mexican desert land near the California Border. Before that, he had been in the military and was active in gymnastics. He even coached some gymnasts in his day. While he was living and working in Mexico he met his wife and was married. He eventually had a child. He and his wife work at the school. His wife runs the boarding house, “the Besant House” as it is usually called. His daughter, a senior in the high school, is an excellent student and a talented musician. The following vignette depicts one day of observation of the fourth grade. I have not included the art and music classes the kids attend due to space limitations, but I will discuss these classes in later chapters.

It's Thinking—That's the Problem

I walked into the fourth grade class just as it was beginning. Todd was beginning with board work for the day. He told me take a seat and to make myself at home. As I walked in the room the huge banner announcing the new school year caught my attention, “WELCOME TO OUR FOURTH-GRADE SUPER YEAR” and “YOU ARE ENTERING THE FOCUS ZONE.”

Todd's classroom is very organized. You can feel all of the order when you walk in the room. The desks are very neatly arranged in a square on one side of the room. On the other side he has his desk and also an area where the kids can sit in a circle and read or lounge. He posts outlines on several boards that explain different activities and the schedule of the day. This includes all the work they need to remember when they go

home, chores and activities they do in the classroom, and just in case, the “what to do when a student is done with everything on the list” list. Today’s class schedule is written on the white board that hangs behind me:

8 a.m. to 10 a.m.	Language Arts
10 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 a.m. to 11 a.m.	Art
11 a.m. to 12 p.m.	Math
12 p.m. to 12:45 p.m.	Lunch
12:45 p.m. to 1 p.m.	Limb removal
1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.	Science
2:15 to 2:30 p.m.	H. F. [home fun]
2:30 to 3:15 p.m.	Music

3:15 p.m. to Midnight	Disneyland.
5 p.m.	Leave for Hawaii

Todd explains to me that he starts “each day with three areas of thinking.” He calls this the “morning routine.” He explains, “It’s real quick and fun.” There’s the grammar of the day (DOL), the daily geography (DG), and the daily analogy (DA). Before he does that he goes through the schedule and tells the kids that there was a slight change of plan and the buddies are coming for 45 minutes. Todd is very explicit about the kinds of jobs and tasks the kids are supposed to accomplish. “Okay, before we get going with the class,” Todd starts to say, “I want to present a guest; his name is Kevin. He is here doing some research and he is going to spend some time with us today. Do you know what it feels like to be at a new school or start a new year?”

“Yeah...Hi Kevin.” The kids smile and give me a sincere hello.

After this they launch into the DOL (Daily Oral Language). On the board Todd has written, “beth has chose mary jane to be her partner on the trip to indianapolis.” The kids

have to correct all the spelling, punctuation, and grammar problems. While he's describing it, Todd's cell phone rings and all the kids start dancing. Todd silences his phone and with a straight face, says, "It's the President," he pulls up his pants and takes a deep breath, "I told him I'm too busy with you guys." They look around for eye contact as they giggle. Todd then moves to complete the DOL. Todd draws a popsicle stick randomly from a jar to call on people to be fair, "If I don't they remind me to do so."

After finishing the daily grammar. They move to the daily geography, "okay its geography time. He pulls on two different maps. There is a physical map which shows the earth in one orientation. That is, North and South America on the left and Europe and Asia on the right with the Atlantic Ocean in the middle. The second map is oriented with the Pacific Ocean in the center. Todd makes sure to point out that it's important that there's the two maps so that the kids don't get confused. Todd starts with some review of various countries throughout the world. Then he asks, "How are countries made? Were all the countries there before?" The kids discuss this amongst themselves.

"People did it?"

"Isn't it rivers and stuff? The border is like a fence."

War comes up from one child in the room, but Todd senses that they don't have much of an idea of what could be doing this and asked them if they know the word *political*, "What is political?" The kids don't seem to know the word. "So what does it mean when they take over another country? The kids haven't really understood the concept of countries. So Todd tries to bring it closer to home, "Who made the border between Mexico and America?"

"Dudes! I think?"

Todd hears this chuckles a bit says, “Dudes? Okay, what kind of dudes? Do you think it's just some people, or would you think it governments and things like that?” “

“Yeah...” The kids are clearly a little confused.

Todd doesn't belabor it any more. “Okay, I'm going to add “political” as the word of the day so you guys can understand better and we'll come back to countries so that you understand this a little better later.”

“Do you guys remember when we talked about rivers, a few days ago? What are the three main rivers?” He is looking at one young girl as he says this and then everybody raises their hands and oo's and aa's. Todd calls on Peter, “The Mississippi, um...I can't remember any others.” Tim calls on Chuck, who says the “wasn't it the Yukon?”

“Yes, good.” He points his finger at him and smiles. “Well, Peter, can you remember the third one now?”

“Uh...the Missouri,” he says very quickly.

Todd walks over to him, smiles and says, “You see, trust yourself, that's thinking! That's how you use your brain. Good.” At the beginning of the every year, Tim starts in science class with a description of the neurons in the brain. After this, he always refers to how thought is a consequence of neurons firing and encourages his students to use their brain and all their neurons. “By the way,” he says, “is it making you nervous when everybody raises their hands?”

“No,” the student whines.

“I know it makes me nervous,” Todd says.

After he says this, one young woman, Claire, who has been sitting quietly and not participating looks down sullenly at her desk. She is clearly uncomfortable and lacking in confidence. She hesitates while working on the daily analogy. Todd writes on the board, “raise is to increase as lower is to...”

Claire says “um...” She looks down at her desk and does a quick check to see if anyone is looking at her as she says, “crease.” She can't quite get “decrease,” and Todd waits patiently while she thinks about it, as does the rest of the class. Another student finally blurts it out and she repeats it. Todd says, “You were this close, trust your thinking Claire! You remember how we talked about this?”

Each day the fourth grade works on vocabulary. The word of the day is “intelligence.” The kids tried to define it, and then decide to go to the dictionary. This is an assigned job, but the student is absent today. Todd asks someone else to do it instead. They read from the dictionary, “actuality, acumen, agility, alertness.” One student raises his hand and makes a funny signal with his hand. Todd sees this, nods, and the kid goes to the bathroom. Todd has a number of different systems like this that he employs to save time and be more efficient. Todd asks them to look into the derivation of the word, “intelligence.” He feels it is important for students to work on etymology from a young age. The kids can figure it out from the dictionary since it is not their normal job, so they hand the dictionary to Todd.

He grabs the dictionary, runs his finger down the page and says, “I see, to get from “intelligence” we have to go to “intellect”” He starts to write on the board:

ME < MF < Latin < Intelligencia < Intelligence

“So from this we can see that the root meant to perceive, to gather, to pick, to choose. See also Logic.” I found it particularly ironic that the word of the day today was “intelligence” and that Todd went to “intellect” to understand the word. Krishnamurti would certainly want to redefine the word to include the integration of heart and intellect, but Todd is more concerned with the kids understanding the common usage of the term. Tom is off-task working on a poem. Todd leans over and asks if he is paying attention. He says “no” and Todd responds, “Okay, please put that away.” I want you to try to use intelligence in a sentence and he says, “I am intelligent.” The kids laugh a bit.

Todd says, “Very creative,” with a smile on his face. Another kid to his left says, “He thinks he is intelligent.” Todd says, “very good,” and Tom and the rest of the kids laugh. Todd is very strict, but very kind. He considers it a matter of principle to be honest with kids. To the casual observer this may look like criticism or occasionally sarcasm, but the relationship that Todd builds with his students ensures that they do not take it this way, as this last comment displays. Tom was laughing at himself. Todd is very honest with his students, which he feels helps them work on pushing their personal limits and challenging them to grow.

Having finished the quick activities, Todd writes the homework, and he calls it “home fun.” Todd writes “political” on the board as the “word of the day” homework. Then he writes read 45 minutes, spelling, and math. As I already pointed out, Todd runs a very ordered classroom. The kids raise their hands; he tells them what they are doing and what they will do next. Todd is also very concerned with the pace and rhythm in the classroom. There is very little downtime, and the kids right from the beginning of the day have a very detailed expectation of what would happen. He does this intentionally to

prevent any behavior issues and to ensure that the kids do not get bored and stay engaged the whole time they are in his class. Todd's classroom is arranged in such a way that the kids' desks are on one half of the room in square facing each other. Each morning Todd comes in the classroom and makes sure that all the desks are in exactly the right order, adjusting the desks by a few centimeters. When the kids leave to go to other classes, and they have moved the desks he rearranges them into a square—all the lines must be straight all the desks must be touching. At first this appeared to be slightly obsessive behavior, but over time, I realized that this attention to detail is one way that Todd ensures that the students feel the room is ordered and safe. He is a bit obsessive about it, but he is really doing this because he cares so deeply for his students.

The kids are working on a letter this morning to their pen pals in France and working on a poem. Todd gives them the option of working on either. He writes some options for the letter on the board:

- 1) start with a question like “Did you ever...?”
- 2) Give advice
- 3) Family
- 4) Ref
- 5) What is Love

As soon as he writes number five on the board, “What is love,” the kids start giggling. He looks at them with a furrowed brow and says "come on now, there are hundreds of different kinds of love. Love of parents, love of pets, not just that kind of love. The kids keep giggling and he moves on, “Do you guys want to add some ideas to this list?”

“Do we have to use these options?” a kid asks.

“No. Come on now, you guys are making me do all the work.” The kids don't have any ideas they want to contribute. A few minutes pass and the kids are having difficulty getting the poem started.

Daniel asks Todd, "I don't know what to do..." in a whiny voice. Todd doesn't immediately answer, nor is he giving into this whininess.

He says, "Okay guys, I want you to write a sentence within two minutes. Okay, are you ready. Start. Once you have it I want you to keep going." Todd walks around a square making sure the kids understand what's happening and are writing their first sentence. One student asked the question, “What don't you want us to write about?” Todd says in a loud voice for everyone to hear, “What do I want you to write about? I said that already. The only thing I don't you write about is potty mouth stuff." A minute passes and Todd reiterates, "One minute left now," the kids whine, and he says "I already said it, come on now get started." It feels like a coach, he's trying to push them. Todd walks over and sits at his desk.

“Should I skip lines or not?” Chloe asks Todd.

One student, Daniel, turns his paper in to Todd to have some validation. After this, the kids finish their line up in front of his desk for validation and a sense that they are doing it right.

“Very good," Todd says to Chloe. He looks through what they have done one-by-one, but it is taking a while. He looks at what he can, and another teacher walks in asks if she, that is Carol, can proofread.

The same kid, Daniel, who was insecure and unconfident, had asked Todd to come over to him. He looks at Todd and says, “I don't know what to do.”

Todd comforts the boy and tells him not to worry, “Just do your best, Daniel.”

The boy struggles for a minute, sees Carol walking around, and raises his hand as high as possible in desperation. Carol does not go over to him because she heard what Tim had said. Todd walks back and forth and helps the kids, and then he leans over to Claire who is also feeling extremely insecure and is now asking for help. He does what he can, but leaves her to figure it out for herself.

“Okay, guys, there are three minutes before our buddies get here,” Todd announces. “I want to read you something one of your classmates wrote so you can see one example. Bill wrote a poem entitled leaves. He didn't capitalize leaves, and I would like you to capitalize the name of your poem.” He writes it on the board:

- 1) leaves, leaves, they fall to the ground
- 2) leaves, leaves, their yellow and brown

“Is 1) a complete sentence?” He asks. The kids whisper answers under their breath lacking the determination to say it out loud.

“Yes...”

“Are we indenting?” one kid asks. Todd shakes his head yes. The kids listen attentively and try to answer the questions. Todd writes the next line on the board:

- 3) some are big and some are small

“Is 3) a complete sentence?” Todd asks. The kids sit there and look puzzled. “Okay, let's say Johnny runs up and says, ‘Some are big and summer small.’ Is that a good sentence?” Everybody in the room is laughing. Todd has a really good sense of humor, and he deliberately uses it in situations like this when kids are tense to try to get them to

loosen up. At about this point, the kids show up from the first grade. These are the fourth-grade reading buddies.

Carol leans over to me and says "this is a good class to watch, Todd's." Just then, Todd explains to me that the first-graders have fourth and fifth grade buddies. "This is something we do to foster relationships and mentorship so that they kids get to know each other." Each group from the preschool and elementary pairs up with students from the elementary and middle school. Tim explains, "This way when they come over from the elementary school, which is far away from them, they are less afraid because they see their buddies when they get to the school." The first-graders look to the fourth graders as they read the book. The first-graders brought their favorite book to share with their buddies, they smile and laugh with one another. The fourth graders have a real sense of self-confidence and kindness each other and laugh. The fourth graders deftly mentor the kids as they read. After the kids read for about 10 minutes or 15 minutes Todd says, "Su attention, por favor" with a good Spanish accent. "We're going to sing," he says. The fourth-graders begin to sing for the first-graders. They sing about the frontier. They are a bit off key, but their heart is definitely in it. The name of the song is "Gold Dust or Bust" :

Sleepy northern California
In 1848
We've got ranchos and steers
Just a few pioneers
And tons of real estate.

Sleepy northern California
In 1848
There's no smog in the air
We've got grizzly bears
And we're not yet a state.

But grab your picks and shovels, friends
It's all gonna change real soon
Gold dust or bust
Gold dust or bust
Start singing a different tune.

The first-graders clap and start to laugh as Todd starts bobbing up and down like it's a hoe-down. It's kind of a campy song. They learned the song for a musical that they did last week on the Gold Rush. Suddenly, Todd realizes that he forgot the kids were supposed to go to the garden so they stop the class abruptly. The kids say thanks to each other and put their belongings away and the fourth graders go to gardening.

Having spent the morning in the classroom, I quickly realize that Claire is not as comfortable in the classroom as the rest of the children. She always looks at Todd with a scared look on her face, like something is about to happen, even though it is evident that she trusts him. She had trouble answering the questions and doing the creative projects. When I brought it up with Todd, he explained that she had recently come to the school and that she had been in a very difficult situation at home and in her previous school. Throughout my stay in Ojai, it was quite easy to pick out the students who had not gone to the school for a long time.

I asked Todd what he tries to do for a girl like Claire in his classroom and he responded,

To be really honest, gentle support and fun. It can take some time, but you should see her now compared to the beginning of the year. You know, she came from a public school this year. She's come from a troubled family. When she first came she would just stare at us. I would sometimes ask her a question and we would have to wait for her to respond for up to five minutes. The kids would just sit there, we would all just sit and wait for her to answer. We just couldn't believe that she would not answer a simple easy question. For me, with someone like this psychological and

emotional safety is a top priority. At this age kids are really afraid to make mistakes, well really at any age, but I start here anyway. I try to get kids to become comfortable with making mistakes and teach them a lot about it. I called them ‘mistake adventures.’ I tell them that by definition, learning is about making mistakes. So I make it a top priority. I speak about it as an important thing; mistakes are important. I make the difference between what I consider to be the three top ways to deal with mistakes: Cover-up, blame, Mea culpa (I couldn’t do it...). We need to learn from it. These three things always stop us from learning from our mistakes. So I try to get them to understand that this won’t work and that we need to be okay to make mistakes. I try to use a lot of humor when they get tense about things.

In the beginning of the year, in science, he starts with the brain process and talks about it in the context of thought processes. Todd asks them a question, “I ask them to see if they have control of their brain. Are you going to sit there and do nothing. It’s almost literally that, we just sit there and do nothing. It is not good thinking. It is not that they have a problem—it’s their thinking itself that is the problem.” It’s like what Anney and Darla do with the body. They tell the kids, they say, “be careful with your body.” They do not say, do not hit that person or pull their hair. By speaking about the thoughts or the body of a person, it acknowledges that it is not the whole person that is being criticized, but rather a certain quality of thinking or way of behaving.

The Curriculum Is the Vehicle for What Life Brings

Each class in the school has a small plot in the organic vegetable garden on the eastern side of campus in between the main house and the elementary school. The area was designed to be zero-impact and environmentally sustainable. There is solar paneling for the electricity. The materials used to build are environmentally friendly and was built as a project by the students. The woman who teaches high school art is also the head of the gardening at the school. The class bed is always full of different plants and

vegetables, depending on what they wanted to grow. They haul mulch and harvest the plants to grow and bring it to the kitchen for lunches at the school.

Today the fourth graders are harvesting lettuce. They are being trained to find a way to pick the lettuce without pulling out the roots. They built their bed with a copper ring around it to protect the vegetables from snails. The kids and Todd explain to me that in addition to growing fruits and vegetables, they also take hikes and walks. During science class they hunt for bugs and try to identify different species on the hundred-and-fifty acre campus. Todd tells me that at this school they try to leave room for what life can bring. He says, “Japanese have a term for this. Wherever the learning is coming from is the ‘uki.’⁵¹ So when we do these different things up in the woods, you never really know what you’re going to find, where the learning is going come from. *A lot of times the curriculum is the vehicle for what life brings.*”

Todd and I are watching the kids pick the lettuce, wash it, and then dry it in the plastic crates that they take to the kitchen for the meals. While we are talking, Tim shares with me that, “An important thing is where the thinking is coming from. The question about the new girl, if they feel real love and honesty then things can change, although I may treat them differently. There's an expression that the same boiling water softens the carrot and hardens the egg. I often tell people that the key to teaching is real love for the students, but people rarely believe me. They tell me that it is just something I am saying and that I have some kind of technique, but for me the key is love and honesty and understanding where the thinking is coming from.” Like I had seen during the class

⁵¹ I do not know the actual spelling of this term. I searched online and in the library, but I could not find any specific references. I therefore spelled the term phonetically.

that morning, he left Daniel to do his own work because he believed it was what he needed most at that time, but the others he gave more support.

The biggest challenge for new teachers and people associated with Krishnamurti is that they struggle with authority. Todd explains it this way, “Krishnamurti dogged us a lot, so we wouldn't follow authority.” For Todd, his goal in the classroom is not to start with authority, but at the same time he cannot just ask them what they want. He looks at it like a trail, “In a way that there is a trail to get them to the meadow. It's my job to get them there and then I tries to back away.” The kids continue to wash the vegetables, which they call the “wishy-washy.” At some point during the washing and drying, Daniel, the boy who had been struggling and that Todd had left to do his own work came outside to the garden. He had finished his poem. He was happy. He walks right up to us and he just hugs Todd. He holds Todd for a few minutes and they talk about the day, much as a father and son would do. At just that moment a great blue heron shows up to our left. The kids point to it and we all stop and take a second to just observe the beautiful, giant bird as it majestically walks by.

Now, they have washed the lettuce and put into trays for drying. The kids take it over to Irmgard in the kitchen. With such a large spacious campus, the feel is much more like a camp for a home or a farm. You get this feeling in various ways like the way kids bring the food into the same kitchen “mother” who cooks for them each day and who has been cooking here for 20 or 30 years. It's really more homey than institutional. When one enters the community you have a sense that you're entering a community, that is you feel relationships. The teachers recognize you or they wonder who you are. There is nobody who walks on this campus who is just a stranger or that goes ignored.

Todd points out to me as we are standing in the garden that one major issue is that of competition and comparison. "Like in PE," he says, "the issue is competition. You can't authoritatively say no competition. How do you play without it? Do you play to win or do you just play and see what happens. The internal freedom that Krishnamurti speaks about is essential. It's not magic. It is long-term. It's realizing the efficacy of being self-directed." After this class the kids go to the art room.

The Joy of Learning

As the kids return from Art, the sound of Jazz beckons everyone into the classroom. Todd is standing ready to go. The overhead projector is already set up; the screen is down. He projects the warm-up on the board.

674.
+965

The kids each take out a mini-white board, write it down and then work on the problem. You can tell they are used to this. Todd tells they are not supposed to talk, but only hold up their boards. "Remember first accuracy, and then speed," he says. "Eraser boards please" "okay, readyyyyyyyyy, go." Todd is constantly working on the pace and rhythm of the classroom. If the pace slow down, he gets it going again; you can tell that he was a coach for a long time. Todd taught gymnastics and this is really in his teaching. For him, it is about being in the moment. Carpe diem! All of this builds mental activity, mental agility, and helps the kids to push their personal limits. It is like a fun stress, he does not want to stress them out, but he wants to push them. He does not want to coddle them.

When the kids do a good job they get a nod and a finger point, like Fonzie from happy days. He even makes the noise sometimes, "ehhhh." The majority of the kids get

the correct answer. There was one kid who didn't get the right one and Todd said, "Remember, use the math part of your brain. Whoever picked up the whiteboards, can you please collect them from everyone and put them away."

Todd uses key to math curriculum. The kids go through very ordered review of common factors in the factors of the numerator and the denominator. Todd writes $32/45$ on the board and asks for volunteers to do the factoring. Todd explains that to reduce the fraction they have to find the Greatest common factor. So they need to first find the factors of the two numbers and then match them. "So let's start," Todd says. Charles, who didn't want to leave art because he said he didn't like math actually raises his hand to start. He begins with the easy factors: 1 and 45. Then he tries to use the number 2 but he does not think it goes, so he then tries 3. Todd says "I did the first one now you guys need to do the next ones." Todd handed out a sheet with a lot of different fractions for the kids work on. Charles struggles with the problem. Todd looks at the problem and sees that the real issue isn't to do with Charles' understanding but with his confidence and he says, "You need to go to the math part of your brain. Don't go to, "I can't." Otherwise you won't get anything done. You can do this, try it." Todd leaves Charles to work for a little while and when he comes back he has changed his attitude and is now flying through it and making no mistakes.

Todd is very good about making contact with all the students. I don't think it would be possible in a class much bigger than 14, which is his current size. It was interesting to notice though during this class that there is so much more to competence than just knowing the steps. There's this whole self concept behind it. The perfectionism, the work ethic itself is essential, not just knowledge. It is important for

people to recognize this consciously and to work at it. We often speak of self-esteem in the classroom, but it is not just a sense of worth that is needed to help people overcome struggles, but also courage, determination, and a sense of purpose. One of the ways Todd encourages this is by talking about mistakes, but also helping people find joy in the learning process. Not by giving a simple reward like a gummy bear or a piece of candy, but by helping his students discover the simple joy of pushing one's own limits and persevering towards a goal that is within reach.

Before the kids finish he wants to tell them a bit more about something. He starts speaking but not everyone is paying attention, so he starts to mumble. At first I thought that this was kind of strange. He started talking and then his words just trailed off. But it turned out that there was method to his madness. When Todd mumbles, the kids are supposed to grab their chin. This way Todd can tell who's listening to him and who isn't. He stops looks over to me and explains this. And while he does it, all the kids still holding their chin turn over to me and smile. They really like this. The kids really love Todd. They clearly enjoy his class and they think he's funny. Todd moves the class to a new activity "And now [with a thick weird accent, the pitch was oscillating up and down] can you all say "now." The kids do it with huge grins on their faces. Todd is clearly using levity and humor to get the kids to lighten up and be less afraid to make mistakes, and it seems to be working. The kids don't realize it, but they are enjoying more engaging more, because it feels more fun or joyful. It is the joy of learning and the balance between discipline and affection. If kids make a mistake, neither he nor the kids make a big deal out of it. In this class everyone knows that nobody is perfect. Todd reminds this to a student who is struggling, "Remember, I don't care if you get your paper

finished, I just want you to focus on the concepts. Just listen I don't want to work on your paper into." The kids work for a while. Jessica, who had been struggle walks over and says "dad," I mean "Todd," she laughs at herself, do we go at 10 till 'cuz its 10 till right now."

"Okay, tell me when it's five till."

It's just before lunch now and the kids are about to pop Todd tries to get them to calm down, "Let me explain something, pencils down. [All the pencils go down at once] The president or governor, I don't remember, told me that I don't have to let you go before it's time," the kids roll their eyes at the corniness, "I do it because I'm nice, and I don't like it when you sit here and try to put pressure on me to go. So let's finish this up and then will go. Pick your pencils back up." The kids have been trained to do this. Todd will sometimes play with this and have the kids pick their pencils up and put them down for a minute or two over and over again. I asked him about this and he explained that he "does this to keep their minds tuned."

A minute later a spider shows up on Charlize's desk and she gets spooked. Todd stops what he is doing, gets a piece of paper, puts a spider on the piece of paper and asks a student to put it out the window. Afterwards he says, "Okay, time to go to lunch." The kids line up at the door after pushing in their chairs and putting their belongings away. Todd goes to the front of the lines and starts running, and they all fall in. As he told me this morning, there's a path that he knows he needs to get them to, then he just stepped back on the path, the kids run towards the Main house for lunch through the Oak trees in the garden on the mulched paths. Some follow Todd after he slows down, others follow their own way. As they walk, they notice a gopher hole, they all stopped and crowd

around it and study at and then they get up and they keep moving towards the Main house for lunch.

As we arrive for lunch the whole school is present and the cook is there serving food to all the kids. At lunch everyone sits together and many kids mix together from different ages. Each day there is a salad bar with fresh vegetables from the garden and then a hot cooked vegetarian meal that usually involves rice, tofu, or pasta. The food is always fresh and enjoyable. The cook is in good spirits today. It's one of the fourth-graders birthday today and everyone waiting in line for food starts to sing happy birthday to him when they hear this. Irmgard, the cook, is there making jokes. While she is serving soup the high school girls come through, she says, "remember girls, bad girls have all the fun." As she says this she laughs hysterically, her whole body shaking as she says it. Above Irmgard to the left on the wall is a big picture of Krishnamurti. Everybody passes by it as they eat lunch. I believe he would be pleased with what I saw today in Todd's class as the kids are beaming with joy and confidence after their morning.

Katherine

Introduction

Katherine is tall with long blonde hair and deep brown eyes. She often wears her hair in braids. She was the director of the school for most of her career here and spent a great deal of time speaking with Krishnamurti when he came to the school. Karen graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1970 and taught in the inner city Minneapolis public school district until 1980. While she taught there, she explained to

me, “There were 60 students, 2 teachers, and no walls—this was state of the art.” After “burning out,” as she describes it, she took a year off and traveled around the world, and ended up in India where she met Krishnamurti. To make a long story short, she ended up having a meeting with Krishnamurti that would change the course of her life and her career. She was very conflicted about leaving the inner city schools, but she wanted a change. She explains it well:

I met with K and I said I don't really know what to do because I could see that the kids that I was teaching in Minnesota really need somebody who gives a hoot. You know the parents were pretty much checked out and I felt sad for the lack of parental involvement and just kind of hitting my head against the wall, and K said, you'll hit your head against the wall a lot less if you go to Ojai. And I thought that was really a very apt statement because certainly it's not like everything is perfect here. I did end up quitting and moving and everything, but certainly you hit your head against the wall here too. The walls of whatever you create in your mind and also just walls of relationship and what not, but at least I did it less.

After traveling for a while longer, she finally settled in Ojai and began teaching at the school in 1980. She was a teacher here for seven years, and then some years after K had died, the director left and Katherine was asked to co-direct the school with three others. There were three directors until one of the three directors moved with her children to Brockwood Park. Afterwards she stayed on and co-directed. She did this for 15 years and then retired in 2001. In 2004 or 2005 she came back as a teacher. She hadn't anticipated this, but she came in as a substitute and when the teacher she was substituting for decided not to stay—she did. Since that time she has taught the seventh grade.

Katherine has a very calm, contemplative demeanor. She takes her job and her work very seriously. She doesn't make much small talk. She is a tireless worker. I never once saw her stop working hard in her classroom. She's always doing something, and she

only stops for the kids. She stops when she sees one of them needing something, "Hey darlin', what's happening?" she would often say. She sometimes takes to acting like a kid herself. She's very sweet and endearing person, who really cares for her students. She will frequently hold the girls in her arms. I suspect she would do the same for the boys if she did not know better. During my observations I witnessed more physical affection and physical contact between teachers and students than any school I have ever been in. Schools where I have worked personally, or where student teachers I have taught have worked, strongly discouraged such conduct. At this school, it is in the culture. People are very affectionate and Krishnamurti encouraged this in his talks, writings, and in the intention. Here affections is at the very least accepted, and even encouraged when appropriate. This affection has a strong humanizing effect on the place.

Who am I?: Looking and Laughing

The kids are very animated and joyful this Friday. They are all smiling and playful. It's a few minutes early and they want to go on break. They stand at the door waiting. Katherine shows up and talks to her students, "Wait a minute, you can work on your homework for math for a little while."

"We didn't have any, a few students say," this of course is not true, and Katherine knows it.

Harsh says, "Yeah we did," and the kids shush him.

The kids go on and on like this and by the end of it Katherine caves in a little bit and says, "What you should ask me is not 'Can I go out?', but will you watch us for a few minutes until the supervisor arrives." The kids repeat this message and Katherine now takes the kids outside for five minutes until the supervisor arrives. As she was saying this I reflect on the fact that during the whole day so far whenever the kids had acted out, Katherine had never yelled. She just says, "excuse me," or "may I have your attention now." She displays the same incredible patience with her students I observed throughout my stay. In fact, Katherine is a tireless observer of her students. She tries her best not to interfere with the kids; she just watches making sure nothing is giving too out of hand. Although she never stated it, I suspect that she does this to respect their freedom and to give them an opportunity to reflect on their own actions. She seems to leave them with the opportunity to be themselves, to be goofy, to push, to challenge. She listens, she's observant, and caring.

The kids come back from break; it's now 10:20 am. The kids have an hour to do research on the computers. Before she lets the kids go out she says, "We're going to

focus for a half an hour on Mavis Beacon and you can focus on DI and finish up your research. Maybe we can watch the 'Story of Stuff' video again soon." The kids seem excited by this. Then she asks "how many people want to work on Mavis Beacon?" Nine students raise their hand; three keep their hand down. Harsh says, "If the net is down, I'd like to do it, otherwise I'd rather research," there is a real discussion going on here about what is going to happen in the curriculum of the course. Katherine listens attentively, "Okay, well I can just leave you with the option to work either on Mavis Beacon or to research. It's your choice. Will everyone please agree to stay focused?"

"Yes..."

