Through the Glass Darkly: New Paradigms for Counselors, Courage, and Spirituality in Contemporary Education

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THROUGH THE GLASS DARKLY: NEW PARADIGMS FOR COUNSELORS, COURAGE, AND SPIRITUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

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This article proposes a paradigm shift in the view of the school counselor role. Evolving from the dualistic mind/body split of traditional physics, counseling has largely focused on problem identification and attempting to fix what is wrong. The new sciences of chaos and complexity invite a more holistic view, with the psychospiritual development of all students seen as an appropriate part of a comprehensive education. School counselors are well placed to mentor the psychospiritual development of all students and to facilitate the presence of spirituality on school sites. Two complementary models, Courage to Teach/Lead and the Ignatian model of Spiritual Discernment are presented with discussion of how their principles and practices might be applied by counselors engaged in this role shift.

INTRODUCTION

The role of the school counselor, in both public and private education, has been well documented. In general, it is a complex role consisting of multiple hats. Many school counselors, in addition to counseling, spend time in tasks that involve advising, administration, teaching, and program planning and development. Priorities for how counselor time is spent are based upon the perceived nature of problems needing to be addressed. Since counseling as a field has been derived from the medical model, there is still a general orientation toward identifying deficits or problems—in the individual and in the collective—and fixing what is wrong.

The present investigation will propose an alternative way of viewing the gifts and talents a school counselor brings, and will suggest a relationship between those gifts and the needs society has for the education of young leaders whose development in areas of values, ethics, and issues of social justice and spirituality is strong. A new paradigm set will also be proposed

for redefining a counselor's role and reprioritizing time and tasks. In addition, two models useful to the counselor with such a redefined role will be presented.

CURRENT VIEWS

School counselors are engaged, as are teachers, in interfacing with the cognitive, social-emotional, and physical-developmental processes of school-aged children and youth. Difficulties and deficits in any of those developmental strands can result in a need, and request, for counselor attention. Counselors, in particular, have been viewed as professionals appropriately directed toward working with the most needy students and troubled situations, students whose needs cannot readily be met in the classroom environment. A shift in perspective has been noticed, however. In "Preparing the Next Generation: Implementing New Paradigms for School Counseling Preservices and Practices," Dahir and Stone (2006) look at the trends and shifts needed. While not identifying psycho-spiritual development specifically, they call for attention by the counseling profession to moral development and social justice agendas.

Wolf (2004) offers practical guidelines for addressing spiritual concerns of students, drawing on the American School Counselors Association Standards for School Counselors, and makes reference to several psychological models which are applicable in discussing spirituality, including Rogers' non-directive theory and Glasser's choice theory.

Psycho-spiritual development of children and adolescents has received less attention; Coles (1997) has been one of the few to treat the spiritual lives of young people. In Richards and Bergin's (1997) *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*, no references to the spiritual development of children are found, and only minimal reference (Wells, 1999) to the issue of religious development and practices in relationship to counseling. Guidance in the development of values, ethics, and issues of social justice has also frequently been outside the center of focus for counselors and teachers alike. There are several likely reasons for this pattern, some relating to a dualism that has been, until recently, a prevailing philosophy in the Western world, shaping institutional forms, including education and religion. Others likely relate to the rising concern in recent years regarding achievement standards, with a resulting focus on acquisition of basic skills, to the increased exclusion of learning experiences considered less central. Still others relate to how issues of spiritual development have been managed by the field of psychology itself. Only recently has credible scientific investigation of spiritual practices and experiences come to the fore. Miller and Thoresen (2003) have proposed a link between spirituality and religion and health in the United

States, suggesting that spirituality can be studied scientifically, and providing a critique of methods for doing so.

THE DILEMMA OF EMPIRICISM

Beginning in the heyday of the Enlightenment, with the ever-expanding profile of scientific method and investigation of the mind-body split, a paradoxical form of dualistic speculation came to the fore. Even as empirical studies attempted to prove the ultimate unity of "mind-states" and "brain-states," a separation of the psycho-spiritual and the cognitive-somatic gradually became the norm. Education and science have tended to issues of the mind, and religion has responded to issues of the spirit. This divide has contributed to a field of developmental psychology in which cognitive, physical, and emotional development as emergent processes have received much more attention in children and adults. Only recently has there been a surge of interest in psycho-spiritual developmental processes as a more visible part of the growth trajectories of individuals and groups

For hundreds of years, Newtonian physics provided a foundation for directing the systems by which Western people ran their lives; consequent to their linear emphases on causality, these systems have been defined by hierarchical patterns that encourage competition and power. An accompanying economic philosophy of scarcity—that there are not enough resources for all, and therefore I must compete well in order to assure receiving what is mine—has also held a place of prominence in Western thought. This belief pattern prioritizes developing a strong sense of individuality, and encourages striving for power. Educational structures reflect these beliefs.

