

IN SEARCH OF THE HOLY GRAIL, LIVING IN NEVERLAND: AN
AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF
IMAGINATION AND STORY OF THE GIFTED HUMAN

A dissertation
presented to the Faculty
of Saybrook University
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by

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Oakland, California
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Abstract

IN SEARCH OF THE HOLY GRAIL, LIVING IN NEVERLAND: AN
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This investigation addresses five constituents—calling, social consequences, imagination, story, and the experience of being gifted. It is grounded in the fundamental human inquiry of identity and purpose and contains both personal and universal answers. Primarily, the author sought to answer one question: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? This led her to Hillman's (1997) contention that our true biography—the destiny written into our metaphoric *acorn*—has been stolen. Three questions arose from the primary question used to organize the literature review: (a) How has the use of this knowledge affected my understanding of the evolution of the human story? (b) What evidence is there to identify when our species developed imagination? and (c) Why is imagination undervalued?

There were four sub-questions answered through the personal data: (a) How is a quest or calling revealed? (b) Why is the phenomenon of Neverland essential to human well-being? (c) How did social forces impede the expression of imagination and the process of the original human story? and (d) What does it mean to be *gifted*?

The method chosen for this work was autoethnography, which, according to Bochner and Ellis (2016), exists in a space between many apparent polarities including facts and meanings,

objectivity and subjectivity, and art and science in what Reed-Danahay (1997) explained was how we come to know, name, and interpret personal and cultural experiences. The author was the only participant in this study; however, the meaning emerging from the inquiry could be relevant for many.

The rationale and significance of this study was based on the assumption that the quality of human lives often suffers when people remain disconnected from experiencing their authentic self. The key finding was that through claiming the state of Neverland, as represented by the Peter Pan story, the author was able to connect with who she is and why she is here. This research allowed the author to reclaim her calling, imagination, and story, and acknowledge her giftedness. The ultimate call is for a new paradigm that welcomes and supports the unfolding human destiny.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the curious and adventurous; YOU, the unstoppable and unyielding; YOU, the courageous and powerful; YOU, the visionary and transcender. I salute YOU!

When I read Steve Jobs deeply meaningful words expressed in 2005, I knew he was speaking to me, and I am sure you will find he was speaking to you—directly to you—as well. It only seemed right to share his words with you since, like this work, they are dedicated to you.

“Your Time Is Limited, So Don’t Waste It Living Someone Else’s Life.”

Below is the full transcript that appeared in the Stanford News on June 14, 2005.

I am honored to be with you today at your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. I never graduated from college. Truth be told, this is the closest I’ve ever gotten to a college graduation. Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That’s it. No big deal. Just three stories.

The first story is about connecting the dots.

I dropped out of Reed College after the first 6 months, but then stayed around as a drop-in for another 18 months or so before I really quit. So why did I drop out?

It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed college graduate student, and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl. So, my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking: “We have an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?” They said: “Of course.” My biological mother later found out that my mother had never graduated from college and that my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would someday go to college.

And 17 years later I did go to college. But I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford, and all of my working-class parents’ savings were being spent on my college tuition. After six months, I couldn’t see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved their entire life. So, I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn’t interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.

It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms, I returned coke bottles for the 5¢ deposits to buy food with, and I would walk the 7 miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on. Let me give you one example:

Reed College at that time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus every poster, every label on every drawer, was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn how to do this. I learned about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture, and I found it fascinating.

None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But ten years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course, it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backwards ten years later.

Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So, you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

My second story is about love and loss.

I was lucky—I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parent's garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4000 employees. We had just released our finest creation—the Macintosh—a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So, at 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previous generation of entrepreneurs down—that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me. I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologize for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly

began to dawn on me—I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so, I decided to start over.

I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the world's first computer animated feature film, Toy Story, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together.

I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So, keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.

My third story is about death.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything—all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure—these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that is incurable, and that I should expect to live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means to try to tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything

is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope it's the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now, the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma—which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

When I was young, there was an amazing publication called *The Whole Earth Catalog*, which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late 1960's, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors, and polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback form, 35 years before Google came along: it was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great notions.

Stewart and his team put out several issues of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, and then when it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words: "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you.

Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.

Thank you all very much

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A note to you, my reader: Provided herein are three explanations that clarify inclusion of information relevant in this work: (a) fair use for education, (b) the application of pseudonyms, and (c) rationale of gender neutrality. First, all figures, tables, and literary quotations (poems, prose, and musical lyrics) that appear in this dissertation comply with legal fair use requirements in documents created for educational purposes, and in this monograph the location statements are identified as (Internet, 2017). Each image used in this treatise was found on the World Wide Web and chosen for its felt sense of fit that depicts the person or event, therefore, no further available source attribution was given. Second, in fulfilling the Saybrook Institutional Review Board (SIRB) and the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines regarding anonymity, I used pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of those individuals named in “Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination” in conjunction with the name of a medium, who cooperated with Pecci in a session I witnessed. Third, evidenced throughout this study’s writings is the use of gender and its implications. In earlier times, the masculine gender inferred both masculine and feminine genders in literature and speech. Accordingly, the older literary works that appear in this dissertation have remained true to the author’s original writings. Today, however, egalitarianism is the prevailing contemporary norm, particularly, reflected in the Western world. With this new understanding of current societal values, my editor and I have made every attempt to project gender equality when relevant in this work.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Your own Self-realization is the greatest service you can render the world.
Sri Ramana Maharishi (as cited in DeAngelis, 2015, p. ix)

Introduction to the Esoteric Study of Neverland

Most research in higher education involves clear-cut boundaries within a field of study, which builds upon research and discovery from the past. The focus of this research has an initial intention to discover information beyond what is currently known and has definitive steps I accounted for as the researcher, from identifying the problem, presenting its background, and stating the purpose of the study. The research questions are understood from the outset, and to provide answers to those questions, the method selected fits the focus and philosophy upon which the study is based.

What follows in this work is not a conventional dissertation because I am not a conventional researcher, and the subject matter is normally not considered within the parameters of acceptable, scientifically based research. Instead of growing out of analytical, linear thinking, this dissertation has unfolded from intuition. Instead of being demonstrated through a carefully ordered outline, this work revealed itself by assembling information resembling puzzle pieces in whatever order they arose. Despite this unconventional approach, many of the requirements of a more traditional dissertation were met as the work unfolded.

This dissertation is qualitative, and for the most part it is both a very personal and highly subjective autoethnography. It is grounded in a lifetime of experiences in my efforts to understand the most basic of human questions, “Who am I, and why am I here?” In addition, it is rooted in a philosophy of those who have grappled with these questions for as long as people have reflected on life. Although this work applies to my own experience, these questions could be considered universal, and the paths I took to answer them for myself might provide guidance

to others who seek answers for themselves. In this context, the subject of this dissertation is central to human experience; therefore, the personal and subjective is most appropriate for the field of psychology.

Researcher's Interest in Her Calling, Imagination, Story, and Being Gifted

Through my review in social science research, with particular attention given to dissertations, few studies appear that elucidate the experience of what some identify as one's calling, purpose, and meaning. Hence, what this work identifies as *our soul's code* or *soul's-image* warrants study. In addition, the review resulted in no dissertations that address and synthesize all five constituents of this inquiry: calling, social consequences, imagination, story, and the experience of being gifted. Although each element is significant in its own right, I emphasize imagination as our most vital resource because [it] influences our minds with images and thoughts that form both our inner and outer worlds. Most importantly, imagination unites us with our divinity and the phenomenal One of All There Is. Further, I propose that our realization of calling, story, and being gifted hinges solely on our abilities to access imagination, which makes life possible, as we know it. My background consists of countless life experiences punctuated by specific events and epiphanies that shaped and informed my research, many of which are imparted throughout this dissertation.

As memory serves me, my interest in the phenomenon of calling, imagination, story, and being gifted originated from my unquenchable thirst for knowledge, spirited curiosity, and relentless nature as a precocious child invested in the daily adventures of life. My first recollection has early beginnings. As a child, storytelling was a common occurrence, and whether real or imagined, the story connected me to its character(s) and events. Traditional fairy tales read to me by my parents included *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, *Little Red Riding Hood*,

and *Hansel and Gretel*, as well as nursery rhymes such as *Humpty Dumpty* and *Old King Cole*. I especially savored tales passed down within my family describing the ancestral history that informed my identity. Specifically, the escapades and performances of my grandparents Samuel and Janet Baroff's vaudeville act "Jean Val Jean," which included skits, comedy, acrobats, singing, and dancing. In my youth, I devoured the entire flight series about stewardess Vicki Barr, and the mystery series about detective Nancy Drew. As testimony to the significance of narratives upon the reader, when I was old enough, I applied to American and Delta Airlines for a position as flight stewardess, both of which wait-listed my hire. Even more telling was the effect the story of *Peter Pan* had on me, which underscores my life story today.

In my youth, imagination was my most prized possession; it formed my waking and dreaming reality. In the blink of an eye, I was whisked away by projections of scenes I saw on the screen of my mind, propelled to act out images, ideas, or feelings that transformed the familiar into limitless options of plausible *what if's*. At dawn, I might begin my day as a famous actor performing live on a Broadway stage. At noon, I could become a doctor riding bareback on an elephant through the dusty streets of Calcutta, having been sent to heal the sick, and at dusk, I might emerge as a distinguished astronomer gazing through the lens of a telescope discovering the trajectory of new planets.

It seemed, as a child, so many of my gifts were recognized easily. I played piano by ear and recognized a song by the fourth musical tone. I had extreme emotional sensitivity to color and form with optical, olfactory, and tactile responses. At age 9, my artwork was displayed at the Chicago Art Institute. Regularly, I sang and danced for family and friends who encouraged my talents. As an overly inquisitive explorer, I climbed trees with constancy to heighten my perspective to see beyond the usual landscape of awareness, and plunged into the subterranean

bowels of the forest to observe other ways of life. I also noticed I was particularly attracted to and by the social dynamics of how people interacted and related to each other. Most obvious was my realization of having two exceptional gifts—imagination that filled me with endless ways to create and psychic abilities that connected me to the spiritual essence of others.

My mother was the first to present to me the concept of *calling* by saying “I could be anything I wanted to be.” However, I intuitively recognized the hardship of remaining authentic to my potentials, as social conformity surrounded me, thus forcing me to stay true to myself. From this awareness, I designed a plan that appealed to my sensibilities and interests with the intent of keeping my spirit lively, a plan that included imaginative writing, as well as expressions of art, philosophy, and psychology. As I matured, I pursued spiritual counsel from a profusion of practitioners in a myriad of interests: shamanic practices, Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy, sometimes called PCEAT, creative studies, transformational practices, healing modalities, and classes in acting, speaking, integral studies, and existential-humanistic-transpersonal psychology. Working conjointly with these modalities revealed a socially conditioned false identity, and it also revealed a spiritually ordained inner muse. This discovery prompted me to uncover my ill-defined calling of childhood. What follows is an accounting of my second remembrance gleaned through Regression Therapy, dating back many years ago, which is a salient aspect of this investigation. Regression Therapy is “an altered-state approach to childhood [that] can uncover a panorama of emotional threads and patterns that ordinarily would remain too far under the surface to come to consciousness” (Lucas, 1993b, p. 89), sometimes because the events were too traumatic or are normally not available if they come from an alleged past life. On this day, I stood facing a psychiatrist to whom I was embarking on Past Life Regression Therapy, calmly and quite candidly, I said, “I don’t think I

am supposed to be here. The world is a devastatingly, sad place. People cannot be themselves. They have to be someone else in order to be accepted.” The words flew out of my mouth effortlessly and undisputedly as obvious fact. Typically, I would have assessed what I was saying and to whom I was saying it to, the difference was, I was enveloped in serenity, which allowed me to speak my truth freely. A secondary delayed reaction was the confluence of elation with liberation, as though I had freed the genie once entrapped in the bottle. Unaffected by my announcement, the psychiatrist delivered his rebuttal with certainty, “Of course you are supposed to be here. You have work to do! I came out of semi-retirement after practicing psychiatry for over 40 years because I first received my calling to work with visionaries like you.” He followed that statement with another, “You are a tenacious ‘truth’ seeker, of which there are few of you in the world.” According to DeAngelis (2015), “the courage to ask yourself sacred questions is what identifies you as a seeker of truth, and is an auspicious sign that your journey of awakening has already begun” (p. 6). My final session resulted in disclosing an unchanged calling I carried with me through all my previous lives. I am an oracle-sage sent to impart a vital message to empower others to claim and realize the unique *gift* they are. For each of us has been called at this time to make our mark in human history and advance humankind. Meade (2016) elaborated:

The future of this world is so much in question that each person needs to be considered a potential subject of a genuine “calling” to serve in some meaningful way. Not the sense that “many are called, but few are chosen.” Rather, the sense that the genius nature in each person is subject to a calling and needed at this time. For, it is the genius within us that our calling is calling to. Everyone has something to give if they give from their essential nature. (p. 4)

Present Study’s Background and Context

My dissertation is about the human journey lived in a particular and personal way, which includes five areas of focus: (a) uncovering a unique preordained calling and potentials that lead to living an authentic congruent life; (b) experiencing life in *Neverland*, related to the magical

place children often live prior to being limited by convention, and the transformative, as well as transpersonal qualities [it] holds for adults; (c) social consequences effect on imagination and story—as a biography and story as narrative; (d) embracing the benefits that imagination and story provide; (e) and uncovering the real determinates of gifted/giftedness. I hold, the human journey for all and the unique story for each begins as we enter this world called as an original soul, which contains treasure troves of untapped potential, codified with specific abilities to evolve, destined to express our unique gifts/talents and to leave this world better than when we found it. Though, during our transition, most of us have forgotten who we are and why we have come (Hillman, 1997; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2001; Robinson, 2009). For many of us, our journey is the lifelong pursuit to find the answers to these perennial questions. I propose that we are in search of The Holy Grail, one that contains the significance of human existence.

