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Phenomenology Redux: Doing Phenomenology, Becoming Phenomenological

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This article revisits the phenomenological method with particular focus on how it is meaningful for me. The effort is to present this method as a personal journey that has evolved over 13 years and to illustrate how it might become a more accessible approach for meaning-making and serving others. This is partly accomplished by dethroning it from its lofty philosophical perch such that it is available for daily use by practitioners, educators, and researchers. Further accessibility is provided through the presentation of various examples in health care, higher education, and personal reflections on the experience of understanding and employing phenomenology. The article concludes with reflective notes on how it has become embodied in me and the experience of not just doing phenomenology but becoming phenomenological. *Organization Management Journal*, 11: 116–128, 2014. doi: 10.1080/15416518.2014.929935

INTRODUCTION

This article is a reflection on the contours of the phenomenological method as it has evolved, become internalized, and been embodied as a way of thinking, doing, and being for me over the past 13 years. A critique of the method was first addressed in a paper published in 2007 (Conklin, 2007) that was born of my curiosities and doubts regarding the ability of a researcher, specifically me, to shed the natural attitude that is discussed in the following, and to adopt the transcendental. The transcendental attitude (Husserl, 1962) is worthy of description before we proceed too deeply into the article. Most simply, this refers to off-loading the usual and often tacit processes of meaning-making that operate unreflectively and often go unnoticed by us as we conduct daily life. This usual and often tacit modus operandi is quite helpful and enables us to function efficiently in an ordered world. Phenomenologists refer to this as the natural attitude that relieves us from the challenges that would be

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present should we have to engage with each new moment as if it were indeed new, never before experienced in any of its varieties. When we are free of the natural we enter the transcendental. It would not be inaccurate to suggest that we only know the transcendental by the absence of the natural. This further complicates full knowing since we are trying to detect the absence of one thing as a marker for another. Interestingly, this echoes the very challenges I encountered that led to the 2007 paper: How can one "know" that she has accessed the transcendental, and if so, to what extent? The transcendental attitude is a suspension of the natural frame. It confronts and sets aside what we take to be given or true such that we might see beneath and beyond into the sense we make of our sense-making. This, as the goal of the phenomenologist, is in pursuit of the deep and intimate knowledge of the fundamental essence of experience.

I first encountered phenomenology during the dissertation process, where I confronted perpetual doubt regarding my success in achieving the glorious transcendental state free of my own psychological interpretations and limits. Once liberated, I would be able to see the world anew, fresh, and clear of my own lenses in ways that would reveal an experience's foundational elements. Having escaped the shackles of human perception and cognition, I would be ushered into the theater of the pretheoretical and timeless and gain access to the holy grail of human knowing, at once pure and yet, still personal . . . lofty aspirations indeed!

Now, upon further reflection, enhanced by the passage of time, I would like to revisit the method in ways that reveal new interpretations, less trepidation regarding my use of phenomenology, and how this process more comfortably resides in my consciousness and body. One may consider this a sort of phenomenological inquiry into the experience of phenomenology.

I offer a brief review of the method to ground the reader in some fundamentals and then move into a discussion of how this method has meaning for me. That is followed by detailed examples to illustrate how it has presented in my everyday experience. The first example introduced me to what I now believe is the transcendental attitude. The second is an intentional application of the attitude to a routine task common to academics.

My suspicion is that the "method," or way of being, has always been present in some fashion, and yet by explicating the process and reflecting on how it has evolved in my consciousness I have begun to understand at a very personal level how it manifests in the moment. Finally, I comment on the experience of the transcendental attitude as a daily companion, including its impact on my knowing and the confidence with which I know. This addresses the experience of phenomenology as daily practice.

Part of my intention in this writing is to invite readers to adopt the phenomenological attitude and its variants (regardless of name). This is based on faith that constructing a bridge between the idiosyncratic and the essence enables one to approach the other transcendentally, within a sphere removed from what is typically interpreted simply as the subject/object dichotomy. Only then will practitioners begin to approach the essence of Kant's (1964) maxim to treat others always as ends, never as means.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Smith offers the following description of phenomenology in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

> Phenomenology is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view. The central structure of an experience is its intentionality, its being directed toward something, as it is an experience of or about some object. An experience is directed toward an object by virtue of its content or meaning. (Smith, 2009, Phenomenology section, para. 1)

As an interpretation of consciousness, phenomenology is considered the foundation of all knowledge rather than, for instance, "ethics or metaphysics or epistemology" (Smith, 2009). Further clarity is found in Smith's following words:

> Phenomenology studies the structure of various types of experience ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity, including linguistic activity. (Smith, 2009, 1. What is Phenomenology? section, para. 2)

Hence, phenomenology is an inherently reflexive practice (Alvesson, Hardy, & Harley, 2008; Hardy & Clegg, 1997; Hardy, Phillips, & Clegg 2001; Harley, Hardy, & Alvesson, 2004; Marshall, & Rossman, 2011; Schipper, 1999; Schon, 1983) that confronts the presuppositions a researcher/practitioner may carry into any inquiry. Husserl's (1931, 1962) contention that one lay aside one's presuppositions is a central element in the method, and yet to what extent can any practitioner move ahead with confidence that she has done so? This, the phenomenological reduction, is a central theme in a phenomenological understanding of experience and stands as a response to the reductionist frame occupied by the positivists, who rely wholly on that knowledge given through the senses. Phenomenology by contrast offers an account of experience liberated from that minimalist perspective. It does not presuppose itself as a replacement or substitute for more positive approaches to science, but instead as an alternate and legitimate form of concern appropriate for examining particular questions. These may include questions asked by those who are principally interested in pursuing the more delicate structures of experience, which are likely glossed over and underserved by positivist methods.