A COMPLEX SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

Recent decades have brought an increasing presence of the New Physics— quantum, chaos, and complexity sciences in particular—onto the radar screen of the Western thinker. There are three major components of systems analysis that are relevant to understanding our contemporary situation. One involves the nature of feedback loops within chaotic (nonlinear systems), and how such feedback allows for integration and continuity. The second involves the fractal qualities of organizations, and how levels of scale within systems of meaning are essential to social learning and formation. The third involves the adaptive nature of complex structures, whether cognitive, social, or global.

Living systems rely upon intricate feedback loops for survival and for thriving within their environments. Positive feedback loops reinforce or amplify what is already occurring within the system. Negative feedback

loops promote change, since they introduce a note of difference into the equation (Briggs & Peat, 1990). If we simply reinforce the status quo, there is a danger of stagnation or even death. What transpires at the individual level unfolds at the social level as well. If our patterns of socialization, identity, and development are monitored and promoted by a pattern of recognizing and responding to problems and deficits, a positive reinforcement of those problems and deficits is the result. If those who counsel want to pass beyond such reinforcement, then a negative input loop is necessary—one which enhances the constructive values they hope to foster, thereby instituting a process of change rather than simply erasing perceived deficits in behavior.

In the emerging science of chaos or non-linear systems analysis, the notion of fractals has come to play a significant role. In dealing with highly complex systems, from human circulation to the length of a continental coastline, scientists are faced with networks that cannot be systematically measured or quantified using simple, mathematical tools. Fractals are elements of a given system that manifest similarity at varying degrees of scale. We are all familiar with the computer screen savers that replicate a given form in ever smaller (or larger) dimensions. This fractal aspect is also present in a multitude of natural systems, making it possible to address their complexity systemically as whole entities, without having to count or measure every particle or variation (Gleick, 1987). Such fractal modeling can provide a useful systems-metaphor for the individual and social dimensions of values, behavior, and developmental growth that are witnessed and fostered at the personal, familial, communal, societal, and global levels. If we can address the positive trajectories of human psychological development that are self-similar at varying degrees of social scale, we can begin to provide both clinical and psycho-spiritual tools that enhance rather than simply repair the wider social fabric.

A further development in the exploration of non-linear occurrences has emerged in the field of complexity studies. In a Newtonian universe, the model or metaphor for the natural world is that of the clock or the machine—each element within the natural order has a clearly defined location and function that can be precisely measured. In a quantum universe, with its inherent probabilities and lack of definitive measurements, the model has shifted to that of a growing organism rather than an exact mechanism. There is certainly order within any given system or its subsets. However, the operation of any given aspect of such a complex system cannot be mapped with mathematical certitude (Waldrop, 1992). There are multiple variables that influence organic outcomes or optimal functioning. Complex systems are open and adaptable, uniting a plethora of inputs into

a single entity. Individuals and societies are also complex systems. To assume that we can address only select aspects of development, or behavior, or identity values is to short-circuit an optimal result in building healthy persons or social units. To treat individuals from the perspective of social deficits or problems is to bypass the many psycho-spiritual dimensions of growth that are essential to human flourishing. Human wholeness cannot be reduced to problem solving.

BEYOND LINEARITY

The various dimensions of chaos and complexity science help to provide a more integrated model for understanding human growth and fulfillment. They also help to redirect many of the earlier norms for the study of social-ization, including excessive dependence upon quantifiably verifiable out-comes, an emphasis upon direct causality in behavior, a demand for alleged-ly "logical" protocols, etc. As history has borne out, at the social level, the linear analyses of previous generations have often led to patterns of power and dominance. These, coupled with an economic focus on resource scarci-ty, have resulted in a serious, and potentially catastrophic, imbalance in many aspects of our collective life. As a result, there is now an increasing call, in educational as well as other systems, for a willingness to look at alternative philosophies and practices that have provided a social foundation for cen-turies in cultures that are rooted in collaborative and communal ways of liv-ing. We are being challenged to incorporate models of abundance over scarcity, and compassionate caring over power, as we strive to develop sus-tainable forms for global living. Implicit in the proposed paradigm shift is an understanding of the necessity for education to foster the development of compassion for others over competition with others. Indeed, early voices linked the implications of the new sciences with the emerging need for a transformation in educational structures and the counseling professional specifically. Michael (1983) pointed to compassion as a central character value related to this shift; compassion was viewed as the natural outcome of a growing awareness of inter-connectedness. Gelatt (1995) suggested that acceptance of the implications of the new sciences by the counseling profes-sion, particularly chaos theory, would render compassion, rather than con-trol, the most significant competence to be desired in one's repertoire.

If we base our understanding of humans on a model that includes aware-ness of our identities as spiritual beings, we can view a shift in the lens through which school counselors and their work are seen as important. Furthermore, as spiritual beings living human lives through complex cogni-tive, physical, and emotional experiences, we perceive the spiritual develop-ment of the individual as an essential aspect of the educational process. In

such a rationale, it seems warranted that school counselors should be significantly involved in fostering and guiding the development of the psycho-spiritual processes of all students on their educational sites. They should also be viewed as leaders in the process of developing the school site as a spiritual environment.