As we incarnate in this world, a select few people are identified as prodigies, some of whom are accepted and well received by society for their calling and potentials, which arise from their gifts and talents that are evident. However, for those remaining, the vast majority of world citizens, most are unaware about who they are and what they are to do, which for them, seem painfully less apparent. Thus, society marginalizes the significance of the many and tells them who they should be (Hillman, 1997; Robinson, 2009; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2001).

Unknowingly, nearly all of us are expected to fit a glorified acceptable societal norm before given the words to speak and understand what is happening to us. We become compromised and ethically incongruent, thereby thwarting our potentials that postpone or could possibly prevent us from discovering our ordained calling, which many theorists have often assumed to be a unique purpose, each person inherently has, and may not fulfill (Csikszentmihalyi, 2006; Fromm, 1995;

Hillman, 1997; Houston, 1993, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1998, 2012; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2001; Pink, 2006; Robinson, 2009; Thurman, 2006).

However, all hope is not lost. In the subsequent chapters, you will learn about those who recognize themselves as *truth seekers*—everyday geniuses—who command a fervent sense of personal destiny that propels them to crystalize their mission even if their goal is obscure for an extended period of time. Although the journey is treacherous and laden with unpredictable challenges, these tenacious warriors persevere with an unquenchable *drive* that keeps them faithfully engaged as gifted visionaries/transcenders whose destiny charges them with perfecting their task and contributing to the advancement of humankind. Although this work applies to my own experience, these questions are likely universal, and the paths I take to answer this inquiry for myself could well provide guidance to another who might choose to answer these questions for themselves. I consider the subject of this dissertation central to human experience, which is most appropriate for the field of psychology.

Even though our spirit is mighty and willing, we enter this life small, vulnerable, and reliant on others for our survival. We are like putty in the hands of humanity. Socialization begins with the very people entrusted to keep us safe; our closest sphere of influence that instills their biases and cultural norms. Because we are trusting, we look to our caregivers for guidance, and typically comply with societal standards presented before us. As a result, many people trade in their authentic character for what society deems acceptable, which continues a vicious cycle of conformity (Moore, 2001).

In time, some people become aware of what has happened to them and begin to question individual identity with the most basic of human questions, “Who am I, and why am I here?” This moment of clarity is generally a game changer that often leads to self-realization for those

who seize the opportunity and rise above compliancy set by social standards, which makes the implausible plausible. However, by then, conditioning could be so embedded that many remain stuck in the quagmire of deceit of socially acceptable behavior. Even more pressing, many feel uncomfortable in their own skin due to an ongoing battle that ensues between their inner muse and society's false identity that dictates who we are and who we should be (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994; Hillman, 1997; Houston, 1993, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1998, 2012; Jacobson, 1999; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2001; Robinson, 2009; Pink, 2006; Singer, 2007; Unger, 2007). In this work, I have proposed in the process of this socialization, many lose the inherent sense of self, or what existentialists call the authentic self, and they experience the feeling that their lives are inconsequential.

Fortunately, however, there are historical figures, specifically those who flouted conventional standards who have experienced the presence of a *daimōn*, or guardian angel, the keeper of our calling. The willingness of these figures to share their information of literary sources, narratives, and story through various mediums seems timely in meeting those of us who search for answers about ourselves, where we are, and where we are to go. They have done this by providing pathways back home and reconnection to our ordained calling, which allows us to contribute to human advancement rather than to add to its decline (Halprin, 2005; Hillman, 1997).

Given the gravity of our need to self-actualize, as Meade (2016) discussed, when we are given an opportunity to be a part of something larger than ourselves we typically welcome the challenge. Against this background, I extend an invitation to those of you on a similar quest to accept the undertaking. For what is warranted is a new direction, a paradigm change, and this

perspective suggests there is a necessity for future research (Epstein, 1992; Fromm, 1955; May, 1975/1994; Pink, 2006; Thurman, 2006).

Problem Statement

The context from which this dissertation arose involves what I consider a widespread problem for humanity. Based on my personal experience and my observation of the subjective experience of many others, and endless research, I have concluded and concur with Hillman (1997) who said, “What is lost in many lives, and what must be recovered [is] a sense of personal calling, that there is a reason I am alive” (p. 4). Aptly put, “I believe we have been ‘robbed’ of our true biography—that destiny [innate image] written into the acorn—and we go to therapy to recover it” (p. 5). Further, until we humans accept this reality and embrace our individuality, I propose we will suffer at the whims of our resident “daimōn’s urgings, [that] appear as eccentricities, compacted with angry resentments and overwhelming longing” (p. 5), which present as (a) warring amid the identities of an authentic self and false self, (b) tension between intuition and tuition, and (c) perception between the invisible and the visible (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994).

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the lifelong quest of a personal calling of the gifted human and the social consequences of imagination and story. To elucidate, the meanings of social consequences and story imply that these consequences impede the expression of imagination and act as an impediment to the development of the original human story. Moreover, story is applied in a twofold process—first, as a living biography that is human history in the making, and second, as a narrative in the form of storytelling. Most significant is the timely wisdom that story imparts, particularly in the instance when an insightful message

synchronously meets us precisely where we are in our spiritual revelation and human development to encourage us to press on in our quest to realize our potentials and calling. I hope to color the world of understanding for you by sharing narratives titled “Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination.” This research method is used to describe and investigate how the processes of Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy applies imagination to access, align, and transcend the ordinary, socialized self to find the inner spiritual wisdom of my higher authentic self, to actualize my potentials, and contribute to humanity.

Beyond my own meaning-making experience, there is a potential that others might be empowered—those teetering on the tightrope between social conformity of a false identity and personal originality of an authentic self, and those who remain steadfast in pursuit of their calling—enabling them to draw from my experiences and explore these processes for themselves.

Importantly, this inquiry was grounded in underlying fundamental questions relative to being human, “Who am I, and why am I here?” and contains both personal and universal answers. The primary research question I sought to answer through this autoethnography asked, “How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative?” I wanted to discover for myself what Hillman (1997) identified as our true biography that has been robbed from all of us. I longed to reclaim the destiny written into the acorn of my being. There were four sub-research questions: (a) How is a quest or calling revealed? (b) Why is the phenomenon of Neverland essential to my human well-being? (c) How did social consequences impede my expression of imagination and the process of the original human story? and (d) What does it mean to be *gifted*? In addition, three questions arose from the primary research question and

were the focus of the literature review: (a) How has the use of this knowledge affected my understanding of the evolution of the human story? (b) What evidence is there to identify when our species developed imagination? and (c) Why is imagination undervalued?

Research Approach

Upon approval from the director of research and Saybrook University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I drew on the research topics as introduced in my dissertation proposal. I presented my life experiences in the form of narrative vignettes in the section "Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination," as the means to operationalize autoethnography research to describe my investigation. I sought to discover how my experiences with the processes of Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy applies imagination to access, align, and transcend the inner spiritual wisdom of my inner muse, to actualize my potentials and contribute to humanity.

A comprehensive review of the literature forms the conceptual framework of this autoethnographic research guided by the previously named questions listed in the Statement of Purpose and Research.

Data Collection

The purpose of the study's statement examined why I undertook the study and what I intended to accomplish with "the desire to *improve* something and reflects a desire to *understand* something" (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2007, p. 9). The study's purpose or research question promotes the exploration of the concept that imagination is the primary factor of conscious thought and awareness that leads to self-discovery and self-actualization of calling and potentials needed for human evolution.

This study's focus used autoethnography as the method of qualitative narrative that investigates the human's evolutionary journey, and thereby, it accomplishes seven intentions: (a) establishes our quest/place in the world, (b) investigates authenticity and false identity, (c) explores imagination, (d) experiences the gift of Neverland, (e) creates story, (f) seeks to understand social consequences, and (g) uncovers the mysteries of being gifted.

As the primary instrument in this dissertation, autoethnography was applied in a way that utilizes artifacts and employs descriptive fieldwork of journal entries, and recollection of events that were inductive due to the researcher constructing abstractions, concepts, hypothesis, and theories, which form additional detailed research questions that emerged as the study progresses. The study occurred in a natural setting during daily activities that transitioned to experiences alone. According to Creswell (2007), in "natural settings, qualitative researchers tend to collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study" (p. 37). The study is unable to be generalized by another researcher because the researcher alone goes through these experiences of transition, which cannot possibly be duplicated or understood in the same manner.

Research Assumptions and Perspectives

Many of the statements made thus far in the chapter reflect my personal assumptions. These assumptions are based on multiple learning types. The first is experiential learning, which begins with the experience followed by reflection, discussion, analysis, and ends with the evaluation of the experience (Wight, 1970). The second learning type is holistic learning, which is based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace (Miller, 1996). The third learning type involves traditional or rote learning that

condenses the curriculum into instructional packages where one repeats through memorization facts, figures, words, and pictures (Schugurensky, 2001). Other learning types include transformational learning, which creates “a crucial sense of agency over ourselves and lives” (Mezirow, 1981, p. 20), thus making meaning of our lives. Finally, I drew on personal experiences presented as narratives in “Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination,” and the conclusions those intuitions formed, examples of which include:

- The world is a sad place because we cannot be our authentic self, and thus, we conform to the masses to be liked, accepted, and fit into society.
- Too often, we forget we are special, unique, and chosen to make a contribution.
- Society fails to see the overall importance in using imagination.
- Traditional education typically stymies imagination, innovation, and inspiration.
- Many give up on themselves without ever realizing their dreams and resign themselves to live a life of mediocrity.
- Universally, the vast majority of us live at the effect of social dictums; often we feel trapped because of ethical incongruence and cannot see our way clear to balance between our inner muse and false identity.
- Knowingly, many people exchange their soul and living an authentic life for financial security, fame, or fortune.
- Most of us feel emotionally unfulfilled because we work at a job we do not like for remuneration.
- Many of us do not know who we really are and what we are capable of accomplishing.
- Often, we equate a successful life with material trappings.
- Most people have the wrong perception of what being gifted is.
- Many adults do not think they are gifted or imaginative.
- Some adults believe we lose access to imagination.

Rationale and Significance

The quality of human life often suffers personally and collectively when people remain disconnected from experiencing their calling and purpose in life (Fromm, 1955; Moore, 2001; Thurman, 1986). I am amazed that we have allowed the human spirit to be silenced by a society in which we, ourselves, hold membership. Misplaced values have led humanity to individual and planetary corruption, which I propose, are related to what have been called *the seven deadly sins*: (a) envy, (b) gluttony, (c) greed or avarice, (d) lust, (e) pride, (f) sloth, and (g) wrath (Schimmel, 1997). If we continue along this line and this way of life, we will decimate our planet, along with ourselves in the process. This focus of the dissertation contains a fervent plea for all citizens of the world to be responsible to self-actualize and contribute to human progress.

The Researcher

My life's mission is dedicated to champion the human spirit in myself and in others. I have experienced the chasm that exists between two parts of myself. The first part is what I have identified as my soul's code, which coincides with what Miller (1981) identified as the true self that holds the healthy narcissism of childhood. The second part is my false identity, the self that emerges to fill the parents' needs instead of the child's own needs and imprisons the true self. I have known the warring tensional divide between my authentic self and false self, which has left me unsettled and searching for answers of how to be in this world and not of this world. Understanding how to access, apply, and attain spiritual harmony to everyday life remains a goal for me. In referring to these two worlds, Miro-Quesada (1998) explained, "This is not about substituting one for the other...it's the dance of both of them together" (p. 4). This is the challenge of *in-betweeners*—*antevasin* in Sanskrit—who live at the border of two worlds. Woods (n.d.) aptly described the physical and spiritual worlds and the tensions between them in her

poem “Two Worlds” (see Appendix A). She explained that people in the physical world are often driven by quests for power, status, money, and material wealth, while the spiritual world is:

the inner world of harmony, where you can go anytime your spirit aches for company. Here you can listen to the songs of rocks and leaves and embrace the wisdom of rivers and essential things contained in raindrops or a flower’s belly or the Earth’s warm breath of spring. In this world, beauty is companion to mystery. (para. 18)

She added that the physical world could not be sustained without the spiritual world.

Because I am a truth seeker, I bring an open heart to being touched by life and touching others. Accordingly, as a spiritual visionary and *imaginaire*, I have applied my abilities as an author, speaker, coach, and educator to support the spiritual growth and contribute to the journeys of others. To further promote my spiritual revelation and human development, I achieved degrees that correspond with my stand on living authentically to my calling: (a) a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies, (b) an M.A. in Existential-Humanistic-Transpersonal Psychology and Creative Studies, and (c) this dissertation, which is now complete, to accomplish my Ph.D. in Existential-Humanistic-Transpersonal Psychology and Creative Studies. Further, this dissertation represents the voice of my inner genius that refuses to be silenced, and envisions a world where each of us is received as the gift we are ordained to be informed by a new social order of acceptable normal, which champions creative imagination and self-expression.

Definitions of Key Concepts

Language used in scientific research is typically uncommon. Accordingly, the words used in this dissertation necessitate the use of referents that are obvious to the reader and invariably designates only one referent. As might be expected, when the investigation lies within a subject area with an existing language, the author is obliged to the conventions of that system (Locke Spirduso, & Silverman, 2007, pp. 127-128). In following this convention, I have defined the

language used in this dissertation to support any reader who might benefit from the definitions, which I have included in the following table:

Table 1

Definitions of Key Concepts

- ***Acorn***—In this work, I used the word *acorn* as a symbol to represent a complete human life that houses a unique individual calling with potentials that are yet unseen (Emerson, n.d.; Hillman, 1997).
- ***Acorn Theory***—Hillman (1997) explained this theory by saying:

In a nutshell...[it] is about calling, about fate, about character, about innate image. Together they make up the “acorn theory,” which holds that each person bears a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present before it can be lived. (p. 6)

The acorn theory originated in Plato’s *Myth of Er*, the last chapter the *Republic* that “[used] a similar word, *paradeigma*, a basic form encompassing your entire destiny” (p. 9).
- ***Active Imagination***—As described by Jung (1997), *Active Imagination*:

means that the images have a life of their own and that the symbolic events develop according to their own logic - that is, of course, if your conscious reason does not interfere. You begin by concentrating upon a starting point. (p. 145)
- ***Antevasin***—is Sanskrit for “one who lives at the border” (Gilbert, 2006, p. 203) in-between worlds, a spiritual dweller. The origin of this term, as used in ancient times, describes a spiritual seeker who left the teeming center of temporal life to live at the forest edge where spiritual masters were known to be present. Although referred to as an *in-betweener*, he or she lives in site of both worlds dwelling in the unknown. Given the nature of this dissertation and modern life, I apply the term *antevasin* figuratively to

mean those of us that live on the border of a socialized false identity, aware of our old thinking, and a spiritual authentic self, aware of the opportunity to actualize and contribute to the greater good of human life.

