When the Bottom Falls Out of the Bucket
Toward A Holistic Perspective on Transformative Learning

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Transformative learning theory has been fragmented in a variety of ways. There has been debate between those who view it as a cognitive, rational process and those who prefer an imaginative, extrarational interpretation. Some scholars emphasize the affective component of the journey; some see social action as preceding individual change. Perspectives such as those from depth psychology and humanism have much to contribute to transformative learning theory. What we attempt to do in this article is to bring together some of the various perspectives on transformative learning and integrate them through the concepts of individuation and authenticity. We hope that this initiative will lead other theorists and writers to continue to contemplate how we can build a holistic perspective of transformative learning theory.

Keywords: transformative learning; authenticity; individuation; holistic transformative learning

In preparing to write this article, we were perusing various perspectives on transformative learning, individuation, and authenticity, one of them being Daloz's (1999) *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners.* He wrote, "Buddhists refer to the sensation of enlightenment as being akin to what happens when the bottom falls out of the bucket" (p. 136). Initially, we feel a terrible sense of loss as we watch the water pour away, but then we create new meaning. This vivid metaphor stayed with us through subsequent discussions of what we hoped to accomplish in this article, and eventually it became a part of the title. We need to release the old so the new can emerge. This is as important in working to un-

derstand transformative learning theory itself as it is in our personal growth and development.

There has been considerable debate in the literature as to whether transformative learning is rational or extrarational, reflective or imaginative, cognitive or emotional, individual or social. It is our intent here to bring some of these perspectives together—not to synthesize them in the way of bringing black and white together to make gray but rather to suggest that they can and should coexist within a holistic perspective. First, we define transformative learning so as to include the common points of view in the literature. Second, we describe the journey of individuation. Third, we explore the concept of authenticity. We then braid these three strands together while maintaining the integrity of each to see how we can further our understanding of transformation and evolvement.

In the general field of adult education, people's interests tend to focus on individual internal processes of growth and development; on the social construction of the individual in terms of how the social world defines people based on age, color of skin, gender, ethnicity, or class; or on a power relations framework informed by Marxism, critical theory, and feminist theory. Postmodernism and poststructuralism may form a fourth area of interest. Transformative learning theorists have been mostly concerned with individual processes and the social construction point of view, although some authors emphasize a power relations framework in their understanding of transformation. In this article, we primarily pay attention to the individual within a social context; hence, our integrated model does not incorporate the transformation of society.

One of us (Patricia) comes to this writing from a long history of working with transformative learning within the rational, cognitive framework. The other of us (Merv) comes from a background of depth psychology and a mythopoetic perspective. It is our hope that the diversity in our two perspectives will help us to explore how seemingly opposing points of view can coexist so as to deepen our understanding of each position.

Transformation

The traditional definition of transformative learning is a process by which previously uncritically assimilated assumptions, beliefs, values, and perspectives are questioned and thereby become more open, permeable, and better validated (Cranton, 1994, 2002; Mezirow, 1991, 2000).

Transformative learning theory has now been with us for 27 years. Since Mezirow's (1975, 1978) initial introduction of the concept of transformation into the adult education literature, the theory has grown, been elaborated on, challenged, and in recent years, received considerable attention in both the academic community and the world of practice. At its core, the idea is elegant in its simplicity. We make meaning out of the world through our experiences. What happens once, we expect to happen again. Through this process, we develop habits of mind or a frame of reference for understanding the world, much of which is un-

critically assimilated. We absorb, in the process of daily living, values, assumptions, and beliefs about how things are without much thought.

When something different happens, we can be led to question our way of seeing the world. We ask, "What happened here?" and, "How did I come to think this way?" and, "Why is this important?" This questioning, or critical self-reflection, may not be linear or sequential, but it is essentially a rational process of seeing that our previously held views no longer fit—they are too narrow, too limiting; they do not explain the new experience. Given that we are social creatures, we most likely discuss this process with others, or as Mezirow says, engage in discourse. Ideas and evidence from others help us to consider our own views in a new light. Transformative learning takes place when this process leads us to open up our frame of reference, discard a habit of mind, see alternatives, and thereby act differently in the world (Mezirow, 2000).