Evolving within such a perspective, individual achievement, knowledge, and notions of power would shift their focus. The dualistic denial of a foundational spiritual locus leads to a vacuum in the education of the spirit. A transformed role for the counselor could move beyond that of being simply a "fixer." The counselor should occupy a central role on-site for the promotion and enhancement of the spiritual development of persons and collectives.

AN EMERGENT SHIFT IN THE COUNSELOR ROLE

In public education, infusing the school environment with a spiritual sense and attending to matters of spiritual development present a major challenge. Many school sites find their limited resources focused on the consequences of the shadow side of human behavior—school violence, gangs, safety issues, drugs, and so on—as well as concern for a decline in academic achievement. Space and time for matters of spirit are difficult to define, as counselors must frequently react to major problems which clearly dominate their professional horizons. Within the medical model, with its primary focus on fixing what is wrong, many counselors find that free time for working with aspects of psycho-spiritual development and mentoring of positive psychological attributes is difficult to come by. The underlying dualism that has embraced a mind/body-spirit split and promoted a division between science and matters of the spirit has limited therapists and counselors, as well as those involved in spiritual direction, in their understanding of, and service to, the development of the whole person.

Emerging from traditional psychotherapy, counseling has evolved as a field committed to the diagnosis of symptoms and problems, and to an approach dedicated to fixing what is wrong. It is imperative to identify that these are necessary components of school mental health, and attention to deficits is a necessary component of all counseling services. The many legally mandated services for handicapped learners serve as an additional aspect of what is required from counselor services. However, the overwhelming emphasis on diagnosis and treatment of what is wrong has tended to consume a disproportionate amount of the time and energy of many school counselors.

Further diminishment of the presence of spirituality in school environments, particularly in the United States public education system, may actu-

ally be a consequence of the attempt to support religious freedom. In an effort to afford individuals their rights in regard to organized religion, nearly all attention to matters of the spirit has disappeared from educational sites. The shadow side of this attempt to ensure freedom actually deprives students of necessary opportunities to view their spiritual aspects of self as an integrated part of who they are. Dividedness and patterns of behavior that appear disconnected from any sense of spirit are thus an increasingly prevalent outcome. A further loss for students occurs through the decreasing presence of tradition and ritual on the educational site, since the experience of learning these cultural patterns helps inform students how collectives weave meaning into their lives.

Corey (2006) has been a consistent voice for viewing development from a whole-person perspective, and has suggested that spiritual values should be seen as a resource to draw upon in therapy. Arveson (2006) has offered a conceptual model for integrating spirituality into diagnosis and treatment, but cautions significant prudence in using spiritual intervention.

With the appearance of a focus on spirituality in assessment and treatment areas within the counseling profession, recent voices have called for attention to the development of the spiritual in education, specifically in school counseling programs. Sink (2004) has argued that comprehensive school counseling programs should adopt a more holistic view of human development, one that includes the spiritual. Sink believes students have questions and desire an exploration of beliefs, morals, and values, but that separation of church and state has led to the directing of these questions elsewhere.

Ingersoll and Bauer (2004) have presented a theoretical look at how Wilber's (1995) integrative model could be used for incorporating spirituality into wellness in school counseling settings. Ingersoll (1997) has explored how a counselor-education course on counseling and spirituality might look, recognizing that counselors in schools will require specialized training in dealing with spiritual issues.

Perhaps Catholic education, already rooted in religious belief and dedicated to making space for spiritual practice and ritual, could provide an ideal arena for the shift being proposed in the school counselor's role. While rite and practice are not generally the most visible or obvious aspects of a given educational system, innovative and dedicated educators have been successful in infusing issues of spirituality and spiritual development into existing school programs. School counselors are in a particularly excellent position to further this area of needed change.

We find ourselves collectively in a paradigm shift, and education and health are among the forms most challenged to transform themselves appro-

priately. As the new science continues to demonstrate that all that exists is energy, and that energy fields attract and evoke real-time outcomes that are congruent to their direction, it becomes essential to examine with great care our patterns of attending excessively to what is not working, rather than engaging and acting in a manner focused on the positive.

THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

In the field of mental health, positive psychology has emerged as one response to this paradigm shift. Seligman's work has called attention to the importance of developing a psychology and mental health system that incorporates attention to the identification and strengthening of positive aspects of client mental health, while continuing to assist in the management of symptoms and the solving of problems (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). These are not new ideas. Indigenous cultures worldwide have understood concepts of oneness and unity, and have embraced a positive focus and collective and collaborative styles for centuries.