- **Archetype**—VandenBos (2007) defined this as, “**1.** A perfect or typical example of something or the original model from which something is held to derive (Prototype); **2.** In ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY, a structural component of the mind that derives from the accumulated experience of humankind” (p. 69). Pearson (1998) described *archetype* as “nothing more than the deep structures in the psyche and in social systems, [which can be thought of as] inner potentialities, allies, or guides that always are available to you” (p. 19).

- **Authenticity**—According to *The APA Dictionary of Psychology*, authenticity refers to:

the quality of being genuine or of undisputed origin. In Existentialism, a mode of being that humans can achieve by accepting the burden of freedom, choice, and responsibility and the need to construct their own values and meanings in a meaningless universe. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 89)

- **Authentic Self**—In this work, the authentic self is defined as a social construct often used in esoteric writing. Bostan (2016), cited the work of Maltby, Wood, Day and Pinto (2012) who explained:

The authentic self is separated as psychological construct from the theories of the self and in the light of what is defined as the personal ego. The authenticity theme is also approached in sciences like philosophy, politics, religion or biology. Further are presented some of the most important directions of research regarding this concept and the theory addressed in the study to define this concept, theory that includes three aspects: a) lack of self-alienation, meaning a consistency of identity with beliefs, feelings and objective reality; b) rejection of external influence when it is not in line with personal beliefs; and c) authentic living, meaning to live accordingly to that identity. (Bostan, 2016, p. 58)

Being authentic involves a holistic approach, meaning that this concept reflects and describes people as acting accordingly to a harmonious way of life, one in which people

reflect comfortable congruency between one's thoughts, and feelings, emotions and behaviors (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Miller (1981) referenced the true self in the same terms as other authors used as the authentic self, which exists when one is able to access and express authentic feelings.

- **Biography**—Comaroff and Comaroff's (1992) suggested that biography is about us, as we are *history in the making*, such a colloquialism implies we are continually in the process of human evolution (p. 25). In this work, I draw from “description of the optic that fuses individual and event into both a worldview and a narrative—genre—[that] lies at the methodological core of much ethnography and history” (as cited in Comaroff & Comaroff, 1992, p. 25).
- **Calling**—a strong urge towards a particular way of life or career; a vocation; a profession, or occupation; a strong impulse especially one believes to be divinely inspired (*Oxford Living Dictionaries: English*, 2017).
- **Clairvoyance**—According to *The APA Dictionary of Psychology*, the term clairvoyance is described:

in parapsychology, [as] the alleged ability to “see” things beyond the normal range of sight, such as distant or hidden objects or events in the past or future (VandenBos, 2007, p. 175).
- **Creative Imagination**—VandenBos (2007) chronicled creative imagination as:

the faculty by which new, uncommon ideas are produced, especially when this does not seem explicable by the mere combination of existing ideas. The operations of the creative imagination are sometimes explained by the interaction of dormant or unconscious elements with active, conscious thoughts. (p. 242)

The operative determinates are *active attitudes* as distinguished by Jung (as cited in Chodorow, 1997) as:

an active fantasy [that] may be evoked when we turn our attention toward the unconscious with an attitude of expectation: something definite is about to happen. Such a state of readiness brings new energy and consciousness to the raw material emerging from the unconscious; themes are elaborated through association with parallel elements. Through this process, the unconscious affects and images are clarified and brought closer to consciousness. Such an active, positive participation of conscious and unconscious corresponds to the method of active imagination. (p. 6)

- ***Daimōns***—are social constructs used in esoteric writing to describe invisible spirits, god(s), goddess(es), guardian(s), angel(s), and other “intermediary beings located between the celestial objects and the terrestrial inhabitants” (Uzdavinys & Finamore, 2004, p. 293).

The Jungian Center for the Spiritual Sciences (JCSS) (2016) defined the term *daimōn* as Greek and derived from the word *daiw*, which means, “to divide or distribute destinies” (p. 1). The center explained that Jung applied the term *daimōn* to:

- Something alien from the unconscious.
- Archetype or numinous imperative, which from ancient times has been accorded a far higher authority than the human intellect.
- As an archetype, the “*daimōn*” is universal, something experienced in all people and cultures. Among indigenous tribes, it shows up as a primitive power concept.
- As an autonomous psychic content, the *daimōn* is a force as real as hunger and the fear of death.
- Because it is autonomous, it behaves within us like a god, making demands of us and acting with authority.
- Besides Jung, multiple figures in history have acknowledged being in the grip of a *daimōn*, e.g. the Greek philosopher Socrates, the German poet Goethe, and the French ruler Napoleon. (p. 1)

Daimōns are seen as both positive and negative forces that hold the tensional opposites and drive us “into untrodden regions and create conflicts between our outer life and inner demands” (p. 1). They force us to look inside of ourselves. Thus, pulling us out of social/conventional norms, the *daimōn* challenges our whole way of being with the intention of *awakening* us to become *whole*. Jung (as cited in JSCC, 2016) noted the close connection

between the daimōn, imagination, and creativity as he posited, “The fight against the paralyzing grip of the unconscious calls forth [our] creative powers” (p. 1).

- **Depth Psychology**—founding president and chancellor of Pacific Graduate Institute Aizenstat (2016) gave a thorough description of depth psychology titled, *The Core Ideas*

Behind Depth Psychology:

There are so many answers to that question, and yet I think overarching all those answers, is a couple of core ideas. First, it's that which lies and lives below the surface of things, in-depth of the material of the deep psyche or what is popularized as the unconscious. So, depth psychology has a first task, the capacity to explore what lives at the depth of our experience. Secondly though, depth psychology really lives in another realm, which has to do with the imagination. The activation of the human imagination. The place, the source, from which stories come from which inspiration arises. The place of mythology. The place of the works of great literature that which comes forward in culture. So, depth psychology really takes as its second move, the exploration and the encouragement of the imagination. The last I would say is, depth psychology is relevant to today's world in the sense that we are all asked to see the social, political, economic realities that face us in our daily life, and certainly in societal affairs. We are asked to look at those with a perceptive eye, with an eye towards what lives behind, [and] what motivates our actions and our behaviors. So, depth psychology really is a way of seeing, a mode of being as much as academic discipline. A way of seeing into that which lives underneath the institutions, the structures, and the behaviors from which we're all a part of, in which we all grow out of. (Pacifica Institute, 2016, www.pacifica.edu/about-pacifica/what-is-depth-psychology)

- **Ego**—the term ego used in this paper is that of Pecci's (2017) definition:

The matrix of each personality is held together by the ego. The ego is a fear thought, a belief that you are not safe and therefore can be killed or, equally bad, totally rejected by the universe. It is created the first time that an infant experiences rejection by the universe. It is created the first time an infant experiences rejection, attack, or abandonment and makes a fear-based premise regarding its identity in the world. Fear is present to some degree in every person who believes that they are nothing more than a physical body.

The egos of most young parents reactively suppress the unique individuality and radiance of their children. To resonate at a lower vibration than your core self is painful. Associated with this is the child's belief that he [or she] could cease to exist by not deserving the flow of love that is essential to his [and her] survival. The ego sustains this belief that is at the core of every personality. Instead of helping us to move on to an awareness of who we truly are, the ego

attempts to protect us from pain by becoming more and more closed off to feelings and depends upon our intellect for survival. (p. 2)

- **Element**—Robinson (2009) defined element as “a meeting point between natural aptitude and personal passion” (p. 21), which is different for everyone. However, in this work, being in one’s element refers to the experience of being engaged in doing what one loves, which leads to feeling most authentic. Furthermore, those in their element “are more alive, more centered, and more vibrant than at any other time” (p. 21).

- **Emotional Intelligence**—From the *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, emotional intelligence refers to:

a type of intelligence that involves the ability to process emotional information and use it in reasoning and other cognitive activities, proposed by U.S. psychologists Peter Salovey (1958-) and John D. Mayer (1953-). According to Mayer and Salovey’s 1997, it comprises four abilities: to perceive and appraise emotions accurately; to access and evoke emotions when they facilitate cognition; to comprehend emotional language and make use of emotional information; and to regulate one’s own and other’s emotions to promote growth and well-being. Their ideas were popularized in a best-selling book by U. S. psychologist and science journalist Daniel J. Goleman (1946-), who also altered the definition to include many personality variables. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 326)

- **Empath**—As doctor, author, and empath herself, Orloff (2009) provided a first-rate in-depth account of characteristics empath possess:

Empaths are highly sensitive, finely tuned instruments when it comes to emotions. They feel everything, sometimes to an extreme, and are less apt to intellectualize feelings. Intuition is the filter through which they experience the world. Empaths are naturally giving, spiritually attuned, and good listeners. If you want heart, empaths have got it. Through thick and thin, they’re there for you, world-class nurturers.

The trademark of empaths is that they know where you’re coming from. Some can do this without taking on people’s feelings. However, for better or worse, others, like myself and many of my patients, can become angst-sucking sponges. This often overrides the sublime capacity to absorb positive emotions and all that is beautiful. If empaths are around peace and love, their bodies assimilate these and flourish. Negativity, though, often feels assaultive, exhausting... Thus, they’re particularly easy marks for emotional vampires, whose fear or rage can ravage empaths. As a subconscious defense, they may gain

weight as a buffer. When thin, they're more vulnerable to negativity, a missing cause of overeating...an empath's sensitivity can be overwhelming in romantic relationships; many stay single since they haven't learned to negotiate their special cohabitation needs with a partner.

When empaths absorb the impact of stressful emotions, it can trigger panic attacks, depression, food, sex and drug binges, and a plethora of physical symptoms the defy traditional medical diagnosis. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that more than two million Americans suffer from chronic fatigue. It's likely that many of them are misdiagnosed empaths. Also, others of this emotional type become agoraphobic, recluses too spooked to venture outdoors. (Orloff, 2009, pp. 106-107)

- **Essence**—According to *The APA Dictionary of Psychology*, essence is described:

in philosophy [as], the presumed ontological reality at the core of something that makes it what it is and not something else. There have been various philosophical attempts to define the difference between what something necessarily is, and what it merely coincidentally is (see ACCIDENTAL PROPERTY; ESSENTIAL PROPERTY). In psychology, the concept of essence is relevant to discussions of personhood, including questions of human agency and of the SELF. It is thus important for personality theories. The view that human beings have certain important essential characteristics is known as ESSENTIALISM. (p. 343)

- **Essentialism**—VandenBos (2007) identified the term essentialism as used:

in philosophy, the position that things (or some things) have ESSENCES; that is, they have certain necessary properties without which they could not be the things they are. In MARXISM, POSTMODERNISM, POSTSTRUCTURALISM, and certain feminist perspectives, essentialism is the rejected position that human beings have an essential nature that transcends such factors as social class, gender, and ethnicity. See also UNIVERSALISM. (p. 343)

- **Ethical Congruence**—is referred to as:

a situation where one's decision is consistent with, aligns with, the applicable set(s) of values. Under these circumstances, a choice to take some action will harmonize with the decision-maker's values. The organizational state where values, behaviors and perceptions are aligned. (psychology-lexicon, 2016)

- **Ethical Determinism**—VandenBos (2007) defined this term as:

the position, stated definitively by Greek philosopher Plato (c. 427-c. 347 BCE), that one who knows the good will (necessarily) do the good. It is implied that a sense of obligation is the defining feature of knowledge of the good, and that this sense will be strong enough to compel, rather than merely suggest, action. This

position assumes the essential rationality of human beings. Later modifications of the position have argued that a person will necessarily act in accordance with what he or she perceives to be good, whether or not it really is good, or that a person will act consistently with what he or she perceives to be good, where what is good is what is in that person's self-interest (see EUDEMONISM) also called moral determinism. (p. 344)

- **Ethical Dilemma**—is “a situation in which two moral principles conflict with one another. Fictional or hypothetical dilemmas of this kind are often used to assess the moral beliefs or moral reasoning skills of individuals” (VandenBos, 2007, p. 344).
- **Existentialism**—VandenBos (2007) provided a thorough detailed and seemingly lengthy explanation of existentialism as:

a philosophical and literary movement that emerged in Europe in the period between the two World Wars and became the dominant trend in Continental thought during the 1940s and 1950s. Existentialism is notoriously difficult to sum up in a single definition—partly because many who might be identified with the movement reject the label, and partly because the movement is itself, in many ways, a rejection of systematization and classification. The origins of existentialism have been traced to a range of thinkers, including French philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), and Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881). However, the first fully developed philosophy of existentialism is usually taken to be the EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY elaborated by German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) in the 1910s and 1920s. Heidegger's concept of DASEIN was a key influence on the work of the French philosopher and author Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), who is usually seen as the existentialist thinker *par excellence*. In the immediate postwar years Sartre popularized both the term “existentialism” and most of the ideas now associated with it. Existentialism represents a turning away from systematic philosophy, with its emphasis on metaphysical absolutes and principles of rational certainty, and toward an emphasis on the concrete existence of a human being “thrown” into a world that is merely “given” and contingent. Such a being encounters the world as a subjective consciousness, “condemned” to create its own meanings and values in an “absurd” and purposeless universe. The human being must perform this task without benefit of a fixed ESSENCE or inherent nature, and in the absence of any possibility of rational certainty. However, by accepting the burden of this responsibility, and refusing the “bad faith” of religion and other spurious rationalizations, he or she can achieve AUTHENTICITY. Various forms of EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY have taken up the task of providing explanations, understandings of human behavior, and therapies based on

existentialist assumptions about human existence. They have emphasized such constructs as ALIENATION, authenticity, and freedom, as well as the difficulties associated with finding meaning and overcoming anxiety. (p. 352)