On the board Katherine spells out the homework for each day. She puts it in the same place each day on the board so that the kids know where to look. They all have homework logs. Right now they are working on a research project. Each student has to do a written report and an oral presentation for the current project. As they work on this project, the students are in charge of keeping a written log of their progress and to give Katherine regular updates. This gives the students yet another opportunity to work on personal autonomy and self-regulated learning.

The project is an inquiry-based, integrated science and math project called "Deconstruct It," or DI for short. The kids have to take an everyday object, think about how it is made, break it down into components and then identify the properties. That is, what element in the periodic table, for example, is it constituted of. They also to figure out where that natural resources used to make it are found on the earth. Katherine places a strong emphasis on ecological thinking. Whether it be math, science, literature, or social-studies. Part of this project was not only to deconstruct the objects and to identify

from where the materials that it was made had originated, but also to consider how to reconstruct or reengineer the objects they had chosen. In this way, she modeled ecological awareness and placed an emphasis on helping the kids look for concrete and reachable solutions to this difficult problems. She would say to the kids, “You are the future engineers who will find better ways to build and make these goods! You are the ones who will have to find ecologically friendly ways to build and reconstruct.” To help the kids in this process, the kids had studied the evolution of packaging from ancient Egypt to the present. They also watched films that highlight concrete examples of sustainable building and design like a zero impact university building and the reengineering that Ford engaged in to help make their plants less polluting and more energy efficient. Katherine has a real gift for creating engaging and unique curriculum. One salient aspect of Katherine’s teaching is the modeling of ecological awareness and sensitivity.

After Katherine helps the kids to figure out what they are working on they all walk over to the computer lab. To get there, the students walk on the porch that overlooks the beautiful Ojai campus. The porch is surrounded by oak trees. It feels like being in a tree house in these buildings. The trails are mulched, there is beautiful green grass, flowers, and trees of different varieties. It is a real pleasure to go to school at Oak Grove. Each time I walk outside, I feel like I am at a National Park Lodge or some kind of nature conversation exhibit. The computer lab, which is fairly small, has 14 Apple computers and is probably 10' x 5'. The computers are arranged on the two long walls.

When we walk in the kids get right to work are totally at home in self-guided study. One student, Aaron is somewhat precocious and outspoken. He tells the kids in

the classroom that he has already finished his project and turned in a draft of this paper to Katherine. Aaron has a lot of presence. He is pretty tall for his age, slightly overweight, and socially awkward, but clearly very intelligent. He is Jewish, and he is eagerly anticipating his bar mitzvah, which he hasn't stopped talking about apparently, and the kids have grown tired of it.

During my observations there is a strong dynamic between and among these boys in the classroom. That was very visible. There is also a dynamic between the girls that was hidden and unspoken.⁵²

Aaron was sitting in the middle of the room, because he'd finished his project and he was ahead in the Mavis Beacon program for learning typing skills. Arty seems discontented with this fact. He cannot believe the Aaron already finished. He said to Aaron, "You're already done?"

"Yeah," Lucas responded.

"Why did you choose a tea box?"

"I don't know why I did. I was thinking about what I wanted to do and it was sitting there right in front of me. It was easy that's why was done before all rest of you."

"No it's not," he says, squinting his eyes and looking skeptically at Aaron, "You just don't have a life, that's why you got it done."

⁵² You have Arty and Kaleb, two new students with a lot of presence, and who were very mischievous and unfocused. One could tell that they had not been at the Krishnamurti school for a long time. Meanwhile Lucas and Jasper want to be cool. They want to fit in with their friends and try to relate with Arty and Kaleb. But there is some tension between Aaron and Arty. The tension among the girls seems to be more competitive. There is one new girl in the class. Kelly, the new girl, is very quiet and seems to have made friends with June, who is also a very mildly spoken, very well behaved, and intelligent. These two girls didn't relate much with the other girls in the classroom, and you had three girls, Jossie, Katie, and Tonya who are the "cool" girls in the room. They'd begun relating with Marietta, a transfer student from Mexico. The three cool girls are inseparable and play a lot of soccer together. Christy, who has a younger sister in the fourth grade, had once been close with these three girls, but had fallen out of favor. While I observed, she rarely made any comments sometimes for an entire day.

Aaron is obviously embarrassed by this comment. He is susceptible to the many eyes that turned to look at him. Katherine was busy helping people with the computers and did not see or hear this. Aaron is looking down at the floor and is obviously upset. At this moment, Arty left the room to go to the bathroom. Aaron looks at me. I couldn't help but lean towards him and tell him that he shouldn't worry about anything and that Arty is just lashing out. Aaron looks at me and says, "I know he just doesn't understand that I am really active and that I don't want to spend my whole day on Myspace or anything like that, but I do have a life," he says this with great sincerity.

I tell him that "it sounds like you lead a productive life and that this is nothing to be ashamed of."

"Yeah, exactly."

This seems to be enough to get Aaron to stop beating himself up for feeling embarrassed. At the first available opportunity I explain the situation to Katherine.

Katherine comes over to me and hands me Aaron's paper about his "Deconstruct It" project. The fact that I am reading it seems to make Aaron happy. Aaron is speaking with June about Kelly's project, which is about a baseball. He cannot control himself though, he leans over towards me and asks, "What do you think?"

"It's good." I said, "I'm impressed by how much stuff there is in a tea box."

"I know. It's really crazy. You should see some of the other things. Like June's baseball." I had seen a half-baseball lying on the table this morning. Now I understood why it was there. Lucas was so excited about this that he ran to the classroom and took it and he showed it to me. I think he expects me to be uninterested. As he explains what it is made out of he has difficulty maintaining eye contact. Aaron eagerly shows me, with

the girls, how it was made, “There's yarn and a cord around it and everything else.” As he did this the girls hesitantly looked at me, struggling to make eye contact. Once they did, they smiled as if to say, “it's okay to open up like this with him.” With the kids, eye-contact is a big deal—eyes go up, eyes go down. Long term eye contact with these kids is only made when there is a real comfort. If there is discomfort there is quick contact, but that is quickly relinquished if there is the slightest discomfort.

There's a very subtle yet consistent trend. The kids are exploring their identity, and as they do so, they look at one another, whether it be for approval or recognition or simply understanding. They are trying different images on, different behaviors, different thoughts, different ideas, and they look at one another and see what the other thinks. And then they laugh. The laughter is multivalent; it can suggest approval or disapproval, acceptance or denial. There's a kind of tyranny in the dynamics of this classroom, but it is maintained by the images the students have of themselves. It is their self brutalization and self-criticism and their problems with facing who they are. The kids are on the roller coaster and do not feel comfortable in their skin. At the same time, you can tell that they really listen to everything that everyone says. I am just amazed at how personal eye contact is in this classroom. It somehow makes different thoughts and behaviors real for them. The kids for the most part live in their head in different ideas of what they are or who they are and they want to share that with others occasionally. The other part of this is the laughter. For example, the girl to my right is looking at her computer screen trying to understand something, “What does this mean? I think I know [laughs], but I don't like get it. [She laughs and looks around for someone's eye contact.]” When the others make eye contact, they quickly mimic her body language make eye contact and laugh in

synchrony. Their body language is speaking volumes about their identity development. The students also write their name on everything they own, their books, their notebooks, in the art they make in school.

As I continue to observe the kids listened to the songs that resound in the room when they are typing on Mavis Beacon. Kaleb attains a level in the program and a rock version of *Yankee Doodle Dandy* begins to play really loudly. He bangs his head like a punk rock star, and then laughs turning his head looking for anyone to see him. You have Arty and Kaleb, two new students with a lot of presence, and who were very mischievous and unfocused. One could tell that they had not been at the Krishnamurti school for a long time. Meanwhile Lucas and Jasper want to be cool. They want to fit in with their friends and try to relate with Arty and Kaleb. But there is some tension between Aaron and Arty. The tension among the girls seems to be more competitive. There is one new girl in the class. Kelly, the new girl, is very quiet and seems to have made friends with June, who is also a very mildly spoken, very well behaved, and intelligent. These two girls didn't relate much with the other girls in the classroom, and you had three girls, Jossie, Katie, and Tonya who are the "cool" girls in the room. They'd begun relating with Marietta, a transfer student from Mexico. The three cool girls are inseparable and play a lot of soccer together. Christy, who has a younger sister in the fourth grade, had once been close with these three girls, but had fallen out of favor. While I observed, she rarely made any comments sometimes for an entire day. Most of the kids stay focused as Katherine walks around helping them, but this brief interruption does cause some kids to look over at him. Some look at him to suggest approval, others express their astonishment that he had turned his computer volume way up, others seem

to resent this kind of disruptive behavior. There is truly a dance of eye contact and laughter, which establishes who one is, who one spends time with, and how one should be. Katherine ends class in the computer lab and they come back to discuss how the objects they have de-constructed can be re-designed or reengineered to be ecologically friendly.

The project work the students have been doing has been quite good. I already described the work on “Deconstruct It,” but another big activity is related to apprenticeships they did this year in class. The whole class went out into the community for three days and did an apprenticeship at various shops, doctors’ offices, and other areas of interest for them. This kind of activity allows them to explore their identity without an emphasis on conformity or on subject matter disciplines. They can get out into the world and explore themselves and try on different jobs that they could see themselves doing. It helps them to develop freedom. They conducted interviews with each those in charge of their apprenticeship. Katherine gives the students plenty of opportunities like this one to study what they are most interested in and to have real-world experiences that they are interested in. This helps the kids to develop their sense of identity and to think about their options in life.

Another big component of this is that the students can present the project work they do to their fellow students. The room is covered in posters and presentations the students have done. “They love to talk about themselves,” Katherine points out, “if I could have them standing at a podium 24 hours a day I would. They love it!” Katherine takes great care to ensure that the students are learning, even if they are unruly in the

classroom. She shows them that she cares about their general welfare, not just their academic learning.

The kids do seem to enjoy these projects. They love the opportunity to have independent self-guided study on projects of their choice and interest. I had the opportunity to see the presentations the kids gave of their projects. Each of them did an excellent job. It is equally fascinating to think that they do all this work without any grades of any kind. There is no pressure for them to succeed. The emphasis here is on how much learning is actually taking place and in this the students are totally responsible for their own learning.

Katherine employs a wide variety of activities in her classroom. She employs very progressive, project driven curriculum like Deconstruct-it, but she also uses more conventional pedagogical strategies when she teaches literature. The students would read great works of world literature as a whole class and discuss it. Math in the 7th grade is also taught as a stand alone subject. A teacher comes from the high school and works on the fundamentals with students. Students are responsible for homework and taking tests on specific chapters of their math text. Katherine makes sure that her students have the fundamentals they will need to be successful in high school such as reading skills, vocabulary, and math and science skills. However she doesn't stop there, she is constantly pushing her students to learn about themselves and to discover their passions. She does this through the differentiation of assignments and the opportunity to give presentations and do long-term supervised projects.

Katherine places a high premium on freedom and self-directed learning. She is not punitive with her students and only takes action if the student's behavior is disruptive

to the rest of the class or endangers their safety—much as we saw in Anney and Darla’s classroom. The following vignette depicts a very a-typical moment in Katherine’s classroom. Yet, I chose to highlight it here in this chapter because it gets at one of the major themes of this dissertation, that of freedom and order. I will return to this theme in chapter 6. I want to point out that this was the only time I observed this type of pedagogical strategy in her classroom. Katherine read this section of my dissertation and pointed out that it was “experimental” and not representative of her classroom approach on a whole. It was not a consistent trend in her instruction, but I did observe similar experiences in other classrooms both in Ojai and in Brockwood and so I go on at length because it highlights an important tension in this dissertation. In this vignette, Katherine is allowing the students to run the class themselves. In this very unconventional format, she is steadfast in her decision not to intervene in the experiment. The kids are to find out for themselves what it is like to run the class and to design something of their own.

Getting Along Without the Teacher

A poster above the blackboard on my left caught my attention. It read, "The object of teaching a child is to enable the child to get along without the teacher." What was clear to me right from the very start of this class period, having only been in the room for five minutes, is that this was a place of discovery.

"Sit down and please try to be boy girl, boy girl. I am going to try a new seating arrangement today while we play the game." Katherine is referring to the huge map sitting on the four slender tables that have been pushed together in the center of the room. It's so big the kids have to put their stuff on the floor, that is the kids that are in class

today. "People are still absent why is that?" she asks, "Well, today we are going to have one of those raise your hand type discussions. We have to do something today, in fact, we have three goals to accomplish: 1) the name of the game, 2) the goal of the game, and 3) the rules of the game. We need to figure this out before we can play and I just want to say this before I turn things over to Mr. K. and June."

Kaleb's, or Mr. K's, hand shoots up in the air, "Yesssss." Kaleb is pretending to be proud of the fact that he is going to be "teaching" today. It was clearly a way of garnering his classmates' attention.

"Okay," Katherine says, "so we still have some work to do before we can play. Let's have one person talking at a time. And let's figure out the three things."

The kids all sat around the table listening attentively. Some of them looked a little confused, but they didn't ask any questions. With many kids having been sick and in and out of class the last week or so, many kids missed different parts of this experiment. The game consists of huge map that has roadways marked out with colored paper and little paper cups full of little trinkets. These trinkets represent natural resources, and the game has something to do with a unit they are doing that is looking at resources across the globe and the global economy. At this point, Jossie, a very talented soccer player and from what I've been told a fairly typical southern California teenager, says, "I don't get this at all."

"Well people who have been absent will make more sense out of this as we begin to discuss it. Does someone want to explain it to her?" Karen says.

Aaron decides to explain, "Okay, so we've got a world map here, and we have many different countries all with different resources. We have to go around the board and collect the different resources to try to build what we want."

"What are the little white things?"

"They are the path where you can move."

The other girl who has been absent says, "There isn't enough."

Katherine steps in, "We will be able to add more. Don't worry, we're just giving Julia and Riley an overview since they have been absent, but right now look remember we'll keep adding to it. We want everybody's ideas." The complexity and the confusion of the game leads to some discord. The kids get a bit rowdy and begin talking to the neighbors. Katherine says in a very calm voice, "Excuse me guys, excuse me. Please don't have private conversations, otherwise we won't finish our goals today."

Jason asks, "Why is Kaleb facilitating?" The kids make a few jokes about this, and Kaleb shakes his head and agrees that it's strange that he's participating. Katherine doesn't engage them. She just looks at the students and observes, trying not to intervene in the discussion. She simply says, "Okay, so why are we doing this exercise?"

Much to my surprise, Julia points to the poster on the wall and begins to read it, "The object teaching a child is to enable the child to get along without the teacher."

"So, I'm here to facilitate and if you want me to help I will you have to ask for me to do so."

The kids are slightly anxious about the fact that they have to do this whole thing themselves. They rattle around in their seats. The school secretary knocks on the door and asked Katherine to step outside to discuss something. While she stands outside the

kids talk to one another nervously. The sound of the laughter, giggling, and cynical sarcastic comments of teenagers fills the room. The kids are nervous.

Kaleb and June are in charge of running the discussion. June is a very shy, timid girl. She is definitely a bit intimidated by Kaleb who has a strong presence and is very critical of the other students and himself. Seemingly by default, Kaleb takes control in the beginning of the discussion. June didn't dare interrupt him and the two students don't make much eye contact, "Okay, so what are we going to call the game?"

All the kids begin talking at once; one student in particular, Arty begins shouting out.

"I didn't call on you and that's not funny," Kaleb says trying to pretend like he's upset. It is really chaotic in the beginning. The kids are all nervous. There is a subtle emotional interplay going on in the classroom.

Jacob raises his hands and Kaleb calls him; he thinks for a second and says, "life sucks." Everybody laughs.

In almost the same moment Arty chimes in out of turn,, "I know, I got it, Tony Danza's tap dance extravaganza."

Then another kid shouts out, and Arty tries to speak without raising his hand. Katherine taps on Arty's shoulder and whispers something in his ear. He gets a bit annoyed and quite for a few seconds, "He's not raising his hand," he whines with annoyance in response. At this point the class pretty much collapsed in terms of organization.

"Can I speak with the facilitators for a second please?" Katherine pulls the two facilitators outside. Up to this point, June has said nothing and Kaleb has been screaming

at people each time they were talking out of turn and being very harsh. Even June was a bit harsh with a couple students, which after spending time in the classroom is quite out of character for her. After they walk out of room the kids laugh and say, “Uh—oh way to go Arty.” They stay outside for two minutes and Kaleb and June come back and say in a mechanical way without making eye contact, “If you keep talking without your hands raised going to have to ask you step outside.” Kaleb rolled his eyes as he said it, but June repeated it with a little more genuineness.

At this point, you can see that Kaleb is clearly uncomfortable. He expresses this by not taking the exercise seriously. He stands in the front of the classroom and continues to make jokes. He's wearing a black hoodie with the hood up over his head. He doesn't look anyone in the eyes and he is now speaking in a monotonous voice. After a couple minutes of this Katherine reminds the facilitators “what their job is” because clearly the classroom was getting out of control again. After several titles for the game have been offered they take a vote. In the end, “Tony Danza's Tap Dance Extravaganza” seems to be the most popular. But this is clearly because the kids think it's funny and absurd. Nonetheless, Katherine doesn't intervene and allows this to be the name.

June takes over the facilitation. She reminds the kids in a very timid voice that it's important now to determine what the goal of the game is going to be. The students offer different ideas for what the goal of the game should be. A few kids suggest, “We should turn around the board three times and collect all the resources.” At this point there's an idle chatter in the room. The kids enjoy discussing with their neighbor about what can happen, although no concrete ideas are being offered to the whole group and nothing is being written down. Arty has been playing with his fingers on the table. The index

finger and middle finger of his right hand are planted on the table and he moves his arms slightly left to right. He is very concentrated on this, but he manages to ask, "Do we have any money?"

Kaleb ignores him and asks Arty to "stop playing with an imaginary skateboard." As he says it, he laughs mischievously. There's something almost perverse in the way that he knows he's going to get Arty in trouble about this. Somewhere he thinks it's cool at this point if it becomes so disruptive that Katherine has to intervene. In the end, she asks Arty to stop playing with a skateboard. Arty gets touchy and says, "I'm not doing anything, I'm just moving my fingers." Katherine doesn't react she just looks at Arty and he gets the point. There is clearly some tension between Arty and Katherine.

With all the distractions, it's pretty difficult to concentrate. One girl in the corner of the classroom throws her hands up in the air and asks, "What are we talking about?" Everyone seems to be a bit lost. The only thing keep the discussion going is the three goals. The goal had already been established to some extent: the people need to turn around the board three times and collect all the resources. Everyone agrees with this and, June asks the kids to consider what the rules are to be.

Harsh, an innocent and kindhearted Indian boy had begun to look a little bored. He seems annoyed with how crazy the class had become and he raises his hand at this point and says, "One rule should be, no screaming out loud and making up certain things." He is clearly expressing his discontent with the conversation right now. The kids are doing just. The trend seems to be to slow the class down and disrupt the class by talking out of turn and speaking very loudly. This exercise of having to run the class themselves really test the limits of the kids. It is asking them to govern themselves and

stay on task and at the moment they're not doing the best job of it. Katherine seems to be sitting back and watching the kids. She could intervene, but she is just watching them like a hawk. She wants to see how they handle it. She is aware that the students are not doing their best, but she seems more interested in allowing this kind of experience to take place and seeing if the kids will learn anything about themselves in the process.

Kaleb is dominating at the board. He is not being patient or understanding. He is acting a bit like a tyrant. He and Arty are friends and they have very strongly personalities. Kaleb enjoys making strange comments, he questions everything, and refuses to take anything seriously. The class by this time has become fairly dysfunctional and Arty and Kaleb keep going back and forth disturbing the entire classroom. Julia had gotten a little bit annoyed with this, and she looked at the Kaleb and said, "okay shh..." Kaleb reacts violently, "you can't shush me," he says in a really annoyed tone.

It's clear the Kaleb's idea of facilitating is that he is in charge. He has the power. He frequently makes eye contact with Arty as he does this. He makes a strong comment and then looks at Arty. He makes jokes, like, "how about Chuck Norris' tap dance extravaganza," and he looks at Arty and laughs.

The class continues discussing the rules and voting on what they will be. Once the experiment is over, Katherine steps back in and begins to teach again, "What questions can we ask the facilitators about their role?"

The kids sit there for a minute and then Arty leans over, raises his hand and says, "What was it like answering questions or facilitating Kaleb?"

"It was a pain in the butt..." Kaleb says, everyone laughs a little bit. "I'm serious. I really am serious." For the first time in the class Kaleb said something sincere.

“So was it difficult?” Katherine asks.

"I made it difficult," Kaleb says.

"Are you saying it's your personality?" Katherine leans in on the table and asks, looking him right in the eyes.

“What?” Arty says with irreverence.

"I'm not the person I would choose to be a facilitator" Kaleb says.

"Why?"

“Because I'm stupid."

"Say something that is true, Kaleb," Katherine says refusing to accept this self-deprecation.

"I am," he laughs and looks around. Perhaps it is because Katherine was nice. Kaleb refuses Katherine's bridge and continues to make self-deprecating comments.

Katherine sits calmly and observes, then she decides to call it a day for Kaleb, "June. How was it for you?"

"It was kind of hard because it was so loud, and everyone was talking at the same time." June rolls her eyes a little bit, gets timid, and puts her head down the table after she finishes her sentence.

Somebody asked Arty, “How did you come up with the name Tony Danza’s Tap Dance Extravaganza?”

Arty responds, “It’s a band. It's hard-coooooorre."

"What do you mean by hard-core?"

“It's ear damage loud. I really like it because it's hard-core."

The kids seem a little disappointed by the fact that it's a band that's extremely loud and that's what they decided to call the game. Kaleb and Arty were new to the school this year and they had both been having problems at their old schools. Together they are a fearsome duo. I asked Katherine what she was thinking about Kaleb and Arty and their behavior. She explained to me that, "Kaleb has an "enemy" image. They're going to try to make me do something. Kaleb says to himself that an adult cannot help him at all. He is at a point where he may have to go home for a week." She looked pained as she expresses this to me. You can tell that she's really been thinking a lot about it and that she's very uncomfortable with his current behavior and his relationship to the school. Generally speaking her classroom is orderly and productive, so this disruptive behavior is very disturbing to her. With this worry on her face she said to me, "Usually the adjustment period is much less, it lasts two months generally. But here, this is really going on now for months, and sometimes I just want to say to them contribute or leave, but don't keep siphoning off the energy. It's a critical threshold at this point. They really need to make a decision, but they can just keep doing this." Katherine has really tried a lot of different strategies and worked with these two for months. She is now concerned now that

Kaleb still does the behavior or reenacts the problem even after we talked about it. He does it again, 30 minutes later. It's like he has an inability to face or understand this. It's really an image problem. If we kick these two boys out, however, it will only serve to reinforce that image, that concept of the adult being 'bad' or 'controlling.' You know, it hasn't been easy for Kaleb. He's young, so when he first came he had to establish himself within the picking order. Now the kids all saw that he was extremely intelligent because he is. And so he was able to slowly work himself into the mix and feel accepted and then cool and everything but it is a bit of a challenge for him. And so the way he deals partly with insecurities is acting up.

Katherine worries that the school may be doing him disservice now by allowing him to go on like this all the time. She also realizes that her, “flow isn't to stop continuously. I can't stop all the time and keep telling him he should stop doing this now. Or please focus or excuse me. The kids need to take their own responsibility for their actions. So I wonder if I'm doing him a disservice.” At the same time, his parents are sure that Kaleb likes it here. His parents don't know where else he would fit in. “But you know seventh-grade, this is the year for building identity with friends. In eighth grade they can get over this hump and get through it. But this year is always a bit tricky.”

Katherine always tries hard to ensure that the students are checking into this for themselves, but she cannot control all of their behavior. I asked her what she believes her difficulties with the students are coming from. In her mind,

it's that they're in charge of their own learning, and to—I hate this word empower but it's kind of one of those words that fits in here because I'm trying to make sure that they have a sense that life is open for them and there's a vast world, inner world, and outer world and you have to pay attention to both. The inner world is sometimes what you really have to listen to and sometimes you have to pay attention—knowing watching, noticing, I mean, the question, “What do you notice?” is a big one. What do you notice?—so there's a pause, like oh, well I didn't notice but now that you get me to be quiet I can notice that—fill in the blank. They notice things. So getting them to notice, getting them to identify their strengths as human beings who have certain loves in their life already. To honor those and to go, “Wow!” and to respect each other and not just to give diversity or learning differences lip service, but really feel it. They can say to themselves, “Isn't her quirkiness unique?” instead of putting her down. She's a quirky kid—so are you, you all have these characteristics. Look at your teachers, they are all teaching differently, and look at all of you, you're all doing different things. Can we genuinely respect our differences, and not try to be conforming—everyone conforming to some thing. That's a huge challenge at this level and not—it's premature, but you can plant seeds. Some of them are ready for it and others haven't a clue—it just becomes an idea and then they feel guilty when they're not respecting because their job is to also try to find their identity, and

sometimes finding it, they do nasty things to each other, and then that's a learning experience.

This class period demonstrates the value Katherine places on “getting along without the teacher.” She gave them freedom of choice, which she viewed as an opportunity for them to work self-control and autonomy. It was extremely challenging for them! It is a bit premature for such responsibility, but rather than interceding and taking control of the lesson when things weren't going smoothly she watched them and ensured that some objectives were achieved and that they remained safe. She was well aware of the fact that they were floundering, she could have easily intervened, but she did not. In the end it was not a productive lesson in the academic sense, but it did give the kids a mirror into their behavior, their egocentrism and it gave Kaleb an opportunity to become more aware of the “enemy” image he has of himself. How productive it was in helping him move through that image is questionable. The students were given freedom of choice, but of course they are all reflecting the tendencies of southern California culture and in Krishnamurti's estimation this is not freedom because they are caught in a pattern of thought. The preferences they have for the things they choose have been conditioned by their upbringing and by the culture they have grown up in so they are not able to navigate that freedom of choice without hitting a wall or getting lost. As a result there was little order during that hour of class. This leads to a question I will come back to later in this dissertation, how is one to tackle this difficult issue of freedom, if it is not a question of giving children freedom of choice?

Wouter

Introduction

Originally from Amsterdam, Wouter read Krishnamurti for the first time while traveling in India. Upon returning from India, he married an American woman, and the two of them came to live in Ojai. At that point, he learned about the Krishnamurti school and began to study K more intensively. He attended some Krishnamurti gatherings for young people in Switzerland, where he met one of the trustees for the Krishnamurti Trust of Brockwood Park. She encouraged Wouter to go to Brockwood, where he lived and worked for two years before returning to the states. Since that time, he completed a Masters thesis on K in philosophy and religion, has worked at the Center for the American West at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and is now a teacher at the Oak Grove School, as well as interim director of the high school during the time of my visit.

Wouter is tall and likes to joke about the fact that he is losing his hair. He has a contagious smile and the wrinkles next to his eyes reveal that he does so often. Wouter has a good demeanor with his students and their parents. He is one of the most well-respected teachers at the school, he is also quite popular with the students.

Wouter describes his intention in the classroom very simply:

I guess my main intention is to really be in touch with that classroom. But it's not too much a conscious intention, but to really know it, but in the sense of the all the students and to really see what is going on and to respond to everything that's going on. If two kids are talking about something, I try to respond to that and to somehow keep bringing it back to whatever the focus is for that particular classroom, whether that be watching something or discussing something or doing homework.

This is something that Wouter does rather effectively as we will see later. However he has other intentions that are important as well. He wants his students to have deep a historical knowledge—to know history. This he encourages through homework, tests, and in-class discussions. He took some flack in his first couple of years for using a college-level textbook for his classes, but he feels that the descriptions are so much better that it is worth any drawback. His third main intention is intriguing:

My third intention is probably to, that's for me where real creativity comes in, to come up with questions that really aren't easy to answer, and that I don't always or very often don't have answers to that the kids then can grab a hold of and discuss but also carry with them. For those questions to really go to, well to issues K raised ultimately. That's really the creativity, so how can I bring in K with that, you know, not throwing a book at them or forcing it on them, or even saying K's right or wrong, but just to discover the thing that is alive in those questions for human beings, it is your self.

By raising difficult questions, Wouter encourages his students to inquire into the significance of life. Concretely speaking, he always sets aside one or two days for discussion every week. He also teaches a class called “Fundamental Questions” where he can jump into such discussions more directly.

In terms of concrete structure, Wouter creates a very detailed and elaborate syllabus that he sticks to throughout his courses. He lays out all the expectations, assignments, and study guides for the exams. This allows him to “create an environment where we can go into these questions, but we're also preparing kids for university, so I really model my courses in some way on the university experience even though my expectations are very different.” Wouter adopts this approach because he believes it allows his students to take responsibility for their own learning. It also helps parents to understand his expectations. With this type of structure in place, Wouter feels more free

to explore different questions in an open-ended way and still get the subject-matter that needs to be covered done. It allows him more freedom and flexibility as a teacher.

Laughing about Depression

Wouter is hunched over with his grading book in hand checking to see if his students have complete their homework. He walks around to each student having a small informal conversation with him about the homework; if they've done it he gives them a check mark.

“How come you didn't give me a smiley face the other day?”

“Oooo, did he give you the frowny face. That's when you know you are in trouble.”

Wouter doesn't respond; he just smiles and continues to check on the homework. There are seven students in the class today. The desks are arranged in a circle around the small classroom. The kids slowly trickle in to class. There is no serious consequence for being late. The kids just kind of flow in and out of the class near the time that it begins. No one flinches, so it appears to be commonplace.

The kids joke with each other and with Wouter. Everybody seems to enjoy being together; the class does not feel too cliquey. Wouter mentions that he's going to be gone for a couple days and that they are going to watch some Frank Capra films in his absence. They are reading in class about the era depicted in Capra's films, so it is a good way to study the time period.

Wouter asks, “Has anybody had seen any films by Frank Capra?”

Six of the seven students raise their hands. Todd's daughter Jill and Claire discuss which one's they've seen.