Long before Seligman (2002) emphasized the branch of positive psychology, Norman Vincent Peale was talking about the power of positive thinking. Beginning in the early 1950s, Peale began to publicize his theory of positive thinking. The Peale Center for Positive Thinking (www.pcfpt.com) continues his work to this day. And in modern psychotherapies (such as Cognitive Behavior Therapy) there has been a recognition of the important relationship between focusing on the positive and the creation of higher levels of well-being. Most recently, there has emerged a major emphasis on different systems of intentions and how they impact manifest outcomes in individual and communal life. People are being taught to form intentions using positive thoughts and visualizations. While some of these systems may lack important ingredients necessary to make them spiritually balanced, nevertheless there is an acknowledgement that recognition and strengthening of human character values is an essential ingredient in bringing about higher levels of mental health and wellness for the individual as well as the collective.

ADAPTATION OF THE COUNSELOR'S ROLE

How, then, could the school counselor, for whom these words ring true, respond to such a paradigm shift? The counselor role is easily amended to a job description that prioritizes equal—or ideally greater—attention to developing and strengthening what is working rather than what is not, with individuals and with groups. What is key is that administrators, parents, students, and counselors themselves understand the value of this perspective for all

stakeholders. They must align with the essence of the paradigm shift. With a revision of priorities, while still assisting those in severe need and in crisis, counselors would also be able to focus their energy in a number of directions that generally receive insufficient attention.

In counseling time with those labeled as difficult or problem students, interventions involving the identification and strengthening of character values and positive attributes such as hope, optimism, and courage would become a significant part of the therapeutic plan. Many of these attributes are already identified by research as adaptive, and as related to success.

With increased community awareness of the central importance of integrated psycho-spiritual development for all students, the counselor could be involved in establishing models on-site for fostering such development systemwide. Students, parents, and teachers alike could begin to view this as a central aspect of an integrated education. The shift from a role in which a counselor is viewed as an adjunct professional, assisting individuals in particular need, to a leader and mentor for all students, would extend access to the counselor's gifts and talents to many students who, at present, do not receive them. Being centrally involved in mentoring the psycho-spiritual development of all students is founded on the belief that such development is part of the education of an integrated human being and that current serious issues plaguing educational sites may partly reflect a significant organizational and systemic lack.

A natural extension of such involvement in the integrated psycho-spiritual development of all students would entail the creation of additional activities related to the specific formation of positive leadership styles in students. Given counselors' training and skills in areas such as communication and conflict resolution, they occupy a natural venue for assisting in the training of leadership capacities, and the development of moral values, ethical foundations, and frameworks for social justice.

Finally, those counselors willing to step into the role could provide a great service through their recognition as site leaders, who assist in creating an environment that fosters an atmosphere of spirituality, and in implementing environmental practices that sustain such an atmosphere.

BENEFITS OF THE PARADIGM SHIFT

At present, many school counselors enjoy, and are involved in, some of these activities. Most, however, find the majority of their professional time is consumed with attention to problems and difficulties—both of individuals and of the collective. In the presence of such overwhelming demands, it may be difficult to shift priorities. An overall redirection of collective focus is called for. Once that occurs, there will be a recognition that only by increasing and

strengthening the focus on what is right and already working, both individually and collectively, will we be truly attending to the educational needs of all. Only when it is recognized that the spirit of all students must be engaged in the educational process, employing mind, emotion, and body, will we be educating students for an integrated development that will prepare them to become a generation of leaders, involved in various ways in the formation of sustainable practices for living with one another. Until these shifts occur, education remains mired in repetitive patterns of what is insufficient. The rising tide of school violence has been linked to moral and spiritual deficiency among students (Rayburn, 2004). With violence framed existentially as the shadow side of a desire for belonging, or as a reaction to fear and anxiety, counselors are viewed as professionals logically appropriate for teaching values education and for assessing students in moral education. Allen and Coy (2004) also link attention to student spiritual development and violence prevention. They point out that current Commission for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs standards include competencies for school counselors that are related to understanding spiritual perspectives and linking spirituality to intervention strategies. The school counselor, by training and by orientation, is in a prime place to assist in promoting these perspectives.

The rationale for such a move is clear. First, few problem students have sufficient attention paid to the identification and development of their positive attributes and strengths—the very attributes that will contribute to a potential permanent movement from the category of problem student to a positive identity. Second, few of the stronger and more capable students and youth leaders encounter and interact sufficiently with a school counselor; yet, if these students were mentored in their gifts and talents, it could only further strengthen their capacity to become future leaders as well-formed adults. Third, it is possible, according to the emerging models of energy interactions and attractions, that our excessive focus on what is wrong, in mental health and counseling treatment modules, may actually contribute to increasing the presence and strength of that which receives such monolithic attention. Finally, few students dealing with environmental crisis have had experience in believing they can learn to adapt and grow from the presence of chaos in their lives. Most view it as a matter of simply surviving. To engage in stress-related growth and to understand the process involved would help all students develop adaptive strategies for the future.