- **Existential phenomenology**—defined by the APA Dictionary (2007) is:

A philosophical development from the PHENOMENOLOGY of German thinker Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) that can be seen most clearly in the work of German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) and French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961). Phenomenology originally sought to achieve immediate and direct apprehension of phenomena at the most fundamental level, the level of that which manifest itself to pure consciousness. Heidegger's contribution was to turn the phenomenological method toward the existential, or lived experience, rather than mere objects of consciousness. Thus, existential phenomenology seeks to get at the meaning of the lived experience *through* the careful and systematic analysis of lived experience itself. In its fundamental project and subject matter, Heidegger's work of the 1910s and 1920s anticipated the French EXISTENTIALISM of the postwar era. (p. 352)

- **Existential psychology**—VandenBos (2007) described existential psychology as:

a general approach to psychological theory and practice that derives from EXISTENTIALISM. It emphasizes the subjective meaning of human experience, the uniqueness of the individual, and personal responsibility reflected in choice. Such an approach was pioneered by Swiss psychologist Ludwig Binswanger (1881-1966). (p. 352)

- **Evolution**—VandenBos (2007) defined evolution as:

the process of gradual change in the appearance of populations of organisms that has taken place over generations. Such changes are widely held to account for the present diversity of living organisms originating from relatively few ancestors since emergence of life on Earth. (p. 348)

- **Fairy Tale**—According to Cambridge (2016), a fairy tale is:

a traditional story usually written for children involving fantastic forces and magical creatures/beings such as elves, hobgoblins, dragons, fairies, wizards—called also fairy story in which improbable events lead to happy endings. Conversely, a made-up story usually designed to mislead.

- **False Self**—The definition of false self is used in this work as false identity since no listing is given in the *APA Dictionary of Psychology*; also see **identity** and **social identity**. VandenBos (2007) used object relations, to explain the false self, based on:

British psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott (1896-1971), [who said] the self that develops as a defense against impingements and in adaption to the environment. This false self contrasts with the true self, which develops in an environment that adapts to the infant and allows him or her to discover and express his or her true impulses. (p. 366)

Contrary to the authentic self, the false self is a construct derived from social dictates of who or what society tells a person to be. According to von Hippel and Trivers (2011), the false self is a social construct of self-deception and interpersonal-deception, but one that has social advantages. This is achieved through:

dissociations of mental processes, including conscious versus unconscious memories, conscious versus unconscious attitudes, and automatic versus controlled processes. Self-deception has two advantages it eliminates cognitive overload and minimizes retribution. It also permits individuals to display more confidence than is warranted, which seems to have many social advantages. (p. 1)

Miller (2001) indicated that the false self arises as a result of needing to focus on the needs of narcissistic parents instead of the child's own needs, which results in the loss and the ability to access and express genuine feelings. Miller noted that the repression of sadness is the most critical, and results in the imprisonment of the true—authentic—self by the false self to create safety. This causes the loss of genuine vitality.

Tolle (1999) posited:

The basic mechanics of the unconscious state [is] identification with the mind, which creates a false self, the ego, as substitute for your true self rooted in Being. You become as a “branch cut off from the vine,” as Jesus puts it.

The ego's needs are endless. It feels vulnerable and threatened and so lives in a state of fear and want. Once you know how the basic dysfunction operates, there is no need to explore all its countless manifestations, no need to make it into a complex personal problem. The ego, of course, loves that. It is always seeking for something to attach itself to in order to uphold and strengthen its illusory sense of self, and it will readily attach itself to your problems. This is why, for so many people, a large part of their sense of self is intimately connected with their problems. Once this has happened, the last thing they want is to become free of them; that would mean loss of self. There can be a great deal of unconscious ego investment in pain and suffering.

So, once you recognize the root of unconsciousness as identification with the mind, which of course includes the emotions, you step out of it. You become *present*. When you are present, you can allow the mind to be as it is without getting entangled in it. The mind in itself is not dysfunctional. It is a wonderful tool. Dysfunction sets in when you seek yourself in it and mistake it for who you are. It then becomes the *egoic* mind and takes over your whole life. (pp. 39-40)

- **Fantasy**—In his *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, VandenBos (2007) provided two definitions of fantasy:

1. any of a range of mental experiences and processes marked by vivid imagery, intensity of emotion, and relaxation or absence of logic. These experiences may be conscious (thus, under the control of the fantasizing individual) or unconscious to varying degrees. Fantasizing is normal and common and often serves a healthy purpose of releasing tension, giving pleasure and amusement, or stimulating creativity. It can also be indicative of pathology, as delusional thinking or significant disconnection from reality. **2.** In psychoanalytic theories, a figment of the imagination: a mental image, night dream or daydream in which a person's conscious or unconscious wishes and impulses are filled. (p. 368)

- **Genius**—VandenBos (2007) provided a comprehensive account of genius as:

1. an extreme degree of creative or other abilities, usually demonstrated by exceptional achievement. **2.** a person who possesses this ability. British scientist Francis Galton (1822-1911), the first to investigate genius systematically, mistakenly based his conclusions on the genealogy of eminent individuals (1869) and concluded that genius was inherited. James M. CATTELL favored an environmental explanation for the emergence of genius. Lewis M. TERMAN originally applied the term to children with an IQ of 140 or more; however, although he followed up a large group of such children until they were over 50, he found few geniuses among them. Alfred ADLER attributed exceptional achievement to overcompensation for feelings of inferiority, while Sigmund FREUD held that geniuses are born with extraordinary ability but are basically conflicted and frustrated individuals who solve their emotional problems by expressing themselves in works of art or science, a theory that has not been widely accepted. In general, genius is seen to emerge as a joint product of heredity and environment and to require a great deal of very hard and dedicated work to achieve. (p. 407)

Meade's (2016) definition of genius is particularly fitting, as it addresses the essential aspect of genius referred to in this investigation. "The point is not that each person is a genius, but that each one born has some innate genius. Not simply that some are gifted

with genius; but that genius names the giftedness in each and every one” (p. 24).

- **Genius Myth**—Meade (2016) combined two independent terms to create the phrase “genius myth” to mean, “We are each genius born and mythic by nature” (p. 37). Further, he espouses on each individual definition to be:

Genius is the entirety of traits and talents that are already there in the soul of each person born. Some are born with prodigious gifts and talents; but each of us brings to life some inner gifts and our own genius way of being.

Myth is the inside story of the world we live in, and we are each and all mythic by nature. Each of us has some genius to bring to life and each life is a meaningful story trying to unfold from within. (p. 37)

- **Gifted**—The *APA Dictionary of Psychology* defines gifted as:

the state of possessing a great amount of natural ability, talent, or intelligence, which usually becomes evident at a very young age. Giftedness in intelligence is often categorized as an IQ (Intelligence Quotient) of two standard deviations above the mean or higher (130 for most IQ tests), obtained on an individually administered intelligence test. Many schools and service organizations now use a combination of attributes as the basis for assessing giftedness, including one or more of the following: high intellectual capacity, academic achievement, demonstrable real-world achievement, creativity, task commitment, proven talent leadership skills, and physical or athletic prowess. The combination of several attributes, or the prominence of one primary attribute, may be regarded as a threshold for the identification of giftedness. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 410)
- **Growing Down**—Hillman (1997) explained his theory of growing down as:

the human journey as spending our life to establish footing or *growing down* through our experiences that eventually leads us back to our original spiritual connection. As a symbol for human life and growth, [he] uses the Tree of the Kabbalah in Jewish and Christian mysticism, and turns the tree upside down, which aligns with previous ancient and current beliefs of spirituality. (p. 43)
- **Holy Grail**—The *Holy Grail* is said to be the cup from which Jesus drank at the Last Supper, and metaphorically is often considered the vessel of knowledge, plenty, and rebirth, and is often believed to give eternal life (Britannica, 2011; Miesel, 2004).
According to L. J. Henderson, (personal email, July 6, 2016):

The Holy Grail, as a metaphor, is all the more powerful because: (a) the cup from which Jesus drank at the Last Supper was a Carpenter's cup, not a patrician's cup. Carpenters are creators with immense imaginations able to combine the practical with the artistic; (b) drinking from the cup of imagination truly does lead to things eternal; failure to do so is a forfeiture of opportunity that can be eternally damning for both those blessed with imagination and those blessed by those blessed by our imaginings; (c) the search never concludes even when we are deluded into believing we have found it. The Grail is the doorway to eternity not the door.

- **Home**—in this investigation, home aligns with the authentic genius within, and *coming home* refers to returning to the soul-image, before the theft of the self takes place early in life, which socializes a child into a false self. However, the meaning I have placed on returning home involves my learning gained from observations of any Homeric-like odyssey or Campbell's (1990/2003) depiction of the hero's journey that occurs between the theft of the *acorn* and the return of the authentic self. The result is living with integrity and congruency with one's calling, potentials, and source-creator.
- **Human**—"relating to, or characteristic of people or human beings; a human being, especially a person as distinguished from another animal or (in science fiction) an alien" (*Oxford Living Dictionaries: English*, 2017, n.p.).
- **Humanity**—"compassion in one's personal relations with specific others, shown by kindness, nurturance, charity, and love" (VandenBos, 2007, p. 450).
- **Identity**—VandenBos (2007) provided an inclusive accounting for identity as:
 1. an individual's sense of self defined by (a) a set of physical and psychological characteristics that is not wholly shared with any other person and (b) a range of social and interpersonal affiliations (e.g., ethnicity) and social roles. Identity involves a sense of continuity: the feeling that one is the same person today that one was yesterday or last year (despite physical or other changes). Such a sense is derived from one's body sensations, one's body image, and the feeling that one's memories, purposes, value, and experiences belong to the self. Also called **personal identity**.
 2. in cognitive development, awareness that an object remains the same even though it may undergo many transformations. For example, a piece

of clay may be made to assume various forms but is still the same piece of clay. (p. 463)

- **Imagination**—“the faculty that produces ideas and images in the absence of direct sensory data, often by combining fragments of previous sensory experiences into new syntheses” (VandenBos, 2007, p. 468). Lecturer-psychology professor Roth (2008) posited:

Imagination is one of the most distinctive characteristics of human thought. The supreme powers of flexibility, supposition and inventiveness that are its hallmarks, whether in science, technology, business or the visual, literary and performing arts, are highly prized in contemporary societies. (p. 1)

- **Individuality**—is “the uniqueness of each individual’s personality” (VandenBos, 2007, p. 476).

- **Individuation**—VandenBos (2007) chronicled an in-depth description of individuation:

1. in psychology, the physiological, psychological, and sociocultural processes by which a person attains status as an individual human being and exerts him or herself as such in the world. 2. in the psychoanalytic theory of Carl JUNG, the gradual development of a unified, integrated personality that incorporates greater and greater amounts of the UNCONSCIOUS, both personal and collective, and resolves any conflicts that exists, such as those between introverted and extraverted tendencies. Also called **self-realization**. 3. a phase of development, occurring between the 18th and 36th months, in which infants become less dependent on their mothers and begin to satisfy their own wishes and fend for themselves. [postulated by Hungarian-born U.S. psychiatrist Margaret Schonberger Mahler (1897-1985)]. (p. 477)

- **IQ**—VandenBos (2007) provided a lengthy definition of IQ or intelligence quotient as being:

a standard measure of an individual’s intelligence level based on psychological tests. In the early years of intelligence testing, IQ was calculated by dividing the mental age by the chronological age and multiplying by 100 to produce a ratio IQ. This concept has now mostly been replaced by the deviation IQ, computed as a function of the discrepancy of an individual score from the mean (or average) score. The mean IQ is customarily 100, with slightly more than two thirds of all scores falling within plus or minus 15 points of the mean (usually one standard

deviation). More than 95% of all scores fall between 70 (two standard deviations below the mean) and 130 (two standard deviations above the mean).

Some tests yield more specific IQ scores, such as verbal IQ, which measures verbal intelligence, and performance IQ, which measures nonverbal intelligence. Discrepancies between the two can be used diagnostically to detect learning disabilities of specific cognitive deficiencies. Additional data is often derived from IQ tests, such as performance speed, freedom from distractibility, verbal comprehension, and perceptual organization indices.

There are critics who consider the concept of IQ (and other intelligence scales) to be flawed. They point out that the IQ test is more a measure of previously learned skills and knowledge than of underlying native ability and that many participants are simply not accustomed to sitting still and following orders (conditions that such test require), although they function well in the real world. Critics also refer to cases of misrepresentation of facts in the history of IQ research. Nevertheless, these problems seem to apply to the interpretation of IQ scores rather than the validity of the scores themselves. (p. 502)

- ***Joseph Campbell's 17-Stage Monomyth***—as described in his book *A Hero With a Thousand Faces*, Campbell (1949/2008) explained:

The Standard Path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation—initiation—return*, which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth.