A frame of reference is a meaning perspective, the web of assumptions and expectations through which we filter the way we see the world (Mezirow, 2000). A frame of reference has two dimensions—a habit of mind and the resulting points of view. Habits of mind are the broad predispositions that we use to interpret experience. Mezirow (2000) listed six kinds of habits of mind, each overlapping and influencing the other. Epistemic habits of mind relate to the way we come to know things and the way we use that knowledge. Sociolinguistic perspectives are the way we view social norms, culture, and how we use language. Psychological perspectives include our self-concept, personality, emotional responses, and personal images and dreams. Moral-ethical habits of mind incorporate our conscience and morality. Philosophical habits of mind are based on religious doctrine or world view. And our aesthetic habits of mind include our tastes and standards about beauty.

A habit of mind is expressed as a point of view. A point of view is a cluster of meaning schemes, and meaning schemes are habitual, implicit rules for interpreting experiences.

At the core of Mezirow's conceptualization of transformative learning theory is the process of critical reflection. We transform frames of reference through critical reflection on our own and others' assumptions and beliefs. Although reflection need not lead to transformation, when it does, our frame of reference becomes more open and better justified. The process is not about changing one's mind from one thing to another or adopting the "right" point of view but rather about becoming more open.

Mezirow drew on Habermas's (1971) work on kinds of knowledge to form a foundation for transformative learning theory. Instrumental knowledge is that which allows us to manipulate and control the environment, predict observable physical and social events, and take appropriate actions. Empirical or natural scientific methodologies produce technically useful knowledge, the knowledge necessary for industry and production in modern society. In this paradigm, knowledge is established by reference to external reality, using the senses. There is an objective world made up of observable phenomena. The laws governing physical and social systems can be identified through science, and these systems

are seen to operate independently of human perceptions. Habermas criticizes instrumental rationality when it becomes such a pervasive ideology that we either believe all knowledge is instrumental or try to fit all knowledge into that category. In the Age of Enlightenment, the application of reason was seen as the way to solve the world's problems. As a result, empirical scientific methods were viewed as superior to subjective, qualitative, or spiritual ways of knowing. Only recently has modernism (the reign of logic) been criticized in the social sciences and education as not allowing a deeper, more open understanding of human interactions.

The second kind of knowledge is based on our need to understand each other through language. Habermas (1971) called this practical or communicative knowledge. Human beings have always been social creatures, instinctively forming groups, tribes, communities, cultures, and nations to satisfy their mutual needs. For people to survive together in groups and societies, they must communicate with and understand each other. There are no scientific laws governing these communications—when we communicate with others, we interpret what they say in our own way. This does not mean that communicative knowledge is entirely individual. All societies share and transmit social knowledge, that is, a code of commonly accepted beliefs and behavior. As a society, we come to agree on how things should be and are in reference to standards and values, moral and political issues, educational and social systems, and government actions. Communicative knowledge is derived from shared interpretation and consensus and then often becomes reified. Habermas criticized communicative knowledge as being too dependent on subjective understanding. He argued that people may misinterpret the world around them based on distorted assumptions about themselves or society. We want social knowledge to be objective and concrete and therefore stop questioning the systems around us, unaware of the distortions that may exist in our assumptions.

The third kind of knowledge, which derives from a questioning of instrumental and communicative knowledge, Habermas called emancipatory. By nature, people are interested in self-knowledge, growth, development, and freedom. Gaining emancipatory knowledge is dependent on our abilities to be self-determining and self-reflective. Self-determination can be described as the capacity to be aware and critical of ourselves and of our social and cultural context. Self-reflection involves being aware and critical of our subjective perceptions of knowledge and of the constraints of social knowledge. Emancipatory knowledge is gained through a process of critically questioning ourselves and the social systems within which we live. The philosophical foundation of emancipatory knowledge lies in critical theory. In this paradigm, instrumental and communicative knowledge are not rejected but are seen as limiting. If we do not question current scientific and social theories and accepted truths, we may never realize how we are constrained by their inevitable distortions and errors (the world is flat, the Aryan race is superior). Without the possibility of critical questioning of ourselves and our beliefs, such constraining knowledge can be accepted by entire cultures.