Jill says, "I just saw *It's a Wonderful Life* the other day," and smiles.

Claire looks at her with a sense of astonishment and begins to make fun of her, "Wow, you had some time on your hands I guess? Did you like it?"

"Yeah I did," Jill sits and broods for a little bit about the fact that Claire made fun of her.

A few minutes later Claire made a silly comment and Jill took advantage of it to tell her that, "She can't be serious!" This is all in good fun, but it's very noticeable in such a small class.

Wouter sees this and laughs. He looks over at Jill and says, "An excellent example of revenge, she felt comfortable and then you pounced on her when she wasn't expecting it." Jill knows she has been called out. She grows quiet.

Wouter continues making his rounds for homework. Gabriel, whose father is the lead singer of the Mexican band *Mana*, did not manage to do his homework. He was sitting in class trying to finish it. Gabriel is a boarding student at the Besant House down the road and he has been sick this week. He said to Wouter, "Nobody told me that there was this homework assignment. I got the other stuff but not this."

Wouter looks at him and smiles ironically, "I feel for you. My heart." He pauses for two seconds, "No, not really." All the kids laugh.

After checking on homework, Wouter begins the class, "Everyone did so well in homework, that we can start now." A number of students had incomplete assignments. One of them, Sam says in a loud sarcastic voice, "There's no need to compare Wouter."

Wouter looks up, "Well done. Well done."

Sam turns to his friend and gives him a high five. Both students have long dishwater blond hair and play in a band together. At the end of the hall is a recording room and a practice area where you can hear the students play each day. Many of the high-school students at Oak Grove are excellent musicians. The school is known around the community for being excellent for aspiring artists and musicians.

Wouter picks up his syllabus off his desk and says, "Okay, well let's look what is ahead of us." The class is so small that there is a sense of closeness in these intimate classrooms. It gives it an air of informality. As Wouter reads the syllabus, he sees that there's a midterm next week. He stops for a minute, "You know what's coming up next week, right?"

Some of the kids have turned to their own syllabi and Jill yells, "Midterm!"

The kids all get very quiet. Wouter looks around the room and says, "Okay you're quiet; that sucks." The kids are laughing.

"Can we do the midterm the week after, Wouter?"

"Can it be open book?"

The kids try to haggle and negotiate the midterm. He looks at them and says, "Okay, I'll think about it. Okay, watch me," he looks up in the air and pauses, "Okay...no!"

The kids get a bit testy, but only because they want to tease Wouter, "You always say you'll think about it, but you never do."

"I don't take anything you say serious," Jill says.

He looks over at me as I take notes, "Will you please strike that from the record. Did you get that? Scratch that?" The kids all laugh and continue to negotiate.

Wouter shifts the class to be more focused. The tone in the room becomes more serious and the kids crack open their books. "The depression. Okay, let's get depressed!" he looks over at me again, "Scratch that please," he smiles.

The kids have read the chapter and Wouter begins to quiz them about what they read, "The success ethic is what?"

"Well it's the American dream. I don't know if it's true though?" Jill says to the rest of the class.

Claire looks at her and says, "Yeah, I think it's true, but it's complex. There are other things that control us. But there is some stuff we can do."

The kids discuss how the government can get in the way of the success ethic. Jill gets a bit passionate about it and the kids start to chant, "Jill should be president. Jill for President!"

"I can't be. I was born in Mexico, Mexico City to be exact."

"Me neither," Wouter says. "So does the American dream exist?"

Stewart chimes in, "Yeah, but it's way more now. It's not the white picket fence anymore; the American dream is to be rich and famous."

"That's why I came to Oak Grove School," Wouter jokes, "to be rich and famous. You have a dream, Harry?"

"I have a dream!"

"What about your band? Do you want to be rich and famous with your band?"

"No, that's not why I do it, I do it because I enjoy it, not be rich."

Stewart thinks about the American Dream and says, "It's not that we're all equal, but that we can say that our abilities can help us to move us to the top. There's so much corruption, however, that it's hard."

Wouter comments that the success ethic was really questioned and debated during the Great Depression, "People start to doubt because there was so little money. How about today do people doubt it today?"

All the students say yes.

"Why?" Wouter asks, "Are they not happy with their possibilities?" The kids don't raise hands but they know how to share space with one another; nobody dominates the conversation.

"It's different depending on your age, and it's different for different racial groups," Stewart says.

"Well, for some immigrant groups is not the same for them. They don't want to be rich and famous," Gabriel says, "The recent immigrants they don't necessarily want to have more, and more than that, they want to have more for the children. They don't want to be rich and famous."

Claire adds to the conversation. "Everyone wants more in general. Not necessarily the most."

Stewart with a big grin on his face looks at Wouter and says, "And we know it started in the depression now."

Wouter looks at me and says, "Make sure not to scratch that, Kevin."

Meanwhile, the kids continue to point out the hypocrisy in society. People really want instant gratification, they say. Jeff says, "It's a way to brag about it." Wouter says "keepin' up with the Joneses, eh?"

Jake responds, "Yeah. The American dream is about wanting to have the coolest stuff. It's a status thing it's like the documentary, um, *The Story of Stuff*. They point out the main points about status and how consumerism leads to the sort of thing."

"Wow, that's depressing," Wouter says; "back to depression I guess."

Jill gets excited and says, "Most people our age are caught in it. Most people don't worry about working for the family. They just would like to have stuff."

"Are you doomed to be in that cycle?" Wouter asks.

"We are," Jake says, "but if you realize that you're part of it though it's possible not to be caught in." Jake is very serious, he looks very skeptically at people and doesn't smile much.

At this point the room is buzzing the kids all want to talk is really a lot of excitement about this topic. You can tell it the kids really found the connection between the Great Depression and their own lives today and are speaking from their own experiences. It is less focused on the book and more to their own personal narratives.

Wouter asks "how many of you have an iPod?" Everybody raises their hands.

Jill says, "All the time there are ads around us. If you buy this you'll have a better life."

Jake agrees with her. He adds, "'You can smell like these people and women will want you. Where did that come from? It seems like there's a bunch of things now, commercials, that say if you smell good you'll be happier or have a better life. Was it the

Axe commercials that started it all? Remember, the guy would spray it and like thousands of women would swarm all over them."

"We all have an image of like movie stars, everybody wants what they have because they seem happy. But it's not true," Stewart says.

Chloe agrees with him, "It's crazy when you think, when you compare our lives to the kids in the films. We see it and all the boring parts of life have been cut out, like *O.C.*"

"Yeah," Stewart says, "People then compare their lives to them and feel that their life isn't adventurous enough."

Jill is nodding her head and agrees with him, "It's propaganda and selling lifestyles. Even healthy or environmental, all that, it's still a product to sell."

Jeff agrees, "Yeah, I want to be the Ojai hippie or live the Santa Monica lifestyle. The Santa Barbara person."

Stewart says that, "After *O.C.*, there was a study that showed that more girls applied to Brown after she applied."

Wouter says, "Would you do a reality TV show with us here?"

The kids laugh and say, "No one would be interested to live our lives because they are boring compared to the shows. They'd have to cut out everything that we do," the kids are bubbling now.

Everybody's engaged every talking almost simultaneously, but they somehow leave enough space for each other. Stewart says, "I find it more interesting that all of this started in the 20s."

Wouter says, "Well, it was there before, but—"

Stewart finishes the sentence, "It wasn't as hard-core before the 20s. The mass marketing really began then."

Wouter says. "It's true"

"Even charities are trendy, like Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt," Stewart says.

At this point, Wouter changes the tone of conversation, bringing it back to the text, "what was it like in the 20s?"

Jeff is reading the book and answers the question by reading straight from the book. Everybody laughs at him.

"Great answer Jeff!" Wouter says ironically.

The kids are learning from the book, but they take it critically, and are conscious not to swallow it.

Wouter asks, "Are artists part of culture or outside of it?"

Jeff responds, "If it's something like O.C. or whatever. They are outside as we looked outside to it, whereas when we look inside of things, like our own culture, that's more inside."

At this point, Wouter begins to lecture on the Great Depression for a few minutes, "There are two strands of art during the Depression..." During the lecture, the kids lean back in their chairs. Kids sometimes talk out of turn, but overall, there is order in the class. Wouter continues discussing the Depression with the students and explains how what they're bringing up helps us understand why people, during the Depression, needed this type of "escapist romance." "Today we continue the sort of thing or so it seems."

There's a lot of humor in the classroom, a lot of energy, and lively discussions. Some are quiet and others are outspoken. Wouter controls the discussion to some extent,

but he leaves his students space and respects them. With this, the class ends. Wouter reminds the kids that they have homework and dismisses them. He asks those in the “Honor Track” to stay behind. It turns out that the school is tracked by level, but the kids stay together in the same classes, though they have different requirements and expectations. Wouter asks them to stay because he wants to find a time to meet.

Asking Fundamental Questions About Fear

Wouter’s class is arranged in a perfect circle. Wouter sits in a chair at the front of the room and slouches; his feet are stretched out and in a relaxed position. He has a sly grin on his face. Wouter is very tall. You wouldn't know it because he sometimes hunches over when you talk to him; nonetheless as he sits slouching in his chair you can see how tall is. Despite his physical size, one has the sensation that he is small. That is, his presence is not foreboding or imposing. He's quite mellow.

He opens the class, “I want to talk about only this today. I want us to talk about fear. You remember when we talked last year about that Krishnamurti book? It can be one of those kind of discussions. Are you afraid of things, Stewart?”

“Obviously, yeah!” He laughs a little bit and says, “Well, actually it’s you Wouter. I'm afraid of you.” The kids laugh at him.

“No, but seriously, I am afraid of some things.” Stewart says.

“Like what?” Wouter asks.

“I'm afraid of SATs, I don't know, not being successful in life.”

Wouter chuckles and says, “As soon as I accepted a teaching position here, I overcame that fear of being successful in life. How about some others?”

A couple other kids talk about "SATs and all that."

Wouter prods them, “Is that really all you’re afraid of, SATs?”

A girl on the left side of the room with long blonde hair begins to talk about her “fear of choking.” Everyone sits quietly and just listens to one another.

“I’m not afraid of this constantly, but once I got into college, what is it going to bring me in life?” Jill says.

The student to her left Adam says, “I’m afraid of the dark, sitting by myself, and that crazy black dude on Main street.”

“Oh, I know,” another student says.

The same girl who spoke about choking says, “I’m afraid of swimming in the deep ocean. Also, the SATs.”

Another girl, Taylor says, “Spiders, dying a painful death. The SATs and all that stuff.”

“Why?” Wouter asks.

Jeff responds, “Well, it comes back to like failure in life. Seriously, it’s about failure. I also have fear of death or rather of being sick and dying.”

Wouter asks, “What about you Lisa?”

“I don’t like swimming in the water where I can see the bottom. Okay, when I sleep, and I’m alone I have it back and I worry about someone coming up and walking around and killing.”

“What about you Harry, have any fears?”

“A lot of little things...”

“Like what?”

“I don't like riding my bike because I'm afraid someone will stick something in my spokes.”

Lisa adds, “Okay, I'm afraid of birds. Everybody knows it.” Everybody is laughing at this comment as she says it.

Wouter tries to change the course of a conversation. “Okay, we talked about a lot of specific fears for what is it, apart of from the self, of ourselves. In some ways, it's a part of me, or it holds us back, but it can also drive you in life.”

Jill, Todd's daughter, responds: “I think people never learn from their mistakes. Some people are afraid of failing: Will, he can't deal with little failures. So you worry about one thing. You compete with people because you have a fear of them doing better than you.”

Stewart hears this and asks her, “In a really deep way, do you ever say I have to do something else?”

“Yeah, definitely!”

Wouter asks them, “Where does that come from?”

Stewart responds, “It doesn't really feel like fear, it's like a stress, it's a kind of worry.”

“Yeah, it comes from something it's a little different than emotion.” Jill says.

Harry adds, “Fear is in short-term, but really the anxiety due to it is long-term fear. You get anxious, but it's not fear itself.”

Stewart tries interrupt twice, and finally gets a chance to speak, “If the spiders are crawling on your face, it's different than the long-term anxiety.”

Claire raises a more personal point, “I thought I wasn't good enough musician because I compared myself to others that are really good. Or who have played forever. If you have a lot of understanding, you can get over that or if you have like a parent who comforts you.”

Wouter asks, “Are you afraid of us as teachers?”

Stewart responds, "Not you, Wouter, but some teachers.”

Jill answers, "I'm more just pissed off. I just get myself upset, but not afraid.”

Lisa tells a story about this coach at a local school, “He is quiet, but serious, very serious in fact, he will sit there and get really angry and you think he will explode. He scares me.”

“Do you feel that generally, you're all right at this school?”

“Yeah. I was afraid of Susie. I was glad when she left.” Stewart says.

“Without speaking about a certain person,” Wouter says, “What are those feelings?”

Jeff says, “Well, when the teacher gets upset with you. They have the ability to make you off balance, emotionally vulnerable but also emotionally off-balance.”

"Really interesting, "Wouter says. "Do we have a fear of that and not being seen for who we are?"

Jill agrees, “Vulnerability is a big one.”

“Do you do this to yourself?”

Stewart says, “Yeah, definitely.”

“It sounds like we fear people in a position of authority?” Wouter says.

“Sometimes I'm afraid of my cello teacher if I haven't worked enough,” Claire says.

Harry adds to the conversations, “I think the reason people fear other people who have authority over you is because they have a way to impact you, to punish you.”

“Yeah or it can also be disappointment if you really like them,” Jill says.

Stewarts says, “Yeah, like with Theresa, I liked her so much that I didn't let her down.”

“So fear is connected to all these choices? “ Wouter says, “What about socially? Do you feel have fear in social situations?”

“Not really, unless it's with new people.” Harry says.

“What brings about fear with people?” one student who hasn't spoken yet says. “When you're with new people are walking down the street. There is almost automatic judgment and walk down the street.”

“Yeah,” this inspires another student who hasn't spoken yet, “I hate that when people look up to you look up and down and then purse their lips.”

“The seventh grade girls here at Oak Grove do that. They're scary,” Jill says.

“We automatically judge, but you don't do it?” Wouter asks them.

“Well, we do it, when we go to other people's schools.” They start talking about one of the schools they play sports with. Lisa makes a silly comment, “They don't take any showers, so they get angry at us.”

“See!” Stewart says, “We do do it. I think we do it because it makes you feel better than them, higher than them or something,” The energy of the room swells with agreement. “It makes you feel like a group.”

“When I was alone, I felt weird because there were 15 of them,” Paul says. “There is an instant judgment, a competition when we see a group.”

"Competition is there. It's like automatic with people," Jill says. "Say we were a group and people judge us for being OGS people, but we do the same thing to them."

“Yeah,” Paul says, "it's also really like stupid things. Like if I'm walking down the street and I see somebody wearing something other than what I am I may say in my head that they weird.”

Gary responds. "I think it's interesting, I saw some happy Valley kids in the city. The drummer in my band is from happy Valley, but when I spend time with him I thought he was cool. Then I saw him with these guys from his school and he didn't come off the same way. It is really something about the group thing.”

“Girls do it more!” Stewart says.

Wouter smirks at this comment, and says, “Do girls do it more, or do boys and girls do it in different ways?”

Stewart says, “Well, when we drive around Santa Barbara with Lisa, we hear a lot.” The kids laugh.

Tyler, one of the girls in the class says, “Well, there's always competition, I want to look better than her.”

“What is the source of the competition?” Wouter asks.

“The way you dress, the way you look, the way you think, but also the way you talk. At my other school there was a lot of slackers, I wasn't like that, but I didn't want to be a part of that so I acted differently and talked differently. So I think it is about saying who you are and people compare.”

“Guys don't do it than?” Wouter says.

“If they are big macho guys, who are muscle builders and they walked down and see me with tight pants, etc. they judge me,” Gary says.

"Yeah, like some meathead," Gary's friend says.

“What's the tight pants thing?” Wouter asks.

“Well it's about the way we dress, we tend to wear tight pants for the band and all that. In any case, I think it's more of a territorial thing with guys. But look, we call them meatheads.”

“It is all about power I think,” Stewart says, “I think that a lot of the reason that gangs are formed. Is that there are power struggles.”

“Don't we all form a kind of gang?” Gary says.

“Well, yeah I guess we do.” Stewart responds.

“Do you think that all these fears that we live with, is it possible to live without it, can we live without fear?” Wouter asks.

“No, it takes so much of our lives that I think it would be difficult,” Jill says.

“There's got to be some monks somewhere who have lived without fear I'm sure though.”

Jill continues her discussion, “I wouldn't want to cut out any emotion out of my life. Life wouldn't be worth living.”

Stewart says, “Yeah, well it would be hard to be without it, but I don't think it's worth dwelling on fear; it's not worth dwelling on it. You have to be aware of it and learn to live with it and it doesn't control you and your life.”

“Good. Well okay you guys, nice discussion, I'm glad we had a chance to talk today. Its time to go to circle.”

With that, class ends. The kids make a few quick announcements. It is interesting to see how there is no definitive answers reached in this type of discussion. It is more about questioning and inquiry. As Wouter had pointed out, it is a question of getting them to ask deep, open-ended questions that leave them in a state of wonder and inquiry. Wouter's role was fairly minimal, he merely directed the questions occasionally or asked them to go deeper into a particular idea or discussion. What is sure, Wouter's approach in the classroom is true to his intentions of promoting inquiry and deep reflection and reflects his own interpretation of K's teachings.

Wrapping Up

Four Branches, But One Tree: The Continuity of Relationship

On my last day of observations at the school, I went back to Anney's classroom. The kids had just returned from planting acorns in the wetlands not far from the school. "Once Upon a Wetland," is the name of the wetland restoration project that the early childhood program and the rest of the school have participated in for several years. It is interesting for the students, because every year they go back and they can watch the maturation of the wetland and learn about the ecological processes at play. They also get to consider their place in such ecological cycles.

I had walked with the little ones to watch them learn how to plant acorns. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience. They dug a shallow hole, made sure there was room, and then threw a few acorns in the hole. Upon our return, the kids are simply covered in the mud after the experience, but they all have big smiles on their faces.

As we arrive, I notice Darla sitting on the bench outside her classroom. I sat down next to her and asked her how the day is going. She is staring at the kindergarten's coming out of the class and she begins to tell me that, "the continuity of relationship here is so amazing; it is just remarkable. You still see them as they get older. It's great." Darla has known many of the students here for four years and taught them for three. I recognize that the kindergarten teacher's assistant is a mother of two children at the school, one of whom we met in Todd's class. The lower school principal, Katie, has been under some much strain with the transition of the administration that took place upon my arrival. She too is playing multiple roles at the school as teacher, administrator, and parent. She sits with her child who is in Darla's class and enjoys watching him eat a snack. Katie is much more than administrator here at the school, she's also a parent and a friend. She feels deep respect for the teachers and the job she has to fulfill because she understands the implications of her actions for the students at the school. She has come in and spent some time watching Darla and her son. A minute or so later, another student in Katherine's class walks by with her housing parent. Jesse had taken the child in as an experiment to see how an exchange program might work with another school in Mexico. Jesse also works as the admissions coordinator at the school. She is holding her young daughter in her arms, walking with Maria the transfer student, and simultaneously giving a tour to some prospective parents.

It is a pleasant contrast from the impersonal nature of some of the schools I have visited this year. The whole school is connected in this way. The administrators are parents, the teachers and administrators and parents are friends, and the kids relate with all of them. Taken as a whole, the continuity of relationship creates an ambience in this

place where students feel safe, secure, loved, understood, and I think in many ways the teachers do too. This makes issues at the school quite painful because they are personal as well as professional. This is both a strength and weakness at both Brockwood and Oak Grove which I will return to later on.

I found the symmetry between the wetland restoration project and the goals of the school to be intriguing. The kids plant acorns, watch them grow over the course of years, and at the same time they themselves are allowed to flower in the sanctuary of the Oak Grove. The spirit at the school nourishes the children, tends to their growth and development both internally and externally. The kids can really be themselves here with little fear of being called weird or of being beaten up by people. Even when there are pushing every boundary, even to the point of being unproductive, they have the freedom to grow. Like the children who made sure to leave room for the acorns in the soil, the students have the space to grow in the culture of the school.

The school is a functioning community and everyone feels that. The high school kids walk out of class and hang out with the early childhood kids. The whole school eats lunch together. Everyone feels as connected to each other as they do to the nature around them and the mysteries which make life possible. The campus's design itself reflects this. The large beautiful campus, with its old oaks, wide-open fields, and the mulched paths that meander through, the whole campus is connected. Everyone in the school feels the connections among the children, teachers, community, and administration. A warm and loving old woman cooks warm lunches with love and care for students. Similarly, the vegetarianism at the school, like that in Brockwood, isn't an imposition, but a

reflection of the love and respect for the sanctity of nature, of the sanctuary that is the Oak Grove School.

Sitting on the bench reflecting on this insight, Anney comes out with the kids, and begins to tell them, "Do you guys remember where the baby oak tree is? It's over there where we will meet. We're going to run over there." The kids put on their shoes and get ready to run around. A little girl comes out who had been having a hard time with her mother having left for a trip. Anney asks her, "Do you want to hug?"

She says, "Yes," with a very pathetic look on her face.

"Do you want to put your shoes on, and then I'll give you a hug."

She puts on her boots, gets a bit upset, says that she does not like her shoes and then Anney sits next her and holds her and rocks her until she wants to go run. Anney then walked out into the field and stood by the baby Oak tree. She waits for the kids to arrive. The kids run and frolic around the a tree. The first kid who ran to the tree stops and gives Anney a hug as soon as he makes it there. Each kid, then does the same; runs as fast as they can towards the baby oak that is some distance from the classroom, hugs Anney, and then runs back to the classroom. Marla, Anney's assistant was back near the classroom where I am sitting and she asks the kids who returned, "Did you guys enjoy that?"

"Yeah! Let's do it again!" They run back, hug Anney and come back around the tree back again.

Like this baby oak tree, the children at the oak grove school are in need of nourishment, space, and light. These flowering plants are fragile, like children. The restoration project has made the whole school aware of the sensitivity of the environment.

Even the mighty oak trees have very shallow roots. They are incredibly susceptible to disease and are easily break in the face of blunt trauma. “The way the roots are,” Anney tells me, “the whole tree can just fall over.” The Oak Grove School rests in a delicate balance. It has experienced hardship over the course of its history, but like the environment, it has so far found a way to survive and at times to flourish. I have enjoyed getting to catch a glimpse of it at this point in its development.

Chapter 6: Understanding the Education at Brockwood and Oak Grove

As explained in chapter 3, I employ two theoretical frameworks in this dissertation to aid me in the description, interpretation, and evaluation of the two schools I observed: Eisner's Ecology of the Schools and the Science of Well-Being. I draw primarily on the ecology of the classroom to structure my descriptions of Brockwood Park and the Oak Grove School. In effect, chapters 4 and 5 describe the various dimensions of the ecology at both schools. Through vignettes that weave together observational and interview data, I describe the intentions, structure, curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation of both the individual classrooms and the school as a whole. I will now turn to a synthesis and interpretation of the two descriptive chapters using the Science of Well-Being.

A Clear Vision

The intentional dimension is crucial when considering the Krishnamurti schools. Krishnamurti had a penetrating vision of what it would require to help students transform themselves psychologically and learn to live in the world. He focused primarily on the intentional dimension in his educational writings and discussions. He occasionally spoke about the importance of structure, curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation, but always in relation to his intention of creating an education that is "whole, sane, and intelligent." Krishnamurti did not believe in methodology and was not interested in going into the particulars of the day-to-day work in the schools. K put great stock in relationships to help create environments that would allow for learning. He thought it preposterous to suggest that good relationships could ever be reduced to method or technique.

Krishnamurti focused instead on helping teachers and administrators to work together with the students and to work on relationships. His discussions with faculty and staff focused on the big enduring questions like the nature of freedom, inquiry, and the sacred dimension of life. He was a “gadfly,” in the Socratic sense, for the various Krishnamurti schools around the world. He always pushed teachers, parents, and administrators to focus more on the global issues in the school—on inquiry, a global outlook, sensitivity to nature, and freedom.

The teachers I observed, particularly the nine I describe in this dissertation, interpret these intentions in various ways. The claim that each Krishnamurti school is different could also be extended and applied within the schools themselves—each classroom is different. Each teacher interprets the school’s intentions and that of its founder differently. For example, Krishnamurti stressed the importance of freedom in his schools, but teachers interpret what freedom means differently in their own practice and classrooms. I should not, however, overstate the point. There were certainly many commonalities that I observed both at the two different schools and within the practices of the teachers within each of the two schools.

Another important and related point is that the different interpretations teachers make are then translated into the other dimensions of the classroom ecology. To take the previous example of freedom, some teachers may focus on freedom at the curricular level, others at the level of pedagogy or evaluation, and still others at a structural level. Katherine, for example, thought that it was important for students to have the freedom to study what interested them at the level of curriculum, whereas Aashika did not emphasize such freedom and instead focused on freedom in the students’ thinking; hence she

focused on freedom in a pedagogical sense. Many of the disagreements I witnessed among staff and administration or between staff members at the two schools often stemmed from such differences of opinion. Due to space constraints I was not able to describe the staff meetings and staff dialogues I observed, however these forums provide places where staff debate their views on freedom, care, subject matter, testing, and school policy. The debates would resonate throughout the school and at times permeate the climate of the school. There may be better and worse ways of addressing certain aspects of the classroom, but there is plenty of room for divergence of opinion on matters like freedom, some of which I tried to depict in chapters four and five. In fact, let me say that while the vignettes in these chapters illustrate the various principles that are important to consider when fostering well-being, not every teacher that is described was helping their students to develop well-being. We can consider freedom as an example. Freedom is essential for the development of well-being, and we saw many different examples of how teachers tried to give students freedom in the vignettes. Despite the fact that K's intentions for the school state clearly that there is no freedom in "freedom of choice," teachers at the schools are experimenting with classroom experiences that are looking at freedom in this way. We can see examples of this at both schools during the K-man movie filming at Brockwood Park (see page 340) or in Katherine's classroom (see page 286) during the session where the children were making rules for the game.

I suspect that such inconsistency is due in part to the fact that Krishnamurti advocates an a-theoretical, a-ideological approach. This means that the individual teacher must be deeply reflective on their own practice and a keen observer of students. Krishnamurti's notion of what a teacher must do to improve their own practice is similar

to that of Schön's notion of reflective practice (Schön, 1983, 1987), Louis Rubin's notion of the "Artist teacher" (Rubin, 1981, 1983, 1989) and Eisner's desire to look at education as an art and not a technical enterprise (Eisner, 2002). The best teachers I observed at both schools always remain flexible and adaptive to their particular context and did not use a formulaic approach. However, teachers seemed to struggle with Krishnamurti's descriptions of education in much the same way teachers struggle with Dewey's progressivism. On the one hand, they want to know "how" to do something; on the other hand they are skeptical and uncertain about anyone's interpretation of how. There is no formal teacher training for Krishnamurti schools. There is no formal induction program for teachers. At the same time, understanding K's criticism of method makes the reasons for this apparent. Nonetheless, it is important for the K schools to consider how to address teacher preparation and development as there is a real need.

Like the teachers at these schools, I struggled to find some organizing structure to think about Krishnamurti education. I spoke about this with many of the teachers and community members. This quest of mine was somewhat controversial within the Krishnamurti community because I was speaking about finding a way to "compare" teachers or schools. Nonetheless, I spoke with many of the teachers and community members about this, and I found that they too were struggling with these questions.

In such a situation where do teachers or administrators turn? During my observations at the two schools I observed that many of the teachers simply rely upon trial-and-error. Some read educational research or books on education, others turn to Krishnamurti's writings on education. However, K's writings are not in an analytic format and are always concerned with the whole. He talks about the interrelationships

between concepts as he speaks. So if one turns to his writings to find a definite answer on a very specific subject, it can be somewhat challenging. Like reading a Platonic dialogue or any other complex philosopher, one must appreciate the whole of the body of work to understand the context of his words and perspectives. Those who read Krishnamurti in such a way sometimes like to say that K contradicts himself, like eastern sages are famous for doing, but this struck me as misleading. This did not make sense to me because Krishnamurti was so amazingly consistent in his message. He was able to succinctly describe the “core” of his work in one or two pages! This is not a sign of contradiction, rather it is a mark of attention to underlying principles. I need to qualify that statement, however, because Krishnamurti did not have a “theory” in the general sense of the term. Krishnamurti regarded all theory as a proxy for reality. It is a heuristic device that is, generally speaking, limited, because thought itself is ultimately limited. Rather than rely upon theory or on ideological speculation, Krishnamurti encouraged individuals to be attentive to the relationships they have with all things. In so doing, an individual might “awaken their intelligence.” Intelligence, that capacity to understand life as a whole, allows for new kind of observation of the world—a form of attention. For Krishnamurti this state of attention is learning, and education should be a vehicle for its cultivation. Education should help an individual be attentive to the whole of life and to always be in a state of learning and openness in full awareness of her relations to all things.

Interpreting Krishnamurti Education through the Domains of Human Life

After three weeks in Ojai, I had an insight that provided me with the structure I have chosen to organize this chapter of the dissertation. I initially contacted the Oak Grove School in December. Before going to Ojai in February, I had been reading Krishnamurti's writings on education. During my stay in Ojai, I continued reading his writings and spent time going through videos of his conversations with parents, staff members, and teachers at the Oak Grove School. As I made my observations of the school, I would notice some of the concepts that Krishnamurti discusses: safety and security, order and freedom, affection, self-understanding, the development of intellect and sensitivity (see **Appendix B** for more examples). As I watched the way that Anney and Darla would spend time in relationship with their children and narrating to them their actions, I realized that they were trying to implement some of K's ideas around making children aware of their thoughts and working on relationships. Similarly, Wouter's detailed syllabi, his emphasis on checking whether the homework had been completed, or Todd's neatly organized desks, his pencil exercises, and his attention to pace and rhythm helped me contemplate what K meant by order and freedom. Watching Maya and Aashika with their students, their affection, their attention to the thoughts and feelings of their students, and their playfulness helped me think about what K meant by care and affection. Raj's K-class, morning meeting, and the walk in the grove gave me an opportunity to think about what K meant by silence and the sacred. Angela's focus on curriculum and on ensuring that her students would study English well and do plenty of homework gave me more insight into the development of the intellect in K's vision of education.