Spiegelberg described the reduction as the "systematic suspension of our belief in the reality of these phenomena" (1975, p. 138) and the "identification and deliberate elimination of theoretical constructs and symbolisms in favor of the return to the unadulterated phenomena" (1960, p. 656). He elaborated on the challenge this presents to the aspiring phenomenologist when he claimed that this required a "determined effort to undo the effect of habitual patterns of thought and to return to the pristine innocence of first seeing" (1960, pp. 656–657). Despite Spiegelberg's claims of what must be done, it was the doing that was most encumbered, as revealed in his reference to Husserl's own difficulty in grasping the complexity of the act and the curious absence of any "final account" (Spiegelberg, 1975, p. 138) of this complex idea. As a crowning statement of the challenge, Merleau-Ponty (1945) suggested that the premier lesson of the reduction was the impossibility of achieving it. Despite this void, and perhaps because of it, there are likely multiple avenues by which we can understand and participate in phenomenology. Instead of a systematic, disciplined, recipe-driven approach to the process, phenomenology is more of a set of ideas with various interpretations available for practice. Phenomenology provides ways of being and doing that are yet amenable to some idiosyncratic interpretation and available for revision along certain practicable lines. This slippery and elusive practice was the central question that fueled my pursuit in the 2007 writing and what has stayed with me as I have continued to encounter phenomenology in the current work.

PHENOMENOLOGY AS DAILY COMPANION

The extant literature on phenomenology contains many studies that have employed this method in understanding organizational phenomena (Aprigliano, 2000; Banaga, 2000; Barrow, 2004; Burgoyne & Hodgson, 1983; Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert, & Shipp, 2006; Gibson, 2004; Hacket, 2000; Johnson & Klee, 2007; Kupers, 2002, 2008; Lee & McLean, 2002; Morenu, 2001; Sherlock, 2002; Van Tiem, 1998). While these studies addressed the utility of the method in a given context, they stopped short of offering additional outlets for its use beyond the particular study or how phenomenology might play a role in our daily understanding, knowing, and sense-making. Hence, my curiosity focuses on the role of phenomenology, if there is one, for the "self in everyday life" (with a nod to Goffman, 1959).

Phenomenology's merit is in its call to set aside presuppositions. In the practical realm this invokes a practitioner to inquire into her convictions and doubts. What does she think she knows? By what means did she come to know it? Might there be other things worth knowing in the construction of her

understanding? In this inquiry it becomes apparent that despite her confidence in what she believes and knows there are very likely other data bits that may have escaped her attention but by no means are any less significant in the construction of her knowledge and upon which she may act. Phenomenology introduces doubt into what she believes she knows and begins to shepherd her into the transcendental attitude. Considering doubt helps one "adopt the attitude" (Conklin, 2007, p. 285) of phenomenology. While she may not perfect the art, doubt facilitates engaging with the possibility of new knowledge and creates space for new awareness to arrive on the scene. Engaging only with a particular manifestation mitigates access to the essence. Phenomenology seeks to bridge the unique contours of the unitary event to the essence of the phenomena in broader terms. In Spiegelberg's (1960) words, "We have to look at the particulars *as examples*, i.e., as instances which stand for the general essence" (p. 677).

The transcendental attitude of phenomenology is intended to replace the natural attitude (Wertz, 2005) described as one's "ordinary lack of curiosity with which most of life is lived . . . [and] the everyday assumption that things are only as they appear to our unreflective consciousness" (LeVasseur, 2003, p. 417). This is similar to Weick's "disciplined imagination" or "thought trials" (1989; Van de Ven, 2007), where the practitioner considers heterogeneous explanations for what she witnesses. A diversity of stories introduces a plurality of explanations pursuing fuller and deeper understanding. Entertaining this variety necessarily suspends any assumed explanation and holds it at arm's length while alternate possibilities are considered. According to Weick, "Any device that short circuits memory, foresight, or preference in the generation of thought trials increases the independence of these trials" (1989, p. 522). Humans' tendency to "exhibit grooved, habituated, redundant thinking," as suggested by Steinbruner (1974) (in Weick, 1989, p. 522), is analogous to the natural attitude and what the transcendental attitude attempts to transcend.

INTENTIONALITY

Husserl's (1900/1970) understanding of intentionality focused on the objectified world beyond mental representation relative to any concrete object. Elements of Smith's (2009) definition of phenomenology that relate to intentionality include the experience of being "directed toward" (Phenomenology section, para. 1) a thing. It is the "central structure of an experience" (Phenomenology section, para. 1) or "an experience of or about some object" (Phenomenology section, para. 1). Intentionality finds its outward representation in something about a particular phenomenon. In daily life, this may manifest in one's imaginings of the other whom one intends to serve. In this way one is "directed toward" (Phenomenology section, para. 1) the other and is having "an experience of or about" the other who is the focus or "central structure of [the] experience" (Phenomenology section, para. 1). One's curiosity is centered on the dynamics

that lie beneath and beyond the immediately available sense data upon which judgments and assessments rest. As a practical example, Buckingham and Clifton (2001) and Rath (2007) have written about orienting and operating from one's strengths. Their approach confronts many of the tacit assumptions (presuppositions perhaps?) in management today, including the seemingly ubiquitous notion that employees must constantly strive to improve their weaknesses. This idea appears to be so ingrained in the collective Western organizational psyche and reified through annual performance reviews that it goes without question or critique as organizational members' default orientation; it is simply "truth." These authors' intentions took a direct assault on this collective presupposition when they declared that one's best use of talents and energy is to find work that frees and enables one to do what one does best. Their novel assumption was that people are simply not wired to become good at everything. Given this, people should focus time and effort on what they already or could do well, strengthening those skills, abilities, talents, and aptitudes, and thereby confronting this taken-for-granted natural attitude. Related writing on positive psychology (Bernstein, 2003; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Cooperrider, 1990; Watkins, Mohr, & Kelly, 2011), positive organizational behavior (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008; Luthans & Church, 2002), and positive organizational scholarship (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012) also orients around the idea of focusing time, energy, and resources on activities that a person or an organization does particularly well or that are desired by that person or organization. Bushe (2007) summed up nicely the intent of appreciative inquiry in its thrust to be "generative" or to create more of what a system genuinely desires, as opposed to simply solving problems, which might be interpreted as the eradication of what is unwanted. Management, however, must initiate the conversation in order to understand who and what can contribute to that generativity. This necessarily requires a change in the fundamental assumptions that tacitly inhabit organizational members, which can only then change the nature of dialogue between those members. Schipper (1999) and Schon (1983) have suggested likewise.

Phenomenology holds the potential to contribute to understanding the possibilities of self and others, and to mobilizing the energy and resources to create environments where everyone can do their best work. The opportunity to serve in this unique way, however, is often missed or obscured through the fog of the demands for ever higher levels of productivity. Performance and productivity goals necessarily take a manager's eye off of self and the other who is doing the performing and producing. The generative approaches cited earlier reorient consciousness toward self and other in the transaction. She who is doing the work can be better served if management can pause and begin to understand her best talents and skills. This particular issue will be further explored later in the article as an example of my personal experience in managing staff.