Several alternatives to the cognitive, rational approach have been proposed. Boyd (1991), for example, suggested that transformation is an inner journey of individuation, the process of learning through reflection on the psychic structures (anima, animus, ego, shadow, collective unconscious, and so forth) that make up one's uniqueness. Taylor (1998) suggested it is not critical reflection that is at the center of transformative learning but discernment—a holistic orientation including receptivity, recognition, and grieving. Grieving, an emotional facet of transformation, was stressed in Scott's (1997) work. Daloz (1999) explored the notion of transformation as being a response to some change in our world that "suddenly forces us to relate to it in a sharply different way" (p. 135). That is, we have an experiential facet to the process—transformative learning is a response to an experience. Another facet of transformative learning is highlighted in the debate between those scholars who view social action as central to transformative learning (for example, Cunningham, 1992; Newman, 1994) and those who see the individual's development as the primary focus. Mezirow (1991) saw the educator's role as being one of helping the individual become aware of, question, and work to change oppressive social norms. He distinguished this from larger scale political, social, and economic transformation. The tasks of education are different than the tasks of political mobilization (Brookfield, 2000). Others hold that critical reflection without social action is meaningless.

If we bring these strands together, we can say that the central process of transformative learning may be rational, affective, extrarational, experiential, or any combination of these depending on the characteristics of the individual and the context in which the transformation takes place. One person, depending on his or her psychological preferences, may consciously engage in a self-reflective process, whereas another may see the journey as an imaginative one. The same individual in one context (the loss of a parent, for example) may experience transformation as an emotional crisis, whereas in another context (the pursuit of academic studies, for example), he or she may experience the process as one of quiet reflection. Transformation may be social when a group becomes free from constraints through collective action (Native self-governance, for example) or individual when a person questions and reframes his or her unique beliefs and assumptions. And finally, transformation involves dialogue, discourse, or relationships with others.

Individuation

Jung (1921/1971) defined individuation as

the process by which individual beings are formed and differentiated; in particular, it is the development of the psychological individual as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology. Individuation, therefore, is a process of differentiation, having for its goal the development of the individual personality. (p. 448)

The individual learns to "stand on his own feet," and

> collective identities such as membership in an organization, support of "isms,"
> and so on, interfere with the fulfillment of this task. Such collective identities are
> crutches for the lame, shields for the timid, beds for the lazy, nurseries for the ir-
> responsible. (Jung, 1961, p. 342)

We gradually become conscious of our own unique psychological makeup over our lifetime.

Individuation is different from individuality, which refers to our unique characteristics and qualities. Individuation is the *process* by which we become aware of who we are as different from others. I may at this moment in time see my individuality as my calm, reflective, quiet, and caring nature. But at the same time, I am also engaged in the process, whether willfully or not, of developing my sense of self more fully.

Individuation is also different from individualism. Individualism is the primarily Western notion of putting "me first," of focusing on the needs of the self over the needs of others. Much of popular psychology takes the stance that individualism is the key to happiness and satisfaction. This approach is sometimes called self-realization and could be called ego-realization. Individuation does not focus on "me first" but rather on understanding how a person fits in with or does not fit in with others around him or her.

The journey is a complex one—we develop a dialogue with our unconscious, come to better understand our shadow, become aware of our animus or anima (masculine or feminine soul), realize the influence of archetypes on the self, and start to see how we engage in projection. It is easy enough to say these things but much harder to realize what they actually mean. Moore (1992), for example, wrote extensively and powerfully about the shadow side of the soul and how we need to allow that side to emerge, embrace it, and learn from it. Because the shadow side of our self is deeply distasteful, painful, and completely unlike who we want to be, to learn from our shadow side is difficult indeed. Yet, it is what happens as we individuate, and Jung said that it does not happen either as an act of will or because others tell us it is a useful thing to do (Sharp, 2001).