As I watched these different teaching styles, I was looking for some kind of connecting thread. Something that could weave everything together. I had some thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers I was observing. I saw some of the best teaching I had ever seen (like Todd's fourth grade classroom) and some of the worst. Yet, I knew that all of these teachers were all paying attention to some of the same features in the classroom. The teachers who were the most experienced and/or capable of verbalizing what they felt they were doing in the classroom, like Todd, Raj, Wouter, Aashika, and Maya, were all addressing the same issues they saw in the classroom. Todd's classroom was highly organized and simultaneously gave the kids a sense of possibility and freedom. As one parent had said to me, "I like Todd's class because he knows how to challenge my kids without defeating them." In speaking about his teaching, Todd shared that he thought it all stemmed from the love he felt for his students. As a result of that love he would ensure that the kids felt safe, that they were being challenged intellectually all day and experiencing the joy of learning. Raj had similar feelings. He described his own teaching approach as building relationships with the students. Once he had developed a deep relationship with them, he felt that it made everything else possible: he could establish order in the classroom, build trust, affection would develop, and students would gradually become aware of the love he felt for the subject matter. Maya and Wouter also discussed their teaching approaches in a very personal way. Each of them talked about the struggles they had as teachers, their desire to help the students feel personal connections to what happened in the classroom, and how to encourage students to discover things about themselves.

After writing and reflecting on all of this, I finally came upon a structure once I noticed the same themes coming back again and again. It helped me interpret what I was seeing in the classroom, but also what I had been reading in K. It also helped me to come to terms with the claim that K was contradicting himself, a subject I will address directly in the next chapter. Of course, what was most interesting about the structure was that it was staring me right in the face the whole time; it is relationship.

K emphasized above all else the importance of relationship. Of course relationships take on many different forms, but there are some common threads that pass through them all like communication or emotion. In other words, relationships are all related to the various domains of human life. It is obvious to point it out, but each of us has a sexual life, a material and corporeal life, an emotional life, an intellectual and cultural life, and a spiritual life.⁵³ These various facets of life are intrinsically interconnected and in dynamic interaction, but it is useful to discuss them one at a time as it provides a framework for analysis. In his work, K was always attentive to each of these dimensions when discussing learning or education. One way to discuss his approach to education without being reductive is to consider his discussion of each of these domains. Much as we can use our relationships with others and the world as a mirror into ourselves, the various domains of human life can help us to understand the underlying principles that cut across the two schools I observed during this dissertation

⁵³ Cloninger (2004) refers to these various dimensions of life in his quantum description of human thought and relationship in his book on the Science of Well-Being. This component of the Science of Well-Being is a tremendous aid in organizing the interpretation of the schools I observed during this study.

research.⁵⁴ The five dimensions of schooling that Krishnamurti discussed at length, and which I observed at the two schools, can be seen in the table below (**Table 9**):

Table 9: Five Dimensions of Schooling and Well-Being

Dimension of Schooling	Domain of Life
<i>Safety, Security, and Trust</i>	<i>Sexual</i>
<i>Order, Structure, and Activity</i>	<i>Material/Corporeal</i>
<i>Care, Affection, and Attention</i>	<i>Emotional</i>
<i>Intellect, Reasoning, and Meaning</i>	<i>Intellectual/Cultural</i>
<i>The Sacred, Spirituality, and Religiosity</i>	<i>Spiritual</i>

These five dimensions of schooling are essential to consider in the development of well-being. I will consider each dimension in detail in the separate sections and look at examples in the descriptions from chapters 4 and 5, as well as data from other interviews and observations made at the two schools.

We will see as this chapter progresses that there is an interrelationship between these various aspects of schooling. Each dimension of the schools relates to interacts with the others. Care and affection, for example, can be extremely helpful in the development of a safe and secure environment and vice versa. Each of these dimensions is important. Safety, security, and order may seem more fundamental or important than other dimensions, but to consider it more important than our intellect, our culture, or our

⁵⁴ What is most important about this framework are the dimensions of schooling. I do not feel the need to elaborate more extensively on the relationship between the various domains of life and the dimensions of schooling identified by K. For the most part the relationships is fairly obvious as is the case for the intellectual domain and intellect, reasoning, and meaning. The sexual domain may not seem obviously related to sexuality at first glance, but when you consider the importance of safety, security, and trust in family life and sexual relationships the connection becomes more clear.

spiritual proclivities is to neglect fundamental human needs. Krishnamurti education attempts to address all these dimensions and needs. In the following sections I will interpret the observations of Brockwood and Oak Grove through this dimensional framework, as well as the Science of Well-Being.

Safety, Security, and Trust

Krishnamurti argued that every person has a need for security, both physiologically speaking and psychologically speaking. As he states, “The feeling of being secure in relationship is a primary need of children” (Krishnamurti, 1963, p. 7). In his schools, he wanted to be sure that both teachers and students felt secure. He used the phrase “at home” for this aspect of his schools. He explains,

Feeling at home implies that there is no sense of fear, that the student is protected physically, cared for and free. Although the student may object to the idea of being protected, guarded, it does not mean that he is held in a prison, confined and watched critically. Freedom obviously does not mean to do what one likes, and it is equally obvious that one can never totally do what one likes. [...] A school, after all, is a place where the student is basically happy, not bullied, not frightened by examinations, not compelled to act according to a pattern, a system. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 36)

Krishnamurti stresses that schools should feel like “a home.” They should provide “protection with freedom.” This includes tending to their physical safety, but also their psychological safety. In his vision, teachers and staff need to be attentive to the fact that we can also threaten children psychologically speaking with tests, systems, authority, and other means. Similarly, K felt it was essential that teachers do not feel burdened by economic worries or other stresses that would lead them to be insecure about their jobs or

livelihood; otherwise they will not be able to relate to the children in a caring and attentive way.

Krishnamurti's message about safety and security in his schools has been taken to heart. What strikes anyone that comes to Brockwood Park or Oak Grove is that there is a very safe and secure environment for the students. The schools do feel like home. This is a subtle aspect of the communities, but there are certain signs that reveal it to the observer. In both schools, for example, they speak of "houses" and not buildings. The classrooms are also very informal and homey; they do not have a cookie cutter feel. The main "houses" at both schools have kitchens where people prepare home-cooked, wholesome meals and everyone is expected to eat together as a community. At the Oak Grove School and Brockwood, the cooks are like loving mothers. The meals are prepared at Brockwood by the cook and a small team of students and/or faculty members. It is a group responsibility to prepare and clean up after the meals, like the chores of a house. At night time or on breaks, students at Brockwood Park spend time with one another, play games, music, dance, or just converse with one another. During the day, the same spaces that were casual, homey places become places of study like a kitchen table sometimes can become in a typical household.

The students are very open, expressive, and outspoken in the classroom. Students have no problem expressing both academic and personal views in the context of the classroom. We saw examples of this in Raj's classroom in the discussion about sex during K-class (see pages 163 to 165). Similarly in Maria's Art Barn, the students felt safe to discuss their insecurities or personal lives with Maria (see pages 218 to 221). In Ojai, the young students in Anney and Darla's classrooms clearly felt loved and secure

with Anney and Darla (see pages 254 to 255). They were very open and affective with their teachers, hugging them like mothers. In Wouter's classroom—particularly during the vignette of the discussion of fear (see pages 309-311)—it was clear that students were comfortable expressing their fears to their classmates and to Wouter. Students feel comfortable being who they are in front of adults without fear of judgment or punishment.

Krishnamurti described the opposite of safety and security, or feeling at home, as a sense of fear. Fear can strike us when we sense a threat to our physical security, like being threatened by violence or intimidation, but also through subtler means that are more psychological in nature like coercion and sarcasm. Unfortunately fear is all too commonplace in schools, whether it be through fear of punishment and disciplinary action, or the fear of disappointing teachers or failing exams. Such fear is also generated by classroom practices like the use of sarcasm and humiliation to maintain control in the classroom or even through institutional forms like detention, suspension, and demerits. In a conversation I had with Scott Forbes, a former school director at Brockwood Park and a close companion of K during his life, he spoke about the use of fear in schools:

Of course a lot of people use fear and bullying, a lot of people, namely teachers and administrators use it to keep control. Humiliation is one of the most terrible things for children of a certain age, you'd be better off if you hit them with a baseball bat, they would be better off, they would feel it less. Humiliation is terrible, there's a constant threat of it. So it's a bullying culture.

It is true that adults pay very close attention to any threat of physical violence. If a child is bruised or has a bloody nose, adults will swarm around them. When it is psychological violence, however, it is often not taken as seriously and yet it can often be more

damaging in the long run—damaging to the students, but also damaging to the culture of a school because it leads to a climate of fear and mistrust. Indeed not all behaviors and acts that breed mistrust and fear are so obviously damaging. Krishnamurti argued that reward and punishment tends to create climates of comparison, competition, and fear.

The Krishnamurti schools seek to abolish all such practices. K said that

Comparison brings about frustration and merely encourages envy, which is called competition. Like other forms of persuasion, comparison prevents learning and breeds fear. Ambition also breeds fear. Ambition, whether personal or identified with the collective, is always antisocial. (Krishnamurti, 1963, p. 2)

Practically speaking, the K schools keep comparison, competition, and ambition at a bare minimum because the children do not live in a bubble and may be prone to competition either because they've been exposed to it elsewhere or due to certain aspects of their personality, desires, passions, or jealousies. Similarly, the teachers also have their own baggage and so they too are learning how to help children not compare or compete with one another. Due to this emphasis at K schools new teachers frequently have to relearn classroom management techniques when they arrive in Ojai or Brockwood. A former teacher at Brockwood who also worked on teacher development with staff at Oak Grove explains it this way:

Some teachers might say in a typical school, “You, you do that again, and you're not coming to the party tomorrow.” On the other hand you get teachers who have kids sitting there chanting affirmations, “we love each other, we love the earth, and we love math.” I mean chanting? It's scary stuff. This equally misses the point. So we aren't going to push all this stuff under the carpet, all this kind of competitive, un-discussable stuff and we're not just going to emphasize the positive. Neither of those approaches is conducive for work at oak grove. So you have this group of teachers, at least a fair number of them, who really understand this problem and who try to actually develop relationships with the children. As K said you have to study the children, you have to watch them very,

very carefully, their tendencies. You have to be incredibly alert from the moment they walk into the classroom, what they do at lunch, what they do at recess. You're just watching, watching, watching. So when things are arising you're not taken completely by surprise. You've got rapport because you're not coming down as a psychological authority. You're not saying I'm better than you at some subtle subliminal level. You're not saying just because I have this position and I'm responsible for your learning, which is the functional authority part, that means I won't listen to you as an equal. Well I will. I will listen to you without filtering it through some image I have about you. I actually, simply, straightforwardly, listen to you.

Being attentive and listening to students is essential here. It allows for their to be safety and security without being punitive or authoritarian because the teacher or adult knows the child and how they think and act. As Marie Curie is famous for saying, "Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood" ("Wit and Wisdom," 2008). There were many examples of listening that we saw in chapter four and five, like the way Raj would repeat what the students had said, or the way Maria conversed with her students, or the way that Todd would tailor his responses to students based on his observations of their behavior.

The distinction Paul Herder makes between psychological and functional authority is also useful. K spoke at length of the dangers of psychological authority; however it is not that he did not believe that there is no role for authority in a school or in relationship, it is just a question of functional authority. Each of us has a role in different situations and assuming it fully is a question of functional authority. Whereas when we seek to extend our influence into a psychological domain then there is much more potential for danger. We must find our equilibrium and not allow our ego to cloud our judgment and lead us to seek power of others, or worse dominate them. K's advice was

to look to the mirror of human relationship and to the keen “power” of observation that we all have to find our way through the murky waters of power.

Work in the Science of Well-Being helps us to understand the impact of an environment of fear or mistrust on the brain and learning. One notable example in schools is test anxiety. In a review of the literature on test anxiety in (2001), McDonald noted two major themes that emerged from the data:

Two main findings emerge from the literature. First, fear of exams and test situations is widespread and appears to be becoming more prevalent, possibly due to the increasing frequency of testing and importance placed on testing within educational systems. Secondly, test anxiety has a detrimental effect on test performance and, although correlations between test anxiety and exam performance are modest, its influence on the number of children passing or failing an exam is potentially considerable. (p. 98)

While some level of test anxiety, if moderate, can lead to a level of arousal that may be beneficial for test performance, in the case of extreme test anxiety, which has been characterized by “excessive degrees of fear, worry, and apprehension” (McDonald, 2001), it can be detrimental to academic performance. Research has shown that both praise and criticism (i.e. reward and punishment) can lead someone to have test anxiety (McDonald, 2001). Research has demonstrated that giving students praise for test performance may be just as likely to cause test anxiety because these students “showed greater belief that test scores were an index of their intelligence, to such an extent that they would lie to another child about their test results when these were poor” (McDonald, 2001, p. 91). McDonald continues:

In relation to test anxiety, when children who had been praised for their ‘intelligence’ experienced failure on a test, they perceived this as being due to their low ability more so than those previously praised for effort. As perceptions of low ability are central to test anxiety (Sarason & Sarason,

1990), these findings indicate that praise for achievement may leave children vulnerable to developing anxiety if they subsequently fail a test. (McDonald, 2001, p. 91)

In this way, both reward and punishment for test performance and achievement may lead a child to experience test anxiety, although other underlying personality factors such as neuroticism and harm avoidance may also lead to vulnerability to such anxiety (McDonald, 2001; C.R. Cloninger et al. 1993, 2006).

Test anxiety reveals a problem that most teachers are aware of, but do not always consider. As I discuss in chapter 2, recent studies have shown that fear can have many effects ranging from minor stresses that increase arousal and positive impact the body, to paralyzing fear that may reduce higher cognitive functioning (Berntson, Cacioppo, & Fieldstone, 1996; C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a; L. Pezawas, A. Meyer-Lindenberg, E.M. Drabant, B.A. Verchinski, K.E. Munoz, B.S. Kolachana, M.F. Egan, V.S. Mattay, A.R. Harriri, D.R. Weinberger, 2005). Let's go back to our example of test anxiety. Let's say that a teacher has put a lot of pressure on a student to perform well on a test the following week in class, telling that student that it is 60% of her grade in the class. An extreme reaction by the student resulting in profound anxiety may lead the child to freeze up, unable to understand what the teacher is saying (McDonald, 2001). At the level of the brain, one possible scenario if the test anxiety is extreme and the student experiences real fear is that the emotional brain short circuits the rational brain (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a; L. Pezawas, A. Meyer-Lindenberg, E.M. Drabant, B.A. Verchinski, K.E. Munoz, B.S. Kolachana, M.F. Egan, V.S. Mattay, A.R. Harriri, D.R. Weinberger, 2005). Due to the evolution of the brain, there are neural connections that help facilitate communication between the evolutionarily ancient "old mammalian brain" and the more recently evolved

cortex and prefrontal cortex. In moments of acute stress—like our student who is panicking because they do not understand the teacher—the amygdala, a region in the brain that is active in moments of fear, can literally short circuit the connection between the emotional and the rational brain by inhibiting the anterior cingulate (L. Pezawas, A. Meyer-Lindenberg, E.M. Drabant, B.A. Verchinski, K.E. Munoz, B.S. Kolachana, M.F. Egan, V.S. Mattay, A.R. Hariri, D.R. Weinberger, 2005). Consequently, more primitive instincts can take over and help us to avoid harm, but in this particular situation, due to the acute stress the student is experiencing, it would only serve to impede higher rational processes and the integration of the emotional and rational responses. Hence the student cannot learn the material that will be worth 60% of her grade. The short-circuiting of the prefrontal cortex by the amygdala is a fairly extreme example, and fortunately its effects are short-term. However, the effects of fear can be prolonged due to our reactions to stress and the hormonal cycles of the body. Let's say that as a consequence of constantly being graded and compared to the other students in the class a student is feeling stressed. Am I going to do well on the exam? Is this teacher going to be upset with me if I didn't do the homework? Am I going to fail in life and work at McDonalds? These are the sorts of fears that can swirl around in the children's heads. During such moments of stress, as I previously discussed in more detail in chapter 2, the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis) is stimulated (Chrousos & Gold, 1992). Its prolonged activation due to long-term stress leads to the overactivation of the sympathetic nervous system and the fight-or-flight response (Berntson et al., 1996). Quite literally, the body puts itself in a state of defense. This leads to numerous negative health impacts when one experiences stress over long periods of time, such as problems with digestion, cardiac coherence,

reproduction, and immune response (Chrousos & Gold, 1992). While we may consider how to calm the child down enough to perform well in class his physical health may be negatively impacted. However, realize too that the HPA axis also impacts the limbic system. This effects our mood and our motivation and also the hippocampus⁵⁵ that is highly involved in memory formation. Depression can be caused in this way if there is prolonged stress. Fear can lead to the inhibition of higher brain processes and affect our memory. While the higher cortical functions may not be highjacked, the amygdala and the hippocampus still impact the functioning of the rational brain and memory, as well as engendering negative health impacts. This includes the downward spirals of thought associated with depression and anxiety which can also impact the whole organism. In light of these advancements in our understanding of brain functioning and the impact of stress and fear on the brain, it is fair to say that learning theory that relies upon reward and punishment and/or fear is seriously questionable and may be detrimental to learning. As K had pointed out long ago, we must be attentive to the safety and security of the children both physiologically and psychologically. When students feel at home, without a sense of someone wielding authority over them, we are more free to study ourselves and the world with attention, to discover our passions and our talents.

Alumni reported that the safety, security, and trust they experienced at these places had a profound impact on their lives and their thinking. One former student from Oak Grove told me that it gave her a firm foundation to build a constructive and happy life:

⁵⁵ The hippocampus is adjacent to the medial temporal cortex that we saw was involved in semantic memory formation.

Real care and safety, I definitely feel like I have that, like I had that real security as a child. You know that my teachers loved me, that my parents loved me, that my brother loved me, you know, I didn't feel unsafe. I felt a level of safety that was a real foundation.

Similarly, other students expressed that their experiences at the school helped to sustain them through difficult moments in their personal lives. The schools were like an oasis in the desert of loneliness and despair:

I think Oak Grove is good at giving support that students need at a challenging point in their lives. During my time at Oak Grove, you would never really feel judged or compared by others. You were just allowed to be, learn, and live. And that was extremely valuable for me.

This state of trust and security, this calmness and relaxation, allows for a physiology and a brain chemistry that will lead to a greater coherence between our head and our heart, stated scientifically, an integration of our emotional and rational brain (Berntson et al., 1996; C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a; L. Pezawas, A. Meyer-Lindenberg, E.M. Drabant, B.A. Verchinski, K.E. Munoz, B.S. Kolachana, M.F. Egan, V.S. Mattay, A.R. Harriri, D.R. Weinberger, 2005). We are free to cultivate the integration of emotional openness, reason, and sensitivity. Conversely, if we scare kids, if we humiliate and intimidate them through methods that exploit fear, like comparison, competition, and punishment, then we don't help them learn; rather we condition them according to a fixed idea of what we want them to be and hinder their development. In this, there is little rational or critical thought, and little freedom. Even if we think it is in the child's best interest, or that it will lead them to happiness at some distant point in the future, we are aggressing the child and consequently preventing the child from realizing their full potential both biologically and psychologically. As K had said more simply, fear prevents us from seeing with intelligence, to see the whole, the actual.

Order, Structure, and Activity

Order and structure is a difficult subject at the Krishnamurti schools. There is such a great emphasis placed on freedom in K's philosophy that sometimes order is overlooked or not properly considered by teachers and administrators who do not appreciate the subtleties of K's vision of order in the classroom. A former student from Oak Grove School told me that for her, order was lacking in the curriculum of the high school during her first three years there:

The curriculum for me when I was there was fairly easy until my senior year. Until then, the academic curriculum was secondary to learning about relationships (at least to me). [...] Up until 12th grade, the two domains of the curriculum previously described (the academic and the relationship/philosophical), were separate in practice. Due to this, classes were often unproductive because the intention of the school is to depend on the dynamic of the two domains. There was often a large disparity between what was intended and what was done in practice. I've always enjoyed learning, but I would say I really started to enjoy my classes in my senior year for the reasons mentioned earlier. [...] I enjoyed Paul Herder and Wouter as teachers because they were passionate about the subjects they were teaching, treated the students as equals, and organized the curriculum to reflect the dynamic of the academic and social/philosophical domains. I did not enjoy the teachers (whose names I will not mention unless you specially request them) because they were careless about organizing the curriculum and were mainly concerned with the politics of the school.

The balance between working on relationships and working on rigorous academic curriculum is a constant challenge at the two schools. Teachers at Brockwood believed they didn't pay enough attention to the academic growth of students. I found this belief fascinating because during my stay in Brockwood, there was scarcely a moment the students weren't engaged in learning some academic content or preparing for an exam. Some in Ojai believed just the opposite: there was too much focus on curriculum. We can see these different approaches if we compare Katherine's approach to Wouter's for

example. Another raging debate within the schools concerned how to structure the curriculum. Should it be more traditional or more progressive? Should it be more inquiry-based in the sense that students define their own curriculum, or should the teacher choose what is studied and allow the children the freedom to ask the questions they want or grapple with it in their own way?

Wouter expressed that upon his arrival in Ojai he desired more rigor and organization in the curriculum he was teaching. Having come from a European schooling system that was highly structured and asking higher-level reasoning from children at younger ages than we do in the U.S., it was something of a struggle for him to teach the way he wanted to at first. Brockwood, due mostly to exams, had always maintained a rigorous traditional academic curriculum. When Wouter tried to do the same in California, he met a lot resistance from parents, other teachers, and the school administration. His actions were viewed as a threat by some, and even bordering on something which went against the intentions of the school. Wouter describes how he addressed this issue differently over time:

My first year here, I was a mess. I mean, I did have a plan, etc., but not on that level, and that's where I was and I said to myself, "this has to change!" because I felt I was destroying myself in a way. I was wearing myself out. When I created these syllabi—and there was a lot of time and work that goes into doing it, my god you're really planning something—but when it's done, you feel so confident and good because you've thought through so many things. This way, my students, for example, they may be doing homework, but I know when I can do something else or when I have the time to do it. And in my week there's a ton of time where I can just do what I want. I never lecture. That's really the way in which Ellen and I spoke about it as well, because people question it and the other teachers are so threatened when I started producing these like books because it's like wait a minute, should we do that, but that's really it. It's order, what you do is you create order and by having order you have more freedom.

Wouter creates very detailed syllabi for his classes. This allows him to create a highly structured and ordered environment for the kids, but it also allows him more freedom for different types of activities.

Despite the fact that K talked about the fact that order was important in classrooms and schools, some teachers I observed confuse disorder with freedom. K states clearly, “Freedom is a state of mind—not freedom *from* something, but a sense of freedom, a freedom to doubt and question everything and therefore so intense, active and vigorous that it throws away every form of dependence, slavery, conformity and acceptance” (Krishnamurti, 1969a, p. 68). In his letters to the schools and in his “intent” for the Oak Grove School, K expresses that freedom should not be equated with doing whatever one wants. However, some teachers still nonetheless interpret him this way.

During my stay in Brockwood, I observed a project that epitomized the disorder at the level of curriculum. It was a film project that students were working on entitled “K-man.” It was a fantasy film about a superhero they called “K-man” after Krishnamurti. During my observations there was very little order in the project. It was a comedy of errors. They had no costumes and no script consequently no one was able to practice their lines. The students misplaced the camera and lighting equipment and it delayed the start of class. Many students complained about this and generally speaking there was antagonism between the students due to the mayhem. Such a student climate of disorder led the students to search for who to blame. Yet the premise of the filming project for the teacher was for it to be “student driven.” To give the students total freedom and for it to be lead entirely by “student initiative.” However, if the teacher provides no order for the

class than one cannot lay all the blame on the students in such moments, they are simply reacting to the chaos around them and the teacher is not doing anything to counteract it. The person in charge of the project was not on the faculty; he was an adult student or “mature student” as they are called at Brockwood. However, he clearly had a confusion about the nature of order and freedom. A fundamental role of teachers in any environment is to maintain order, but not at the expense of freedom. This, however, does not mean that students do not need direction and structure. There is little freedom in disorder.

In order to maximize the potential of freedom and order at his schools K focused on how to structure his schools. He argued that due to the non-verbal messages communicated by school structure, it was imperative to consider how to construct the schools. He of course is referring to the “hidden curriculum” implicit in school structure. He asked his teachers and readers to consider what mindset and what values gave rise to the schools around the world. Krishnamurti argued that most of the schools around the world look and feel the same (Krishnamurti, 1953). If the schools were going to create a new mode of teaching it would be necessary to transform this school structure. Stephen Smith, a long standing teacher and administrator at Brockwood who worked and spoke with Krishnamurti, put it this way:

The first step is to have a different kind of atmosphere, a different kind of building. So they should be natural materials, and it should be well built. K put an emphasis on that, so that it is a good place to be physically. So its not a place to be drilled, you go there and you live there; you know it is your home. You go there and you live there. [...] Smallness is also important. Being small allows you to place an emphasis on humanity and it is easier to have a functioning orderly, friendly atmosphere, without it degenerating into something chaotic. And of course it diminishes the need for any kind of hierarchy. It certainly diminishes the need for that kind of

structure. So it is therefore possible to run it with a minimum of functional authority and preferably no psychological authority at all, but it depends on the people that are functioning. There is a fairly acute sense that people have when someone is speaking from a position and of course that happens. It happens, but it is really not part of K's teachings at all.

By creating small, intimate schools with small class sizes, order could be maximized and still there could be freedom with a minimum of psychological and functional authority.

The atmosphere at Oak Grove and Brockwood had this feeling of psychological and physical security. Scott Forbes shared an anecdote with me about an exhibit at Oxford he saw once:

I saw an exhibition on public architecture. They wanted to show how the architecture, of public buildings evolved from the 1700s into the 20th century and they chose three different types of institutions to demonstrate this fact. The three institutions were insane asylums, prisons, and schools. And guess what, these buildings look the same in this period of 300 years. You can see why, they are all about containment. It's about conditioning, it's about coercing, and so the buildings for these institutions end up looking the same. You know, if you had a different kind of institution, which is not about conditioning kids, which is not about coercing them, it would look differently. There is more totalitarianism in schools than in any other place in our society other than prisons and the military—absolute authoritarianism. For example, kids have to ask permission to perform a bodily function. You know, I mean what is that? To give little pieces of paper so you can have a pee, that's completely idiotic, and kids don't want to be there, really, what a surprise!

What Scott Forbes is pointing out here is that the hidden curriculum of the school structures needs to be examined to understand the societal values they reflect. While I was in Ojai, I had an opportunity to go to a local public high school. I was simply astounded to find drug sniffing dogs, high fences around the perimeter, walkie-talkies, a police officer on duty in the main office, and a sense of fear and conflict among the students in this affluent, southern Californian high school. What kind of message is sent by drug-sniffing dogs, fences, walkie-talkies, police officers? What values does it

reflect? It is not a message of freedom or peace. It is rather that of control, conformity, and fear. Nel Noddings (1992) commented on this same fact:

The three approaches I have described to curriculum, instruction, and classroom management illustrate movements guided by an ideology of control and dominated by a search for method. The idea is to make the individual teacher, the individual student, and their relationship irrelevant to the success of instruction, which is posited as the primary goal of schooling. Once objectives are chosen, teachers are not supposed to deviate from them. They are to seek means within a narrowly defined standard form to reach the objectives, and, further, the objectives now established are almost entirely cognitive. The purposes and objectives of students are ignored (indeed denied, as random behavior) unless they happen to coincide with those of the teacher. (Noddings, 1992, p. 10)

Here Noddings alludes to the fact that the ideology of control is linked with a search for method and emphasizes an impersonal technical process of education. In this particular example of the public school in Ojai it is not classroom management, but school management, but the ideology is still the same and is reflecting in the physical structure and architecture of the school.

What does it take to communicate values of freedom, peace, and understanding?

This is something that teachers struggle with this at the schools I observed. As one teacher in Ojai expressed to me:

I have a real conflict about authority in this school because when I'm working with the kids I feel for my own self to function, well it's for them to function and also for me to function, I need things to be pretty simple and clear and organized. The school isn't always like that. The school isn't always set up like that. I don't necessarily know how other teachers work and I don't have enough of a position of authority exactly to be able to make some of those choices, so my sense is there's this real flux in this school now, and that's kind of I think the issue of authority is huge. Sometimes I see other teachers here that I think they're not willing to take that role because we all want to get along with the kids and all that stuff, and I think that's kind of a big issue at this school in a different way than it might be at a different kind of school.

The close relationships at the schools lead to a different sort of difficulty between and among staff and students. The same teacher explains it well:

The teachers are close with students. They hang out with them, they go camping with them, they go planting with them, they play music with them, they constantly supervise them at a dance or whatever. It's so close and so they get to really know each other in a certain way, but then there's this whole role thing that really permits the students to get stretched and sometimes when we don't have these set up, the rules, then I feel like we're not offering the students enough of a challenge.

Part of order and structure in a school is its relationship to the activity of the students.

When there is more order it gives the teachers and students more freedom to work and also allows teachers to work on challenging students or "stretch" them as this teacher said. To give students a reason to stretch themselves, the teacher has to be on top of her game. This involves a clear understanding of his role in the classroom and at the school.