Moustakas ([1994](#)) believed that researchers take a personal interest in the phenomenon they seek to know, and that they are "intimately connected" (p. 59) with the phenomenon. For the practitioner this could mean seeing and understanding the special knowledge, abilities, skills, and talents in others, as suggested earlier. It means understanding the unique contribution the practitioner might make to the organization. For example, those in the service/health professions might see beyond the *Physicians' Desk Reference* (PDR), the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes, or the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM-5) classification scheme to more fully understand and serve the patient. In Moustakas's ([1994](#)) description of the phenomenological method, the knower and her "thinking, intuiting, reflecting, and judging" (p. 59) are the primary evidence of the investigation. In understanding the other, the clinician who is the "knower" must begin with herself in an inside-out orientation (Hunt, [1987](#)); who is she being in relation to the patient/phenomenon in her apprehension of that phenomenon? The nexus of these various elements is where meaning is constructed. The knower is a figural participant in the creation of that knowing.

Similarly, a manager whose intentionality is about the firm, or the bottom line, or production quotas, is "about" something other than the person whose work is directed toward those topics. A manager's intention then can just as likely be about her staff or herself and the sense-making resident in that self. In this way, phenomenology may blend with other forms of knowing, particularly autoethnography (Chang, [2008](#)). Autoethnography focuses on the author as culturally situated and thereby blends and blurs the boundaries between phenomenology as the understanding of the essence of an experience and autoethnography as the understanding of one's culturally situated experience. Understanding self and one's biases and then setting them aside requires penetrating access into one's mind and experience. This must be undertaken even given the imprecise nature of perception, one's inability to escape one's own contingency, and the interests and dispositions that occupy one and from which one can never be fully liberated. Barthes ([1989](#)) said, "The subject of the speech-act can never be the same as the one who acted yesterday: the *I* of the discourse can no longer be the site where a previously stored-up person is innocently restored" (p. 17). While this insight may compromise the integrity of any knowledge claim, it does not undo a claim's contribution. By contrast, it better locates the author as a participant in the inquiry rather than one who has slickly escaped her earthly bonds and who now peers from a lofty perch, free and clear of that which is muddled for those who live in the grimy moist trenches of this world.

Locating the rightful place of the author in the phenomenological approach applies to, and performs a similar function in, the practice of autoethnography, as we are all products of and contributors to the cultures of which we are members. Rodriguez and Ryave ([2002](#)), whose work falls at the crossroads of interactionism, ethnomethodology, and conversational

analysis, argue for self-observation where the researcher may bring to the surface what is "taken-for-granted, habituated, and/or unconscious" (p. 4). Their claim clearly reflects elements of phenomenology, yet is more identified with the aforementioned domains. It is important to note this so that we may move forward with the understanding of the sometimes arbitrary distinctions among methods and their lineage and/or purity.

SO HOW DOES PHENOMENOLOGY ACTUALLY HAPPEN?

Husserl's ([2001](#)) maxim "To the things themselves" (p. 168) does not just include lamps and trees. It also includes the other who sits before me in her joy, angst, frustration, pain, bliss. In Merleau-Ponty's ([1964](#)) reflections on painting and art, he said that "Scientific thinking, a thinking which looks on from above, and thinks of the object-in-general, must return to the 'there is' which precedes it" (p. 160). "It is a matter of describing, not of explaining or analyzing" (Merleau-Ponty, [1964](#), p. viii). Greater clarity is gained from reflecting on the following lengthy quote:

> To return to the things themselves is to return to that world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always *speaks*, and in relation to which every scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign-language, as is geography in relation to the countryside in which we have learnt beforehand what a forest, a prairie or a river is. (Merleau-Ponty, [1964](#), p. ix)

Phenomenology endeavors to wrestle perception free of the habituated constraints, patterns, and motifs that make for order in everyday life. However, becoming unhinged from convenient orienting schemata may reveal its alternative, which has been called "negative capability." This phrase was originally used in a letter by Keats ([1970](#), p. 43) and has now been used to help understand the experience of thinking in the moment, especially when that moment is disorienting, unexpected, and uncertain (Simpson & French, [2006](#)). The phenomenologist who pursues the essence of experience must intentionally release herself from the routine, systematized, and orderly. It is inherent in the practice to intentionally pursue negative capability situations, to get beyond the traditional, typical, unreflective structures offered by society's rubrics of meaning. The phenomenologist pursues the contours of experience prior to entrapment and sanitation through modern artifice. The phenomenologist seeks to hear words and expressions beyond any title, role, community, or organizational identity. Now freed of the restraints of her interpretive lenses, the phenomenologist is situated in a receptive posture, available to encounter experience prior to any role. In this bracketed space she is available to receive the other, less constrained by conventions to which she has naively become a slave in habituated practice. To see through the collective veil and find that person residing there is to approach the transcendental. It is to acquiesce to the phenomenological possibility given by Harmon ([1990](#)), who suggested that "the understandings of organizational actors . . . differ widely, thus requiring

continual cooperative and mutually intelligible activity" (p. 11), which can only come through suspension of current truths.

As a particular case, nursing research has focused on the role of phenomenology in a practitioner's attempt to apprehend the unique and individual, as well as the universal concerns of patients (Jasper, 1994; Van der Zalm & Bergum, 2000). Jasper (1994) claimed that while phenomenology focuses on the idiosyncratic experience with an interpretation along structural lines, it also provides a frame for nursing practitioners to interpret patients' experiences that may be aligned along certain dynamics common to those who are dealing with illness. These interpretations offer lenses for action within the bounded terrain of the profession while still allowing sufficient breadth and depth to see what is distinctive.