Moore (1992, pp. 148-153) told the story of a priest who, after 30 years in the priesthood, was forced to leave because he was thought to have mishandled church funds. A lively, enthusiastic, caring, and happy man in the initial stages of his therapy, he fell into a dark, angry, and depressed mood. Rather than trying to cure the priest's depression through medication, Moore helped him live with, understand, and learn from this shadow side of his soul.

Sharp (2001) saw individuation as a circular odyssey or spiral, a journey where the aim is to get back to where you started but knowing where you have been. We essentially remain who we are. There is no quick-fix transformation to make us into who we (or others) think we should be. But through the journey of individuation, we come to know who that self is—we can *consciously* live our destiny. Our frames of reference often represent collectively held frames of reference. We

unconsciously and unintentionally assimilate views from our culture, community, and family. We become a part of a collective. Individuation takes place as we break away from that collective by critically questioning the habits of mind of which we have been unaware. However, it is not about becoming alone or isolated. Jung said that individuation does not shut one out from the world but gathers the world to itself (Sharp, 2001). We must adapt to both inner and outer reality; we need to see how we are reflected through other people as well as through our unconscious. For example, let us consider Patricia's story. She grew up in a remote, rural community in Western Canada where education was not only not valued but denigrated. One significant stage in her individuation was the break from the uncritically assimilated values of her early community. In this process, she experienced isolation and a sense of cultural suicide (where do I belong now?), but at the same time she reintegrated her sense of self with other groups and communities whose norms were, at that time, more akin to hers. She did not lose her childhood community but learned to be with the people there in a new way. This in turn allowed her to better understand and work with students from similar backgrounds many years later.

Sharp (2001) saw Jung's four stages of the analytic process as representing individuation. During the first stage, confession, you tell everything that has been consciously concealed or repressed. In the second stage, elucidation, you become aware of the unconscious complexes, projections, and character traits that make up the self. The next task, which Jung called education, is discovering your role as a social being and where you fit in the world. Finally, in the fourth stage, transformation, you become the person you were meant to be. "Unconscious compulsion is replaced by conscious development; aimless activity gives way to a directed focus on what is personally relevant and meaningful. Egocentricity is subsumed by a working relationship with the Self" (Sharp, 2001, p. 62). So individuation is becoming conscious of who you are—both things consciously repressed and things unconscious, seeing where you fit in the world given that consciousness, and becoming more fully the person you were meant to be.

In working to understand the role of imagination in transformative learning, Dirkx (2000) relied on the process of individuation. He argued that transformation is the stuff of ordinary, everyday occurrences much more than it is a "burning bush" phenomenon in which we use reason to "wrest knowledge from the throes of ignorance" (p. 247). Individuation, Dirkx suggested, is an ongoing psychic process that occurs in everyone whether we are conscious of it or not. When we participate in it consciously and imaginatively, we develop a deepened sense of self, an expansion of consciousness, and an engendering of soul. Transformation is the emergence of the Self.

Authenticity

Authenticity is an elusive concept and, oddly, one that has received little serious attention in the adult education literature. Its foundation lies in humanism.

Authenticity is often mentioned in passing—Brookfield (1995), for example, advised us of the importance of being authentic in our role as an educator, and Scott (1998) listed freedom, democracy, and authenticity as the goals of transformative learning. Elsewhere, Cranton (2001) suggested that authenticity is at the core of meaningful teaching and contributes to the spiral-like journey of individuation and transformative learning. However, here, we hope to more fully integrate authenticity into the theoretical framework of transformative learning.

First, let us turn to some of the ways of understanding authenticity from the literature. Looking at authenticity from the educator's perspective, Brookfield (1990) proposed that being an authentic teacher includes making sure our behaviors are congruent with our words, admitting we do not have all the answers and can make mistakes, building trust with students through revealing personal aspects of ourselves and our experiences, and respecting students as people. This provides us with a practical focus—what we can *do* in the classroom to be authentic. Also in relation to authentic teaching, Cranton (2001) used a broad definition of authenticity and built a process by which educators can come to know themselves and integrate that sense of self into their teaching. Here, authenticity is defined as the expression of the genuine self in the community.