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder (*x*): fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won (*y*): the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man (*z*). (p. 23)

A more comprehensive accounting of the adventure can be summarized as:

The mythological hero, setting forth from his common-day hut or castle, is lured, carried away, or else voluntarily proceeds, to the threshold of adventure. There he encounters a shadow presence that guards the passage. The hero may defeat or conciliate this power and go alive into the kingdom of the dark (brother-battle, dragon-battle; offering, charm), or be slain by the opponent and descend in death (dismemberment, crucifixion). Beyond the threshold, then, the hero journeys through a world of unfamiliar yet strangely intimate forces, some of which severely threaten him (tests), some of which give magical aid (helpers). When he arrives at the nadir of the mythological round, he undergoes a supreme ordeal and gains his reward. The triumph may be represented as the hero's sexual union with the goddess-mother of the world (sacred marriage), his recognition by the father-creator (father atonement), his own divinization (apotheosis), or again—if the powers have remained unfriendly to him—his theft of the boon he came to gain (bride-theft, fire-theft); intrinsically it is an expansion of consciousness and therewith of being (illumination, transfiguration, freedom). The final work is that

of the return. If the powers have blessed the hero, he now sets forth under their protection (emissary); if not, he flees and is pursued (transformation flight, obstacle flight). At the return threshold, the transcendental powers must remain behind; the hero re-emerges from the kingdom of dread (return, resurrection). The boon that he brings restores the world (elixir). (p. 211)

The three stages of the adventure are “one composite adventure the tales of a number of the world’s symbolic carriers of the destiny of Everyman” (p. 28). The first stage of *separation or departure* includes:

- 1 “The Call to Adventure,” or the signs of the vocation of the hero
- 2 “Refusal of the Call,” or the folly of the flight from the god
- 3 “Supernatural Aid,” the unsuspected assistance that comes to one who has undertaken his proper adventure
- 4 “The Crossing of the First Threshold”
- 5 “The Belly of the Whale,” or the passage into the realm of night

The second stage contains *the trials and victories of initiation*:

- 1 “The Road of Trials,” or the dangerous aspect of the gods
- 2 “The Meeting with the Goddess” (*Magna Mater*), or the bliss of infancy regained
- 3 “Woman as the Temptress,” the realization and agony of Oedipus
- 4 “Atonement with the Father”
- 5 “Apotheosis”
- 6 “The Ultimate Boon”

The third stage encompasses *the return and reintegration with society*:

- 1 “Refusal of the Return,” or the world denied.
- 2 “The Magic Flight,” or the escape of Prometheus
- 3 “Rescue from Without”
- 4 “The Crossing of the Return Threshold,” or the return to the world of common day
- 5 “Master of the Two Worlds”
- 6 “Freedom to Live,” the nature and function of the ultimate boon (pp. 28-29)

- **Maslow’s Motivational Hierarchy**—VandenBos (2007) defined as:

the hierarchy of human motives, or needs, as described by Abraham MASLOW, which he developed as a reaction against the determinism of the theories of Sigmund FREUD and B. F. SKINNER. PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS (air, water, food, sleep, sex, etc.) are at the base; followed by safety and security (the

SAFETY NEEDS); then love, affection, and gregariousness (the LOVE NEEDS); then prestige, competence, and power (the ESTEEM NEEDS); and, at the highest level, aesthetic needs, the need for knowing, and SELF-ACTUALIZATION (the METANEEDS). (p. 556)

- **Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation**—described by VandenBos (2007) as:

the humanistic view of motivation proposed by Abraham MASLOW, in which the higher human needs for understanding, aesthetic values, self-realization, and PEAK EXPERIENCES are emphasized. Maslow contrasted the METAMOTIVATION arising from such METANEEDS with the DEFICIENCY MOTIVATION arising from physical needs, insecurity, and alienation. (p. 556)

- **Meaning**—*The APA Dictionary* chronicles meaning to be:

the cognitive or emotional significance of a word or sequence of words, or of a concept, sign, or symbolic act. This may include a range of implied or associated ideas (connotative meaning) as well as a literal significance (DENOTATIVE MEANING). The study of meaning in language is SEMANTICS, and that of meaning in symbolic systems generally is SEMIOTICS. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 561)

- **Metaphor**—According to *Literary Devices* (2016), a metaphor is defined as:

a rhetorical figure of speech that compares two subjects without the use of “like” or “as.” Metaphor is often confused with simile, which compares two subjects by connecting them with “like” or “as” (for example: “She’s fit as a fiddle”). While a simile states that one thing is like another, a metaphor asserts that one thing *is* the other, or is a substitute for the other thing.

A metaphor asserts a correlation or resemblance between two things that are otherwise unrelated. The English word “metaphor” originates from the Greek *metaphora*, which means “to transfer” or “to carry over.” Indeed, a metaphor transfers meaning from one subject on to another so that the target subject can be understood in a new way. (www.literarydevice.com/metaphor/)

Examples of metaphors—a blanket of snow, a heart of gold, birds of a feather flog

together, cherry picking, cold feet, domino effect, elephant in the room, fork in the road,

Greek to me, Holy Grail, landslide victory, moral compass, nutshell, puppet government,

rolling in dough, three sheets in the wind, tunnel vision, and slippery slope.

(www.metaphors.com/)

- **Monomyth**—is a term coined by Joyce (1939) in his book, *Finnegan’s Wake*. Campbell (1949/2008) borrowed this idiosyncratic expression from Joyce and popularized it in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, which appears as a cyclical journey or quest undertaken by a mythical hero. *The Oxford Living Dictionaries: English* (2017) describes a monomyth as “an archetypal myth; a theme that underlies a number of superficially different myths” (n.p.)
- **Multiple-Intelligences Theory**—VandenBos (2007) explained multiple-intelligences theory as proposing, “the idea that intelligence is made up of eight distinct categories: linguistic, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, logical-mathematical, spatial, naturalist, intrapersonal, and interpersonal. [proposed in 1983 by U.S. psychologist Howard Gardner (1943-)]” (p. 600).
- **Muse**—The *Cambridge Dictionary* (2017) defines muse as an “imaginary force that gives you ideas and helps you to write, paint, or make music, or a physical representation of this force” (Muse, 2017).
- **Myth**—McAdams (1993), elucidated on myth as story:

Some stories gain wide acceptance for their ability to communicate a fundamental truth about life. These stories are incorporated into the culture of a particular group of people. Such stories may be deemed sacred, and we reserve for them the term *myth*. In religious societies myths are believed to *embody* primordial characteristics of reality, and thus are distinguished from legends or other less sacred forms of stories. Traditional myths concern transcendent beings, such as gods, spirits, and larger-than-life nobles and heroes like Oedipus. Myths incorporate archetypal symbols that remain viable today if our imaginations are active enough to make us conscious of, and curious about, our origins and our destiny. Myths capture a given society’s basic psychological, sociological, cosmological, and metaphysical truths. A society’s myths reflect the most important concerns of people. By giving narrative form to a diverse collection of elements, they help to preserve the society’s integrity and assure its continuity and health. (pp. 33-34)
- **Narrative**—VandenBos (2007) explained that narrative, when applied to therapy:

involves interpreting or writing life events into true but more life-enhancing... stories...[because]...individuals are primarily meaning-making beings who are the linguistic authors of their lives and who can re-author those stories by learning to de-construct them, by seeing patterns in their ways of interpreting life-events or problems, and by re-constructing problems or events in a more helpful light. (p. 609)

- *Nature of the Earth Experience*—is a detailed encapsulation of psychiatrist, Pecci’s (2017) work on the human experience:

The Earth experience is expected to contain a Personality Construct in order to have an experience. Many levels of perceptions are available through different identities in different cultures. In order to allow multiple energies to enter and raise the vibration and acuity of the senses you move through various constructs, each with a capability of blending 3-dimensional with non-3-dimensional energy.

There are default axioms, which each individual creates before proceeding out from the Creator cluster. A dimension and circumstance are chosen to bring an individual through events that will elicit certain emotions like the many petals of a flower. It expands who and what one is. These perceptions have purposes far beyond the mechanics of the human brain to understand what is occurring.

You came into limited circumstances in which you chose to experience negativity, in order to complete a particular energy pattern. This has gone on for multiple lifetimes. In the larger picture, this also has value. Take Judas—considered bad; Pontius Pilot—an icon of one without the courage to speak out what he knows to be right, a political coward; Ivan the Terrible—creating destruction and fear that was exhilarating; the Vandals—enjoying wonton destruction, going to the cutting edge; Atlantis, in which a crystal was improperly attuned, causing destruction. They all pushed energies in “detrimental” ways. The negative, however, is a balancing of the whole. Yet, the feeling of disharmony experienced in these individuals can result in guilt, remorse, fear, a feeling of separation and an acceptance of victimization.

One’s life purpose is to acknowledge the powerful negative experiences that are perceived as “bad.” Our society is based upon “good” and “bad.” The first step for release is to recognize that “bad” is simply an experience from a different perspective. Each time one comes back there is a greater understanding of who he is. This is a special time of Earth changes that will allow energy to move more rapidly to new levels of awareness.

The Universe does not have to forgive because no judgments are ever made. As you experience guilt and limitations you must realize that your chosen trajectory was for a valuable purpose. Now is the time for a releasing of negative self-judgments. This is a lifetime of rotation from extremely negative to extremely positive after accepting the wisdom of negative experiences. For example, when you refer to the upper chakras as a higher level than then the lower chakras you are seeing them as linear. The multidimensional counterpart of each level needs to be understood. There is no need to go back and correct anything. A few threads

are still keeping you down. You need to release the statements holding these threads. As a consciousness-raising project, try to chronicle the events of your life from the viewpoint of your Teachers. (p. 28)

- ***Neverland***—is a fictitious magical place constructed by author-playwright Barrie (1904) in his novel *Peter Pan*. Barrie described it as a place where dreams never die, no one ages, and life is one big daring adventure, where anything is possible (Elizabeth, 2007).

- ***Persona***—VandenBos (2007) described the use of persona as:

in the ANALYTIC PSYCHOLOGY of Carl JUNG, the public face an individual presents to the outside world, in contrast to more deeply rooted and authentic personality characteristics. The term is taken from the mask worn by actors in Roman antiquity. (p. 688)

- ***Personality***—VandenBos (2007) defined personality as:

the configuration of characteristics and behavior that comprises an individual's unique adjustment to life, including major traits, interests, drives, values, self-concept, abilities, and emotional patterns. Personality is generally viewed as a complex, dynamic integration or totality, shaped by many forces, including: hereditary and constitutional tendencies; physical maturation; early training; identification with significant individuals and groups; culturally conditioned values and roles; and critical experiences and relationships. Various theories explain the structure and development of personality in different ways but all agree that personality helps determine behavior. (p. 689)

- ***Personality Construct***—used here, the term *personality construct*, according to Pecci (2017), is:

the artificial personality that you have adopted and which now conceals your true identity. This personality construct makes your present life a journey of forgetfulness, a separation from your true Source of power and of love, and the taking on of characteristics that are, in many ways, the exact opposite of your true nature. It is the ultimate experience of becoming lost, with your energies so entangled within a rigid and artificial personality configuration that the final battle becomes one that is entirely within yourself. And each personality is as unique as one's fingerprints. (p. 1)

- ***Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy (PCEAT)***—According to N. Rogers (1993), Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy:

...is a therapy method that uses various arts: movement, drawing, painting, sculpting, music, writing, sound, and improvisation in a supportive setting to facilitate growth and healing. It involves a process of discovering ourselves through any art form that comes from emotional depth. It is *not* creating a “pretty” picture. It is *not* a dance ready for stage. It is *not* a poem written and rewritten to perfection. *Expressive arts* refer to using the emotional, intuitive aspects of ourselves in various media. It involves going into our inner realms to discover feeling and to express them through visual art, movement, sounds, writing, or drama. Humanistic expressive arts therapy differs from the analytic or medical model of art therapy, in which art is used to diagnose, analyze, or “treat” people. (pp. 1-2)

- ***Person-Centered Therapy***—VandenBos (2007) equated Person-Centered Therapy to Client-Centered Therapy, which he explained was developed by psychologist Carl ROGERS in the 1940s (p. 178), and it viewed individuals as having the capacity and desire for personal growth and change to self-actualization. This form of therapy was based on the belief that the client could heal him or herself with the therapist providing unconditional positive regard, acceptance, and trust to facilitate change. The therapist’s job was not directing a course of action, but rather, the therapist followed the client’s lead (C. Rogers, 1989; N. Rogers, 1993). N. Rogers (1993) merged her father’s therapy with Expressive Arts Therapy and coined her work as *The Creative Connection*, the interplay among movement, art, writing, and sound to producing Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy or (PCEAT).
- ***Personal Mythology***—is the collection of stories people weave together to make sense of their lives. Feinstein and Krippner (2008) explained:

Your personal mythology is a lens that gives meaning to every situation you meet and determines what you will do in it. Personal myths speak to the broad concerns of identity (Who am I?), direction (Where am I going?), and purpose (Why am I going there?). (p. 6)

These authors pointed out that “a personal myth is a constellation of beliefs, feelings, images and rules—operating largely outside of conscious awareness—that interprets

sensations, constructs new explanations, and directs behavior” (p. 5), which:

reveal themselves to be every bit as creative and imaginative as the most enterprising nighttime dream, setting the standards for success and failure, good and evil, heroism and villainy, while defining for you a unique role in it all. The source of your mythology is also the source of your motivations, of your imagination, of your emotions, of awareness itself. It is the point at which consciousness springs into being. (Feinstein & Krippner, 2008, p. 3)

- ***Peter Pan***—is one of the most beloved, and enchanting stories of all time that has been celebrated around the world for over 100 years. It is a fictional story written by Scottish playwright Barrie who romanticized the world of childhood and unveiled multiple themes some of which are “courage and fear, fantasy and reality, happiness and sadness, strength and weakness, and past and future” (Elizabeth, 2007, p. 1), knowledge and ignorance, and motherhood (SuperSummary, 2016). Symbolically, the story is strewn with copious underlying meanings.
- ***Phenomenology***—*The Oxford Living Dictionaries: English* (2017) defines phenomenology as an approach that concentrates on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience.
- ***Phenomenon***—According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2016), phenomenon is described:

in philosophy, [as] any object, fact, or occurrence perceived or observed. In general, phenomena are the objects of the senses (*e.g.*, sights and sounds) as contrasted with what is apprehended by the intellect. The Greek verb, *phainesthai* (“to seem,” or “to appear”) does not indicate whether the thing perceived is other than what it appears to be. Thus, in Aristotle’s ethics “the apparent good” is what seems good to a man, whether or not it really is good. Later Greek philosophers distinguished observed facts (phenomena) from theories devised to explain them. This usage, widely adopted in the 17th century by scientists who sought to explain phenomena of natural science (*e.g.*, magnetism), is still current.