Many school counselors could be motivated to redesign their role in relationship to the shift proposed here. The delineation of a model that could guide individuals in the principles and practices helpful to such re-prioritizing would be of immense value to the counseling community. There has

already been some experimentation with the application of spiritual developmental theory, such as that of Fowler (1981), to structured group counseling, which is designed toward specific goals of self development (Bruce & Cockreham, 2004).

TWO MODELS FOR SHIFTING THE PRESENT PARADIGM

There are two currently-employed models for spiritual exploration and formation that offer enormous potential for redirecting the role of the counselor. The first is the Courage to Teach/Lead model, authored by Palmer (1998), and the second is the model of Ignatian spiritual discernment, initiated by Ignatius of Loyola, and employed in Jesuit spiritual and educational enterprises for nearly 5 centuries. Both models, independently or in tandem, could be of immense value to the school counselor who desires to focus a greater proportion of professional attention to the psycho-spiritual development of students and the presence of spirituality in the workplace. The benefits inherent in each model are twofold: the models provide a personal roadmap for counselors in their own spiritual-development processes and support for their own journey; in addition, they make available knowledge of principles and practices that offer specific guidance for counselors wishing to implement activities with students and others on-site, that are congruent with their professional goals in these areas.

COURAGE TO TEACH

The Courage to Teach model was created in 1994 by educator/author Palmer, at the request of the Fetzer Institute. It was developed as a program which would foster personal and professional renewal through what was called teacher formation. Central to the model is the concept of an inner teacher, a voice of wisdom within each person, capable of being activated in the process of personal decision making and problem solving. Also essential is the concept of an agricultural rather than industrial model of education. Individuals are viewed as unique seeds to be nurtured into their own particular selves, rather than as raw material designed to be pushed through the pre-set molds of an assembly-line process. In the Courage model, it is the self of the teacher, rather than specific techniques used, that is viewed as the heart of the potential impact the teacher has. Teacher formation, then, encourages educators to pursue congruence and undividedness in their personal and professional lives; it encourages specific inner practices designed to help them remain well-connected to their inner spirit (Palmer, 1998). It is through the ongoing process of teaching from the inner place of who they

most fully are that educators mentor and guide students into their own full development. "Good teaching," according to Palmer, "cannot be reduced to technique; it comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (1998, p.10).

The first cohort of 22 teachers attended a renewal program in 1994, opening the door to ongoing seasonal retreats for educators. In 1998, Palmer's book, *The Courage to Teach*, was published; in 1998, the first cohort of national Courage facilitators was trained. In the subsequent decade, the program and the model have continued to develop. There are currently over 100 facilitators offering Courage retreats in 25 states and Canada, and the model itself has been extended into other disciplines, including business, health, law, and ministry. As an example of the increasing recognition given to the effort for rejoining soul and role, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education has established 10 Courage to Teach awards annually for exemplary programs that integrate "the heart" into medical school training. The national Courage support organization, the Center for Courage and Renewal (www.couragerenewal.org), continues to be a critical support for those interested in Courage work across all disciplines.

KEY COURAGE PRINCIPLES AND THEIR APPLICATION TO COUNSELING

The principles and practices of the Courage movement are potentially useful to school counselors in two essential ways. First, they serve as a guide by which counselors can track, support, and foster their own personal and professional formation as they evolve in their work. This aspect is critical; since the Courage model mentors "being" rather than "doing" as core, it is essential that those facilitating the work be grounded in their own inner process. Second, they can be used as foundational guidelines for working with students concerning issues of psycho-spiritual development, and they can inform the efforts of the counselor in the development of an educational site as a spiritual environment, since specific Courage practices lend readily to creative use in a larger educational arena.

A number of significant principles order and direct Courage work. The central principle is a deep belief that every human holds an inner source of personal truth. This core has been given different names in different traditions; in the Courage model it is referred to as the "inner teacher" or the "teacher within," and is considered a source of strength and potential guidance. Courage work affirms the vital relationship between this inner source and the outer public life of a person, and all Courage practices are designed to assist in the process of rediscovering and strengthening this connection. Second, there is a belief that it is possible to form trustworthy communal

spaces that support the deep inner work of the individual in a safe way. Engagement in this work must be voluntary; opportunities for participation are offered and encouraged, but not forced. Just as wisdom cultures have always viewed an inherent wholeness within the natural world, a "hidden wholeness" is witnessed within our inner nature as well, and movement away from being divided in life toward greater wholeness between soul and role is central to Courage work (Palmer, 2004). Finally, there is a belief that Courage work, done by individuals, leads a movement toward social change. As more people find courage to move toward greater integrity and coherence in their inner and outer lives, society itself begins to shift toward more compassionate and socially just ways of being in the world with one another.