In other words, there is a tension in K schools around functional and psychological authority. There was much strife around this issue between teachers. Some of this related to a lack of safe and secure environment, but it also related to various conceptions of freedom and authority. Like students, teachers at these schools need a safe and secure environment, as well as a ordered and structured one. The relationship of order to freedom is important. In fact, freedom is an essential theme of this dissertation and of the Science of Well-Being, which I will return to again in chapter 7.

Care, Affection, and Attention

Decades before Nel Noddings would challenge us to care in schools, Krishnamurti had encouraged the teachers and students at his schools to work on the development of their sense of "responsibility" to the world. K used the word

responsibility to “...imply care and concern for our world” (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 124). K believed that the key to this sense of responsibility is a state of “affection” which for him was a quality that was completely and totally natural. He describes it this way:

Probably when you are young you have this quality, but very quickly you seem to lose it. Why? It is because of the pressure of studies, the pressure of competition, the pressure of trying to reach a certain standing in your studies, comparing yourself with others, and perhaps being bullied by other students? Do not all these many pressures force you to be concerned with yourself, you inevitably lose the quality of affection. It is very important to understand how the circumstances—environment, the pressure of your parents or your own urge to conform—gradually narrow the vast beauty of life to the small circle of yourself. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 125-126)

Slowly due to violence and various other negative influences like competition and comparison, K argues, we become conditioned to be self-absorbed and lose the natural quality of affection that children have.⁵⁶ In his letters to the schools, K encouraged staff and students to contemplate the meaning of affection because it was the foundation of all self-transformation and sensitivity to the world. He explains,

Affections implies care, a diligent care in whatever you are doing—care in your speech, in your dress, in the manner of your eating, how you look after your body, care in your behavior without distinctions of superior or inferior, how you consider people. Politeness is consideration for others, and this consideration is care, whether it is for your younger brother or oldest sister. When you care, violence in every form disappears from you—your anger, your antagonism, your pride. This care implies attention. Attention is to watch, observe, listen, learn. There are many things you can learn from books, but there is learning which is infinitely clear, quick, and without any ignorance. Attention implies sensitivity and this gives depth to perception, which no knowledge, with its related ignorance, can give. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 126)

⁵⁶ It is interesting to see how Krishnamurti always works from the same basic core message. Even when he discusses concepts like affection. He is amazingly consistent in his rationale for schools.

Affection, care, and attention he would argue are all inextricably linked. As I already pointed out this sentiment is of course not a new idea to the field of curriculum. Nel Noddings argues that caring is

...the state of consciousness of the carer (or “one-caring”) as characterized by engrossment and motivational displacement. By engrossment I mean an open, nonselective receptivity to the cared-for. Other writers have used the word “attention” to describe this characteristic. Iris Murdoch, for example, discussed attention as essential in moral life, and she traced the concept to Simone Weil. (Noddings, 1992, p. 15)

Clearly Noddings and K are close in their meaning and understanding of care and affection. Iris Murdoch, who was an ardent admirer of Krishnamurti, was undoubtedly influenced by him as well in her thinking on attention. Whatever the case, affection, care, and attention are linked and important to fostering well-being in schools.

As I pointed out throughout the vignettes from the schools, the teachers at both Oak Grove and Brockwood were quite affectionate with students. This care was demonstrated through physical affection, but also through other aspects of relationship, such as sharing the love of the subject with students like Raj in K-Class or Aashika in Math (see page 173 to 177), through walks and camping in nature at the schools, and also through attention and classroom manner. Katherine, Aashika, Todd, Anney, Darla, and Wouter are also quite affectionate with their students both physically and in other aspects of relationship (e.g. see page 178 or page 317). This most certainly creates an atmosphere of care and concern for individuals, community, nature, and the world as a whole.

Teachers at the schools also focus on the cultivation of this quality of affection in the students. The attention to the emotional intelligence of children and their social-

emotional development is key in developing this quality of affection. Anney, for example spoke of the importance of “attunement” with her students:

...our goal is attunement, really, to know who the child is, to anticipate, because early childhood is also a time when kids are working on impulse control and has a flow like this [pointing out the kids running around], so that you know, you expect, that when they're toddlers they barely know the boundaries of their own body and if at home there's one truck and one kid, why would it be any different at school? It's very different with peer relationships for them, so they're learning to navigate that and the goal would be that instead of grabbing, pushing, pinching, biting, kicking, which is the physically speaking the earliest childhood impulse, that they learn to put words to those needs and those feelings, so we'll model that in a gentle, respectful way. It's part of what we're doing when you hear us describing what we see, or using open-ended sentences, like, “I'm wondering what...that was a really big voice...that was a really loud voice...that was a mad voice...” you know it's this sort of open ended statements or questions so that we can help them understand what it feels like. That “Oh,” that was made, “ooooh,” we help them to understand it. They are learning fluency and literacy for emotions, it's a very important thing to do and can be done very early and is so helpful later on, so that's a lot of the work on the conflict resolution and the emotional literacy is what we're focused on. We focus on the dynamics of relationship the dynamics, the social interactions, etc...

Anney and Darla typify this approach at the K schools. Through attention or engrossment, the teachers can really get into the thinking and emotions of the student. In this way they can focus not only on the intellect, but also the heart. This can lead to an integration of the emotional and the intellectual. This emotional intelligence or “literacy” as she calls it, is an important work for the integration of the emotional and rational brain, which implies a fuller use of the various learning and memory systems of the brain.

Earlier in this dissertation I discussed the importance of the activity of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. One of the most reliable measures of the activity of these two systems is actually the regularity of our heart rate (Grossman, 1992; Porges & Byrne, 1992; Servan-Schreiber, 2004), sometimes called cardiac

coherence (Servan-Schreiber, 2004). When we are stressed or emotionally disturbed our heart rate can be relatively erratic because our sympathetic nervous system is active constantly or sporadically. We could compare this to the accelerator in a car. We experience coherence either when we have completely damaged our heart by accelerating all the time or through states of calmness where the parasympathetic nervous system (the brake in our car) is more active leads us to a state of rest and relaxation (the relaxation response). Finding a good equilibrium between our brake and our accelerator is essential if we seek to develop a calm disposition and a strong character. It is the biological correlate of our emotional states. Although K may have been speaking more metaphorically when he referred to the heart, it is true that when someone gives attention or receives it, the heart tends to be more regular and coherent and vice versa (Berntson et al., 1996; Servan-Schreiber, 2004). Just as we saw for the importance of safety and security, a caring and affectionate environment that gives attention to students is essential for the coherence of the brain and the heart.

Former students from Oak Grove expressed that one of the predominate features they remember from their education was the care and affection they received. I asked one student about her relationships with her teachers. She told me that

The small size and intimate nature of Oak Grove makes it possible to become quite close to your teachers. For me they were not only educators, but mentors, as well as friends. To this day I still meet up with some of my teachers who my friends and I were especially close to, for lunch or movies. Because of this, during high school, I felt completely comfortable to talk about any problems or issues I may have been having

As this quote demonstrates, there is a strong relationship between care and affection and safety and security. The quality and character of the relationships at both schools were

very familiar, they never felt formal. Other students I spoke with expressed similar sentiments:

I would describe my relationships with my ex-teachers as informal and real. We would communicate with each other in ways other than that are usually defined for student and teacher. The relationships were generally honest and open. We treated each other like friendly colleagues, but we had a diverse spectrum of conversation topics. I found that quite a few relationships were important to me.

This same student also expressed that sometimes the relationships were “too personal” and that there was a balance to be maintained between teachers and students that isn’t easy to do, but it was clear that she nonetheless valued the experience as a whole.

Students at Brockwood expressed similar sentiments:

I really was very happy at Brockwood and I think the thing that gave me the most in terms of inner education was having that rapport with staff because you can...um...I liken them to parents and yet they are educators and you go through both things, you know, they’re living with you as well. And I think that the kind of friendships that occur here are wonderful. I took a lot from relating to the staff, I really enjoy the adult company. And of course I had best friends here, I met, you know, whom I still today have bonds, yeah you know, just very good strong relationships. They’re deep friends for me and they always will be. It’s like lifetime connections which not many persons have, especially in mainstream schools. You look back 15 years and I still feel that way.

The caring relationships have the potential to be even closer at Brockwood because the staff and students live together all year. They play the role of parents and teachers, so the bonds are generally deeper.

Some of the parents I spoke with were also very happy with this aspect of the schools. They considered the care and affection of these small schools as one of the essential reasons for choosing to keep their children enrolled. One parent from Oak Grove told me,

Here they have a direct experience with what they do, how others react and how they feel, who they are. Kids at other schools say, "I'm really good at math, that's who I am." Here they don't do that, they just feel good about themselves. They are extremely confident. They go into a room and feel that they are going to be liked. They are going to feel that because they are good people. They don't have that competition in this environment so they aren't measuring themselves against others in their environment and they know who they are, that is really important for them.

The care and affection, as well as the sense of security and safety, contributes to a child sense of self-respect and self-confidence. This parent remarked that it was such a marked difference from her own experiences in school that on occasion it brings her to tears.

Other parents shared with me that the teachers help them as parents. Because the teachers come to know the children so well, they really understand their personalities and challenges. One parent expressed that

Every single conference I've had with teachers has been dead on about the observations they make about my child. So I've got it easy as a parent, I've got support. You know, I'm sure a day will come, not every day or every year has been as good as every other. I am not easily won over either. I lurked around this school for 4 years before I brought my children here.

Both schools I observed really cared deeply for their students. If there is one great strength of Krishnamurti education in its present form it is the care that teachers show for the students.

Intellect, Reasoning, and Meaning

Krishnamurti and the schools he created still greatly value the development of the mind and the mental aspects of the human being. This includes an exposure to various cultures, traditions, and belief systems. However, K never wanted anything that could lead to conformity or indoctrination. In his words,

It is necessary to encourage the development of a good mind—a mind which is capable of dealing with the many issues of life as a whole, and which does not try to escape from them and so become self-contradictory, frustrated, bitter or cynical. And it is essential for the mind to be aware of this own conditioning, its own motives and pursuits. (Krishnamurti, 1963, p. 3)

This cognitive and meta-cognitive understanding is as important as the work on sensitivity and the emotional life of people in K's educational vision. As children, K points out, we are incredibly inquisitive. We have an almost inexhaustible curiosity to learn new things and remain incredibly observant and sensitive to the world around us. As we age, this capacity tends to dull, and our thinking becomes increasingly rigid and fixed in patterns. There is thus a great importance in understanding the mind and the nature of thought and through processes so that we can remain supple and fluid in our thinking—capable of making rapid adjustments to situations in life. By mind, K does not only mean the brain. K means an understanding of the contents of our own consciousness:

The mind which says, “I think”; “it is mine”; “I am hurt”; “I am jealous”; “I love”; “I hate”; “I am Indian”; “I am a Muslim”; “I believe in this and I do not believe in that”; [...] Unless you being now to understand and make yourself thoroughly familiar with the whole process of thinking which is called the mind, unless you are fully aware of it in yourself, you will gradually, as you grow older, become hard, crystallized, dull, fixed in a certain pattern of thought. (Krishnamurti, 1963, p. 96)

Through an understanding of the mind, a person can work towards the subtlety of mind necessary to stay fluid and supple throughout life. K wanted to ensure that schooling supported this goal. Moreover, cognitive and meta-cognitive understanding brings us face to face with our own subjectivity and our cultural orientation. As K points out, our cultural conditioning can lead us to rigidity in thinking.

Various aspects of the school programs at Oak Grove and Brockwood worked towards helping children become more aware of their thinking, their conditioning, and their cultural understanding. Anney and Darla work on helping the children put words to experience and to feelings through constant narration and modeling (see page 248 and 249). This is an essential part of helping kids to begin to develop their mind and thinking. We also saw examples of the development of critical thinking and the inquiry in K-class or fundamental questions with Raj and Wouter. Each of them tackles difficult open-ended subjects like fear and human sexuality. The level of discourse was sustained at a high level by good questioning and prompting.

The goal of self-understanding and the goal of understanding of thought are often complementary in practice. However, more globally speaking the study of academic disciplines, tests, memorization, reading, writing, and all the other standard practices of schools are important for the development of a keen analytic mind. Krishnamurti never disparaged such practices, rather he disparaged their exclusive use. In point of fact, the curriculum during K's life and after has remained fairly traditional in terms of scope and approach. The traditional curriculum of the schools was certainly one of the most surprising aspects of my visit to the schools. He and the trustees had agreed that it was in the best interest of the schools to maintain accreditation, to participate in national exams, and to satisfy the standards of the respective state or country of the school. Consistent with K's view of freedom, he was not interested in reactivity, he rather sought to go above and beyond the minimum and reductive assumptions of those who focused exclusively on technical education. Parents I spoke with at the schools like this facet of K education. One parent shared that,

I come from a pretty rigorous academic background, I don't think there is any way around writing and reading literature to master the English language. Similar for math skills, its never going to be fun, but it needs to be handled. I also believe that if you challenge a child properly you help them to soar instead of inhibited and repressed. A certain challenge is exactly what they need, which is another thing I treasure about this place is they challenge kids without defeating them.

While the curriculum may remain fairly traditional, the approach is anything but. As the parent points out, the approach at the K schools asks students to constantly push their personal boundaries and limits. They focus on the "appropriate challenge" in both the "inner" and the "outer" curriculum. This is accomplished through study, but also through dialogue, inquiry, and outdoor experiences like camping and class trips.

When I discussed what the students felt they learned while at Brockwood, alumni reported that they had learned a lot about their own thinking while at the school. It is an aspect that has stuck with them throughout their lives. One student told me that

...I can say (generally, of course), that Oak Grove taught me to self-assess and evaluate my thoughts and behavior. When it comes to thinking about other people in social situations, I would say that the school taught me to think about other individuals as more than figures that represent a single idea at a particular moment. In other words, Oak Grove taught me to train myself to see individuals as whole people (to the best of my abilities), with complex thoughts and feelings. To realize, and then be reminded every once in a while that everyone in the world is a whole person, is quite sensational.

Self-awareness is of paramount importance at the school and it is a message that manages to make its way through to the students. Equally important to is the academic learning and the self-regulated learning of subject matter. I had asked alumni how prepared they felt to go to college and the students all said something similar to this student:

In terms of academics, Oak Grove prepared me for college in one important way: they taught me the skill of critical thinking. This skill is important in any discipline, in my opinion. Also, Oak Grove taught me

how to be self-motivated. Since it is such a small school each individual has to make the active choice to participate in activities and seek knowledge. Due to the fact that I did make the active choice to participate, I was supported and provided with more outlets and opportunities. To sum up, I learned that by working hard and being self-motivated I would be successful at school. I kept this lesson with me going into college, and it has served me well.

The type of critical thinking and self-regulated learning that K schools encourage helps students to be successful in their academic studies if they decide to continue, but also helps them to understand their character and their own autonomy which is an essential skill in life.

The understanding of the cognitive, metacognitive, conscious, and unconscious processes of the brain are essential in man's search for meaning and for the development of self-awareness. While there is great concern about the development of self-awareness, there is no specific technique, recipe, or method that all teachers rely upon to encourage this type of awareness. Each of them attempts in their own way—some through dialogue, journaling and writing, and the encouragement of inquiry, others through the moments of silence, and experiences in nature—to encourage children to become more mindful of their thought processes. In his description of the development of self-awareness (**see table 5** in chapter 2), Cloninger (2004) emphasizes the importance of meta-cognition for reaching the second stage of self-awareness, which he links with the episodic memory system of the pre-frontal cortex. Self-awareness, especially in the higher stages, requires an understanding of the unconscious and subconscious aspects of thought. Most of us remain largely ignorant of these processes unless we are encouraged to study it. While the work at the K schools is not full-proof, they definitely leave room in the classroom for this type of work.

Work on this aspect of consciousness is essential if we seek to understand our biases and prejudices. In fact, we will have great difficulty reaching the cultural and racial tolerance sought after by critical theorists and multicultural education without an awareness of our own thinking. Krishnamurti referred to the “hidden or unconscious mind” which he regarded as the repository of racial memories, “Religion, superstition, symbol, peculiar traditions of a particular race, the influence of literature both sacred and profane, of aspirations, frustrations, mannerisms, and varieties of food—all these are rooted in the unconscious” (Krishnamurti, 1963, p. 20). It is sure that the K schools I visited did not have any problems of racial or cultural intolerance. Brockwood was internationally-speaking incredibly diverse, so the potential was certainly there for it. However, the emphasis on self-awareness, safety and security, and care and affection in the school was key in staving off intolerance. Classes like human development at Brockwood seek to deepen this awareness by dealing directly with subjects like homosexuality, cultural sensitivity, and prejudice. The mixture of anti-bias work, global awareness, care, safety, and self-awareness is key for the learning that takes place at Brockwood and Oak Grove.

The Sacred, Spirituality, and Religiosity

In our materialistic era, it is rather unusual to hear the terms spirituality, the sacred, or religiosity in the context of schools, except if those schools are operated by religious organizations like Catholic Schools, or Quaker Schools. Krishnamurti spoke unabashedly about the religion and spirituality, but not through the vision of organized religion:

...there is the religious mind, the true religious mind that does not belong to any cult, to any group, to any religion, to any organized church.[...] The religious mind does not belong to any group which calls itself religious. [...] the religious mind is completely alone. It is a mind that has seen through the falsity of churches, dogmas, beliefs, traditions. [...] The innocent mind, the young mind, the mind that is extraordinarily pliable, subtle, has no anchor. It is only such a mind that can experience that which you call God, that which is not measurable. (Krishnamurti, 2006a, p. 17)

Krishnamurti equated the religious mind with the pliability and subtlety of a child's mind.

To see the world without lens or filter, without religious dogma or traditions, was the heart of the religious mind for K. He contrasted this with the scientific mind which he also thought was valuable. K described the scientific mind as very "factual." He said, "Discovery is its mission, its perception" (Krishnamurti, 2006a, p. 16). The true scientific mind see the world "as it is," unmediated. From this science draws conclusions and builds up theories. In this sense a pure scientific mind has nothing to do with nationalism, race, or prejudice. However, nationalism or racism often exploits science. For Krishnamurti, the scientific mind and the religious mind are kindred: "A human being is a true human being when the scientific spirit and the true religious spirit go together" (Krishnamurti, 2006a, p. 17). Where the scientific mind is clear and precise, dealing with facts, the religious mind is creative and loving. K wanted his schools to work on both of these facets, the inner and the outer, the religious and the scientific. He argued that it was imperative for the student to cultivate a scientific mind in studies, but also to know himself:

You cannot have a religious mind without knowing yourself, without knowing all about yourself—your body, your mind, your emotions, how the mind works, how thought functions. And to go beyond that, to uncover all that, you must approach it with a scientific mind which is precise, clear, unprejudiced, which does not condemn, which observes,

which sees. When you have such a mind you are really a cultured human being, a human being who knows compassion. Such a human beings knows what it is to be alive. (Krishnamurti, 2006a, p. 18)

Through self-awareness which can be approached in a scientific manner, an individual can begin to cultivate the religious mind and a sense of the sacred.

K's vision of spirituality is very atypical. He did not believe that any person could mediate our understanding of ourselves and of truth. "Truth is a pathless land," for K, so authority, dogma, tradition, and methodology are not helpful, but hold us back from that lived experience of the actual or the real. So a religious experience for K is not something someone comes to through organized religion, but is the very experience of reality. Truth is not inaccessible or locked away behind an altar. It is rather in our hands. K continually spoke of the importance of awakening our intelligence, which is not constrained by human thought. He argued that our intelligence is dormant and can be awakened through relationship and inquiry, as well as thinking and working together. So truth comes to us through experience, through being in touch with our common human consciousness, the same principles he encouraged in his schools. In this sense, one of the fundamental goals of Krishnamurti education is to help children have a sense of the sacred. This sacredness cannot be communicated outwardly through religious symbols or ritual, but rather through the atmosphere brought about by the people who live in the place and their own understanding of it.

This religious or sacred dimension of K education is very important but very difficult to address. It is a stated intention of both schools, but the spirit to which K refers is certainly stronger at Brockwood than it is at the Oak Grove School. I believe this is due in no small part to the fact that Brockwood is a boarding school. The potential for

students and teachers to dedicate themselves to the religious mind is more possible as a result of the intensity of relationship there and also due to the fact that the students are more immersed in the school. They also carve out space for silence during morning meeting, inquiry time, and other activities that help the kids to work on an appreciation of the sacred. That said, Oak Grove also makes efforts to address it, but in a far less systematic way. Each teacher attends to it in their own way. Oak Grove has to contend with the culture of southern California and the limited amount of time that they spend with the students. Generally speaking, the Oak Grove School focuses more on the sensitivity to nature and ecological thinking. This in and of itself tends to help children, especially young ones, to approach the sacred through a sense of connectedness with nature and relationship to the world as a whole. This, I suspect, is one of the reasons that K chose such beautiful places for his schools. When I asked Anney and Darla how they addressed the spiritual with children they said simply, “Experiences in nature which we are blessed to be able to support, compared to inner city schools or the apartment building schools in New York, we have this amazing environment.” A former student at Oak Grove confirmed this:

And I think it [Oak Grove School] really is a sanctuary. I remember Katherine one time at an assembly gave a whole lecture on the fact that this place is a sanctuary. She was mainly talking at the time about animals, I think maybe some of the kids were catching lizards. She was like this is a sanctuary, we can't catch the lizards or whatever, so... but I think it really in some ways allowed me to be who I am, you know this place where they allowed me to question also who I am, or who I think I am, and it's an ongoing education for me.

The “sanctuary” of the Oak Grove is an important aid in the student’s search for self-understanding and understanding of the sacred.

The natural environment is also an important facet of life at Brockwood Park. Freya's work with children is designed to help children appreciate the mysteries of life and to develop a connection with the natural world. I asked her what she thought it was about and after thinking for a minute she gave me a list, "Time with nature, respect for nature, communion with nature." After thinking for another minute she explained:

As with many things, I think it could have a greater role than it does here, but I feel like it's basic to the place. It's basic in that developing at least an awareness if not a real sensitivity to the natural world, to all living things, is one of the major roles of this place, is one of the major intentions. How we do it, if we 're successful, if we even have it as a staff, is all questionable. I don't know. But definitely that sense that, I don't know how to put it, but I feel like it actually begins to enter what I would call, and I have the same shyness about using these words as everybody else, it would begin to enter the sort of the world of the sacred for me, that it has that depth of significance. It's essential to it. It is also essential for a healthy, happy, well-balanced life. If mean we cut ourselves off, it's clear that that balance goes away. In so many ways, and also in how we interact with each other and how we detach ourselves from each other more and more. A basic respect and sensitivity to life enables us to also have a basic respect and sensitivity to each other because we're clearly a very physical part of that.

The activation of the senses through experiences in nature is extremely important for sensitivity and openness to the world and for helping children develop a sense of connectedness with the world. One of the central themes of K's vision, as we saw in chapter 2, is that the "observer is the observed," and ecological awareness is central to helping people understanding the non-dualistic understanding of reality. This element of attentiveness to "sensitivity to the natural world, to all living things" is extremely important at Brockwood and in Ojai. This is the major impetus for the vegetarianism at both schools.

Thus there is a balance between moments for silence and meditation, relationships, time in nature, and inquiry in the classrooms. In the classrooms, teachers focus on how to make connections to this dimension through subject matter study. I discussed this issue with Wouter at length:

It is so much harder on that level than academic level, to open a mind because each, every single person or it seems most kids here believe in God or in a higher power or something, or feel like there is a self because they want to be a self. They want to have an identity and be something and they believe that they have free will, for example. So there my challenge is even greater than in the academic realm because how can I come up with questions that are genuine and that somehow they will hold and can't immediately answer where it's not me—they're very smart these kids and the moment I have an agenda and I want them to see something, they will sense it and immediately the effect will be lost. This was true at Brockwood also. There is no sense is pushing this on anyone [...] In these unaware moments you are sparked with creative moments and a question comes out and a student goes, oh I haven't considered that and they go along with it, but God knows what. On that level, yes, long-term for sure, I don't see—but that's also for me personally the area where I would love to do more with in the school. You see it at Brockwood and I proposed it for our high school. I think we should sit quietly everyday for ten minutes—I mean that in itself addresses it, but if you keep saying why you do this, that makes a huge difference. People do all the morning jobs together so that makes a huge difference, so there's really some additional stuff that happens there.

Authenticity is an essential element in this domain. If students sense agendas or fixed ideas they tend to shut out the elements. At the same time care needs to be taken to provide opportunities for students to have experiences that can help them to understand the sacred, like silence and experiences in nature. It is just important that such initiatives aren't coercive or forced. There are some initiatives around the country that seek to do meditation with children, however if such practices are forced on the children it will not necessarily lead to a deeper understanding of the sacred and may even lead them to resent the whole idea of meditation if done improperly. This issue was somewhat of a dilemma

at Brockwood while I was there. Many students were not attending morning meeting. It is a “rule” at Brockwood that everyone should attend, but it is not enforced through punishment. It is up to each student and their tutor to discuss such problems. There had been some concern, however, that the whole process had become something of a ritual at the school. It was in the air, and everyone was debating the importance of silence and a search for the sacred in the life of the school. Some students said that they should be able to go walk in the grove instead of attending morning meeting if they wanted. However the matter is eventually resolved, it is true that making room for such an experience in the curriculum allowed for there to be a discussion on the subject at all.

A final note, regarding the role of the sacred in schooling regards the place for the love and joy of learning. K’s vision of education was an effort to fundamentally reexamine schooling in order not to rely strictly on technical education and training. It is true that technical education or training can be a joyless process with its emphasis on memorization and understanding of specific skills. There are increasingly problems keeping children in schools and engaged (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). This is one place, where an attention to the sacred dimension of schooling is important and as of yet poorly explored in the literature. To help the reader see my point here, let me recount a part of the interview I had with Todd concerning his beliefs about the role of spirituality in the classroom:

There is that spiritual component to the class, that we’re kind of on a spiritual journey and it makes education more profound and richer. When their divinity within or higher connection or whatever you want to call it, when that deeper self can come through, that is the true wonderment of teaching. The students who can get in touch with this aspect of themselves have an experience of joy. It’s that unequal joy of learning and that’s the real reward. The real reward of learning is that joy. Instead

of gummy bears or marbles in the jar and stuff, that's counterfeit, and it just turns off the self, turns off the spiritual self.

Although he uses a different language than K would, Todd is alluding to the joy that comes from real learning that is motivated not out of reward or punishment, but in the satisfaction that comes from self-awareness and personal discovery. When students are pushed beyond themselves and challenge themselves they can have a true learning experience that isn't motivated out of anything but the simple joy that comes about as a natural consequence of such inward discovery. The real joy of learning comes from a discovery of the human being with little need for external rewards like gummy bears or marbles in a jar. Todd also shared with me that this is why he feels that he has no behavioral issues in his class. He explains this to parents and teachers and they "never believe him" they assume that he must rely upon some technique. But according to Todd, when the deeper aspects of the person are touched and they have experienced this joy of learning they "they yearn to come back, so they run in here and learn."

There is a danger when we rely upon reward and punishment in the classroom. We saw one example of this during the discussion of test anxiety (McDonald, 2001). Todd expressed to me during my visit that reward and punishment in the classroom, whether it comes from jelly beans, gold stars, or yelling at children or punishing them with detention and other means may miss an essential feature of learning. There is a real joy that comes from true learning. We may easily extinguish students natural love of learning and rob them of the joy that comes from it. This is not only a question of bad grades on a test, or a lack of engagement in schools, but on disturbing the connection an individual has with the world around them, which spiritually speaking has far more dire

consequences in the development of human civilization and culture. The cultivation of memory and the intellect is certainly a necessity to function properly in the existing social and economic order. However, the role of education also concerns the development and maintenance of human culture. It is the way in which children are inducted in the legacy of the history of humanity, with all its strengths and weaknesses, and given an opportunity to write a new chapter. When we disconnect from the legacy of human history we are doomed to “reinvent the wheel” constantly, instead of standing on the shoulders of those who came before us. If we reduce learning to something mechanical and based solely on conditioned responses to reward and punishment we are really engaging in an assault on the sacred legacy. K argues that culture is something totally different than the mere cultivation of knowledge:

The word implies not only the cultivation of knowledge, but also the total essence of man, both inner and outer. The division is artificial; complete harmony in which there is no division is the real. The present cultures of the world are fast fading, and because they are disappearing they are being replaced by knowledge and not by wisdom. The essence of culture is complete harmony. This harmony is the very core of the religious mind. Without religion there is no culture; but not the religion of organized propaganda, which all religions are, nor the personal search for some vast experience. [...] Culture is the door to reality... (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 230-231)

A reliance on knowledge, training, and memorization at the expense of the cultivation of the mind may only serve to dull our intelligence and the formation of the religious mind in culture. As Eisner remarked:

It does not require a great leap of imagination or profound insight to recognize that the values and visions that have driven education during the first quarter of the twentieth century are reappearing with a vengeance today. We look for “best methods” as if they were independent of context; we do more testing than any nation on earth; we seek curriculum uniformity so parents can compare their schools with other schools, as if

test scores were good proxies for the quality of education...What we are now doing is creating an industrial culture in our schools, one whose values are brittle and whose conception of what's important narrow. We flirt with payment by results, we pay practically no attention to the idea that engagement in school can and should provide intrinsic satisfactions, and we exacerbate the importance of extrinsic rewards by creating policies that encourage children to become point collectors. Achievement has triumphed over inquiry. I think our children deserve more. (Eisner, 2002, pp. 6-7)

“I think our children deserve more” too. If we forget these “intrinsic satisfactions,” if we concentrate on “extrinsic awards” than it may well lead us to the denigration and vulgarization of culture to its mere shadow. As I quoted Martin Luther King Jr. earlier in this dissertation “When culture is degraded and vulgarity enthroned,” the social system does not build security but leads people to pull away from a “soulless” society. People are increasingly isolated and alienated from society. This leads to fear and rigidity. It is therefore imperative for those of us interested in the culture, social justice, and the stability of human society to think about the role of spirituality in schooling. The religious mind is no enemy of the scientific mind, it completes it and helps humanity to focus on the sacred in culture. As K had said at the very end of his life:

Religion is a form of science. That is, to know and to go beyond all knowledge, to comprehend the nature and immensity of the universe, not through a telescope, but the immensity of the mind and the heart. And this immensity has nothing whatsoever to do with organized religion. (Krishnamurti, 1987, p. 127)

Living and Working Together: Looking in an Integrated Way at the Dimensions of Schooling

While I have presented these various dimensions as somehow separate for analytical purposes, they are all in dynamic interaction. As we had seen throughout these descriptions, it is difficult to completely disentangle them from one another. It is not

only difficult, but false. These various dimensions of the school, like Eisner's ecology, are interrelated and interconnected. From a certain point of view, one could look at these dimensions as a taxonomy of well-being and schooling. If we neglect one of these dimensions it has a tendency to feedback and impact other dimensions. When the school lacks order, it is going to impact its ability to care for the students or to provide security and safety. Yet, at the same time these dimensions do have some qualities that are discrete and can be considered independent of their relationships with various aspects of the school. I would argue that if a teacher and a school could be attentive to all of these dimensions through relationship than it would maximize the potential for students to have the freedom to learn.