In modern philosophy, the word is sometimes used for what is immediately apprehended by the senses before any judgment is made; it has, however, never become a technical term, many philosophers preferring sense-datum or some such expression—though they commonly accept the cognate

forms phenomenism and phenomenology. In English translations of the works of Immanuel Kant, “phenomenon” is often used to translate *Erscheinung* (“appearance”), Kant’s term for the immediate object of sensory intuition, the bare datum that becomes an object only when interpreted through the categories of substance and cause. Kant contrasted it to the noumenon, or thing-in-itself, to which the categories do not apply. (Phenomenon, 2016)

- **Philosophy**—*The APA Dictionary of Psychology* defines philosophy as:

the intellectual discipline that uses careful reasoned argument to elucidate fundamental questions, notably those concerning the nature of reality (METAPHYSICS), the nature of knowledge (EPISTEMOLOGY), and the nature of moral judgments (ETHICS). As such, it provides an intellectual foundation for many other disciplines, including psychology. Psychology as a scientific discipline has its roots in the epistemological preoccupations of 18th- and 19th-century philosophy and continues to be influenced by philosophical ideas. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 697)

- **Potential**—*The APA Dictionary of Psychology* defines potential as:

1. the capacity to develop or come into existence. **2.** Electric potential, measured in volts: a property of an electrical field equal to the energy needed to bring unit electric charge from infinity to a given point. The potential difference between two points is the driving force that causes a current to flow. Because messages in the nervous system are conveyed by electrochemical potentials, many kinds of potential are of importance in neuroscience and biological psychology, including the action potential, after-potential, graded potential, local potential, membrane potential, post synaptic potential, and resting potential. **3.** in philosophy, see ACTUAL. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 717)

- **Psyche**—VandenBos (2007) described psyche in *The APA Dictionary of Psychology* as a term in psychology involving:

the mind in its totality, as distinguished from the physical organism. The term also refers to the soul or the very essence of life and derives from Greek mythology, in which Psyche is a personification of the soul in the form of a beautiful girl who, having lost her divine lover, Eros, is eventually reunited with him and made immortal. (p. 747)

- **Psychology**—VandenBos (2007) renders an in-depth definition of psychology as:

1. the study of the mind and behavior. Historically, psychology was an area of philosophy (see EPISTEMOLOGY). It is now a diverse scientific discipline comprising several major branches of research (e.g., experimental psychology, biological psychology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology,

personality, and social psychology), as well as several subareas of research and applied psychology (e.g., clinical psychology, industrial/organizational psychology, school and educational psychology, human factors, health psychology, neuropsychology, cross-cultural psychology). Research in psychology involves observation, experimentation, testing, and analysis to explore the biological, cognitive, emotional, personal, and social processes or stimuli underlying human and animal behavior. The practice of psychology involves the use of psychological knowledge for any of several purposes: to understand and treat mental, emotional, physical, and social dysfunction; to understand and enhance behavior in various settings of human activity (e.g., school, workplace, courtroom, sports arena, battlefield, etc.); and to improve machine and building design for human use. **2.** The supposed collection of behaviors, traits, attitudes, and so forth that characterize an individual or a group (e.g., the psychology of women). (pp. 753-754)

- **Psychotherapy**—*The APA Dictionary of Psychology* defines psychotherapy as:

any psychological service provided by a trained professional that primarily uses forms of communication and interaction to assess, diagnose, and treat dysfunctional emotional reactions, ways of thinking, and behavior patterns of an individual, family (see FAMILY THERAPY), or group (see GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY). There are many types of psychotherapy, but generally they fall into four major categories: psychodynamic (e.g., PSYCHOANALYSIS; CLIENT-CENTERED THERAPY), cognitive-behavioral (see BEHAVIOR THERAPY; COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY; COGNITIVE THERAPY), humanistic (e.g., EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOTHERAPY), and INTEGRATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY. The **psychotherapist** is an individual who has been professionally trained and licensed (in the United States by a state board) to treat mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders by psychological means. He or she may be a clinical psychologist (see CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY), PSYCHIATRIST, counselor (see COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY), SOCIAL WORKER, or psychiatric nurse. ALSO CALLED **therapy**; **talk therapy**. (p. 757)
- **Regression Therapy**—According to Lucas (1993b), “While a patient is in an altered state, his recovery of past lives constantly touches prenatal and birth experiences, childhood traumas, death and the interlife, and attaching entities” (p. xvii). During this process, the client can “uncover a panorama of emotional threads and patterns that ordinarily would remain too far under the surface of consciousness” (p. 89). Klimo (1992) said, “through this technique a client can be helped to experience, re-live, own,

make sense of, resolve, dispel, integrate, or transmute the cognitive-emotional and psychoenergetic fields involved” (p. xvi).

- **Schema**—VandenBos (2007) explained the meaning of schema by providing three definitions:

1. a collection of basic knowledge about a concept or entity that serves as a guide to perception, interpretation, imagination, or problem solving. For example, the schema “dorm room” suggests that a bed and desk are probably part of the scene, that a microwave oven might or might not be, and that expensive Persian rugs probably will not be. Also called **cognitive schema**.
2. an outlook or assumption that an individual has of the self, others, or the world that endures despite objective reality. For example, “I am a damaged person” and “Anyone I trust will eventually hurt me” are negative schemas that may result from actual or imagined abandonment in early childhood. A goal of treatment, particularly stressed in COGNITIVE THERAPY, is to help the client to develop more realistic, present-oriented schemas to replace those developed during childhood or through traumatic experiences.
3. in social psychology, a cognitive structure representing a person’s knowledge about some entity or situation, including its qualities and the relationships between these. Schemas are usually ABSTRACTIONS and therefore simplify a person’s world. In 1932 psychologist Frederic Bartlett (1886-1969) proposed that past experiences are stored in memory as schemas; impressions of other people are also thought to be organized in this way. (pp. 814-815)

- **Self**—*The APA Dictionary of Psychology* defines self as:

the totality of the individual, consisting of all characteristic attributes, conscious and unconscious, mental and physical. Apart from its basic reference to personal identity, being, and experience, the term’s use in psychology is extremely wide-ranging and lacks uniformity. According to William JAMES, self can refer either to the person as the target of appraisal (i.e., one introspectively evaluates how one is doing) or to the person as the source of AGENCY (i.e., one attributes the source of regulation of perception, thought, and behavior to one’s body or mind). Carl JUNG maintained that the Self (his capitalization) gradually develops by a process of INDIVIDUATION, which is not complete until late maturity is reached. Alfred ADLER identified the self with the individual’s LIFESTYLE, the manner in which he or she seeks fulfillment. German born U.S. psychoanalyst Karen Horney, held that one’s REAL SELF, as opposed to one’s idealized self-image consists of one’s unique capacities for growth and development. Gordon ALLPORT substituted the word PROPRIUM for self, and conceived of it as the essence of the individual, consisting of a gradually developing body sense, IDENTITY, self-estimate, and set of personal values, attitudes, and intentions. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 827)

- ***Self-Actualization***—Using Maslow’s (1968) work, VandenBos (2007) explained self-actualization as being:

the realization of that of which one is capable. According to Abraham MASLOW, it is the “full use and exploitation of talent, capacities, potentialities” such that the individual develops to maximum self-realization, ideally integrating physical, social, intellectual, and emotional needs. The process of striving toward full potential is fundamental according to Maslow; however, he posited that self-actualization can only be fully realized if the basic needs of physical survival, safety, love and belongingness, and esteem are fulfilled. (p. 827)

Also, the word self-realization is often interchangeable with self-actualization.

- ***Self-Concept***—*The APA Dictionary of Psychology* identifies self-concept as:

one’s conception and evaluation of oneself, including psychological and physical characteristics, qualities, and skills. Self-concepts contribute to the individual’s sense of identity over time. The conscious representation of self-concept is dependent in part on unconscious schematization of the self. Although, self-concepts are usually available to some degree of the consciousness, they may be inhibited from representation yet still influence judgment, mood, and behavior patterns. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 828)

- ***Self-Efficacy***—an individual’s capacity to act effectively to bring about desired results, especially as perceived by the individual (VandenBos, 2007, pp. 829-830).
- ***Seven Deadly Sins***—In Christian literature dating back to medieval times, the Seven Deadly Sins that have been well known since those times are included here with explanations: (a) envy—entails the desire to possess someone, something, or to have an experience that someone else possesses; (b) gluttony—refers to the excessive or ongoing consumption of food and drink; (c) greed or avarice—has to do with an excessive seeking of material possessions; (d) lust—involves an out-of-control passion or longing, often related to sexual desires; (e) pride—is related to an excessive elevation of one’s self above others without regard to the effect on others; (f) sloth—is a description of laziness—not needed or called for rest—that often results in failure to act and utilize

one's talents; and finally, (g) wrath—is expressed by uncontrollable feelings of anger and hate toward others or about circumstances (Schimmel, 1997).

- **Shaman**—According to Magee (2005), in *Peruvian Shamanism: The Pachakuti Mesa*:

Initially, the term shaman was used solely to describe indigenous, mystic ceremonialists observed by anthropologists in the cultures of Siberia and Central Asia. The term shaman is Russian, but derives from the Tungusic term *saman*, which has been said to mean, “one who knows.” In addition, these individuals are commonly linked to indigenous healing practices that involve some form of ecstatic trance, which acts as a catalyst for mediation between the physical and spiritual realms. (p. 2)

Some cultural anthropologists propose that the existence of shaman is strongly evidenced since the dawn of humankind that Cowen (1997) mentioned in his book, *Pocket Guide to Shamanism*:

Prehistoric rock art found in caves and on cliffs in many parts of the world suggests that our ancestors were working with shamanic themes perhaps 40,000 years ago, judging by the wealth of animal drawings and pictures of humans either dancing or lying in trance or ecstatic states, wearing bird or animal masks, and in some mysterious sense interacting with the power that emanates from the animals. (p. 5)

- **Social Identity**—VandenBos (2007) defined social identity as:

the personal qualities that one claims and displays to others so consistently that they are considered part of one's essential, stable self. This public persona may be an accurate indicator of the private, personal self, but it may also be a deliberately contrived image. (p. 865)

- **Social Influence**—VandenBos (2007) provided two definitions of social influence. These included: “**1.** any change in an individual's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors caused by other people, who may be actually present, imagined, expected, or only implied. **2.** those interpersonal processes that can cause individuals to change their thoughts, feelings, or behaviors” (p. 865).
- **Social Inhibition**—the restraint placed on an individual's expression of her or his

feelings, attitudes, motives, and so forth by the belief that others could learn of this behavior and disapprove of it (VandenBos, 2007, p. 865).

- **Social Norms**—*The APA Dictionary of Psychology* states that social norms include two qualifiers:

socially determined consensual standards that indicate (a) what behaviors are considered typical in a given context and (b) what behaviors are considered proper in the context. Whether implicitly or explicitly, these norms not only prescribe the socially appropriate way to respond in the situation (the “normal” course of action) but also proscribe actions that should be avoided if possible. Unlike statistical norms, social norms of both types include an evaluative quality such that those who do not comply cannot provide an acceptable explanation for their violations are evaluated negatively. Social norms apply across groups and social settings, whereas group norms are specific to a particular group. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 867)

- **Social Self**—According to VandenBos (2007), the social-self entails:

1. the aspects of the self that are important to or are influenced by social relations.
2. a person’s characteristic behavior in social situations. 3. The façade that an individual may exhibit when in contact with other people, as contrasted with his or her real self. (p. 869)

- **Soul**—*The APA Dictionary of Psychology* defines the word *soul* as:

the nonphysical aspect of a human being, considered responsible for the functions of mind and individual personality and often thought to live on after the death of the physical body. The English word corresponds to the Greek *psyche*, often also translated as “mind,” and Latin *anima*, usually translated as “spirit.” The concept of the soul was present in early Greek thinking, and has been an important feature of many philosophical systems and most religions. Some traditional areas of debate have included whether the soul is material or immaterial, whether animals, plants, or seemingly inert natural objects have souls, and whether the soul is individual, allowing the personality to persist after death, or whether it is a reflection of a universal “cosmic” soul. Because the existence of the soul has resisted empirical verification, science has generally ignored the concept, while those who adhere to materialism, positivism, or reductionism reject it absolutely. Despite this, the term survives in the general language to mean the deepest center of a person’s identity and the seat of his or her most important moral, emotional, and aesthetic experiences. (VandenBos, 2007, p. 876)

- **Soul’s Code**—In this work, this term is taken from Hillman’s (1997) book, *The Soul’s*

Code: In Search of Character and Calling. It describes the *acorn theory* of the soul, previously listed. Hillman stated that we incarnate into this life as preordained, encoded, or seeded beings bearing a unique pattern we are to live out like an acorn that bears a seeded pattern to become an oak tree:

The innate image of your fate holds all in the co-presence, of today, yesterday, and tomorrow. Your person is not a process of a development. You *are* that essential image that develops, if it does. As Picasso, said, “I don’t develop; I am.” (p. 7)

- ***Spirit***—VandenBos (2007) included seven definitions of the word *Spirit* in his *APA*

Dictionary of Psychology:

1. the nonphysical part of a person: the mental, moral, and emotional characteristics that make up the core of someone’s identity. 2. a vital force seen as animating the bodies of living creatures, sometimes identified with the soul and seen surviving death. 3. an immaterial being, possessed of some permanence, to which are ascribed many or most of the activities of a living person. 4. a supernatural being, such as a ghost or a deity. 5. in idealist philosophies, a universal mind or idea seen as a fundamental reality and a moving force of events in the world. 6. the mood, temper, or disposition that temporarily or permanently characterizes a person. 7. loyalty or morale. (p. 884)

- ***Spiritual Awakening***—According to Tolles (2010), spiritual awakening implies:

the abiding re-connection with reality. It's reconnecting you and the divine, which are ultimately one and the same. From that connection, your true self arises to heal old wounds, moves you into alignment with the Divine, and shifts you towards your truest way of expressing yourself and living your life.