The Courage model offers a way to raise spiritual issues while respecting people's deeply held and unique beliefs. Courage work proceeds through an examination of the seasons and the use of seasonal metaphors, which have been central in allowing those from diverse traditions to engage in deep and significant dialogue in a respectful way. These seasonal metaphors could well provide a powerful foundation for school counselors in assisting all students in the unfolding of their own psycho-spiritual development.

EDUCATION OF THE SOUL

What are the conditions for the education of the soul, and how can the school counselor assist them in occurring? In addition to using seasonal metaphors, other Courage practices appear equally useful to the school counselor. An essential condition is the creation of a quiet and focused space where the deep inner voice can begin to be heard. This involves private space for practices such as reflection and journaling; it also includes a trustworthy communal space where one's inner voice is invited forth through deep listening and the asking of open and honest questions. Participants agree to a "no fixing, no saving" mode of interaction, and instead respect the belief in individual sources of wisdom. Confidentiality is essential for the creation of a safe space, and metaphorical materials from wisdom traditions serve as a bridge to the inner voice. Poetry, art, image, and music help form connections at both individual and collective levels through the universality of the language used. Silence is viewed as a central participant in the process. Moreover, paradox appears frequently as a reminder of our innate hidden wholeness, as we evolve in our understanding of the necessity for both light and dark, and joy and pain, in the growth of a human life. In ongoing Courage retreats, the Clearness Committee, a centuries-old Quaker practice, offers an important discernment process. The Committee provides a communal base for the deep listening and authentic questioning that are fundamental to the circle of trust at the heart of Courage conversations.

For many in the field, there is a deep awareness of the need for role re-alignment that could incorporate the values promoted by Palmer's work beyond the classroom. They experience a sense of suspension, aware of the need for change, yet uncertain of the path to follow. Indeed, many school counselors identify with the experience of "standing in the tragic gap." The tragic gap, as defined by Palmer (2004), is that place in between our knowledge of what is—the current reality—and our understanding of what could be—the possibilities. Counselors often report having skills and motivational energy they cannot put to use in their role as currently defined.

COUNSELORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL SPIRITUALITY

As indicated above, an integrated education that weaves together development of the mind, heart, and spirit is needed. Until that happens, behaviors that appear disconnected from heart and soul are likely to continue, for it is only when mind, heart, and spirit operate in an integrated way that compassionate action can be anticipated. Therefore, with significant ongoing concern about school violence, drugs, and gangs, it seems critical that space be made for education of the soul and for the emergence of spiritual formation on all school sites.

One might take a step back, and ask the leading question: What is spirituality and what is its role in education? This complex question has been addressed by many. Palmer offers a simple, yet helpful, definition: "I mean the ancient and abiding human quest for connectedness with something larger and more trustworthy than our egos—with our own souls, with one another, with the worlds of history and nature, with the invisible winds of the spirit, with the mystery of being alive" (Palmer, 1998/1999, p. 6). This definition invites whole-person involvement in educational dynamics. Not only cognitive processes, but emotional and spiritual ones as well, are invited into the educational forum. In Palmer's view, it is this passionate connection with the teaching/learning process that separates it from the more objective stance of the dualism that has marked education in recent centuries.

It matters little what "it" is named, according to Palmer; spirit, the true self, and the inner teacher are among the names used by different traditions. The "it" being referred to is the core/essence in every human; it is this energetic core that is at the center of all psycho-spiritual development, unfolding as it can, or being guided gently by wise teachers and mentors. It becomes the anchor for all individual beliefs, values, and morals; it ultimately guides the behavior patterns of the individual.

Rationalism has focused on educating the mind through the acquisition of information, emphasizing the power of reason over the power of emergent and synthetic being. The Courage model supports a shift in the role of the

counselor from a provider of data that helps to solve problems, to a mentor in wisdom and personal insight. Rather than being a peripheral person, working primarily with those most troubled, the counselor could become central to the newer focus of educating the mind, the heart, and the soul. Can education grow hearts and souls and minds in equal proportions? Creative thinkers and educators have answered "yes" and presented compelling stories of what schools infused with spirit are like (Glazer, 1999; Intrator, 2002; Lantieri, 2001).

Many school systems now partially address that question through requirements for students to engage in social service or service learning. Catholic schools, in particular, have led the way with service-learning requirements for all students. The past 20 years have witnessed a breakthrough in awareness of the need to integrate the cognitive dimensions of social or civic identity into a broader understanding of the learning self, an identity that unites information with personal development in the arena of values, ethics, and leadership. It is no longer sufficient to possess a conceptual notion of justice and social change. Education for transformation demands that critical prowess be united with an experiential insight into the economic and political systems that promote inequities, with an affective component linked to the analytical process. Values-based education has come to recognize that student action, unless tied to and informed by a strong inner self, will only be partially effective as a teaching and learning component. Counselors are in a strong position to assist the development of students' inner lives in such a way that outer action emanates from a mature personal core.