Phenomenology's use in the applied professions has a long tradition. van Manen (2007) states:

> Scholars such as Van den Berg (1966, 1972), Beets (1952/75), Langeveld (1983 a,b), Linschoten (1987), and Buytendijk (1943) integrated phenomenological method into the very languages and structures of their disciplines. They shied away from technical philosophical issues and they openly admitted that they were primarily interested in phenomenology as a practical and reflective method, not in phenomenology as professional philosophy. (pp. 22–23)

My interest in this work is aligned with their intent as well as Jaspers's (1968) work in psychiatry, which acknowledged the practical and applied role of phenomenology. He was most interested in gaining access to the idiosyncratic, individual, and unique experiences of patients and claimed that the psychiatrist must experience what the patient experiences, thereby reflecting what is commonly understood as empathy. Only through this process can the therapist gain access to others' mental/emotional states and focus on their whole experience. In my evolving understanding and apprehension of phenomenology, I recall being released from my immobilization by my dissertation chair's similar suggestion that phenomenology had much in common with empathy. Moustakas (1994) offered specific suggestions for how one might achieve this frame. He encouraged his learners to "enter into a process of authentic self-presence, thinking, and choosing as a way of discovering and knowing the nature and meaning of significant experiences in identity formation and selfhood" (p. 63). More concretely, he suggested:

> growing quiet and listening; coming to an inward clearing; connecting with a dominant question, issue, or concern related to a specific person (including one's own self), or a situation or event; describing the experience; determining the qualities, invariant constituents, and core themes; considering possible meanings; and arriving at an understanding of the essences of the experience. (p. 63)

For me this takes the form of mindfully identifying with my inner state, discerning any free-floating concerns or anxiety detached from specific identifiable causes, or recognizing any attractors of my attention that would distract and or dilute my experience. What are the lightning rods of mind that draw my energy and attention away from my focus on what is, my focus on the phenomenon at hand? Attending to this inner terrain has proven valuable as a means of self-reference that aids in identifying and bracketing elements that might compromise the 1:0 signal-to-noise ratio of my awareness. Drilling deeper into the detail, Benner (1994) offered some categories of inquiry that may aid nurse practitioners' attempts to better understand self and other in their meaning construction. Specifically, she suggested paying attention to:

"Situation—This includes an understanding of how the person is situated, both historically and concurrently. Is the situation one of smooth social functioning or . . . breakdown?" Is there "novelty, error, confusion, or conflict" (p. 104)?

"Embodiment—This includes an understanding of embodied knowing that encompasses skillful comportment and perceptual and emotional responses" (p. 104). What are the "highly skilled, taken-for-granted" (p. 104) responses in the knower that enable her to respond in ways foreign to those who are less knowledgeable of the dynamics, nuances and circumstance?

"Temporality—The experience of lived time [and how] one projects oneself into the future and understands oneself from the past. . . . It includes the qualitative, lived experience of time or timelessness. [Benner refers to the experience of chronic illness where] one's sense of time may be radically altered" (p. 105).

"Concerns— . . . the way the person is oriented meaningfully in the situation. Concerns will dictate what will show up as salient and therefore what will be noticed in the situation. They constitute what matters to the person" (p. 105).

"Common meanings—These are taken-for-granted linguistic and cultural meanings that create what is noticed and what are possible issues, agreements, and disagreements between people" (p. 105).

While Benner applied these perceptual categories to the nursing profession, they can easily serve as general arenas for observation regardless of discipline. Reflecting on these categories loosens one's perceptual apparatus, renders one available, and helps free up one's portals of observation. While history and the lenses of a profession can create limiting perceptions or "scripts" (Gioia, 1992) that may prevent a full encounter with what is available, it is just this history that creates the background against which an impression can relate to previous impressions. History connects the material of professional practice, linking experiences together. Impressions are associated in meaningful ways that are "already *understood* in the light of the past experience in which it co-existed with those which we are concerned to arouse" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 17). Behind this however, is the question of how such experiences came to be had in the first place. What drew her attention, curiosities, and passions towards a thing? How is it that one thing captured her attention and not another?

In this way I am curious about the a priori nature of experience. I didn't learn to be empathic and sensitive to another's

pain only by studying psychology and practicing as a therapist. Something else was on the scene prior to that "choice" to study psychology. Something else predisposed me to those curiosities. Perhaps because of these questions, I am naturally drawn to such things as phenomenology, which is attenuated towards such matters. "[P]henomenology seeks to study phenomena as they are known directly as they are presented to consciousness" (Sanders, 1982, p. 358), and because of this the trajectory of my curiosity may have been preordained. In a similar way, the habits of perception and sense-making developed in a profession relieve the practitioner of having to encounter each new moment as if it were indeed new. This constructs schemas that enable action. The practitioner is informed by partial and patterned perceptions that contribute much to her behavior and effectiveness. This is what is meant by engaging in the natural attitude. Phenomenology, however, requires that she also think transcendentally.

Further direction for the practitioner is provided by Gibson and Hanes (2003), who identified five critical elements for one's receptivity. "Openness, encounter, immediacy, uniqueness, and meaning" (p. 189) are necessary companions in the practitioner's disposition.

Openness refers to the ability of the practitioner to be "receptive, sensitive, self disclosing" and to suspend her own assumptions and judgments "without imposing presuppositions, external theories, models, or structures on it" (Gibson & Hanes, 2003, p. 190).

Encounter addresses the relationship between the practitioner and the other. It may be summarized by Buber's (1958) "I and Thou." The other is met as a unique other complete with personal meaning structures that are wholly her own and through which she has made meaning of her experience.

Immediacy has to do with the presence of oneself in and through the conversation that contributes to a sense of trust and a willingness to disclose.

Uniqueness calls on the practitioner to be simultaneously available to the particulars of the individual story while also drawing connections between similar stories as a means of understanding the central essence of the experience. How does the subtext of this moment connect to the structural grounding of other similar experiences?

In understanding what meaning the other has come to make of her experience, the practitioner moves from the particular structures of the other to an investigation of the essence of the experience's meaning. Despite these valuable guides for thinking, it is important to remain aware of the limited nature of human consciousness. We are pointedly reminded of this caution by Hasselgreen and Beach (1999), who said, "The way in which a person experiences a phenomenon constitutes one facet of the phenomenon, seen from that person's perspective, with that person's biography as background (p. 4, as cited in Parry, 2003, p. 259). By inference, one could deduce that there are many possible perspectives limited only by the number of available observers.

In spite of the limitations of qualitative methods in general, and phenomenology in particular (Conklin, 2007), examples may help to illuminate its practice. I next share two. The first is an experience that introduced me to what I now interpret as an unwitting shift in my attitude from the natural to the transcendental. The second example illustrates a common practice as an academic where I see the opportunity to intentionally engage the transcendental attitude. Both examples illustrate the intersubjective (Husserl, 1962) nature of phenomenology.