Some of the things that a spiritual awakening reveals to us—along with the truth—are our self-imposed limitations. A spiritual awakening is felt throughout your body, heart, mind, and soul, but no sooner has that erupted then you are forced to see how limited you have been in so many regards. That bright light shining in the inner most depths of us asks us a potent question: "Now that we know the truth, will we clean up our home or will we try to ignore our illusions, pain, and misconceptions?" (p. 1)

- ***Story***—*The Oxford Living Dictionaries: English* (2017) defines story as being:

an account of imaginary or real people and events told for entertainment; a plot or story line in novel; a situation viewed in terms of the information known about it or its similarity to another; the facts about the present situation. (n.p.)

Specifically emphasized in this work is our life story, as we are history in the making.

According to Khuon (2014), several sources explain:

Storytelling may seem like an old-fashioned tool, today—and it is. That’s exactly what makes it so powerful. Life happens in the narratives we tell one another. A story can go where quantitative analysis is denied admission: our hearts. Data can persuade people, but it doesn’t inspire them to act; to do that, you need to wrap your vision in a story that fires the imagination and stirs the soul. (para. 11)

- **Storytelling**—Kaye (1979), discussed storytelling, which is a key component of this work, when she described and defined it in the following statement:

Storytelling was introduced into library programs in the 1890s and by the late 1920s was a common activity in the public library. But, for thousands of years before that, storytelling played an essential role in the cultural process through which people amused, taught, and communicated with each other. Anne Pellowski has prepared a thorough and scholarly examination of the nature of storytelling—its history, function, and meaning. Drawing from various interpretations of the art, she offers this definition of storytelling: “The art or craft of narration of stories in verse and/or prose, as performed or led by one person before a live audience; the stories narrated may be spoken, chanted or sung, with or without musical, pictorial, and/or accompaniment, and may be learned from oral, printed, or mechanically recorded sources; one of its purpose must be entertainment” (p. 15). (pp. 64-65)

The work is international in scope, covering storytelling patterns and formats throughout the world and the history of civilization. The section on types of storytelling covers bardic; folk; religious; theatrical; library and institutional; and camp, park, and playground. (p. 65)

- **The Holy Grail of the Unconscious**—refers to the 100-year-old book, *Liber Novus*, (Latin), *The Red Book*, by Jung (as cited in Baroff, 2016a, 2016b; Kyburz, Peck, & Shamdasani, 2009), which tells how Jung found himself in midlife crisis as a lost *soul*. His realization prompted an inner quest for what has been called The Holy Grail to heal his inner child and reengage his creative proclivity. This account of the quest is an important part of this investigation.
- **The Wheel**—In *Quick & Insightful Personality Profiling Projective Techniques*, Pecci

and Batchelder (2008) elucidated on the development in the 70s of a one-minute projective tool. The Wheel in its use in psychotherapy is a:

method guaranteed that every new patient [Pecci] interviewed would make a commitment to a treatment plan. I have found this tool technique to be an instant portrait of its author in terms of energy level, current tolerance for stress, openness to new ideas, and their general balance between intellectual and emotional functioning. As such, it represents the attempt of the psyche to achieve order within diversity and conflict. It reveals a sense of self in context to the external environment in one instant in time.

The outer rim represents orientation in space and time—the presenting persona. The spokes reveal the balance or flow of emotional energy—the life force. And the center (hub) is the core of the psyche; it determines the nature of the entire structure.

It is easy to develop rapid rapport with patients by having them participate in the examination and understanding their wheels. Engaging them in explaining unusual aspects of their wheel with an intellectual sense of detachment results in raising their curiosity that overcomes any resistance, especially when it is explained that they have the power to change anything they might dislike that is not serving them.

Suggestions can often be made from an examination of their wheel that could bring dramatic positive change in their life, depending upon their willingness to change a negative belief system, release the past through forgiveness, and accept the reality of their Essence Self.

The “One-Minute Wheel” attempts to capture the “naked self” under the control of the ego. It is a spontaneous exercise designed to minimize conscious elaborations. (p. 7)

- **Transcendence**—VandenBos (2007) explained that transcendence:

in metaphysics and in the study of consciousness, [is] a state of existence or perception that exceeds normal understanding or experience—and is not definable in terms of those perspectives. The term implies states that go beyond the physical world and the nature of material existence. (p. 951)

- **Transcendent Self**—is a term that refers to one who has reached the highest level of self-actualization and transcendence of the self to guide the progress of evolution.

Csikszentmihalyi (1994) explained:

To help guide the progress of evolution, it is not sufficient for a person to enjoy merely any kind of life, but a life that increases order instead of disorder. To contribute to greater harmony, a person’s consciousness has to become complex. Complexity of consciousness is not a function of only intelligence or knowledge,

and is not just a cognitive trait—it includes a person’s feelings and actions as well. It involves becoming aware of and in control of one’s *unique* potentials, and being able to create harmony between goals and desires, sensations and experiences, both for oneself and for others. (p. 207)

- ***Transformational Learning Theory***—Transformational learning was introduced by Mezirow (1981) as a change process that transforms frames of reference (Imel, 1998).

His theory defines frames of references as “the structures of assumptions through which we understand our experiences. They selectively shape and delimit expectations, perceptions, cognition, and feelings” (p. 5). According to this view, “actions and behaviors will be changed based on changed perspective” (Cranton, 1994):

Several key elements of transformational learning process are cited frequently in literature. Initially, a disorienting dilemma, or “an activating event that typically exposes a discrepancy between what a person has always assumed to be true and what has been experienced, heard or read” (Cranton, 2002, p. 66) and may contribute to a readiness for change (Taylor, 2000). Cranton (2002) describes this as a “catalyst for transformation” (p. 66). It could be a single event or a series of events that occur over a much longer period in “an accretion of transformation in points of view” (p. 730).

- ***Universal***—*The Oxford Living Dictionaries: English* (2017) depicts universal to mean: relating to or done by all people or things in the world or in a particular group; applicable to all cases. (n.p.)

- ***Universalism***—As VandenBos (2007) explained universalism is:

the position that certain aspects of the human mind, human behavior, and human morality are universal and essential and are, therefore, to be found in all cultures and historical periods. Universalism is a form of ESSENTIALISM and is opposed to RELATIVISM. (p. 969)

- ***Vignette***—is a brief evocative description, account, or episode (*Oxford Living Dictionaries: English*, 2017).

- ***Waking Dream Therapy***—Baroff (2009) cited the work of Epstein (1992) who explained:

The method of this treatment technique uses three fundamental elements: (1) a waking dream that includes guided exercises; (2) life plan; and (3) reversing. When used in combination, these elements can produce lasting transformations of behavior in thinking and feeling in a relatively brief period of time, when compared to protracted conventional psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. Moreover, Waking Dream Therapy offers the individual the possibility of living a fulfilling life. At a therapy session, the individual is instructed to select the image or element of his or dream that is most personally “significant, compelling, or striking, and this element becomes the image that begins waking dream exploration.” (p. 62)

Summary of the First Chapter

This chapter distinguished the critical key components of this investigation: the overview, statement of problem, statement of purpose, and research questions. It underscored each constituent while emphasizing the importance of how well these components align and complement each other. This chapter also illustrated other elements that include: research approach, research assumption, rational and significance, authentication of the researcher, and definitions of key concepts.

The next chapter provides a brief but thorough literature review that entails my relationship to literature and establishes the significance of the review of literature.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The unexamined life is not worth living.
(Socrates, as cited in Plato's *Apology*)

Introduction: A Personal Encounter—Form Unfolding

I open this chapter with a citation from Socrates, which underscores the scope of this investigation, and I follow with the image *Down the Rabbit Hole* (see figure 1) as an example of my daimōn's directives guiding my course of study. Considering my interest in creativity as it relates to imagination, this is not a traditional dissertation because it includes a multitude of drawings, paintings, and images used intentionally to encapsulate a message contained herein.



Figure 1. *Down the Rabbit Hole*. (Lewis Carroll's, *Alice in Wonderland*. Internet, 2017).

The undertaking of this project has not come lightly, like Kazantzakis (as cited in Miller & Cook-Greuter, 2000) stated, “the more I wrote the more deeply I felt that in writing I was struggling, not for beauty, but for deliverance” (p. 31). As I searched for words that would accurately portray the labyrinth of human complexities of *The Hero's Journey* (Campbell, 1990/2003), I also prayed for the courage to reveal my personal story of struggle, hope,

and longing. As I engaged in this project, I believed the answers I sought about the riddle of why my life matters would be revealed to me, and I would open more fully to who I truly am. As I witnessed the formulation of this chapter markedly take form and become increasingly and undeniably clear, I observed in myself a transformation underway. What customarily occurs in a dream-like state was happening to me in real time, as thoughts, conversations, and materials began crystalizing and converging as they moved toward me—or perhaps more accurately—I moved toward them. As in the fairy tale, *Alice in Wonderland*, when the rabbit suddenly appeared out of nowhere, like Alice, I became enthralled by the chase of entering into new areas of fascination I had not experienced before. I toppled deeper and further down the *rabbit hole* towards new dimensions of enchantment brimming with awe, magic, and wonder, a cornucopia of ancillary information I could expound upon indefinitely.

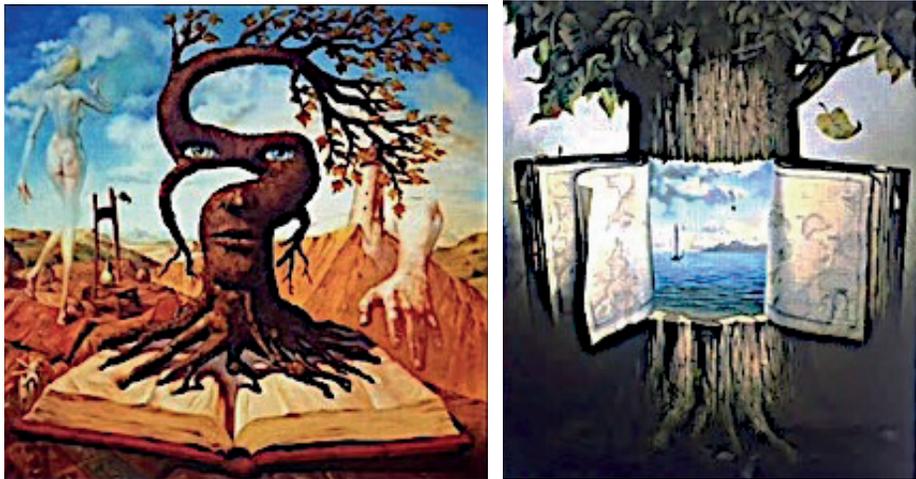


Figure 2. Autumn Story. (Internet, 2017). *Figure 3. The Book of Wander.* (Kush, 2002, p. 19). Reading opens the portals of imagination and transports the dreamer to destinations unknown.

Landscape of the Literature

Sagan (1980), a highly respected cosmologist and author whose life was dedicated to educating the public in the science of the cosmos stated:

What an astonishing thing a book is. It's a flat object made from a tree with flexible parts:

on which are imprinted lots of funny dark squiggles. But one glance at it and you're inside the mind of another person, maybe somebody dead for thousands of years. Across the millennia, an author is speaking clearly and silently inside your head, directly to you. Writing is perhaps the greatest of human inventions, binding together people who never knew each other, citizens of distant epochs. Books break the shackles of time. A book is proof that humans are capable of working magic. (n.p.)

In this literature review, I ventured into the ideology of depth psychology, which Aizenstat (as cited in Pacifica Institute, 2016) defined as “the capacity to explore what lives at the depth of our experience...[that embodies human imagination]...the source, from which stories come from which inspiration arises. The place of mythology” (<https://www.pacifica.edu/about-pacifica/what-is-depth-psychology>). In this work, I have presented the tenets of philosophy that embrace the love of wisdom and understanding that examine the most fundamental truths of life (Morris, 1999). I have chosen this investigation to explore the underpinnings of my *character* or *inner genius* that compels me toward uncovering my unique and unparalleled place in the universe. This study was an intimate pilgrimage to seek answers to the most salient riddles of human existence, which is, “Who am I, and why am I here?” The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the lifelong quest of the gifted human and the social consequence of imagination and story. The rationale and significance of this study was of monumental importance because the quality of human lives often suffers, personally and universally, when people remain disconnected from experiencing their calling and purpose in life. Therefore, this personal and intimate examination was also a universal investigation to find a solution for all people. Importantly, this inquiry endeavored to answer the following research questions that guided this study to fulfill the stated purpose. While seeking to unravel the answers of the human riddle, I also directed my attention to another question: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? From this question, three additional questions arose, which were the focus of the literature review: (a) How has the use of this knowledge affected my

understanding of the evolution of the human story? (b) What evidence is there to identify when our species developed imagination? and (c) Why is imagination undervalued?