For several decades, Palmer has attempted to draw attention to an integrated process of linking knower and knowing. The spirituality of learning as a reflective discipline asks that our depth knowledge of self and self-in-society become part of how we learn, and the manner in which we apply what we learn. *To Know as We Are Known* (Palmer, 1983) encourages teachers and learners to participate in an educational process that perceives/receives information with both critical acuity and subjective reverence. In reflecting on the nature of the spirit as it appears in teacher education, Palmer (1998/1999) points out that spiritual questions relate to the deep need for human connectedness; when invited into teaching and learning, those questions honor life's deepest meaning. Psycho-spiritual development proceeds through the process of such self-examination.

What is needed for this to occur? Is it possible to create an integrated pedagogy of intellect, heart, and soul? Personal development can only unfold and grow in spaces that are welcoming to the soul. Are school sites and class-

rooms such spaces? Palmer (2004) describes the kind of space that nourishes the needs of the soul through the metaphor of a wild animal:

> Like a wild animal, the soul is tough, resilient, resourceful, savvy, and self-sufficient....Yet despite its toughness, the soul is also shy. Just like a wild animal, it seeks safety in the dense underbrush, especially when other people are around. If we want to see a wild animal, we know that the last thing we should do is go crashing through the woods yelling for it to come out. But if we will walk quietly into the woods, sit patiently at the base of a tree, breathe with the earth, and fade into our surroundings, the wild creature we seek might put in an appearance. We may only see it briefly and only out of the corner of an eye—but the sight is a gift we will always treasure as an end in itself. (pp. 58-59)

Is there room for the soul in our current educational systems?

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE COURAGE MODEL

In sum, the Courage model is one of immense possibility for school counselors wishing to become more involved in the spiritual development of students and the spirituality of the school site. Currently used primarily in retreat settings with adults, it is gaining an increased profile among educators who believe students deserve as much attention to the unfolding of their psycho-spiritual nature and to the formation of their beliefs, values, and morals, as to the acquisition of academic skills. Counselors who use Courage principles to guide their personal spiritual walks become visible models; they provide a healing influence simply through presence. Counselors who use Courage principles as the foundation for group work with students establish trustworthy spaces where psycho-spiritual growth can occur. Courage practices offer bountiful resources for use with students, as individuals and in groups, and for creative infusion into the school environment itself. The Courage model is compatible with others that emphasize the uniqueness and worth of all persons; it is particularly complementary to the Ignatian model already familiar in Catholic education.

THE IGNATIAN MODEL OF DISCERNMENT AND SPIRITUAL DIALOG: HISTORICAL PRECURSORS

When Ignatius spent some 10 months at the River Cardoner in Manresa, Spain, exploring the interior spiritual movements that later became the core principles of the Spiritual Exercises which are the foundation of Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit community practice, he could never have envisioned the enormous range of application his insights would generate. In the intro-

duction to the Exercises, Ignatius notes: "By the term Spiritual Exercises we mean every method of examination of conscience, meditation, contemplation, vocal or mental prayer, and other spiritual activities" (Ganss, 1991).

Although Ignatius had very clear connections to a Catholic and Christian tradition of prayer and religious discipline, what has made the Exercises a global tool for personal insight and development has been their focus on insights gleaned from day-to-day life (Jackson, 2006). It is precisely the intersection of practical experience, inner movements of emotion and imagination, and attention to divine inspiration that has allowed so many generations of inquirers to benefit from his initial insights. Effective application of Ignatian discernment is in no way limited to Catholic or Jesuit environments. There certainly are major points of congruence between a positive psychological or psycho-spiritual approach to counseling and an Ignatian model of conversation, which is both interior in its reflection, and dialogic in its unfolding as a spiritual practice.

Originally conceived as a 30-day process of vocational discernment, the Exercises have grown to embrace interior investigations ranging from a 3- to 8-day retreat process, or even a year-long exploration, known as a Nineteenth Annotation Retreat, based in a weekly dialog between director and exercitant, that unfolds major spiritual themes over a longer period (for those unable to undertake a month-long separation from other pursuits).

The practical focus of the Exercises—their acknowledgment that the inner life is not simply a way of separating oneself from the real world, but, rather, a way of uniting the spiritual and the pragmatic—has made them a powerful tool for individual and group transformation over nearly 5 centuries. That so many retreatants conclude with the observation that the Exercises really work is a testimony to the integrated spirituality which they represent—connection to the divine does not exclude intellectual acuity and fruitful living in the life-work of business, education, government, the sciences, or any other legitimate application of human reason and intelligence.

Although the establishment of a global network of educational institutions was totally removed from any initiating vision Ignatius may have had for the fledgling Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), it should come as no surprise in retrospect that the linking of a deeply interior process for vocational discernment with an educational tradition rooted in the humanities, rhetorical skill, and critical thinking would give rise to an enduring educational enterprise.