EXAMPLE 1

As a former manager in a large urban research hospital, I recall encountering a problem with one of my staff. I managed a group of 37 in a radiation oncology department and had a large population of patients who required daily treatment. Patient treatment was conducted using a variety of radiation machines, each of which required two trained radiation therapy technologists. It was important that the day begin on time as the scheduling of patients was relatively tight and use of staff and equipment needed to be efficient. The problem was that one technologist on whom patients and her technologist partner depended was habitually late to work by approximately 25 minutes. This hospital was in Chicago, which, of course, is a densely populated area. Many staff members commuted significant distances to work and this was true for this person as well.

As a manager I had documented the details of her tardiness for several weeks and decided it was time to have a chat. I arranged a meeting with her in my office, which was set by my administrative assistant. As the date approached I reviewed all of my data and files and was clearly occupied with managerial thoughts. What was the cause of her lateness? What was the nature of her work ethic? What was the impact on the patients? How was her work partner affected? How could she be so cavalier about her work and the care of the patients? Why was she so lazy?

While these thoughts and evolving, yet unconscious judgments were present, it was only later that I realized that they had tacitly occupied me in anticipation of the meeting and in creating the file that supported it. This clearly reflected Atkinson's (1972) insight that phenomenology, while concerned primarily with experiences as they encounter consciousness, may also be occupied with consciousness itself. This became most painfully apparent as my dispositions were revealed to me through my experience of her and reflections on that experience.

In the meeting I began with small talk to set a collegial tone. Shortly into the conversation, however, I began to describe the reason for the meeting and the problem replete with the details of the file. I then moved into a question session intended to get at the fundamental issue at the base of her tardiness. I was not long into this planned interchange when I was confronted with a reality for which I was unprepared, indeed one that introduced me to the idea of negative capability referred to above and in the work of Simpson and French (2006) and French, Simpson,

and Harvey (2009). My opening litany of details was met with tears and the sudden pouring forth of a trauma- and drama-filled home life. She was a woman in her early thirties with three children under the age of 5. This, a significant challenge to manage in its own right, was further complicated by her need to be at work "across town" (in Chicago) by 8:30 every morning. If that was not enough, she also shared a challenging marriage with an alcoholic husband who did not work and was of little help at home with the needs that are presented by three young children.

This turn radically changed what I had planned for the meeting and introduced so much new information that I was unable to do anything other than be empathic as she put forth these sad details. I was confronted with Benner's (1994) "situation" context where her story presented "novelty, error, confusion, or conflict" (p. 104). She offered a broader and deeper picture of her life, unsanitized by the artifice of organizational life. Negative capability naturally followed her story that jolted me into the awareness that there are many things impacting any given situation beyond what is believed to be present or imagined. The "concern" (Benner, 1994) in this experience was beyond the traditional and organizational context, thereby introducing unanticipated data that became more salient than the planned agenda. These details wrenched me out of my natural managerial attitude and introduced me to multiple other possibilities for this conversation. It was then that I realized that my thinking contained a constellation of categories, assumptions, and value judgments, biased by the domains of my role, discipline, and study during my MBA . . . thinking, by the way, that I did not realize was biased at all. I was clearly immersed in the natural attitude of what it meant to be a manager.

Perhaps the experience in the hospital was an act of grace . . . an eye-opening incident that there in the midst of an organizational/business setting (not a therapeutic setting) we are still human . . . we are still trying and there is ample opportunity to bring some of the therapeutic process into even these settings. While businesses and organizational environments are not therapy, they can be therapeutic. This was the shocking awareness that opened my eyes to the fact that business is still organized and managed by human beings. The manager role was my first official role in an organization that was not mainly focused on human wellness as its core function. Despite the fact that it was in a hospital, my particular role was on managing and organizing the radiation oncology department. Given this, I entered this role full with presuppositions about my distance from the human tragedy of cancer, and its toll on patients and their families. I apparently believed that my work was about the business end of the department, thereby separating me from the more clinical elements of the work. When this conversation occurred with one of my staff members, whatever presuppositions occupied me regarding the sterile and business focus of my role were deflated. I encountered, here in this business office, another human being mired in the frightening and fragile experience of what it means to be human, and how similar were these dynamics to so many prior encounters with clients in the

therapist's office. In a split second I was transported back to a former role where my person was in relationship with this person. I believe this was my introduction to the phenomenological that happened by way of contrast: the contrasting experiences of who I had been in previous work and how that, in my imagination, was different from who I was now being as a manager. The powerful discovery was that these two roles were quite similar. While the content of the organization's work may have been different, the roles I occupied were quite similar. Upon further reflection I would suggest that even my title of "Administrative Director" connoted for me a "dollars and cents" approach that insulated me from the visceral and human dynamics of working with people.

I believe this story reflects the five concepts identified by Gibson and Hanes (2003) and confronted my managerial thinking with questions regarding what I believed I knew, how I came to know it, and what else might be known. The tale of her trauma was compelling and drew me beyond my role as "manager relating to staff" into a human "I and Thou" (Buber, 1958) relationship. This shift created openness or a sense of receptivity to her and rendered me available to the encounter, full with the potential to craft shared understanding and meaning with her. A sense of immediacy was present in her free, unencumbered sharing. Perhaps she sensed some safety in our relationship or in me as one who might have "not only the capacity to listen and be present, but is also able to understand what is often not being said in words or actions" (Pooley, 2004, p. 185). As a direct correlate, Pooley (2004) suggested that effective coaches are able to "look . . . beyond the obvious reasons for being late . . . [recognizing] that these all have possible and multiple meanings that are worthy of exploration" (p. 185).

My experience of her woeful account and my emotional and bodily response to the novel, unexpected story left a visceral residue. Benner's (1994) notion of embodiment is relevant as I attempted to be present to her in ways that were clearly nonmanagerial. I felt a physical response to her, the feeling of being pulled out of myself and compassionately drawn to how she had been thrown into the world. Merleau-Ponty (1962) said that "every perceptual habit is still a motor habit and here equally the process of grasping a meaning is performed by the body" (p. 153). My instinctive response, the welling up, the shift in tone and topic in our conversation had their origins in my physical and psychological reorientation out of my managerial self. The instinctive response was historically situated and provided a "temporal" (Benner, 1994) component that united my current self with a previous self as a psychologist. In that role I felt compelled in my relations to others; I was drawn into empathy, not as a configured or mechanical and intentional reaction but as the innate upwelling within that ever-so-natural response to what the client offered. It "is to allow oneself to respond to their call, which is made upon it independently of any representation" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 139). Appreciating and accepting her unique situation transcended any traditional or typical managerial interpretation I may have anticipated. The

meaning this had for her was palpable for me, as my domain of potential understandings and meanings for an employee's behavior expanded beyond what is often taken to be the typical managerial interpretation.