As this analysis has shown, the two schools I observed during this dissertation are not perfect. It is difficult to evaluate these schools in the same way one would evaluate a mainstream public school. They are attempting to address the whole child, which concerns all of the dimensions discussed in this chapter. There are few schools that place a strong emphasis on the sacred, or on the development of a pliable and subtle mind, or on care and affection for that matter (Noddings, 1992). While I am now going to point out some of the weak points of the schools, it is important to recognize that so much of what is happening in these schools would warm the hearts of the thousands of parents and teachers who are dissatisfied with schools that do not value the whole child. The fact that these two schools have the courage to address these other issues at all is quite laudable. Overall, the education that children receive at both schools is quite good.

With this strong qualification in mind, I would like to point out some of the issues the two schools I observed are having. Clearly, K education is still a work in progress.

As Bill had said in chapter 4, “We have nothing to be complacent about.” They are still working to implement K’s vision of education at each of these various levels. There are a number of areas that the schools seem to struggle with and have done so since their very beginnings. The first area concerns the role and structure of the academic curriculum in the schools. In Ojai, because it is a day school, there is much more of a need to work on relationship in the classroom as compared with Brockwood where the students and teachers live together. Relationship is key to K’s approach. So there is a competition for time and energy between relationship and subject matter. Sometimes the academics suffer, other time the relationship suffers. As I described above, parents, teachers, and students have been critical of Ojai for being a bit lax on academic learning. At Brockwood, the situation is different because there is so much interaction happening all the time. With a solid backdrop of relationship, teachers focus more energy on the subject matter while in classes. So it would seem that there is a better balance at Brockwood. This is not an either/or situation, but it is an issue that requires vigilance and attention at the schools. Some staff and parents at Brockwood feel that there is not an adequate assessment and evaluation of learning. There are no grades, only national exams that are elective. This led some members of the community to believe that there is not enough feedback for students about their learning. At Brockwood, students are truly responsible for their own learning—the same can be said of Ojai. Given this freedom some students may not do as well on academics. Is this a problem? The answer to this question can only be dictated by the values of the parents and teachers. For example, if students grow personally and not academically it may well be more important for the child’s learning and education (at least for a time), especially if he or she is not interested

in going to the University⁵⁷. It is important to consider each child individually and reflect on their talents, strengths, and personal development. Regardless of whether they work on academic learning or on the arts, or on personal discovery, let me not leave you with the impression that students can just hang around Brockwood and do nothing. Rather, it is a question of emphasis and priorities. The students have a very rich experience at both schools, especially Brockwood Park. Many staff expressed strong feelings to me about the way their classrooms “should be.” What are the appropriate forms of evaluation, what should classroom time look like, what is appropriate feedback for students, how should the classroom be structured, and so forth. It is an issue that needs to be clarified for staff, parents, and students at both schools.

A second major issue I observed concerned the role of authority at the school. I had described a useful distinction earlier in this dissertation that is relevant here, namely psychological vs. functional authority. K frequently pointed out that authority is often toxic for intelligence. Nonetheless, he did not believe that there should be no authority. Rather he argued that individuals needed to understand their roles in the school and fulfill them with rigor, but not allow themselves to think that they are a psychological authority as a result. During my stay at the two schools there was a lot of turmoil in the staff bodies. In the space of this dissertation I was not able to describe all of my experiences at the school. I attended many staff meetings and was privy to some of conflicts at the school. I was not able to depict any of these experiences in vignettes, but some of what I

⁵⁷ As Noddings (1992), Meier (2002), and others have pointed out, the US does not do a very good job with vocational education at the moment. We make an assumption that all students will go to the University but rarely consider other career and life paths. Here I am trying to point out that while there is room for children to explore other things than academics and at times this may well be more important to a child's development than good grades.

observed is germane to this discussion. In Brockwood the turmoil was due to the fact that there was some level of mistrust among the staff and most certainly a lack of safety and security. Much of this stemmed from a lack of adequate definition of roles and clear communication about those roles. Staff did not have a clear sense of how decisions were made. In terms of functional authority there was a felt need to improve the sense of what the various roles are in the school, even if that is subject to change. In the absence of clear role definitions and structures to support those roles by the administration, there was a felt lack of safety and security. While the school was a very safe and secure place for children, it was not for the teachers. Part of clarifying the roles is related to time management and the demands on the staff's time. Clearly the staff are pushed to some limits because there are a lot of time demands at Brockwood. This left little time for planning and even less for reflection on K's vision of education. This meant that teachers had to spend their breaks and time off planning and reflecting. This unfortunately leads to burn out and misunderstanding, as well as a relatively large turnover rate at the school. In Ojai, the principal resigned and was subsequently asked to pack her belongs and leave due to misunderstanding between the principal and the board of trustees. This led to a large upheaval at the school. Some teachers, parents, and community members felt that the principal had strayed too far from K's intentions and was pushing an agenda that was good business, but not moving towards the vision K had. Other teachers felt exactly the opposite. The tensions and conflicts that ensued as a result of this between the board and the teachers, the school and the parents, and the community as a whole was quite troubling. There was vehement arguments about what is best for the school. What was helpful in this whole process however was that it did force the whole community, staff,

trustees, parents, students, and teachers, to sit together and communicate about what they felt was important, what wasn't being addressed, what structures could be established to address those issues, and how to best meet the needs of the children. The fact that the community was small meant that everyone took the situation very personally, which has its up sides and its down sides. What is important to bear in mind here is that the communities of people that are drawn to K schools are very skeptical of authority and are always questioning motives. At times, they do it too much. Finding a way to deal with the functional authority necessary to govern a school well is a quintessential question of Krishnamurti education.

This equally relates to the teacher induction and development. While I was at Brockwood I spoke with new staff members who expressed that coming into Brockwood was very difficult. They felt that there was insufficient preparation and explanation about the nature of the community and the expectations on them. The questions new staff had upon arrival were, what is typical here? What is the culture, the expectations, the needs, my roles, my responsibilities, and so forth? How does it work around here? Once again, while there is a clear induction process for students at Brockwood there is not a clear teacher induction process. This doesn't mean that the new teachers did not like the job they had or the nature of the school, simply that the induction process was difficult. I believe that this relates to the fact that there is no method of Krishnamurti education. So each individual teacher has to come to terms with what K education means and what is entailed in working at the school. Staff are required to come and live with everyone for at least a week or two before coming to work at the school, which certainly helps the staff, but once they come to the school they have to figure it out on their own step-by-step.

While the explanations of the community would remain at the level of thought, with all the risks this implies, these limitations can be explicitly stated to the staff and any explanation of how the community functions would go a long way in making people feel more secure and safe.

Finally, as with any school the quality of the teachers and administrators, and the student body determine much of what transpires in a school. At K schools the awareness of the teacher and the education of the educator, takes on great significance. There are at least two reasons for this greater demand on teachers. First of all, there is a strong emphasis placed on the education of the whole child in each of these dimensions. This means that a teacher needs to have spent time considering each of these dimensions in his or her own life before being able to work with students on it. Secondly, it is important to realize that the educator also needs to be educated to understand that this is a process, not an end in itself. That is, the learning that K describes is not something that they can finish in a month or even a year. K education requires the teachers to learn as well. The teachers and the students are learning together about life. Living together and learning together in relationship, that is the way K intended his schools to be and it is a tall order. Yet this positive vision of education is exactly what is required to help us to escape the many evils in society from ecological destruction to nuclear war. In the next chapter I will consider what I believe to be the essential themes that such a teacher preparation or induction program would need to adequately prepare teachers to address well-being in each of the five dimensions of schooling we have just seen. This chapter will help to complete my response to the 3 research questions that guide this study.

Chapter 7: Implications and Themes

Introduction

In chapters 1 through 6, I examine the concept of well-being and its relevance to the schools. The exploration of Krishnamurti's vision of education and the two schools he founded led to the identification of five dimensions of schooling that relate to the cultivation of well-being. The Science of Well-Being allowed me first to identify these five dimensions of schools and then to analyze how school practices relate to the cultivation of an individual's health and well-being (as I will continue to do in this chapter). In this manner, chapters 1 through 6 have already thoroughly addressed the first research question that guided this study (as well as the second to some extent):

1. *How is well-being relevant to the schools?*

In this chapter I will specifically address the latter two research questions:

2. *In a school dedicated to well-being and self-awareness, what specific strategies and pedagogies are used to help students cultivate self-awareness and well-being?*
3. *What is the significance of theories and practices aimed at increasing well-being for public schools in general?*

I will begin this response by placing it in a historical and sociological context for the reader. Then, I will use the Science of Well-Being to help us understand some practices that can shed light on how the K schools address well-being and its significance for the public schools.

The Pedagogy of Relationship

Krishnamurti did not hold educational methodology in high esteem. He argued that, considering the state of the world, our systems of education must be failing our society. If there is this much self-interest, greed, competition, ambition, violence, and war in the world, he argued, education must not be helping individuals to flower in goodness. Speaking about the problems of relying on methods he stated:

...the intelligence of the educator is far more important than his knowledge of a new method of education. When one follows a method, even if it has been worked out by a thoughtful and intelligent person, the method becomes very important, and the children are important only as they fit into it...If the teacher is of the right kind, he will not depend on a method, but will study each individual pupil. In our relationship with children and young people, we are not dealing with mechanical devices that can be quickly repaired, but with living beings who are impressionable, volatile, sensitive, afraid, affectionate; and to deal with them, we have to have great understanding, the strength of patience and love. (Krishnamurti, 1953, pp. 25-27)

When I began this study, I was searching for specific strategies, techniques, or methods that could help an individual grow in well-being. I questioned the teachers I observed and those from the community who were interested in education about what techniques or strategies we could use to help an individual develop well-being. Of course the teachers I observed were using some techniques and strategies. They would check homework regularly, create syllabi, place lists on the wall, create differentiated lessons, read aloud, check for student understanding, help kids set reasonable goals, encourage student participation, capitalize on their students' prior knowledge, assign a lot of work, and many other specific strategies and techniques. These techniques, however, were not enough to characterize the pedagogy they were employing. Technique and method, after

all, are nothing more than tools, and a tool is only as useful as the hand that wields it. Without sufficient understanding and know-how, a person may or may not be able to use a tool properly. As K had stated, the “right kind of teacher will not depend on method, but [will] study each individual pupil.” I suppose that this does not preclude the possibility that the “right kind of teacher” uses methodology, but she does not depend on it. It is like the artist who paints or composes music. Is the artist bound by the technique he or she uses? Sometimes the creative process demands the development of new tools or techniques to realize the vision. Some measure of technique is necessary, but it is not sufficient for true creativity. Like Schön’s reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983, 1987) or Rubin’s “Artist teacher” (Rubin, 1981, 1983), K’s notion of a teacher is far more than a technician or methodologist. She must be scientifically precise in the study of the children and constantly refine her own understanding of her teaching. This requires more than method or technique. As Nel Noddings pointed out,

Administrators assume that there must be a method that will allow teachers to meet 150-200 new students every year and yet establish the atmosphere of caring that teachers such as mine did years ago. A main message of this book is that there is no such method. People are not reducible to methods except, perhaps, in their work with objects. This form of reduction is called automation, and it simply does not apply to interpersonal activities. (Noddings, 1992, p. 8)

Human relationships are not reducible to technique. There is always something missing when we seek to reduce relationship to a simple strategy or method. With this in mind, I return to one of the research questions that guided this dissertation. What specific strategies or pedagogies are used to help students cultivate self-awareness and well-being? It is safe to say that at the two Krishnamurti schools I observed the dominant pedagogy used to foster well-being and self-awareness is a pedagogy of relationship. In

terms of strategies, it is probably better to speak of practices. I chose the word “practice” very carefully. The practices that lead to well-being are not rough and ready techniques or prescriptive methods that will lead to perfect strategies for teaching—if such a thing is even desirable. Rather I regard these as frameworks and principles that professionals should reflect upon, consider, and grapple with if they seek to foster well-being in the schools. It will give a means to evaluate how well our work in schools is fostering well-being and an approach for cultivating it. However, remember that Krishnamurti considered teaching to be relationship. This is why teachers at Krishnamurti schools generally scoff at the idea of employing a strategy or a technique in the classroom. Pedagogy is empty and mechanical without human relationship. And human relationship is sterile and pointless if it relies upon methods or techniques.

Krishnamurti is not the only person who believes that relationship is key to effective teaching (Bernstein, 1996; Cuban & Shippis, 2000; Dewey, 1938/1997, 1944; Kliebard, 2002, 2004; Lawton & Gordon, 2002; Meier, 2002; Nieto, 1999; Noddings, 1992; Oliver et al., 2002; Whitehead, 1967a). Earlier in this dissertation I offered a broad and simple definition of education as everything that is done to care for the learning of an individual. However, from a certain point of view, all of life can be considered learning. Therefore, as lifestyles shift, the nature of education must change. A couple hundred years ago, there would have been no need to debate what education should look like. There was only one way to learn, it was through the daily life of the small community, farm, village, or tribe where a person grew up. There were of course cities in those days as well, but not the gargantuan urban jungles we know today. Everything was smaller and children were constantly in the company of adults. As Deborah Meier points out,

A century ago, even less, children made the transition to adulthood early, steeped in the company of adults. Surely by fifteen or sixteen, when a majority of youngsters today are still a half dozen years or more away from entering the adult world, most were already in the thick of adult lives: having children, earning a living. They spent their time in the midst of multiage settings from birth on—small communities, farms, workplaces where they knew grown-ups intimately and knew a lot about how they went about their work, negotiating their way through life. Being young in the olden days wasn't idyllic, not by a long shot. (Meier, 2002, pp. 10-11)

Community life was not perfect in the past either, but it was quite different. This organic relationship between adults and children was simply a way of life, for better or worse. As Meier points out, we naturally absorbed the language, customs, arts and crafts, and everything else necessary to enter into the “club” of adulthood without the formalistic and somewhat contrived educational environments we have created today. While there was a fairly large degree of uniformity and conformity in the apprenticeships of old, children had a direct connection with what was being learned; it was personal. They had a deep personal investment in what they learned because it would enable them to live and survive, raise a family, or just simply eat. This system of apprenticeship was not perfect, but its strengths consisted in its personal relevance and the strength of the relationships in the small communities.

With the advent of the modern era and democratic societies, the tremendous shifts in lifestyle created a need for public education (Dewey, 1944; Meier, 2002; Oliver et al., 2002). This system was to provide the many with the same kind of education that only a few had been entitled to receive⁵⁸. Meier explains,

In seeking a substitute for the natural learning communities of yesterday, we invented schools and then systematically began to downgrade anything learned in nonschool ways. Schools bore the burden of replacing many if

⁵⁸ It is worthy of note that the ruling aristocratic classes hired tutors for their children. It mostly consisted of one-on-one work or small groups—this too was very personalized for the students.

not most of the functions of those former multiage communities—and at increasingly earlier ages. In a daunting but perhaps not surprising twist of fate, the schools that replaced those natural learning communities simultaneously underwent a transformation too—toward greater depersonalization. [...] We've invented schools that present at best a caricature of what the kids need in order to grow up to be effective citizens, skillful team members, tenacious and ingenious thinkers, or truth seekers. [...] We are—in short—perhaps the only civilization in history that organizes its youth so that the nearer they get to being adults the less and less likely they are to know any adults. (Meier, 2002, pp. 11-13)

Meier argues that children growing up today are largely forced to sit passively in classrooms and expected to assimilate a hopelessly large curriculum. She also argues that students most frequently learn from adults who they would never imagine becoming, much less like to become. The curriculum in our schools is often abstract and disconnected from student passions and interests. Frequently kids are left without any concrete skills. If they are interested in a specific trade, the abstract subject matter they have learned may have little or no relevance to their lives. The depersonalization of schools and the emphasis on technical learning does not meet all the educational needs of children.

Krishnamurti schools are an attempt to reinvigorate real communities of learning. Instead of relying solely on techniques or methods they seek to create relationships within a community. However, this is only the beginning of the approach. As Meier points out, there are many problems that can ensue from community learning. The child used to be expected to be an adult at a much younger age, and this led to a fair measure of pain and hardship. The goal is to take the strengths of this more natural adult/child relationship. K wanted to maintain deep human relationships, but to make the schools a

relaxed community where students had more freedom and no pressure to conform to a particular mode of life or career. He explains:

A school is a place of leisure, where the educator and the one to be educated are both learning. [...] Leisure implies freedom, which is generally translated as doing as one desires, which is what human beings are doing anyway, causing a great deal of mischief, misery and confusion. [...] It is only in a state of leisure that the mind can learn, not only science, history, mathematics but also about oneself. And one can learn about oneself in relationship. [...] When the teacher and the taught are involved in really understanding the extraordinary importance of relationship, then they are establishing in the school a right relationship among themselves. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 8-9)

The leisure K refers to is not laziness, but is rather the opportunity to reflect on one's life and learn without the standard pressures of life. Krishnamurti knew that people would have to learn about themselves slowly over time and that teachers would need to be learning along with students about how to live and work together. Each person would have to rediscover this natural form of learning through relationship.

Krishnamurti's major intention for his learning communities was to ensure that individuals would be capable of inward flowering. It was not enough to simply be in relationship. It was a question of being in relationship so that the dormant potential in each human being could be awakened and a person could become more aware of the good. As he explains:

...we will deal with the awakening of the heart, which is not sentimental, romantic or imaginary, but is of goodness which is born out of affection and love; and with the cultivation of the body, the right kind of food, proper exercise, which will bring about deep sensitivity. When the mind, the heart, and the body are in complete harmony, then the flowering comes naturally, easily and in excellence. [...] Goodness can flower only in freedom. It cannot bloom in the soil of persuasion in any form, or under compulsion, nor is it the outcome of reward. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 2-4)

A natural consequence of the greater coherence of a person is the “flowering” of goodness. It also leads to a “deep sensitivity.” This sensitivity is closely related to awareness. As he says, “Awareness implies sensitivity: to be sensitive to nature, to the hills, rivers and trees around one; [...] to be sensitive to the man who is sitting next to you [...] This sensitivity has no choice in it and it does not criticize” (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 156). This awareness and sensitivity to life helps an individual to cultivate well-being or goodness.

Thematics: The Practices that Lead to the Cultivation of Well-Being in Schools

The last quotes we saw from Krishnamurti concerning leisure, goodness, sensitivity, and awareness touch on some themes that emerge when looking globally at Krishnamurti’s writings and his schools. These themes transcend the interpretations that the participants of this study and have relevance outside of the context of the schools. It is useful to extract these themes and examine them because it allows us to gain insight into how the practices at the K schools can be useful in other settings, particularly public schools.

In chapter 6, I explored the five dimensions that can be considered a taxonomy of well-being and schooling. I demonstrated how each of the dimensions was addressed at Oak Grove School and Brockwood Park. These five dimensions give us a framework for considering how well a school is functioning and how it is able to help students and teachers cultivate well-being. It is imperative to consider the safety and security of students and teachers in order to build a stable environment where staff and students trust one another. It is equally essential that the classroom be ordered so that students and

teachers can be active and learn efficiently. It is important for well-being to care for one another and show affection. The development of a subtle and rational mind is key for an individual's search for meaning and the search for greater well-being. It is also crucial that we create spaces for children to explore the spiritual aspects of reality and to search for their own insights into the truth and nature of reality. These five dimensions are important for the development of well-being.

Before I explain the three themes that emerged from this study, I want to explain how they emerged during the course of the study. At the same time that the five dimensions of schooling and well-being emerged, a question was in the back of my mind: how do we evaluate the quality of what is being done in each of the five dimensions? Krishnamurti was highly critical of everything he saw in his schools. He never stopped questioning it. Some of the teachers and community members I was speaking with, while being aware of each of the five dimensions to some extent, were concerned with how the community was doing, especially in Ojai as the principal resigned (although the same can be said of Brockwood after a large number of teachers decided to leave at the end of the year). After coding all the data and digesting it, something emerged about the quality of relationships at the school. First of all, I realized that if I looked at the quality of the relationships between the teachers and the students, I could say something about the potential of that classroom to help the child develop well-being. By looking at the interactions between students and teachers, I could assess how much authentic learning was taking place. I had noticed some of the teachers relating to their students as friends. They would hang out with them, gossip a bit, and generally get along well together, but such relationships did not push children to get out of their comfort zone or transform

themselves, rather it reinforced certain attitudes they already held and did not ask them to see things in a new way. Contrast that with teachers who were not concerned with friendship with their students, but rather in a quality of love for their students that held consistent boundaries and asked them to push their personal limits. Here the relationship felt more familial, like a mother and a child or an older brother and a younger brother. This quality of relationship as we had seen it in Wouter's class, Raj's class, or Maria's class seemed to create environments during my observations that were better for learning about the internal and external sides of life. I had written a paper (K. Cloninger, 2008) on these various qualities of love some years earlier, but I had not made this connection between the different qualities of love and their potential for helping students cultivate well-being.

Then arose a second major theme related to the kind of freedom that teachers valued in the classroom. As we saw, there were some teachers who considered freedom to be "freedom of choice" or autonomy. This quality of freedom could be observed in the K-man filming (see page 340) or in the activity that Katherine used for making the rules of the game (see page 286). It is simply the ability to "do what one wants." Krishnamurti was very critical of this notion of freedom because he argued that it was leading to so much misery in the world because it stems from self-interest and not from a global perspective on life. I realized that the way K described freedom was not materialistic at all. It wholly transcends material issues. So at what level did freedom apply? I asked myself this question over and over again. After much reflection on the observations I made and on K's writings on the subject, I concluded that both freedom and love, at least the way that K refers to these concepts, transcend the particulars of the

classroom. They are transcendent phenomenon, and as a result, they find expression in each of the five dimensions of schooling and well-being discussed in chapter 6. In fact, in chapter 6 I point out the deep relationship between freedom and order, especially as K describes it. Looking back to the dimensions of schooling and well-being, if teachers could successfully create a foundation of safety and security, order, and care and affection, then students would be able to become more aware of their own thinking, work on the subtlety of the mind, and also begin to question something fundamental about the nature of existence and their own path in life. What was essential to look at was the quality of relationship. I had noticed different approaches at the school. Some teachers, like Wouter, Raj, Maria, and Anney were the most conscious or aware of the way in which love and freedom were expressing themselves in their classrooms. The self-awareness these teachers displayed of what they were doing in the classroom and why greatly aided them and helped their classes to be the most productive, both academically and in the development of well-being.

I also observed during my stay at the two schools a lot of work on character development. I was amazed that some of the teachers employed the very terms Cloninger (1993, 2004) uses to describe character. Todd, for example, describes the importance of students being “self-directed.” One term I was not surprised to here was the term “cooperation” or “corporate action,” both of which are used quite frequently by both K and teachers at the schools to describe the process of working together and understanding one another (see for example page 207). It quickly became apparent to me that a lot of what teachers and administrators at these two schools are trying to do is work on the development of character. Work on self-transcendence as a character trait was not

spoken of readily, but there are certainly many activities that work on it's development at the school such as spending time in nature or caring for the earth, and the use of silence in the classrooms.

Considering all of these emergent themes through the lens of the Science of Well-Being, I recognized that, in fact, the schools are actually trying to improve their understanding and implementation of love, freedom, and awareness, and that this is related to the work on the development of character of both teachers and students. Furthermore, I identified that while the teachers were not always consciously aware of it, they were working on the practices of well-being discussed in chapter 2: letting go, working in the service of others, and growing in awareness.

With this background story in mind, the three themes that emerged from this study inform the dimensional framework we discussed in chapter 6 by helping us to see how well-being can be encouraged in each of these five dimensions. The three themes are *love*, *freedom*, and *awareness*. These three themes come up frequently in the school descriptions and Krishnamurti's writings. They also correspond with research from the Science of Well-Being on the practices that lead to greater well-being and the development of character. As we saw in our discussion of the advances in the study of subjective well-being, the development of character and virtue is an integral part of the Science of Well-Being (C. R. Cloninger, 2000b, 2004, 2006a; C. R. Cloninger, D.M. Svrakic, and T.R. Przybeck, 1993; C. R. Cloninger & Svrakic, 1997; C. R. Cloninger et al., 1997). The character traits are self-directedness (i.e., responsible, purposeful, and resourceful), cooperativeness (i.e., tolerant, helpful, compassionate), and self-

transcendence (i.e., intuitive, judicious, spiritual)⁵⁹. These character traits can be developed through various practices in one’s life and encouraged by therapists, counselors and teachers (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a; K. Cloninger, 2008). Cloninger (2004) has identified 3 essential practices that can lead to such growth: letting go, working in the service of others, and growing in awareness. These three practices lead to growth in character and help an individual to grow in self-awareness. There is a correspondence (as seen in the **Table 10**), between the three themes that emerged from the study (love, freedom, and awareness) the three character traits (cooperativeness, self-directedness, and self-transcendence), and the three practices of well-being(working in the service of others, letting go, and growing in awareness):

Table 10: Correspondence between the Themes, Character Traits, and Practices

Themes	Freedom	Love	Awareness
Character Traits	Self-Directedness	Cooperativeness	Self-Transcendence
Practice of Well-Being	Letting Go	Working in the Service of Others	Growing in Awareness

One gauge of the effectiveness of a school in augmenting the well-being of its staff and students is to examine the expression of love, freedom, and awareness in each of the five dimensions of schooling. Helping teachers to contemplate and express love, freedom, and awareness in each of the five dimensions of their classroom should prove useful in teacher education and in the evaluation of schools. This brings me back to a point I made in chapter six, namely that I do not believe that K is contradicting himself in his writings

⁵⁹ I reviewed research in chapter two that demonstrated that high scorers in all these character traits have frequent positive emotions and infrequent negative emotions. (C. R. Cloninger, 2004; 2006a; see also Graph 2). Moreover, the development of character leads to less susceptibility to depression and negative thinking (C. R. Cloninger, 2000a, 2004, 2006a; Farmer et al., 2003; Tome et al., 1997)

as would a Zen master or some other eastern sage. Rather I would argue that K is speaking differently about freedom when he discusses it in the context of the dimension of order, structure, and activity than he would if he was discussing freedom in the context of the dimension of the sacred, or in the awareness of thought. There are for sure commonalities in the way he discusses a theme like freedom, love, or awareness in each of these different domains, but there are important subtleties and nuance that K explores in each of these dimensions regarding the three main themes. I will consider each of these three themes and their relationship to character development and the practices of well-being in great detail for the rest of the chapter. I use some of the interview data that I was not able to include in chapters 4 and 5, as well as K's writings on education and the Science of Well-Being to describe these themes.

Love

When Krishnamurti started the Brockwood Park Educational Center in England, he asked Dorothy Simmons to be its first head. Dorothy Simmons was a sculptor by trade but had worked closely with her husband while he was principal of Niesworth Hall in Cambridgeshire, England a school for delinquent boys. In an oral history she gave to the Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, Mrs. Simmons was asked about Krishnamurti's vision of education. She explained:

Affection, caring, loving, trust, are a vital part of his whole life's work. He cared for everything. Nothing was more important than anything else. But how you approached it, how you treated it was all a question of relationship and I think that's the very vital part of Krishnaji. Affection is the beginning of how you approach anything. You can't see anything or perceive anything without affection, but I think it needs to go deeper, it has to generate an energy, really amounting to passion if you're really going to share with anybody and everybody whatever it is you've

perceived. And I think it was the passion with which Krishnaji received and approached and gave to life that gave the quality that he bestowed on the world generally. It was great affection, it was love, which I think is the vital, vital quality of his whole approach. It's the most wonderful thing. You can do nothing without it at all, that's all I can say. (Evelyn Blau, 2008)

Mrs. Simmons expressed that love is the “vital quality of his whole approach.” She is not overstating the point. K validates the claim,

In the total development of the human being through right education, the quality of love must be nourished and sustained from the very beginning. [...] So the educator must be concerned from the very beginning with this quality of love, which is humility, gentleness, consideration, patience, and courtesy. Modesty and courtesy are innate in the man of right education; he is considerate to all, including the animals and plants, and this is reflected in his behavior and manner of talking” (Krishnamurti, 1963, p. 11).

Love is clearly an essential ingredient in Krishnamurti education. Staff use the term sparingly, however, because they treat the term with great reverence. Talking about love doesn't help one be loving or understand love—it needs to be put into action. Instead, the community speaks more about care or affection, although K used love differently than he used care and affection. K considered care and affection as ways of detecting or giving love. Love was more spiritual in nature, whereas care and affection manifest more in the other domains of life. Whatever the case, the affection is very obvious in both communities. Like Todd, Anney, Aashika, or Fran who regularly embraced their students or patted them on the shoulder. I asked one former student at Ojai what she felt were the most important qualities of her best teachers and she told me unequivocally,

Just that quality of love. The real love. Real, and I think in some ways mature. Like Carol who was so heartfelt and genuine, so nurturing. She's very good at disciplining though. Katherine was more matriarchal. She made you accountable, holding you accountable for certain things, but still the love, ultimately.