The first Jesuit colleges were essentially formation houses, accessory communities set up to care for young men in religious training, located near university centers in Paris, or Cologne, or Padua. They were not educational institutions *per se*, but gradually grew into communities where formative

disciplines could be reinforced in-house. Eventually, the educational framework expanded to include a fuller course of studies. One of the first colleges to gain a significant local reputation outside of the Society was established in Messina in 1548. Within a short time, local families of influence began petitioning the authorities to make such education available to the young men of the region (O'Malley, 1993). The Jesuit tradition of promoting the intellectual life of humane letters was underway.

The ensuing centuries witnessed a worldwide explosion of Jesuit education, on both the secondary and post-secondary levels. Young Catholic men were provided an integrated program for intellectual, religious, and moral formation. During the last half-century, an institutional metamorphosis has taken place. The student population has grown to encompass young women and students of varied religious traditions (or no confessional affiliation). The academic, professional, ethical, and religious dimensions of the institutions have become departmentalized; declining vocations have reduced the number of on-site Jesuits working as teachers and administrators; and civil incorporation has eliminated Jesuit ownership of the schools and universities. As a result, it is no longer a given that the unified identity of a Jesuit educational organization can be taken for granted.

THE CONTEMPORARY IGNATIAN CONTEXT

Maintaining an Ignatian quality and dynamic within Jesuit institutions has demanded a return-to-the-roots mentality, that places greater emphasis on promoting the Spiritual Exercises as a core resource for institutional vitality and continuity. Because the Ignatian process is so grounded in an integration of spiritual development and the practicalities of contemporary life, there is a natural synergy between Ignatian discernment and the organizational roles of academic advising and developmental counseling. Predictable frictions between religious affiliation and secular/professional preparation need not arise, since those schooled in the Exercises are capable of facilitating profound interior discernment without necessarily resorting to sectarian evangelization.

An ongoing question that faces those who work in Jesuit and Ignatian contexts can be simply presented: How do the principles of the Exercises continue to evoke fruitful results in the real-world environments of 21st century individuals and communities? As Barry (2003) has noted, there are influential currents in contemporary culture that can tend to mitigate against an integration of the spiritual (and religious) dimensions of personal experience with the more empirical developmental models so prevalent in clinical situations. However, when those engaged in the dialog of soul and psyche are sensitive to the potential synergies or discords that can result from a truly

psycho-spiritual approach, the results can be both illuminating and inspirational. There is no longer a dialectical tension between two different and perhaps competing methodologies. There is simply a confluence of integrative possibilities that allow the so-called clinical and pastoral modalities to work harmoniously.

Counselors in what are deemed secular contexts can productively implement a process that allows the clarity of interior discernment to merge with the therapeutic insights gleaned from clinical techniques. Shelton (2000) has reflected at length on the convergences among, and the distinctions between, spiritual direction, pastoral counseling, and therapy. It would be naive to observe that anyone could (or would) make an absolute demarcation between personal identity and values, and therapeutic practice. However, an Ignatian process allows for significant congruence between the counselor as a holistic, spiritual individual, and his or her clinical method in its practical application. If the counseling role in its many contemporary manifestations is to provide opportunities for practitioners to be proactive in encouraging the development of values, ethics, or leadership potentials among clients, an Ignatian exemplar which unites the recognition of daily practicalities with profound interior exploration can offer a powerful vehicle for next-stage modeling.

CONCLUSIONS

The impacts of dualism have left soul development out of education, and spirituality absent from many school sites. There are currently numerous voices acknowledging the relationship between behaviors disconnected from heart and soul and the educational systems in which young people learn their personal and social roles and practices. The principal voices advocating the maintenance of an education focused on a cognitive pedagogy of mind cite improved academic achievement as the primary goal and need of our current system, as declining scores point to a failing system. In a well-crafted, 10-year longitudinal study of the Chicago public schools, Bryk and Schneider (2002; Gordon, 2002) established an important correlation between relational trust and student learning outcomes. This potential missing ingredient in efforts to identify procedures for improving achievement and increasing student outcomes is profoundly important.

The current obsessive focus on standardized test results as the measure of student learning has been accompanied by increasing frustration and discouragement among the nation's hardworking teachers. Experiences that educate the whole person have been eliminated to make space for additional activities related to basic skills and testing. As Bryk and Schneider (2002; Gordon, 2002) make clear, the presence of on-site relational trust is central

to improved learning outcomes. Learning and development are relational, and require the intersection of whole persons in dialog with each other. Information and skill sets are only the tools. The spiritual and communal integrality of students and teachers allows these tools to be put to effective use.

The work of the Courage movement, and the applied spirituality of Ignatian tradition, among other options, offer holistic and open-systems alternatives for the effective growth of individuals and social groups. As those who counsel others are encouraged to pursue broader, more integrated developmental practices and strategies, the possibilities for psychological and spiritual flourishing are enhanced exponentially. The holistic advantage for both practitioners and those whom they serve is clear and encouraging. As all participants benefit from the counseling process, the health of each individual and the social network is enriched and more profoundly integrated.

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