This experience confronted me with assumptions that informed my approach to the initiating circumstance, thus mirroring Baxter Magolda's (2004) epistemological reflection where we encounter our assumptions "about the nature, limits and certainty of knowledge" (p. 31). Baxter Magolda claimed that these evolve into more sophisticated and complex sets of epistemological assumptions that are context related and socially constructed. Her ideas align with Kegan's (1982) work on the constructive-developmental self. Kegan described how we evolve through various stages by encountering unsettling and disruptive experiences which confront current interpretations of self vis-à-vis world. Specifically, Kegan suggested we must reestablish truces about what accounts for the subjective experience of our life while renegotiating that which is object— in essence, what is me and what is not the current me, but part of a previous me. These confrontations with experience, not unlike my experience with this employee, have the potential to upset existing truces and create the necessary disequilibrium that propels us forward toward higher development.

In my experience I believe I confronted an existing truce, to use Kegan's word, in what was then my current constructive-developmental state, as I engaged the essence of Harmon's (1990) question: "What are those people [she in this case] or *we* trying to do" (p. 13)? This question and its variants bluntly interjected what I have come to understand as the transcendental attitude. What does this experience ask of management today? What do they think they know? How is it that they know it? By what means did they come to know it? What else could be known? What don't they know that if they knew, they would do differently? And then, of course, how might they go about expanding that knowing? Can management craft "holding environments" (Winnicott, 1965) in organizations where truth-telling can happen? Where are the leaders who can sustain the "uncertainty, frustration, and pain without getting too anxious themselves" (Huffington, James, & Armstrong, 2004, p. 79) as they become containers for others' anxiety revealed through unexpected and nontraditional responses? Considering these questions, members of management may come to realize that their central task is to negotiate shared meaning such that everyone can collectively and consciously act. What qualifies as valid knowledge worthy of consideration is addressed through writing that confronts the once tacit faith in objective science (Garratt & Hodkinson, 1999). Now, there must be room for the local, situated, yet incomplete knowing that exists outside the usual domain of what has stood as valid knowledge. This frame undoes any claim to established criteria for what counts in a given qualitative inquiry (Garratt & Hodkinson, 1999). These authors declare "that it is both illogical and pointless to attempt to predetermine a definitive set of criteria against which all qualitative research should be judged" (Garratt &

Hodkinson, 1999, p. 515). Their views are supported by Harley, Hardy, and Alvesson (2004), whose work discussed the inherent limitations and paradoxical dilemmas of qualitative research. Despite their undoing, they left the researcher standing ready and prepared with greater reflexivity in her work, as the inherent limitations of qualitative methods do not render them moot. Instead, the Harley et al. (2004) work enlightened researchers and enabled them to more thoroughly address the complexities of human science. In like manner, the qualitative approach to knowledge liberates managers, practitioners, and researchers alike; it sets them free to ask heretofore unforgivable questions and legitimizes the knowing that emerges from such inquiry.

EXAMPLE 2

Another example from the daily life of teaching may illuminate the practice and better reflect the experience of this journal's readership.

As I encounter the essay exam or term paper grading process, I begin by reading and rereading, over and over, never being quite sure whether I have appreciated the student's effort and intention. This can invite an intentional experience of negative capability by suspending what is believed to be known, and engaging the uncertainty and doubt that agitate the happy attitude that comes from "knowing." This reveals the doubt I carry, likely, at least in part, a result of living in a Cartesian world where the experience of knowing and that which is known have parted company.

Further complicating knowledge apprehension is the embeddedness of self and student in various socio/cultural worlds. What are the "taken-for-granted linguistic and cultural meanings" (Benner, 1994, p. 105) that guide the hearts and minds of each? Roth (2006) has commented on how the observer and observed can never be separated, thus revealing how both are caught up in worlds that precede and inform the other and are hence "shot through with meaning" (p. 8). Wise would be the professor then who can recall and reconnect to the experience of being a student at the various levels at which she has participated. A full, rich memory would be replete with the uncertainty and curiosities of what teachers intended for her as student. Historically situated reflections offer some hedge against grossly divergent views and acknowledge the interconnectedness of their two worlds, thus providing some context for understanding and shared knowing.

Knowledge of others then is always relational and historical. It is always contained and reflected in what always already was or is. Regardless of the purchase of any common ground, the upshot of this is ever more questions not unlike those already described. To what extent have I only seen or am I only seeing through the filter of how I have come to know that student and the relationship we share? How is the intersubjective nature of our relationship present and historically, temporally (Benner, 1994) contextualized in my reading of her work? To what extent am I only seeing what is central to *my* understanding of a

particular concept or theory? To what extent has the student offered something new, novel, perhaps an alternative to the tired interpretation that has accompanied me in recent years? Am I available and receptive to these new interpretations; am I, could I be an active listener (Rogers & Roethlisberger, 1991) even through the printed word? Can I get out of my own way in the act of understanding and evaluating another's always partial, halting effort at expressing her deepest, most heartfelt, and intellectual observations and interpretations? These questions are at the heart of trying to see through history: my own, that of the student, and that of the particular discipline. I am populated by the ghosts of previous classes, students, ideas, and my ideas about ideas. Knowing this, can I apprehend myself purely, enabled to act with unencumbered consciousness?

Simply asking these questions begins the process of relieving my consciousness of its burdens. Having bracketed the experience, explored and confronted presuppositions, and transcended the natural attitude, I am more available to the essence of the experience of her writing. Over time and iterative reviews of her work the process yields a saturated perspective through encountering her various horizons of the idea. These have provided the textual components, which give way to the structures of the experience. However, I can never know to what extent I have achieved such an unfettered state, for every new "encounter" (Gibson & Hanes, 2003) with the phenomenon reveals yet additional perspectives. At some point I am filled up with perspectives and can repose with the full awareness that while each new observation is revealing and "unique" as Gibson and Hanes (2003) suggest, perhaps they only further saturate perspectives already gathered. Eventually I find what she means and understand her "concerns" and how she is "meaningfully" oriented to the writing (Benner, 1994, p. 105) and realize that I have found it. It is then that I can offer a grade on the work with some confidence that I have both accessed the unique textual elements of this particular student's response, and also appreciated what is timeless and structural in her language.