Teachers at both schools love their students and the students are comfortable to love their teachers if they so choose. The quality of love affects the atmosphere of the schools. It contributes to the sense of safety and security and motivates the care and affection that children receive. It also affects other dimensions of the schooling, like helping students to develop their reasoning capacities because teachers share their love of subject matter with students. In the intellectual dimension of schools, love helps children to wonder about the curriculum and life. The emphasis placed on love and concern for nature also helps students to develop a sense of the sacredness of nature and life. Love is important in all five dimensions of the schools.

Love is also an important quality for creating order and structure. In the context of discussions about love, the order and structure dimension of schooling is often discussed as “boundaries.” For example, Freya shared with me her approach to pastoral care with me:

When I was a student, one of the greatest things for me was the sense that we were equals. Of course there were rules and there are rules for the staff and certain rules for the students, but basically we’re equals. I think a lot of my sense of pastoral is approaching the students on that basis. At certain points of course I have to place boundaries and I have to say certain things to them, but even in doing that I feel that the basis is that we’re coming at it from a space of being equals where it really matters. We’re also coming at it from a basis of having true affection for each other. And making, I often, I feel that I need to make it clear to them that none of the boundaries, none of the things I might be saying about them, makes them a bad person, if I’m having to challenge them or criticize them. It’s just a particular behavior or pattern or something that they’ve picked up, that I could be doing something quite similar.

Boundaries are important in establishing order for students. It is a part of communicating love and concern for children to help them understand the appropriate boundaries for

them, not out of coercion or judgment, but out of concern for their general welfare. This is a very difficult balance to strike. As teachers, we desire that our student's like us, but at the same time sometimes we have to ask them to study, behave, or think in ways they may or may not like. Love is the necessary catalyst to enable us to act in ways that may be unpopular with the students, but it takes a great deal of awareness on the part of the teacher to take such actions. I discussed this issue with Wouter while I was in Ojai and he explained,

It is really an interesting question because my first year at Brockwood I hadn't been a teacher before and my initial impulse was really to say to them, "I want to be your friend." I want them to find me cool in a way, because its so infectious, in the school, when students say, "We like this teacher!" You want to be that teacher, so I kind of fell into that trap a little my first year at Brockwood and it wasn't until towards the end of that year, my second year at Brockwood, that I realized that kids are not waiting to make you their friend, that's not what they want from you.

As Wouter considered his role as a teacher at the school, he began to see that what kids wanted was clear boundaries and expectations. They don't want another friend or someone to hang out with: they want guidance and love. Wouter continued to explain his perspective,

And that's what I found. I was astonished at...well you see, I kind of, in a very affectionate way, make fun of them sometimes. But I very clearly say, if not in words then in actions, I don't care to be your friend. I don't care what you think of me, whatever, and it's almost like they flock to me. They like that more. They seem to recognize something authentic. [...] I so often think of my journey as a teacher and this sort of trying to be a friend, being swept up in the drama of the kids, and how that led nowhere. In fact what it led to was disrespect from kids. [...] I feel kids are really looking for something to trust, a rock to hold onto, and that's not friendship, it's this other thing as you say, it's something that's deeper than this.

While I was at Brockwood and Ojai, I saw different approaches to relationships with students. Some teachers sought to be friends with their students and others acted more like Wouter or Todd with little interest in friendship in this sense. As Wouter noted, students gravitated to both approaches, but there was greater respect for teachers who didn't take on the role of friendship.

Love and relationship are essential in K schools, and in all schools. Krishnamurti pointed out that friendship can lead to imitation and authority in relationship. I observed this in the various approaches that teachers adopted at the schools. The teachers who related to students as friends, in the general sense of that term, had difficulties helping to students to face difficult issues or pushing them beyond their relationships. This has a tendency to limit or cap the kind of development that can happen in that student. When I relate to my student as a friend I want them to like me or I want to like them. In that process there's a kind of imitation or a mimicry and we take the other as a kind of authority in terms of life experience, attitudes, thinking, posture, behavior, and beliefs. As a result, we are unable to learn together. We are not able to move toward something that transcends us both and instead we're left capped within the confines of our relationship. We may acquire one another's habits, manner of speaking, body language or priorities in life, but unfortunately this type of love is tied up with psychological authority. We become a psychological authority for the other. Elsewhere I have discussed the role of love in the classroom (K. Cloninger, 2008). The Greeks had a word for this type of love, *philia*. *Philia* was the term for any sort of friendly love. There were two other words for love in the Greek language, *eros* which is desirous or romantic love, and *agape* which is unconditional love. *Agape*, the unconditional love, doesn't ask for

anything in return because you don't view a person as separate from anyone else. "You are the world," as K would say; and as a result, you love unconditionally because you regard everyone as a part of yourself. It doesn't depend on anything. As Wouter had said, "I feel kids are really looking for something to trust, a rock to hold onto, and that's not friendship, it's this other thing as you say, it's something that's deeper than this." The "other thing" is *agape*.

Earlier in the dissertation, I described a disorganized classroom I observed during my time at Brockwood—the filming of the K-man movie (see page 340). This classroom epitomizes the problems of this quality of relationship. The teacher who taught the film class sought to befriend his students—that is, he loved only in the manner of *philia*. He was unable to find the way to create the appropriate order and structure, the appropriate boundaries, without fearing that he would lose this connection. He was dependent on the whims of his students because he wanted to be friends. This immaturity is a major issue in a school like Brockwood or Oak Grove where a close personal relationship with students is encouraged. This doesn't mean there is no room for *philia* in the relationships in school (see Aashika for a good example on page 174-177), or that *philia* and *agape* are mutually exclusive, but when we relate in that way a classroom tends toward disorder and psychological authority if it is not held in check by *agape*. *Agape* can often feel superficially similar to *philia* (see for example Todd on pages 258 to 260 or Wouter on pages 300-302), but as this example demonstrates, there are important differences—especially concerning psychological authority.

There is also a relationship between love, freedom, and order. We tend to let the kids just do whatever they want as a result of wanting the kids to like us. K often pointed

out that freedom does not consist in being able to do whatever one wants; but in the absence of authority, reward, and punishment, love is required to help maintain order and help the kids develop real freedom. If this relationship isn't clear, it stops a teacher's ability to help students grow.

The spirit of love in a school helps to foster environments of cooperation and sensitivity to the world. In this way, the K schools work a great deal on the development of character and self-awareness of the students. The schools provides many opportunities for both staff and students to work in the service of others, one of the practices of well-being discussed in the Science of Well-Being (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a). Morning jobs is an excellent example of a simple practical means to help engender cooperativeness in students. Working on care for the earth and teaching children to have a deep concern for nature is another. Additionally, both schools frequently meet together as a group. This can be seen in the all school meetings at the beginning and end of each week at Brockwood, or the "circle" meeting the high school students have each day to discuss the day. It is not that all one needs to do to foster loving environments is create such programmatic elements, but it does allow a space for such learning to occur. The lack of emphasis on comparison and competition and the exclusion of reward and punishment also goes a long way in encouraging cooperativeness and service to others. K wrote,

There is no system through which you learn to cooperate. It is not to be structured and classified. Its very nature demands that there be love, and that love is not measurable, for when you compare, which is the essence of measurement, thought has entered. Where thought is, love is not. Now, can this be conveyed to the student, and can cooperation exist among educators in these schools? These schools are centres of a new generation with a new outlook, with a new sense of being citizens of the world,

concerned with all living things of this world. It is your grave responsibility to bring about this spirit of co-operation. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 114)

The development of cooperativeness is a strength of K schools. There is much that public education can learn from these practices and approaches in the K schools and in K's descriptions of it. Teacher preparation programs spend time focusing on pedagogical strategies, methods, and techniques when much of this would flow naturally from a loving relationship with students (K. Cloninger, 2008). As we saw in this study, many of the teachers at these schools have little formal educational training beyond their own educational experiences. Students at the schools still perform well on standardized exams and are able to attend prestigious universities if they so desire. At the same time, the best teachers at both schools relate to the students like parents would. They attend to their individual needs, modify assignments, push them when they need to be pushed. If we spent as much time giving pre-service teachers an opportunity to reflect on love, cooperation, and service and its role in the classroom and the schools I am confident that teachers would learn much more than a technique—they would be more capable of developing their own approach in the service of children's unique needs.

Freedom

Freedom is a central theme for Krishnamurti. He spoke at length about the fact that schools should respect the freedom of children, both psychologically and physically speaking. The fact that schooling is compulsory for children already restricts the child's freedom to some degree. One of the factors that contributes to the sense of freedom at

Brockwood is that students have to chose to attend⁶⁰. Even if a parent brings a child there to interview, the staff at the school always make sure with the students that they do indeed want to come to the school. In this way, the students who attend Brockwood already have a sense that they have freely chosen to attend the school. However their freedom doesn't stop there. They are allowed to chose what classes they attend and are free to create their own courses if they get the proper sponsorship. They are living independent from their parents and they are ultimately responsible for their own schedules. Moreover, because there is no system of grading, students have to be responsible for their own learning. There is nobody telling them that they need to do their homework or else. Like a college or university, students are responsible for becoming stewards of their own education. This self-regulation of learning (see page 278 for an example of this in Ojai) is extremely helpful for the development of the character trait of self-directedness, as we will discuss later.

Freedom is on the tip of everybody's tongue at the schools. With little probing it comes up again and again. Concretely speaking though, staff members at the two schools I observed hold varying conceptions about why freedom matters in the school. Freedom has a different meaning in each of the various dimensions of the school, whether it concerns safety and security, order, care, reasoning, or the sacred. One of the major points of disagreement among staff at the two schools revolves around at what level the freedom K talked about really mattered. For example, is freedom the ability for students to explore what they want at the level of academics? Should the students be able to just

⁶⁰ In interviews with Wendy Smith and Scott Forbes, two teachers who taught at Brockwood for many years, they both stressed how important this freedom of choice was for the students who attended Brockwood. They were allowed to chose to come to school or not and right from the beginning it creates a sense of freedom that is often not present in mainstream public schools.

drop a class in the middle because they don't want to do it anymore? Should they be allowed to do whatever they want whenever they want and then run off? Is this the kind of freedom K was talking about? These are the kinds of questions staff shared with me. After studying K, I have come to the conclusion that he considered such issues as secondary to real freedom. As he stated in the "intention" for the Oak Grove School, "Freedom of choice is not freedom, though it may appear so; nor is order, conformity or imitation." K often criticized the notion of freedom as choice or "being able to do what I want." This was an egocentric and materialistic conception of freedom that was ultimately self-serving and unhelpful in the development of well-being. It is not freedom to shirk responsibility or to give up on what one starts. Instead, K emphasized the importance of freedom at the psychological level and at the level of authority. Yet, the staff at both schools seem to have a great many different opinions on this matter. As K said, "Though we talk about freedom, apparently very few seem to come upon it" (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 257). Uniformity of opinion is not important, but still if each classroom has a different approach on this matter it is not creating a supportive and nurturing environment for the kids. This was one major issue that plagued the staff at both schools.

The issue of freedom transcends whether or not one adopts a particular approach in the classroom, be it traditional or progressive, but what counts is that there is order in a classroom. If there is order there can be freedom in the class. K wrote:

Freedom is absolute order: neither freedom nor order is relative. Either you are free or you are not. Either there is complete order in you or there is disorder. Order is harmony. Human's seem to like to live in disorder both outwardly and inwardly. [...] You see this confusion in education, which is mainly concerned with the cultivation of memory as knowledge,

disregarding the entire psychological structure of man. [...] Order is vastly pliable, subtle and swift. You cannot put it in a frame and endeavour to live according to it. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 256-257)

Like we saw during Katherine's classroom in Ojai (see page 286) or in the filming of the K-man movie, helping students to live in freedom requires more than freedom of choice. It requires a freedom from our conditioning. When we have this type of internal freedom there is a kind of order that sets in within our thinking and consequently our behavior. However paradoxical it may seem, there is freedom in order and order in freedom. In cultivating freedom, it is essential that we focus on the psychological level and less at the level of choice within the classroom curriculum. This is important because from birth we tend to imitate others and conform to certain concepts and ideals. These mental grooves limit our freedom because we react to images we have and lack the freedom to respond without following a pattern. While our ability to choose what we want to do is an aspect of freedom, if our choices are conditioned because we are following patterns that we were conditioned to follow there is ultimately little freedom in it. K explains:

You are obliged in some matters to be imitative; as in the clothes you put on, in the books you read, in the language you speak. These are all forms of imitation. But it is necessary to go beyond this level and feel free to think things out for yourself so that you do not thoughtlessly accept what somebody else says, it does not matter *who* it is—a teacher in a school, a parent, or one of the great religious teaches. [...] Freedom of mind comes into being when there is no fear, when the mind has no desire to show off and is not intriguing for position or prestige. Then it has no sense of imitation. And it is important to have such a mind—a mind really free of tradition, which is the habit-forming mechanism of the mind. (Krishnamurti, 1963, pp. 30-31)

To work on freedom at the level of the mind it is key to learn how to be free of tradition and not to rely upon authority figures of any persuasion. In discussions at the schools I observed, however, when teachers debated freedom it was concerning the curriculum.

That is, should the classrooms be more traditional or progressive. The point is interesting but irrelevant to the kind of freedom K sought to cultivate at the schools. In fact due to the lack of freedom of the mind, I saw disordered classrooms that employed both approaches, traditional or progressive. At Brockwood, the traditional style pedagogy can be very ordered and at times too rigid and structured. On several occasions, I heard students at Brockwood complain after classes about lectures being boring and that they found it tedious and would have preferred other work such as presentations of projects. We could contrast this with Katherine's class the day they worked on the rules for the map game. There was a great deal of disorder in that class, but it was due to the fact that Katherine was allowing the students to discover for themselves how to run the classroom. Their own inward disorder and fear of what the other kids thought lead to the disorder in the classroom. Due to this inward disorder, the students at both schools frequently exploit the freedom they are given at the schools and attempt to take advantage of teachers. Staff at the schools sometimes struggle with finding appropriate means of responding that do not rely upon punishment or judgment, but it is difficult. In extreme cases, like the two boys we saw in Katherine's class, they may be asked to leave the community. That said, kids are very self-regulated learners. They are very independent for the most part, and capable of taking their own initiative. One of the aspects of both Brockwood and Oak Grove that is a complete success is helping students be very self-directed in their decision-making and in taking responsibility for their learning. The emphasis on freedom at the two schools leads to a great deal of character development for the students.

To the outside observer arriving at the schools, it may look a bit chaotic at times in both schools. I spoke with a well-known curricularist at the AERA before doing my data collection in England, and she remarked that in her brief visit to the schools she believed the kids at Brockwood were “spoiled.” During my observations at Brockwood her comment echoed through my mind. There is perhaps some truth to the claim, but ultimately it turns around this question of freedom and order. The freedom the students have here can be exploited, but the kids are not better behaved in authoritative environments out of self-understanding. Rather it is generally out of fear, and when placed in an environment with more freedom they would be much more likely to behave in a similar manner as the students who attend Brockwood—if not even more disorderly since they carry with them repressed and stifled energy. We see this with freshman in college who, in the absence of strict supervision or authority, get into trouble with drinking, partying, or skipping classes. What is important in the absence of punishment, disciplinary systems, and fear is that students are encouraged to become more responsible and self-directed and that seriously detrimental actions are held in check by firm boundaries set by loving teachers (like in Anney and Darla’s classroom or in Todd’s classroom). I spoke with Raj about this and he shared the following with me:

The student should do something because they see it for themselves. If somebody’s not going to bed at ten o’clock and staying up late at night and being tired the next day. It’s their responsibility to see that, not that we force them to go to bed at ten o’clock. And our tutor system is designed to help with that. And largely it works, as you can see, people will do things on their own. My hope is that they even will see the value of silence on their own, not because somebody is telling them to sit quietly because then you won’t have silence. So that’s the approach here. It’s very different. It’s very difficult. And even sometimes people who are professional teachers actually are the ones that are more used to demanding things and implementing things, and so we have to break them of that habit, just as

we have to break the students of it who actually to some extent have gotten used to being controlled. They're actually comfortable with it. Somebody tells us we know where the line is, we know when we want to break it, we're not really learning anything, we're just complying, and then it suits us not to comply with this thing we want. And that's pretty normal.

As Raj explains, the approach at Brockwood is that kids need to see it for themselves.

Raj pushes this self-reliance even further in his classroom. He does not assign homework. In his math classes he feels that the students should be responsible enough to look at the book and do whatever problems they think they need to learn the material they are responsible for. Raj explains,

I explain to them that they don't do an exercise because I want them to do it, but because you are using it as a tool for your learning. You're using it to discover what you don't know, where you'll get stuck. That's the interesting thing. You should love the fact you don't, can't do it, because then you know which area you didn't understand. You can go and look it in the book or ask somebody else or come to me. But if you're doing that, you take charge of your learning. So take charge of your learning. After a while, at first they're not used to it, then they get used to it. Then they realize that it's down to them, and then they start to do it.

When Raj explained this practice to me, I was surprised to observe my own reaction.

"You don't assign homework?" I said to myself. But he is absolutely right that we do not respect the student's ability to decide what homework to do for themselves or to gauge their own limits. Certainly in the professional world we frequently have to set our own guidelines for the work we do and learn to deal with it is essential.

Conflicts are at the heart of the reduction of our freedom. We are in struggles with ourselves, with traditions, with our parents, our teachers, our culture, even our education. All struggles and fights reduce our freedom because we spend energy and time reacting to situations. We become violent, judgmental, fearful, and competitive. All

of these reactions build up in our inner life and in our social life. We are so lost in fights and conflicts of all orders that we forget our problems and they remain leaving us in a state of confusion, loneliness, fear, and agitation. The practice of letting go is essential in the quest for freedom because it helps us to transcend these fights and conflicts, both psychologically and socially. Letting go is more than indifference, it is a state of acceptance and transcendence. We stop the fighting, we simply stop engaging in all the fights the world throws at us, both internally and externally. By letting go we can work on our freedom, which allows us to be in a position to contemplate the truth about our lives and the world around us. This is the kind of freedom that K encouraged his schools to cultivate in children. To conclude this section on freedom, I quote Krishnamurti who spoke about the importance of working on freedom to a group of students in India. K asked,

Is this all too difficult? I don't think it is as difficult as your geography or mathematics. It is much easier, only you have never thought about it. You spend perhaps ten or fifteen years of your life in school acquiring information, yet you never take time—not a week, not even a day—to think fully, completely about any of these things. That is why it all seems so difficult; but it is not really difficult at all. On the contrary, if you give time to it you can see for yourself how your mind works, how it operates, responds. And it is very important to begin to understand your own mind while you are young, otherwise you will grow up following some tradition which has very little meaning; you will imitate, which is to keep cultivating fear, and so you will never be free. (Krishnamurti, 1963, p. 31)

While it is uncommon for us to focus on freedom or understanding the functioning of thought in schools, as Krishnamurti says it's not that difficult really and the benefits are great for any school.

Awareness

The theme of awareness has come up throughout this dissertation. It is central to K's approach to education. As we saw in the descriptions of the two schools K was concerned with the psychological dimension of learning, although he had no intention of neglecting the physical, material, or biological side of learning either. But he argued that,

What one is inwardly will eventually bring about a good society or the gradual deterioration of human relationship. We are concerned with both aspects of life, not giving one or the other predominance, although the psychological—that is, what we are inwardly—will dictate our behavior, our relationship with others. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 121)

Much like Deborah Meier, K was concerned that we seem to neglect human relationships in schools. K's objection was more penetrating than Meier's: he felt that we “neglect wholly the deeper and wider realities of life, and give far greater importance to physical aspects, to everyday activities, however relevant or irrelevant” (Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 121). Becoming aware of our internal and external constraints and the “deeper and wider realities of life” was fundamental in finding real freedom. By attempting to pay attention to the oft-neglected inner aspects, as well as the outer aspects of the curriculum, both schools in this study weave a focus on awareness and self-understanding throughout their school programs. Relationships with students allow a teacher to understand the awareness of the students. The focus on inquiry and exploration whether that be at the level of curriculum, structure, or pedagogy also contributes to the development of awareness. The work students do at these schools is not independent of their own self-awareness nor their identity (see the vignette that begins on page 277: *Who am I?: Looking and Laughing*. See also Raj's classroom in *Getting Intelligent about Sex* on page 159). Assignments and artwork reflect the student's quest for self-understanding

(see Todd's classroom on page 270 and Maria's Art Barn on page 221 to 224). The attentiveness to nature and the beauty of the school campuses also help students become more aware of the world and the sacred or spiritual dimensions of life. Awareness is weaved throughout the programs at both Brockwood and Oak Grove.

During my visit, I spoke with Stephen Smith about how to work on the growth of awareness in the schools. He believes that important message from K is that teachers

...have to start with themselves. If the teacher is not involved in an inquiry on their own behalf, they won't be able to convey it. You can't convey it as information. It only comes alive when you activate it, when something happens. So the adult themselves must be aware. [...] I am very focused on that, that the school needs to become a place of community and dialogue. It is a model that needs much more emphasis—holding together, bringing together people in community and dialogue. [...] I feel that it is somehow out of balance, even in progressive or alternative schools, even there all the emphasis goes onto better ways to convey knowledge and information. It does not ask the great question, "who am I?" We walk around it. The schools could be places where the staff and the adults are focused on the great question, this is also true for the students. It is not about going off to Himalayas in isolation. We don't need to isolate ourselves. It isn't a question of being isolated and then coming back either, but we begin by being with people. So we generate it in common, because we are in common, common consciousness. And also with affection and I think that all of that will follow. It needs to start with the teacher and then it will flow quite naturally after that. There are also various bridges that can be built like human development class, and relationship class, K-class, etc... However, the fundamental issue is to educate the educator, the awareness of the teacher.

The emphasis even in progressive schools is not on self-awareness, but on knowledge and skills. It is generally technical education, even if we dress it up as something more creative or progressive. K schools focus on the self-awareness of the students, which transcends a strict notion of technical education. As Smith points out, many people think that growth in self-awareness is somehow a solitary, isolating process. We must be alone, high in the Himalayas somewhere, or experience some transcendent mystical

experience to ask the deeper questions of life. K was convinced that it was in the schools that such questions much be asked and not only in some grand quest for a Guru or a monastery in which a person would isolate herself. One of the big differences between K and Waldorf education, Montessori, or other alternative movements is that K did not think about this process of becoming aware as occurring in stages. At the psychological level K did not believe in stage development or sequential steps. It is available now and at any age. It is a matter of the adult wrapping their brains around the fact that there is this potential that humans have that is being wasted in violence, technology, ideology, conformity, religions, and every form of authority. As Stephen Smith said, “It is this beautiful potential that is being wasted.” This makes the K schools quite unique in the alternative movement. Raj put it this way:

I think that in a way we are not against anything, so we are not an alternative school in the sense of rejecting everything. There is a place for what one might call “the standard methods of education.” So even though K talks about the limitation of knowledge and he talks about how knowledge will never change the world. It’s also pretty clear that you also need knowledge. And so one of the things we’d be doing here would be to making sure the students have knowledge and skills, but we don’t actually stop at that, so I suppose the way we would put it here is, I mean sometimes you talked about there being two tracks, the outer and the inner. you know, to be a doctor you’ve got to know a lot of stuff, but that’s not enough to live a fulfilled life. You know Krishnaji puts it very ornately, he says you know, the scientist who can smash the atom, but has no love in their heart is a monster.

This relationship between the inner and the outer is subtle, but simultaneously extremely deep and pervasive across the school. It is not something that is stated overtly very often, many of the staff that work at the school hold this intention somewhere in their being.

The focus on awareness at the schools is related to growth in the character trait of self-transcendence. As K explains in a discussion of the freedom that comes from being

aware of one's condition, "Freedom is something totally different. It is the understanding of conditioning both verbally and nonverbally, so that the mind transcends it"

(Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 240). By transcending our conditioning an individual is a very meaningful way begins to search for meaning beyond the narrow confines of our individual self. Today research in psychology demonstrates that the "self" the "ego" the "me" is in many respects a narrative construction built by experience (Bruner, 1996; Damasio, 2003; Feinberg & Keenan, 2005). By examining the contents of one's own consciousness, an individual can gradually become more aware of this narrative construction and transcend this subconscious construct. As we are relatively unaware of our own thoughts they tend to rigidify, fossilize and we get trapped in certain images of ourselves. We form rigid identities that are resistant to change. K spoke about this at length:

As we said, we ought to consider what it means to be attentive. This may be the clue to a harmonious existence. As things are, the intellect, the whole activity of the brain, which is thinking, dominates our existence. This brings about contradiction, peculiar behaviour in us. When only one part of our whole being is dominant, it will inevitably bring about neurotic behaviour. Attention is awareness of this dominance of intellect without acting on the instinctive urge to control it or allow emotion to take its place. This awareness brings about subtlety, clarity of mind.
(Krishnamurti, 2006b, p. 147)

Cloninger (2004) described this development as growth in self-awareness which he viewed to proceed through a variety of stages in a non-linear manner (see **Table 5**). As an individual becomes increasingly aware of this subconscious narrative, he or she is less bound by dualistic thinking. When the "observer becomes the observed" there is no duality as K would say. If one can always be self-aware in this way, a new kind of

intelligence expresses itself and a person experiences a kind of freedom that allows for creative action and deep insight.

I spoke at length about these stages of self-awareness in chapter 2, as well as their relationship to various pedagogical strategies in the classroom (**Table 5**). The highest stages of self-awareness are often equated with a sense of something that transcends the self. This of course relates to the development of a sense of the sacred, religious, or spiritual dimension of life and its expression in schools. However, it does not mean that the other dimensions are irrelevant. A major part of the awareness stems from the solid foundation provided by the other dimensions, care and affection, a safe and secure environment, the order and structure of the school, as well as the development of the mind of a subtle and clear mind. Nonetheless, as the students and staff are given an opportunity to grow in awareness—one of the practices of well-being described by Cloninger (2004, 2006)—they are given an opportunity to catch a glimpse of a way of living that is “whole, sane, and intelligent” to use K’s terminology. This notion can be likened to Maslow’s “peak experiences” (Maslow, 1994). Students have profound existential experiences that are like seeds. These moments are most certainly far and few between, but they are extremely marking psychologically because they have a sense of something beyond thought, something sacred. This is due to the moments like morning meeting, walks in the groves, classroom experiences, love, freedom, awareness, and opportunities for silence, understanding, and a relationship to the earth. These seeds are sown and may or may not bear fruit in the short term. Nonetheless, seeds are being planted, but it’s not always the same seeds and it’s not always clear to the staff at the school what those seeds are. Nonetheless, K’s goal of flowering is happening with some

of the students who pass through the halls he created, even if they are not deeply flowering in the way that he had described. The obstacles to this deep inward flowering are latent within the staff and the society as a whole. It is difficult to move towards such a lofty pursuit as the creation of a “new generation” with a “new outlook” on life. The schools are hindered in this pursuit by many of the problems we have already discussed throughout this dissertation. Fundamental to getting over these problems is that staff come together around dimensions of life which transcend the self. It is this, which allows the staff to cultivate a the quality of relationship necessary to help children undergo radical psychological transformation and inward flowering.

Putting it Together: Lessons for Public Schools

As the last four chapters have shown, there is much that can be gleaned from Krishnamurti education to help us foster well-being in schools worldwide, especially when viewed through the lens of the Science of Well-Being. In this section I specifically address the third and final research question of this dissertation: *What is the significance of theories and practices aimed at increasing well-being for public schools in general?* Throughout this dissertation, I make many comments that have significance for helping public schools to think about the importance of well-being. In this section, I consider three main implications that this study has for those interested in increasing well-being in public schools.

One of the major conclusions drawn from this study is that the teachers use good relationships to facilitate good teaching and learning. The most important pedagogical approach to cultivating relationship in the two schools I observed is the pedagogy of

relationship. We saw many examples of good relationships in Raj's class, Wouter's class, Anney and Darla's class, Todd's class, Aashika's class, and Maya's class. These teachers employ some methods and techniques, but relationship itself cannot be reduced to technique or method. As Noddings (1992) points out, there is no method that can lead to caring classrooms. In fact, regarding human relationship as a method or technique misses the point entirely. This is very important for the public schools to consider. As many have noted (Eisner, 2002, 2005; Hansen, 2001; Liston and Garrison, 2004; Meier, 2002; Nieto, 1999; Noddings, 1992; Palmer, 1998), we need to focus on creating communities, developing good relationships, and creating inspiring learning environments. This is neither a technical process nor something that can be created by method. There can be no assurance that the pedagogical tools we give our teachers are used properly; only good relationships can ensure that. Like a painter, teachers need a brush, but they also need other things like love, passion, freedom, dedication, awareness, and hope in order to produce a masterpiece. A lot of lip service is given to the importance of creating "learning communities" and to encourage people to be "life-long learners," but what does it really take to create such environments? As Eisner (2002) explains, we often focus on creating systems and methods, but it has a way of backfiring on us. He writes,

Winston Churchill once said that first we design our buildings and then our buildings design us. To paraphrase Churchill, we can say, first we design our curriculum, then our curriculum designs us. What I think many of us want is not only a form of educational practice whose features, so to speak, "design us," but a form of educational practice that enables students to learn how to design themselves. Thus it might be said that at its best, education is a process of learning how to become the architect of our own education. It is a process that does not terminate until we do. (Eisner, 2002, p. 14)

A good education is not a slave to method; rather, it equips children with tools to become “architects.” This is a very tall order. We need to find ways to inspire people in schools to want to create such communities. As we have seen, a lot has been written in the field of curriculum on this subject, but it hasn’t made any real headway in transforming schools. This study has shown how important relationship is to creating this kind of community and also how difficult it is for people to engage in deep and meaningful relationships. We saw many examples of children who lacked the vocabulary to speak about their own feelings as young children, but we also saw how with time and encouragement the older students in Raj’s and Wouter’s classes at Brockwood and Ojai began to exhibit clear emotional communication and the capacity to examine their own relationships. This is certainly a place to start. I would argue that adults and teachers in the public system are not any different from their students in regards to having the vocabulary and fluency in relationships. Reflective practice (Schön 1983, 1987) and emotional intelligence are both very important to consider. These schools demonstrated good examples of a focus on the head and the heart. We would do well in public education and teacher education to consider how to encourage such relational literacy. It would go a long way in increasing our capacity to create learning communities and life-long learners.