Based on the first year of a research project involving 22 university teachers as participants, Cranton and Carusetta (2002) found that authenticity is perceived by educators as much more complex than the definitions above imply. It seems, for example, to be related to concepts such as the use and misuse of power, relationships with students, institutional constraints, seeing teaching as a vocation, self-awareness in teaching and in one's personal life, integration rather than fragmentation in one's work life, and the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue about teaching. Although it is too early in the project to attempt to build a definition from these preliminary results, we do see a multifaceted image emerging.

Jarvis (1992) emphasized two interesting aspects of authenticity. First, he suggested that authenticity is linked to reflective learning. People need to develop as autonomous and rational individuals within their social context. When people's actions are "controlled by others and their performance is repetitive and ritualistic" (pp. 115-116), we have the opposite, inauthenticity. Second, Jarvis reminded us that we are being authentic when we choose to act so as to "foster the growth and development of each other's being" (p. 113). Jarvis saw this as an experimental and creative act where we consciously have the goal of helping another person develop. In other words, teachers and students learn together through dialogue, as Freire (1972) advocated, and the result of authentic teaching is that "teachers learn and grow together with their students" (Jarvis, 1992, p. 114). As we know from Buber's (1961) work, it is only through relationships with others that authenticity can be fostered.

Turning away from the literature that directly addresses adult education, we can find some perspectives on authenticity that may be helpful in our quest to integrate it with transformation and individuation. Heidegger (1962), for example, saw authenticity as involving critical participation in life. By critical participation,

he meant that we question how we are different from the community and live accordingly; we do not do something just because it is done that way by others or believe what others believe without considering whether it is true for us. This is a good way of understanding authenticity—we need to know who we are and what we believe and then act on that. This also sounds a lot like the process of individuation. Although Carl Jung did not write directly about authenticity, the notion of persona plays a vital role in his understanding of human psychology. The persona is that aspect of ourselves that lives up to what is expected and proper. We cover up our inferiorities with a persona; we are vulnerable without it. As Sharp (1998) said, "Civilized society depends on interactions between people through the persona" (p. 27). It becomes unhealthy when a person believes he or she is nothing but a persona or mask—no more than what is shown to others. Here, we have inauthenticity. And we are taken back once again to the process of consciously developing personality rather than acting only through a persona. Sharp (1995) suggested that the first fruit of consciously developing as an authentic person is the "segregation of the individual from the undifferentiated and unconscious herd" (p. 48). Authenticity, individuation, and transformation become inextricably intertwined.

Hollis (1998), a Jungian, helped us to integrate our understanding of persona with the importance of relationships in authenticity. To enter into an authentic relationship requires self-understanding. "The quality of all our relationships is a direct function of our relationship to ourselves. . . . The best thing we can do for our relationships with others, and with the transcendent, then, is to render our relationship to ourselves more conscious" (Hollis, 1998, p. 13). The quality of relationships depends on how well we know ourselves and how authentically we bring ourselves to the relationship. Hollis proposed four principles of relationship: what we do not know or want to accept about ourselves, we project onto others; we project our wounds and longings onto others; when the other person refuses responsibility for our wounds and longings, projection gives away to resentment and issues of power; and the only way to heal a faltering relationship is to take personal responsibility for our own individuation.

What happens when we take this back to transformative teaching and learning? Teaching is about relationships. Teaching is a specialized form of communication that has learning as its goal. If we work only from the persona, the inauthentic, we mask our ability to communicate fully and openly with our learners, and we stop learning from our students.

Let us weave these threads together and see what we have. Authenticity is the expression of the genuine self in the community. To create that genuine self, we need to critically participate in life rather than run with the unconscious herd. Part of this journey is understanding how others are different from us without attempting to make them into our own image; that is, we help others discover their authenticity as a way of fostering our own authenticity.