This practice is encumbered, given that the participant's written or spoken word is simply an abstraction of her authentic experience, as words are at best a map and not the territory itself. This abstraction is further diluted through the hearing/reading I bring to the interchange. Here, then, are at least two degrees of separation between the unvarnished experience of the student: (a) that which is reflected in her words, which reflect her attempt at capturing her experience, and (b) my understanding/knowing of that experience. Given these dodgy encumbrances on knowing, one would be wise to consider Hasselgreen and Beach's (1999) injunction that a person's experience stands as only one facet of a phenomenon, one with that person's biography in full bloom. Finally, it is partly an act of faith that I believe I have accessed the transcendental attitude, full with the knowledge that I may have at best only approximated this slippery consciousness.

As a practical application of the phenomenological attitude, I have instituted a practice in my organizational behavior classes where we co-create the final exam. This process is predicated upon the confronted presupposition that quite possibly, not everything in a class is worth knowing. Also, that which is worth knowing may vary by student. In that exercise, 2 weeks before the exam, students are provided with a long list of potential essay questions and asked to consider which questions would require an answer that, for them, would be worth knowing. They are also invited to pose questions that would also reflect knowledge that they would find valuable. One week prior to the exam we discuss in small groups the collection of questions they have selected, and narrow that to six. Of these six they are required to answer three the following week during the final exam. This approach considers the idiosyncratic interests of each student as much as possible, given the structure of classroom life. This process partially considers each student's individual phenomenology of learning and attempts to honor that with as much freedom as possible, given our current academic structure.

EPILOGUE

Imagining that phenomenological awareness may reside below the waterline of consciousness helps me inquire into and consider the possibility of what I might be missing. For instance, in crafting my teaching philosophy, I include as one of four points the commitment to maintain a balance of doubt and conviction regarding what I think I know and how I share it. I am perpetually trying to address the deeper grooves of committed knowing that get carved through more and more time in a particular track. The repetitive nature of the academic calendar renders me vulnerable to increasing levels of the natural attitude about what I think I know about the field of organization studies and related topics. As a hedge against this, doubt becomes ever more important. And yet, with doubt how am I able to act at all? How can I act while suspecting that I may not know? Spiegelberg (1975) has released me from my self imposed prison of reluctant inactivity, my paralysis from analysis. Spiegelberg claimed that "doubt is significant only if it is reasonable, if it can offer "good reasons'" (1975, p. 143). Without such, doubt "is merely the expression of pathological scruples and . . . epistemologically irrelevant" (p. 143). Huffington (2004) suggested that "Self-doubt, as opposed to certainty, seems to be an important quality. . . . It signals the leader's need for constant reflection on oneself in role so as to make change possible when it is needed" (p. 60). Together these perspectives provide some guidance on the presence and role of doubt while simultaneously affirming its value. This delicate balance between doubt and action can be met then with tentative action, always available and alert to new knowledge. I must wear lightly what knowledge I believe I have and maintain my commitment to deeper knowing with no attachment to what is current. At best I must understand self in ways that reduce the blind bias introduced by my own sociohistorical engagement. My sensing practices, biased as they may be,

are to be understood as metrics of understanding that serve and yet are limited. I find it helpful to attend to and gain a deeper understanding of what draws my attention and what sense I generally make of it. On the contrary, what is usually ignored? Discerning the difference between what has served me and what has devolved into barriers in my understanding or knowing is a moment worthy of reflection. Am I willing to risk the comfort of what is "known" in new knowing? Am I available to step off that cliff into the unknown as commitment to truth (with a small t), am I willing to leave everything behind? Though I am well served by my knowledge, at some point it may have outlived its usefulness. Here I see the bloom of the seed of demise contained in the heart of all solutions and must be ready to abandon them. In this sense the fundamental question for Everyman is, "What don't I know about the phenomenology of my own consciousness that, were I to know, I would do differently?" This is the perpetual question at the heart of practical phenomenology . . . for me. In this I am attempting to adopt the autoethnographer's voice as I engage in what may be called "autophenomenology."

Autoethnography (Gergen & Gergen, 2002) moves away from traditional conventions and yields to more personal, emotional, and unique representation, providing insights into the unique experience of the author that attempt to honor the purity of experience. The autoethnographical voice presents a viable and established approach to engaging in this phenomenological study. It is necessarily burdened by the "auto" nature of this particular inquiry—an inquiry into self ripe with the challenges, hurdles, entanglements, and bias resident in self knowledge that mirror Barthes's (1989) concerns cited earlier. This challenge of the inquiry requires getting free of my self so that the self's experience can be bracketed in a clear field. Here then is the outlet for the application of Rodriguez and Ryave's (2002) self observation as data collection process. Their approach surfaces "taken-for-granted, habituated, and/or unconscious manner that . . . are unavailable for recall" (p. 4).

As teaching and research are highly personal acts, asking "what don't I know about the phenomenology of my own consciousness that, were I to know, I would do differently" has become a constant companion. It spills into daily activity at home, with my children, neighbors, and friends, sometimes becoming tedious. Can't I just be okay with what is? The question is begging—at what point does this transcendental orientation and the presence of doubt become the very thing it aspires to transcend? When does the transcendental attitude become the natural attitude itself? It begins to appear as a reciprocal and hermeneutical act, the presence of one, only given the existence of the other. Geertz (1976/1979) claimed this as "a continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure in such a way as to bring both into view simultaneously" (p. 239). The double-helix nature of the natural and phenomenological attitudes are intertwined such that both are necessary elements in how sense and understanding are achieved and then visited upon any new experience encountered. Perpetually doubling back

on experience and knowledge is unavoidable as one pursues the transcendental. To the extent that better seeing and greater knowing are achieved through the recursive process of transcending through bracketing, one theoretically discovers deeper grooves in the bedrock of human experience. This is the hedge against what was once transcendental becoming the natural. One has moved in one's position and orientation relevant to the landscape, and hence the landscape itself appears to have changed. Understanding this as a function of one's self and not an independent act by the landscape is critical to avoid conflating the two. What appears as distant motion independent of self may in fact simply appear as such due to the motion of the observing body. Revisiting Kegan's (1982) notion, "what is me and what is not me, but perhaps part of a previous me?" is the question to be addressed in understanding the evolving nature of my natural attitude and what for me is my transcendental attitude.