In speaking of the importance of relationship, it is important to consider how one would go about assessing the health and well-being of schools and, by extension, their capacity to help their students cultivate well-being. Although I have not had the time or space to flesh it out in this dissertation, I would suggest that another promising area of

this dissertation with great significance for public schools is to look in detail at the expression of love, freedom and awareness, in each of the five dimensions of schooling (e.g. safety, security, and trust; order, structure, and activity; etc.). By looking at the expression of love, freedom, and awareness in each of the five dimensions we can begin to parse out a global assessment of the health and well-being of the schools and their capacity to foster well-being in students. This development will take time, but the themes of love, freedom, awareness, and their expression in each of the five dimensions of schooling (sexual, material, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual) provide a concrete framework that can be used in teacher education and the evaluation of existing school programs. It is not a technique or a method that is infallible. Rather it highlights underlying developmental principles and functions of the human being that should be considered in the relationships formed in natural learning communities. I would contend, and the research in this study would support the claim, that teachers may be able to come to “best practices” naturally if they have an opportunity to deeply reflect on human nature and on understanding the principles of well-being. Moreover, if we allow them to have meaningful relationships with children they can continue to learn about how to best reach them instead of relying upon the present educational fad. If we only focus on giving conceptual information to teacher trainees, instead of giving them the tools to think about how to focus on the well-being of their students, then our teacher education strategies may be ineffective in helping teachers to question their underlying assumptions about human nature, human learning, and excellence in teaching. In fact research has shown that teachers most frequently teach as they were taught (Torff & Sternberg, 2001). Teachers rely upon their tacit understanding of the child’s mind and how they learn to

guide much of their instruction, what Bruner has called folk psychology and folk pedagogy (Bruner, 1996; Olson, 2003). Research has shown that unless we challenge these frameworks that teachers hold in profound ways—and not merely by discussing new techniques, methods, and curricular ideologies—we can not engender meaningful reform in teacher practice (Olson, 2003; Torff & Sternberg, 2001). Helping teachers to contemplate the fundamental role of well-being and relationship by creating an assessment tool that allows them to contemplate and reflect on their own practice in classrooms may help more teachers to understand the principles and practices that work best.

This framework and assessment tool could also help the field of curriculum studies to begin to communicate with policy makers and school administrators about how to engender healthy human development towards well-being. It is interesting to point out that much of curriculum theory touches on the themes and dimensions that emerged from this study. Meier (2002) speaks about the importance of trust; Noddings speaks of care (1992); Liston and Garrison (2004) speak of love; Freire (1993) speaks a lot of the importance of hope and freedom; Bruner (1996) and Duckworth (1995) speak about the importance of meta-cognition and understanding how the minds of students work (as does Dewey); Ayers (2001) about self-awareness; Oliver (2002) about the importance of community; Pinar (2002), Eisner (2005), and Apple (1979, 1999) speak about the dangers of institutions, of methods, and the role of ideologies in schools; and Hansen (2001) about the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching. One thing I have tried to demonstrate in this dissertation is that these aspects of human development and schooling are all interrelated and in dynamic interaction. This is evident in the five dimensions of

schooling and the expression of love, freedom, and awareness (as well as character development and the practices of well-being) in each dimension. This dissertation represents only a first step in that direction, but this has important significance for public schooling. It allows us to see that the work coming out of the field of curriculum studies has the potential to deeply inform policy and school practice as it helps us to understand the development of well-being. Now, we must build a consensus in the field of curriculum around how these underlying developmental principles are expressed in curriculum, pedagogy, and every other aspect of the ecology of a school. This process will take time, but it is essential for the field to consider how to begin to communicate in this way with the schools, parents, and policy makers.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Krishnamurti was a visionary thinker who offered practical solutions to problems we have been dealing with for centuries. For the most part, however, his educational philosophy has gone untapped in the field of curriculum. Perhaps it is his unusual life history that has led researchers to underestimate his ideas. Scott Forbes had suggested that many people were influenced by K when they wrote their own ideas about education, but he was seldom referenced specifically. Whatever the case, K left an amazingly rich educational legacy and worked for over fifty years to help teachers and administrators implement it.

I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to study the schools this year. There were many people I met who knew K personally, and who had worked for years in his schools or in the foundations he created. In 15 years, that may no longer be the case. In both schools many of the teachers who had been there for 10, 20, or even 30 years were retiring. It was already quite a shift after his death, and once those who knew him are also gone, it will be interesting to see how the movement adapts. That said, K was quite adamant about the fact that his teachings spoke for themselves and that interpretations should be regarded with skepticism as he had spent many years refining his ideas into their present form.

Today his writings have spread across the globe and continue to be read by many. Whatever one may think of his ideas, there is no doubt that he was a truly remarkable man who thought a great deal about the welfare of humanity and the planet. His life touched so many different people in so many positive ways. Those he did strongly

influence continue to influence others. His schools are like an oasis for those seeking meaning and significance. He offers them much more than ideas or theories, he helps them to realize that all the answers they may ever need are already in their hands. K never sought fame or fortune, and the same could be said of his schools. They are something of undiscovered treasure that were indispensable in this research.

Directions for Future Research

As with any research, there were some limitations to this dissertation. I discussed of the major shortcomings in chapter 3. Rather than dwelling on the problems I encountered, I thought it more appropriate to discuss some of the avenues for future research on the subject of well-being and education before concluding this dissertation.

This study explored primarily the intentional and operational curriculum of the schools. This also included the way in which the hidden curriculum is involved in the intentions and operations of the curriculum to some extent. Future research should continue to explore the received curriculum and the experiences of the students. Research could be done on the vast quantity of K's educational writings. Other questions worthy of exploration would include: How are the 9 K schools around the world similar and different? How do the Indian schools differ from those explored in this study in terms of the interpretation of K's intentions? How do the relationships between parents and the schools differ in K schools compared with mainstream public schools? How do the K schools impact students on a short-term and long-term basis? In general, more studies are needed to explore this relatively unknown school movement. There are also other schools, listed on some of the websites dedicated to Krishnamurti, which are not

affiliated with the foundations that have taken their inspiration from Krishnamurti. These schools would be interesting to research as well. More generally speaking the role of well-being in education is a huge topic that could certainly be explored in a number of different schools environments both mainstream or alternative.

A Positive Educational Vision

I chose to focus on the development of health and well-being through education, instead of the obstacles to such development. The latter I uncovered to some extent along the way, but always in the context of positive growth and development. It is a question of emphasis and perspective. Much of the modern scholarship in sociology, history, and education has focused on these obstacles. These analyses are powerful and have led to the identification of mechanisms by which education leads to oppression, social reproduction, hegemony, racial and economic inequality, and other obstacles to freedom and democracy. But these analyses are not only powerful, they are full of power. That is, the centerpiece of analysis relates to power and the power dynamics at play in society and schools. Certainly understanding power and how people seek to reproduce their power over time is an important area of study, but it is akin to studying disease and inferring healthy functioning from its absence. As we saw in the context of psychology and medicine in chapter 2, understanding positive psychological functioning is allowing for the development of new therapies that can help cure mental illness and not simply treat the symptoms (C. R. Cloninger, 2004, 2006a; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Emmons & ME, 2003; Huppert et al., 2005; Keyes, 2006; C. Peterson & Seligman, 2004; C. Ryff & Singer, 2008; Seligman, 2002; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Diseases can also be prevented before it begins due to greater knowledge of positive functioning. The same lessons need to be applied in education. By understanding the abuses of power and their expression in the schools we cannot necessarily infer what schools would look like if they were not governed by hegemonic, ideological, and authoritarian practices. Much of the literature is highly “critical,” but it has led to few constructive, workable alternatives to the restrictive policies and theories of the dominant ideologies controlling schools at present. Like the work of Foucault (2001), it has been helpful in helping us understand what a purely punitive model of society can lead us to, but it does little to help us conceive of a society that is not based on fear, punishment, and authority. We may seek to undermine the societal forces that have led to fear, discipline, and punishment, but we have little knowledge of what will replace these social structures if we manage to undermine them. Similarly, in educational research, we identify the hidden curriculum of conformity, docility, fear, and success that is so pervasive in the technical education children receive in schools. We attempt to understand what the implicit messages being taught to our children are, but this by itself does not help us reach the goal of freedom. Despite the hidden curriculum being widely acknowledged by scholars and educational researchers, little has changed in the hidden curriculum of public schools. We know much about power and ideology and its impact on schooling, but we have done little to transform education.

In K’s words, we have focused a lot on the outer, the structure of inequality, but done very little to address the inner psychological features of this injustice. Those who have sought reform to address the hidden curriculum in public schools have neglected the

fact that love, freedom, and awareness is paramount in psychological transformation⁶¹. We can find an analogy in the civil rights struggle. The transformation of the law was exceptionally important in the movement, but it could not eradicate the violence and prejudice in people's hearts and minds. Today such overt racism and prejudice is illegal, but there is more racial and economic inequality in schools than before the civil rights era (Kozol, 2005). Instead of seeking transformation in our inner life, they have concentrated on injustice and violence in the outer world. We have been trying to change the way people behave through social action and legal struggles, but we have done little to change their psychological makeup. We must change both hearts and minds but we cannot do this through power struggles or with threats. It requires love, freedom, and awareness, which was the essence of non-violent social resistance (King Jr., 1986).

Instead of transcending ideology or rising above class conflict, much of modern educational theory has reacted to the economically driven capitalistic ideologies that have power in the schools. The idea is that if we give power to the right agenda, or the right ideology, or if we could only reach whatever ideal or Utopia we have in mind, then we will have the just society. K believed such approaches to be misguided and detrimental. He said:

Almost all of us feel responsible for our families and children, but we do not have the feeling of being wholly concerned and committed to the environment around us, to nature, or of being totally responsible for our actions. That absolute care is love. Without this love, there can be no change in society. The idealists, though they may love their ideal or their concept, have not brought about a radically different society. Revolutionaries, terrorists, have not fundamentally changed the pattern of

⁶¹ Although I did not have the space to speak about it at length, humor is also an essential ingredient for schooling. There were many examples of humor throughout the descriptions of the two schools. Humor is a means of communicating any number of different things to children in each of the five dimensions of schooling and could equally be included along side love, freedom, and awareness.

societies. Physically violent revolutionaries have talked about freedom for all men, forming a new society, but all the jargon and slogans have only further tortured the spirit and existence. [...] We are saying very definitely and most emphatically that it is only having a sense of total responsibility for all mankind, which is love, that can basically transform the present state of society. (Krishnamurti, 2006b, pp. 27-28)

Idealism and ideology cannot bring about this radical transformation of the individual because it can only persuade or condition people. Only individual people can change themselves. The ideological forces only seek to have power over people. Taking control of power structures or replacing one ideology with another may do very little to engender meaningful social transformation. It cannot help people to have a change of heart.

Martin Luther King Jr. argued that what is needed to balance power is love:

One of the greatest problems of history is that the concepts of love and power are usually contrasted as polar opposites. Love is identified with a resignation of power and power with a denial of love. [...] What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive and that love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice. Justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love. (King Jr., 1986, p. 578)

We need to focus on the powerful love and loving power to reach the goals of social and individual transformation. By focusing on the analysis of power without consider love (“power at its best”) we never question the central issue: what motivates men and women to be violent, racist, prejudiced, ambitious, greedy, and self-interested? Why do we worship success? Why do we look to ideology to guide the development of schools and is it possible to transcend ideology? How can we get schools to focus on the whole human being and the whole of life and not only the world economy?

The extreme left has flagrantly used the very same forces of conditioning, power struggles, and ideology that they sought to undermine in the first place. Like changing

from one empire to another, we simply attempt to take over the structures and vestiges that had been left to us, baptizing new churches on the grounds of the temples of old. We brand new ideologies out of the ashes of old ones. If we really seek to undermine the power struggles being waged on the battleground of our children's futures we cannot fight fire with fire. It is imperative that we take K's advice and transcend ideological struggle. We have to see that all races, classes, and cultures, and peoples of the world partake in one diverse human family and that we are all bound up in common humanity, our common suffering, and our common hope for a good life. Like Krishnamurti, the great social reformers of the last century argued that "all men are brothers." Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi lived this, as did K. It was not an ideal, a concept, or a method. If it were only an idea, it would never have had the power to encourage social transformation. The men and women that catalyzed the non-violent social movement were appealing to something that transcended culture, subjectivity, and any other category that could divide us. Somewhere along the way however, this core message of the nonviolent movement was lost as it was translated into educational theory. We focused, instead, on power without the balancing force of love. However, Martin Luther King Jr., and Gandhi were after the very freedom that Krishnamurti spoke of so eloquently. In his famous speech, King cried out, "From every mountainside let freedom ring." This was nothing but a message of hope, love, and truth. If we cannot see that humanity is tied up in a common fate, not in theory, but in actuality, then we will never be able to sing those words of equality and justice. Let us have the clarity of mind and heart as a human family to take the political wars and ideological struggles out of our educational systems and to encourage the kind of self-aware and internally free

men and women that are capable of leading themselves and their children out of the mess we have created in the world. It is only through freedom from the past that we can truly give our children a future.

What I am suggesting is that we need a positive educational movement that focuses on positive human development. What is needed is the equivalent of the positive psychological movement in sociology and education. We need to examine well-being in education. This means that instead of exclusively studying dysfunction and inferring healthy functioning from it, we need to study both well-functioning and dysfunction in as systematic and rigorous a manner as possible. This would give us a measure of the real “health” and positive potential of a school. We should focus on love, freedom and awareness with its emphasis on truth and relationship. If we truly seek to educate children well, we need to transcend ideology, not create new ones. In this manner we can subvert the ideological and hegemonic forces at play in society through the power of love. This was the force behind the civil rights movement and non-violent social resistance. Not the strength of brute force, violence, or cruelty, but the courage of love, truth, and hope. We need a call to the conscience of parents and educators, and this will never happen if we focus only on criticism and seek power. We must have the courage to find a different type of power that comes from within and not from without.

Beyond Idealism: The Science of Well-Being and Education

I have endeavored to show the relevance of the Science of Well-Being for education. The five dimensions of schooling, the development of character, the integration of the emotional and rational brain, a positive view of human nature, and the

three practices of well-being demonstrate that relevance. These are elements that have broad relevance for program evaluation, teacher education, and the examination of well-being in schools. The three themes identified in this dissertation are as old as the hills. There is certainly nothing novel in love, freedom, or awareness. However, as is too often the case, we tend to forget the lessons from our past.

Krishnamurti's vision of how education could create a new generation capable of transforming themselves and the world completely may sound too idealistic to some. Certainly he did not think of it as such. Towards the end of his life in Rishi Valley, K commented that in the fifty years that the schools had existed that they had not managed to create "one lion, only mice." K believed that there was a human potential that lays dormant within each one of us. We simply lacked the necessary education and awareness to awaken that intelligence. If we could only help one individual to be fundamentally human, then perhaps the whole world would be different. Even within the K movement, some remain skeptical of whether or not the movement has been a "success." "Perhaps our time would be better spent," they say to themselves feeling the pressure of standards and accountability, "making sure the kids are successful academically." However, I believe that this is the wrong question to ask ourselves as educators. Imagine what schools would be like if each one of us strived to help children reach their maximal potential in every aspect of their lives? How different would we approach preparing for classes, choosing curriculum, or finding funding if we deeply believed that every child in our schools could be capable of radical transformation, and hence capable of leading the world out of the violence, madness, and suffering we endure each day?

K had a profoundly hopeful vision of the potential of education for the individual and society. It is one that fits well with the vision of human development described by the Science of Well-Being. Instead of looking to address the problems he saw, K looked to how to reach the highest possible standard of humanity. This positive educational vision asked us to transcend all the patterns of thought and ideologies that could prevent us from seeing the world as it actually is. By asking ourselves how to help children experience well-being and to help them to discover the tools and dispositions necessary to cultivate their own well-being, we can begin to build a better society from the inside-out. We can compare this attitude to those we hold as children and adults. As children, we often try to change others around us when we do not get our way. As we grow older, we realize that time is better spent changing ourselves for we have little control over anything else. This same search for power over others has the potential to consume us and we may never realize that we neglect our own inner development and the power of love as a result. It is human pride and vanity that leads us to think in this way. It leads to much of the strife we experience each day in the world. K asked us to patiently consider how we might go about really changing this. Many of the facets of his approach, as I have endeavored to show in this dissertation, have been confirmed by what we now understand about the science of human development and well-being. It is my hope that this scientific understanding will encourage us as a field to find the courage and the faith in our common humanity to maintain a positive vision of the potential for education to help people to blossom. This is not an end or a “standard” that is easily measured. It is rather a means. But as Gandhi and MLK reminded us during the civil rights movement, the end is in the means. Change yourself radically and the whole world changes

radically. Gandhi provides the direction and action we must take when he says, “We must be the change we wish to see in the world.” Krishnamurti gives us the reason—because we are the world:

Do you realize in your heart, in the totality of your mind, that you are the world and the world is you? When you cheat another you are cheating yourself. When you are jealous the world is jealous, and therefore your jealousy is sustained. And when you are envious you are part of that world. And then you ask, how am I to live in that world without envy, which is an abstraction because you are envious. So, when you realize that you are the world, and it is really an extraordinary thing to realize that, not verbally, not as an ideation, idea or mental concept but as an actuality, it is a tremendous thing. It breaks all the limits of thought. You understand, sir? Come, sir. It breaks down all barriers. It breaks down the centre of your being, which is the ‘me’. When you say, I am the world and the world is me, there is no me. You understand? So it is a tremendous thing to realize that. Then you will know what compassion is. (Krishnamurti, 1973b)

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Appendix A: Member Checking

As a part of this research I emailed a copy of each description that appeared in the final dissertation to the teachers that were observed and in some cases to faculty members who worked in those classrooms with those teachers for comment and feedback on the validity of the descriptions. I received letters as well as emails from some of the teachers I observed. I incorporated their feedback and comments into the descriptions. I have included here the letters that I received.

There are two teachers I observed during this study who I did not receive a letter from: Katherine and Wouter. Katherine emailed me a long email expressing that she was not content with my description of her classroom. She felt that I had not done a good job of characterizing her classroom as a whole. This is not something I disagreed with entirely, but the goal of my descriptions of the two schools was to give a broad description of the range of different experiences the children might have. For this reason I included an atypical lesson in Katherine's class in the description of her classroom. I endeavored to point out that it was not representative of a typical day in her classroom, however, the events did transpire as I described in her class during my observations. I incorporated other changes she suggested including reordering the sequence of the vignettes and a brief summary of what I just explained here. Wouter left the school at the end of the school year and I have been unable to find any means of contacting him by phone or email. He is currently working and traveling somewhere in Europe, but he has not left any means of correspondence with those I am still in contact with at his old school. As a result I was not able to have his feedback on the description of his

classroom. Nonetheless, I am confident that the letters I have included here demonstrate the accuracy and validity of the descriptions included in this dissertation.

Dear Kevin,

I found your observations to be very insightful and your writing eloquent. Your description of the classroom activities, in every instance, is vivid and honestly portrayed. In fact, you have captured many subtle points in the various descriptions. For instance the atmosphere in the Art Barn during the Art exam class has been beautifully captured and the relationship that the teacher has with her students in the math class (in the Rose garden) has been accurately portrayed. Your observations have shed light on understanding the educational environment at Brockwood, particularly in the context of Krishnamurti's intentions for place.

May I add that you have an acute sense of observation and have tremendous note taking skills. You are also good at putting the students at ease while observing them, so that they don't feel intruded upon by 'an inspector'. I noted that the students were very eager to get to know you and the work that you do and were curious about the subject of 'Education' in the context of alternative schools.

Altogether I feel that you have a lot to contribute to Brockwood, as an outside observer and a friend of the institution. You are, after all, not in the garb of an OFSTED inspector and therefore, the views you have shared with us have helped us tremendously both officially and unofficially in your talks with us and your continued correspondence with many of the teachers and staff members.

I look forward to your next visit to Brockwood,

With warm regards,
Aashika

To: Kevin Cloninger

4th October 2008

Dear Kevin

I really enjoyed reading the chapter on Brockwood that you sent me. I think you have done a great service to Brockwood by taking the time to study us so closely and then depicting the depth of what happens here with the perception and understanding that is displayed in your account. Also you have impressed everyone by your sincerity and affection and gained the trust of all here and we look forward to your return. I wish you could have been here for a whole year. You saw us through the rosy light and warmth of spring and early summer, towards the end of the school year when relationships have been established and the sun shines and the Grove is in flower. There are other seasons to Brockwood and it is just as important and instructive how we build community and how we deal with our travails.

It is always helpful have a objective and insightful observer gauge what actually happens and your observations on my classes show a clear understanding of what I was trying to do. Your style of writing, a detailed and accurate account of what went on with asides and comments, helped to explicate and illustrate the depth and significance of what, on the surface, could have been very simple activities; walking around the block to a grove of trees or sitting around with young people talking. You have captured some of the intention, the atmosphere and the intangible essence which lies at the heart of Brockwood and which represents what is often not given enough emphasis in education.

I look forward to reading the finished document and meeting you again.

With affection,

Raj
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England

Dear Kevin

Thank you so much for sending me the draft of your article. It felt rather strange to read about Maria and her art barn – I never think of the place as being mine, but I suppose, to some extent, it is.

Whilst you were there, ‘observing’ I often forgot about your presence and just carried on as normal. I think that comes through clearly in your observations and I am glad of it; I would not have wanted to put on some kind of show for you. Neither would the students. It was interesting for me to read what you noticed and highlighted – it felt like very clear and constructive feedback on my teaching practice, which is sometimes something I feel we teachers at Brockwood do not get enough of. Of course, you were looking for virtues rather than problems with my teaching practice, and I know that I am far from the perfect teacher!

Perhaps the thing which comes across most strongly for me in your article is the importance of relationship – in and out of the classroom. Being at Brockwood for the past five years has really emphasized that for me: relationship is what it is ALL about. And that is no easy task. I know that I am not always at my best with the students or anyone else, for that matter and I always find it challenging to be as patient and caring as I would like to be. It is something I feel I need to work on every day.

I am thinking a lot about the exam students, in particular, at the moment as their results are due to be released in a week or so. Their responses to that, I think, will reveal a lot about how much they have taken from all my babbling on about the value of grades. If I am honest, I think that I would have a hard time swallowing a grade I am not pleased with, no matter how many times my teacher told me not to worry about it!

On the whole, I am very pleased with your portrayal of Maria and of the environment in the art barn. Obviously the fact that you were there at the end of the year when everyone is very familiar with everyone else, played a major role in the ease and comfort of the relationships you witnessed. I think it is a little different at the beginning of the year when it is all a bit new. As an aside, you should see the art barn now! Some of the students and I spent a few days in there clearing up – they were pretty hard on me and forced me to throw out a lot of unnecessary and unused stuff. It now looks very neat and orderly. Still creative – but stylishly so. Once the new term starts I expect it to last a week!

With warm regards,
‘Maria’.

Dear Kevin,

Time seems to fly by ...

The extract affected me quite deeply actually. It was interesting to see myself through somebody else's eyes. I didn't always like what I saw. Although I do feel that it is an accurate and insightful representation of that class and of my thoughts on the school.

It appears that my class is far more chaotic and loud than I had noticed. It is disconcerting to see one's own social clumsiness and self-consciousness written in black and white. However, I enjoyed reading the piece (twice over) as it helped me have an insight into my own reactions to the students and to strangers in my class!

Thank you for the time you spent here,
I found all of your reflections on our life very interesting and useful,

Hope to see you soon,
Freya

Dear Kevin

I think what you wrote accurately reflects what happened in class that day, also my style of teaching to some extent. I suppose I'm not always that well planned down to the last detail. That lesson I think came so well-planned because Ofsted were expected. I found at Brockwood that it was impossible to plan every lesson adequately because of the imperative to be all things to all people. This was not only coming from above and was also self-driven.

I suppose the one thing that disturbs me about what you wrote is that it makes me sound like I was driven by something very traditional. I suppose what I was driven by at Brockwood was traditional in a sense but it was about being a mother not about being an efficiency expert. You see, all the time I was at Brockwood I got into trouble for my observations that had to do with how students were progressing academically. When I came to Brockwood no other staff member had a child there and I saw the implications of what we were doing to the students personally, and this stayed with me even after Susannah left. The only other person to take the Reflective Learning Journal seriously was Melinda who arrived a year ago with her son. She also shared my concerns. The thing is Kevin, I may have come across as a bit neurotic about being efficient as teachers but it stems from this. Susannah benefited greatly in many ways from being at Brockwood, but the one area she lost out in was in her academics.

I care very much for the people at Brockwood and I appreciate the care and effort you have put in to trying to reflect accurately on the place.

Best,
Angela

Dear Kevin

I found what you wrote extremely enjoyable reading - it was all so familiar. Your description of the physical beauty of the place and the 'immense depth of the silence' was perfectly portrayed and I was happy to realise that you recognise how important these factors are. I believe that you understand K's intentions for the school and it shows - I feel that your input into how we go about our daily life will be most helpful to all who are involved.

As I followed you through your time spent there I found your observations were insightful, objective and very recognisable. Your observations based on your interaction with students and their relationship with the staff was accurate and the school meeting was as I remember it, although I hope the reader does not get the impression that Adrian is lacking in energy, he is someone that always has time for students and though he is not a natural speaker he gives immense thought to any decision he makes and cares deeply about the place and it's intentions. In the same vein Fran sounded a little fragile which I don't think was your intention she has great strength which I know you recognised. But as I said I trust your perception and feel we can all learn from it.

Classes were as they are and as you point out we need to be working on our own interaction and relationships - staff with staff, and we are - it is an ongoing work in progress. As you know we are very open to input from outside if we feel that is understood what we are trying to do here, and you obviously do.

I think you have given an accurate, sincere and very insightful view.

With great affection,

Pamela

Hello Kevin,

Thank you for sharing with me a copy of your dissertation on your experience at Oak Grove School, and specifically the time you spent with my 4th grade class. It was very interesting for me to get a peek at the class from someone else's perspective.

I read your description with much interest. Rarely does a teacher have the opportunity to examine the classroom from someone else's perspective. It was as if you took many snapshots of the day's activities, and then thoughtfully described them in words. Because we as teachers are intensely living moment-to-moment, as frame-by-frame of life flashing before us, we don't usually have a chance to engage in a comprehensive retrospection.

I think your writing often captured the essence of the class and several of its individuals during one day of its evolution. I was pleased you mentioned my emphasis on the students using their neurons. Over my many years of teaching I have observed that this approach (not a trick or strategy, but speaking to what is literally taking place) allows students to more readily accept encouragement, rather than feeling wronged by comments from their teachers such as "*you* can do better." I think students need that impersonal approach along the lines of "you and me can work together to get those neurons going," or perhaps "your neurons must really be lighting up right now!" It **is** those neurons **not** "you," we are talking about. Using the word "you" is far too general and can have so many connotations.

Again, the questions I need to constantly ask myself is: "Am I getting my student(s) to really think?" or "Where is the thinking coming from, me or them?" or "Am I teaching my students how to think, not so much what to think?"

Kevin, I have valued the time you spent with us, and your thoughtful, but low-keyed participation, and for sharing of your observations.

Best regards,

Todd

Dear Kevin,

I thoroughly enjoyed reading through your observations and analysis of your time at Oak Grove School last Spring. Your written work is thoughtful, accurate and insightful. You use different vocabulary than I, which casts new light on my own thinking. You integrate teacher interviews and classroom/playground experiences with skill, and I have learned from your astute associations.

It was very enjoyable to have you in our school environment for the month. Having an “outsider” come watch and listen creates sharper eyes and ears for those of us doing the work. You have a definite gift for conducting interviews... I remember the eagerness we teachers felt in speaking about philosophy with you, with words just spilling out. This is not always the case with our many visitors!

I think you’ve captured the essence of the intention of our programs – their theory and practice – in a way which someone embedded in the school can’t do. Thanks for your careful process and good luck in the future!

With warm wishes,

Anney
Director
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Appendix B: Codes

I used NVIVO, a qualitative data analysis program. I therefore had no need to abbreviate my codes. I have included the list of the codes here below:

A Lack of Security and Trust for Staff

Action

Adjusting to Life Outside the School

Agape

Wonder

Creativity

Awareness

Boundaries

Care and Love

Changes in Consciousness with Technology

Core Program

Disease Perspective

Emotional Literacy

Evaluation of Inquiry

Fantasy about the School

Flow

Freedom and Order

Freedom

Grading and Comparison

Reward and Punishment

Honesty

Humor

Identity Development

Inner and Outer

Inquiry

Integration of Emotional and Rational Brain

Awareness of the Teacher

Role of the Teacher

Learning from Mistakes

Learning Styles

Learning

Making Personal Connections

Homework

Order and Security

Outdoor Experiential Ed

Playing the role of Teacher

Pushing Personal Limits

Relationship

Rich, Privileged Children

Safe and Secure Environment

Self directed Learning

Self-transcendence

Spirituality and the Sacred

Self-Understanding

Student Interests

Students are Aware of their Own Learning

Talents

Teacher as Resource

Teacher Freedom in the Classroom

Teaching Skill and Pedagogy

The Education of Perception

The Importance of Subject Matter

The Joy of Learning

The Middle Ground, How K hits the ground

The Self of a Teacher

The Void of K—Dependence on K

Traditional Education

Working Together Thinking Together