Integration: Moving to a Holistic Perspective

Our goal is to move toward a more holistic perspective of transformative learning. We have set the rational and extrarational perspectives side by side to let them coexist. We have suggested that the individual and social goals of transformative learning are both valid. We have described individuation and linked it to transformative learning through Dirkx's (2000) work. And we have contemplated a variety of conceptualizations of authenticity, including Jarvis's (1992) rational views and the extrarational position of the Jungian writers. Now we want to explore the connections between transformation, individuation, and authenticity. We first look at each pair.

TRANSFORMATION AND INDIVIDUATION

When individuals transform a habit of mind, either through a rational or extrarational process, individually or socially, they question and reject previously uncritically assimilated assumptions or perspectives. Beliefs become more open, permeable, and better validated. When people individuate, their sense of self becomes differentiated from the collective; they bring the unconscious to consciousness and regroup with more like-minded individuals. Transformation is a move away from the collective in that uncritically assimilated assumptions come from the collective. Transformation must involve bringing the unconscious to consciousness for us to critically reflect on our beliefs. It seems, then, that transformation is individuating and that individuation is transformative. Although the traditional definition of transformation focuses on the rational, scholars such as Dirkx (2000) introduced the extrarational or imaginative component into the process, bringing transformation into line with individuation.

TRANSFORMATION AND AUTHENTICITY

By integrating a variety of perspectives, we see that authenticity involves an understanding and presentation of the genuine self, critical participation in life, and working to help others grow and develop in their authenticity. When people transform a habit of mind, surely they are engaged in becoming more authentic. Transforming a habit of mind involves separating one's own beliefs from the beliefs of others just as it does when a person sets out on the journey of becoming authentic. To know who we are and to express that sense of self in the community, we need to be able to see what is truly our self and what we have absorbed from our community or culture. To engage in transformative learning, we need to do exactly the same thing. It seems that every transformative experience leads to further authenticity and that every time we become more authentic, we have engaged in transformative learning.

Table 1: A Holistic Perspective of Transformative Learning

Individuation is transformative	Transformation is individuating
Becoming authentic is transformative	Transformation is becoming authentic
Becoming authentic is individuating	Individuation is becoming authentic

AUTHENTICITY AND INDIVIDUATION

Because we have said that transformation is a process of individuation and also a part of the journey of becoming authentic, it would seem to follow that individuation and becoming authentic are also closely related. Let us look at this. The lifelong process of individuation involves people learning who they are relative to the rest of humanity—how are they different from others and how are they the same? It involves integrating the various facets of the psyche in an attempt to develop a full and deep consciousness of the Self. Similarly, in becoming authentic, people come to see who they are and express that sense of self in the community and in relationships with others. If we critically participate in life and live accordingly, we must be on the path to authenticity. If we are becoming authentic, we must be engaged in individuation.

A Holistic Perspective

Sometimes, when we read and reread writing from different perspectives—from depth psychology, adult education, or humanism—we find that people are talking about the same things but using a different language. Scholarly work is often fragmented. We read the journals and books that are directly related to our interests but overlook those that are coming from a different perspective. Even within one field, such as transformative learning theory, we seem to want to isolate ourselves into camps or conflicting points of view. Jack Mezirow (2000) has repeatedly reminded us that we need to bring these perspectives together to build on and elaborate on transformative learning theory.

As we began this article, we were still deeply entrenched in the fragmentation of the various perspectives. We argued about and could not seem to see how the rational view of transformative learning could ever exist side-by-side with the depth psychology understanding of individuation, for example. But as we worked through each position, we could no longer see the contradictions. Instead of either-or, it became both or all. Most of the seeming contradiction was a matter of language—the terms used to describe the journey. Other seeming contradictions disappeared when we let the images coexist. Both could be true. Table 1 summarizes the main points of the proposed holistic perspective of transformative learning.

There are many facets to the human psyche and many contexts within which human beings live, love, reflect, and dream. To try to describe the way people transform or open up their perspectives, grow and develop as persons, and learn to live according their authentic selves, we need to honor the complexity of human life and its social setting. We hope that our initiative will open up a dialogue in which we move beyond trying to determine whether transformative learning is *either* this way *or* that way. There is much to question and challenge here; we look forward to the journey.

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