This project may sum to undertaking autoethnographic phenomenology . . . taking a phenomenological approach to my autoethnographic experience of grading papers, managing staff, and understanding self as becoming transcendental. I have engaged in "participation, self-observation, int[ra]view" (Chang, 2008, p. 5), as pathways to understanding self within the systems where those acts reside. Simultaneously, I am trying to wrest myself free of cultural constraints such that these experiences are liberated from the systems which spawned them. This, in theory, renders them available as phenomena untethered from theories about their existence, approaching a bracketed presence, now seen via the phenomenological transcendental attitude, or quite possibly and more accurately the "autophenomenological" transcendental attitude.

Merleau-Ponty (1962) said we can really only know phenomenology by doing it. Hence, it is through the doing that one comes to know, and yet how can one do phenomenology *until* one knows something about phenomenology? Here is the conundrum, well described by Sanders (1982) as engaging the Augustinian circle: "In order to find out, I must already know, but in order to know, I must first find out" (p. 359). My evolution in knowing and understanding phenomenology has progressed along a circular and recursive path of action and reflection similar to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. Engaging tentatively, cautiously, and full with doubt while accompanied by questions such as "Did I get it? Have I done it correctly? How do I know if what I got in the interview is phenomenologically valid or what phenomenology should reveal? What did I miss and how could I ever know that I missed it?" gives way to some growth in confidence while still not releasing me from that well-serving doubt. Can I live in that tension between knowing it, doing it, and being unsure whether I know it or can do it? Perhaps being is the product of the knowing and the doing that emerges from cycling back and forth between the always tentative talking, thinking, and writing.

Through the data collection, analysis, and the writing I am always "in" the phenomenology. I am always already doing

phenomenology. As I attempt to understand and do it, that doing is contained in the question of how to do. Remaining present to the question and alive to the ideas of phenomenology is critical lest I devolve into simple story form. This attentive posture reflects Gannon's (2006) concerns that "theories as tools for thinking, ought not to be too readily dismissed" (p. 476). She has written critically on autoethnography as a method with attention to the "deconstructive textual practices that [both] represent and trouble the self at the same time" (p. 476). In this form of writing she does not "abandon theoretical or critical frames in pursuing evocative provocative effects in the texts we write" (p. 477). Further on she quotes Probyn (1993, p. 11), who said that "although the "possibilities of speaking selves [are] great . . . the liabilities of an untheorised return to the 'I' are even greater"" (Gannon, 2006, p. 477). I would be wise to heed her admonishments and have taken steps to present the "story" along with theory as the page against which it is written.

My hope and intention are that through these examples the reader may better understand my presence of mind as I aspired to lay aside presuppositions in my quest for the transcendental attitude. It has been a journey born of deep compassion, a simple desire to apprehend what is timeless and that which stands as the essence of experience and at some level to get beyond and beneath the seemingly superficial level of relationship contained in the traditional and routinized nature of the modern organization. Failing to see the unique and idiosyncratic is inhumane and divests our organizations of their best opportunities for the brightest, most committed, and passionate stakeholders: a cost no organization can bear in these trying times. While there is no simple recipe for its apprehension, "seeing" it in practice through the forgoing descriptions best reflects how I have attempted to apprehend the state of consciousness that best serves the in-between of self and others.

CONCLUSION

In the 21st century where borders routinely collapse we are confronted with new and fresh events, situations, people, and interactions where cultures collide, what is known is challenged, and the solid ground that offered support, comfort, and confidence erodes beneath our feet. Old habits of sense-making discover their limits as they no longer apply to the world we occupy. They are simply non-sensical. In this environment we have little choice but to engage with the new through opening our portals of perception, allowing the light to stream in. The given, taken-for-granted realities of yesterday are ill equipped to manage what we now encounter. This notion is reminiscent of Einstein's call for a shift in our thought where he said, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them" (Fripp, Fripp, & Fripp, 2000, p. 135). This shift is where the transcendental attitude earns its merit as it enables us to engage with the novel. Bracketing the experience as it unfolds through identifying one's presuppositions about how it is "supposed" to be enables

a sympathetic eye to new vistas. This situates the viewer with an open and receptive stance, hanging on loosely to what has been while extending arms out, palms up to what is now present. Observation without interpretation/evaluation is required. What is, is what is. Let us steer free of Kegan's (1982) limiting "resistance to the motion of life" (p. 265) and meet the experience where it is, not requiring it to move or morph into what we think it ought to be. To do otherwise would be to impose the natural attitude on the world as it now is, or is becoming.

In the classroom this requires much, especially given the repetitive nature of semesters and course preps. As an academic I may be particularly susceptible to falling prey to the routinized and thematically consistent experience of teaching the same courses each year. Students begin to look alike, classrooms appear the same, theories become pale, even the paths I walk to those classrooms change little. Thank God the weather changes, lest I begin to have a Groundhog Day (Ramis, 1993) experience! The hedge against such a thing? I suggest a phenomenological approach to my teaching. Remaining open to doubt about what I believe to be true ensures space for the new to arrive on the scene. Srikantia and Pasmore (1996) have discussed the tenuous balance of conviction and doubt as it applies to organizational learning. Their claim that "learning begins with self-doubt" (p. 42) as applied at the macro scale is equally sensible in our individual relationships and invites new interpretations of what we may have believed we knew to be true. Doubt releases us from the harness of our convictions and the dogma of our "truths." Doubt creates the opportunity for deeper understanding through reflective inquiry.

The challenge is to see the essence of each new semester, course, and room of students through fresh eyes. Confronting my presuppositions and what I think I know about the material and the students in the room is absolutely essential if I am to see the bright and curious minds before me. While many students may not be the eager learners I would like, clearly there will be some who are hungry for ideas and dialogue. How might I be available to harvest this ripe fruit in service to our shared sustenance? Appreciating them while releasing my self from the chains of repetition ushers me into the light and helps reveal whatever rich potential lies dormant, awaiting invitation that can only come from me. And the presence of mind to offer such invitation can only arise if I have begun to see through my own fog. Here, I confront the natural attitude, which bears repeating. It is the "ordinary lack of curiosity with which most of life is lived . . . [and] the everyday assumption that things are only as they appear to our unreflective consciousness" (LeVasseur, 2003, p. 417).

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