In researching these questions, four sub-questions emerged, which warranted further investigation: (a) How is a quest or calling revealed? (b) Why is the phenomenon of Neverland essential to human well-being? (c) How do social consequences impede the expression of imagination and the process of the original human story? and (d) What does it mean to be *gifted*? Of most importance, I set out to examine and resolve a moral conundrum related to incongruence, a breach between my soul and socialized identity, to realize sustained harmony. This spiritual void I have referred to in this work is what I have identified as *soul-sickness* that infects not only my intrinsic nature, but also permeates human life, prevails currently, and appears to be prevalent worldwide. I based my subjective observation on solid research to conclude “what is lost in so many lives, and what must be recovered, [is] a sense of personal calling, that there is a reason I am alive” (Hillman, 1997, p. 4). In this context, I submit, we have been robbed of our true biography, “the destiny written in the acorn” (Hillman, 1997, p. 5). This theft is at the expense of planetary societies that both stifle and ignore this inner need to self-actualize as in Maslow’s (as cited in VandenBos, 2007, p. 556) Motivational Hierarchy, which enforces social mandates that compel us to seek asylum in therapy. If we follow those mandates, we work to understand two important questions that surfaced for Hillman: “How do I put together into a coherent image the pieces of my life? ...[and]...How do I find the basic plot of my story?” (pp. 4-5). Beckwith (2012) wrote, “Throughout our formative years and into adulthood we are given prescriptions, admonitions, exhortations, and instructions for doing our life, yet little or nothing about becoming our authentic self and living our life purpose” (p. 1).

Most psychologies—such as biological or developmental—trim a life to fit the frame of human developmental stages of infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, midlife crises, aging, and death. By creating this predetermined frame, they foretell the human story before the individual actually lives those experiences, and therefore, it represses our fundamental way of being, which in turn influences our relationship to a socialized world. Moreover, it omits the rich details of our lives, which successively leads to our spiritual awakening of our *destiny* or *calling*, that is the underlying reason many of us have chosen to take up this journey (Hillman, 1997; Houston, 1996; May, 1975; Meade, 2016). My investigation and sharing of it in this dissertation has been an attempt to remedy this misperception; I wanted to *unshell* this sleight of hand, and publicly challenge universal social injustices of human conditioned conformity that have seduced and censored the psyche and have cast aside our intrinsic wisdom by cultural mandates that have shaped our personal outlook, whereby, masking our individuality with a false sense of identity (Fromm, 1995; Moore, 2001; Robinson, 2009). This story is a fervent attempt to inform and encourage those who are finding their way to not give up, “The journey is in yourself. . . . Without inner movement, it is impossible to bring forth anything” (Neville, 1954, p. 70). As the central character in the film *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade* discovered, the path is one that is invisible, and will require courage and perseverance to keep following it. Trust that divine providence aligns your underfoot and guides your steps along the way. The search for the *true* Grail is within you, and brings life to your seeded treasure and your only aim. It is my hope that my “Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination,” and the three remedies of Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy serve to impassion you in your search to experience wholeness. In this context, I have provided a map that outlines the human journey and introduces the various components that

support my proposition. The broader areas of discussion include (a) the call and search for identity, (b) life in Neverland, (c) the social consequences of imagination and story, (d) imagination, (e) story as biography and narrative, and (f) giftedness.

I remind you that this work reflects my particular odyssey, unique only to me. There are those who are aware of this search for meaningful wholeness and are in earnest pursuit to discover the answers; however, for others, the value of searching for or even attaining such a call remains an imperceptible goal. This is the value of my story for it contains a story that is both generic and specific in path.

The information contained within this chapter was taken from my original writings of two unpublished essays: *Adventures in Neverland: The Social Consequences of Imagination* and *Story of Children Engaged, and In Search of Neverland: The Social Consequences of Imagination and Story of Gifted Adults Lost*. These essays were outgrowths of my personal mythology, experiences, and spiritual awakenings as a truth-seeker's adaptation to a higher calling. From the outset, I have used metaphorical language and images to engage your imagination. The term *acorn* readily appears as the primary symbol that uses interchangeable terms, such as potential, soul's code, soul's-image, calling, destiny, genius, *daimōn*, inner muse, character, and fate, according to the context that sets out to ground your understanding of the invisible world of spirit as used in this investigation (Hillman, 1997; Meade, 2016). Other terms of interest use interchangeable words according to the context: (a) *biography* pertains to personal mythology and in this work implies an individual's history in the making (Feinstein & Krippner, 2008; Hillman, 1997; Houston, 1996; Meade, 2016); (b) *daimōn* indicates guardian angel and genius (Feinstein & Krippner, 2008; Hillman, 1997; Hollis, 2000; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2004; Richards, 1989); (c) *element* signifies potentials, gifts, and talents (Robinson, 2009); (d) *gifted*

human makes reference to *imaginaires*, children and adults (Gottschall, 2012; Harding, 2012; Hill, 2007; Hubbard, 2012; Jacobsen, 1999; Liu and Noppe-Brandon, 2009; Robinson, 2009; Roth, 2008); (e) *imagination* in this work is the container for creativity, innovation, counterfactual thinking, fantasy, and make-believe (Byrne, 2007; Egan, 2011; Liu & Noppe-Brandon, 2009; Osborn, 1963; Robinson, 2009; Roth, 2008); (f) *myth* embodies archetype and the narrative story of a given society (Campbell, 1990/2003; Cobb, 1992; Feinstein & Krippner, 2008; Hillman, 1997; Hollis, 2002; Houston, 1993, 1996, 1998; McAdams, 1993; Meade, 2016); (g) *Neverland*, in this work, is viewed as a metaphor for imagination and possibility (Gottschall, 2012); (h) *story* is represented as biography, fairy tale, fantasy, myth, and narrative (Bettelheim, 1975/2010; Boyd, 2009; Cron, 2012; Gottschall, 2012; Narrative Story, 2015; Pearson, 1998; Story, 2015; von Franz, 1996); (i) *transcender* indicates self-actualized Renaissance wo/man, universal/cosmic/leader, luminary, visionary, and change agent (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994).

Hillman's (1997) *acorn theory* and Meade's (2016) *genius myth* are two concepts, which are defined fairly early in this chapter, followed by Campbell's (1990/2003) *hero's journey* appearing shortly after. To develop this study, it was imperative to complete an analytical review of current literature, which was underway throughout the data collection, data analysis, and synthesis stages of the study. To perform this selected literature review, I used various educational sources that included books, Internet resources, dissertations, professional journals, periodicals, and articles.

Summary of the Introduction of Chapter 2

This chapter's focus establishes in rich detail the critical key components that comprise the title of this dissertation—the search of The Holy Grail, living in Neverland, the social consequences of imagination and story, and the gifted human. As the researcher, participant, and

author, I examined the universal ethical conundrum the majority of human beings confront: (a) to live life congruently, as our soul's code preordained us to live, or (b) to live life by social mandates that tell us who are and what we should do.

Making Sense of Our Calling Into Life

Explanations of the Beginning

This section is teeming with valuable information intended to establish a rudimentary understanding of what it is to experience having a calling, and the search to find it. I open this section of the investigation with the first auxiliary question, “How is a quest or calling revealed?” In this context, I have drawn from a wealth of researchers—retired psychiatrist-spiritual healer, and author, Pecci (2016), my personal experiences as a truth-seeker and other contributors, Jungian psychologist and author, Hillman (1997), mythologist-storyteller, author, Meade (2016), and acclaimed mythologist, author-speaker, Campbell (1990/2003; 1949/2008). My approach to this section is purposeful. I have specifically chosen to introduce each scholar's philosophical position individually because I am convinced each perspective conjoins a consensus, which fortifies the foundation of our true identity before we incarnate into this 3rd dimension and who we are once we enter into this world. Before we begin, I introduce a quote by DeAngelis (2015) that best expresses my intention:

As we embark on this journey together, I [sincerely] invite you to find the courage to go deep—deep into the places this [dissertation] takes you inside of yourself, deep into the wisdom offerings I've gathered here for you, deep into the hidden sanctuaries of grace and hidden shrines of truth buried in your own heart. (p. xx)



Figure 4. Angelic Magnificence. (Internet, 2017). Nature loves a mystery and each soul born is a mystery waiting to be revealed, a meaningful story waiting to unfold (Meade, 2016, p. 13).

Incarnation. According to Wordsworth, (1807/1982) in his ode, *Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*, “Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting: The Soul that rises with us, our life’s Star, hath had elsewhere its settings, and cometh from afar” (p. 23).

The call is a story of transition of original Source energy well beyond the outside 3rd dimensional space-time continuum, and the embodiment of physical matter (Pecci, 2016). Pecci, with whom I have had the pleasure of working in Regression Therapy, shared his personal collection about the human journey he has accumulated over the past 20 years known as *The Nature of the Earth Experience*, which begins here as an encapsulation:

Mankind comes to the Earth as individuated beings, and at that time they are separated from the truth of who they are and consequently have an experience of a false identity, which inevitably leads to experiencing great discomfort. However, a way has been left open toward a reversal of this experience and a return to a clear picture of one’s original identity.

Each life is a page in a very large book. Yet, each page is carefully planned. It is a journey of forgetfulness, of loss of identity and a belief in separation that allows experiences from an infinite variety of perspectives interwoven into complex plots and counterplots that create the myths, which cast each individual into a particular role within the archetypes that they must faithfully play out. How else could a child of God suffer incredible abuse, merciless injustices, disappointments, deprivation and pain that portray the tapestry of human history? (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016).

Separation anxiety. According to Pecci (2016), the thought of a separation from the Creator is shared by some religions that advocate to follow the example of Jesus, who taught the way toward reversal was to acknowledge the *sin* and use prayer as what some might call an immediate shortcut, while others could call it a mechanism to rescind and restore the original connection. Prayer allows the individual to *surrender* a previous identity while offering a new identity of one's Higher Self, which circumvents the difficult psychological levels of previous identities and past errors. Spiritual teachers might offer insights to assist individuals to accelerate the process of achieving awakening, "but difficulties arise because of the inability to release all that has been experienced within the Earth parameters in order to move to these higher levels of awareness" (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016). This could cause a *dark night* of the soul infused with increased remorse and self-contempt that resists forgiveness. In view of this, E. F. Pecci (personal communication, December 19, 2016) said:

Original Source energy is beyond the comprehension of our physical brains so that whatever is gained through teaching, intuition, or meditation will always have some distortion and incompleteness. Before the entrapment of [any person] in matter, there was a level of energy, already imbued with shape, form, and purpose that desired to translate its state of being into an active dimension. The creation of matter was unique in that it allowed bits of higher energy to individuate, to assume each for itself a unique viewpoint achieved by unique experiences that were, in turn, interpreted in an individualistic way. Many souls have voluntarily elected to have this experience.

Event planning. Pecci (personal communication, December 19, 2016) explained that from this perspective, before we enter Earth's 3rd dimension, the universal Source has a planning session regarding the upcoming life from which the self has the opportunity to individuate. The self is a part of what can be considered the *design team* that establishes the primary parameters for certain experiences to unfold. Optional opportunities for choices exist within the pre-designed experience. There is a specific trajectory based upon the desire for particular experiences. A filmstrip is then reviewed one frame at a time before the entrance transition. The

soul simultaneously accepts the creation of all future life events. Other choices are made: (a) male or female body, (b) influential status, (c) geographic location, and (d) support system and other selections. These are then coalesced into the 3rd dimension with its limitations and distortions. In addition, “the center contains a DNA-like purity into its pattern, but also accessibility to the pattern” (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016). Since awakening is beyond the construct of the physical body, what can be produced is a duplicate image of the material and spiritual world. The awareness of the mechanism of the construct, can afford us with a subjective view, to step outside of the experience and view our life as a series of events that had a purpose where our behavior was quite different from our authentic self. This 3rd dimensional experience is best seen as an aid that furnishes significant insight essential to the development of our purpose for our Higher Self, the larger whole, the multi-universes, and is utterly beyond human comprehension. The awareness of this information could be found helpful through times each of us face frustration and pain of living on Earth.

A master illusion. Pecci (2016) spoke of our choice to enter into the 3rd dimensional experience on Earth as something akin to electing to experience a movie. We come having pre-selected the movie theater, planet Earth, a favored movie, a biography, and the sorts of food and snacks we would like to enjoy; the kinds of experiences and situations we want to have. While we are seated and watching a picture story unfold, we become considerably embroiled in—the experiences, feelings and sensations that lead us to all sorts of thoughts, perceptions, and plausible conclusions we did not have beforehand. As we leave the theater, we leave altered by those experiences, feelings, and sensations prior to our entrance to the movie. If we were to reflect on the various degrees of subtlety, it would be quite obvious that each person had a unique experience. And although this was only a story, we were still affected by those

experiences, emotions, and thoughts that changed our perception in some way. Preceding our journey to Earth, we agreed to have limited awareness and limited understanding as a part of designing our own theater of experiences, which is what we came to experience. If we had full awareness and full understanding of our movie—the experiences, situations, and the role we were to play, would wipe out the experience, expose the illusion, turn the lights up on the movie screen, and the whole dimension would vanish. This was designed with intricate precision and purpose to be completed in this dimension, and “return us out of this dimension into another portion of existence, which is not residing in the original Source but is a place quite outside of the Earth’s 3rd dimensional space-time experience” (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016). Ultimately, the destiny of each human is to experience this depth of understanding. Further, when the last person has reached this level of understanding this dimension will cease to exist.

Bewildering construct. We are given a personality construct intentionally to change perspective that limits our experience of wholeness and allows for experiences that are completely different from our core self. According to Pecci (2016), “after many lifetimes there comes an awakening to the multidimensional core self that involves an expansion far beyond the construct” (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016). Meanwhile, as young Earthlings, we are bombarded with degrees of pre-selected discomfort in which difficulties arise. Therefore, we misinterpret our coming to Earth from “the perfect energy of the Godhead into a difficult or negative experience” (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016) as a punishment for mistakes we made that separated us from Source energy from which we must escape, heal, and awaken and then correct or fix. This is our greatest error of interpreting our

time here as imposed punishment. This message that Susan, a medium, channeled, was sourced through what she called the *One Mind* and transcribed by Pecci (2016):

The design of this Earth with the various capabilities that it has for such individualistic experience is a magnificent creation of extreme cleverness, of extreme perfection; and one which offers an experience for each individual within the same structure, in such a way that the design of this magnificent arena would be far beyond the comprehension or the capacity of any human to either envision or to replicate. And partly because this goes unappreciated and made negative and even seen as God's error, which actually gives God a giggle because each detail was so minutely considered and fit into place with such precision. The idea that this was an error on God's part or anybody else's part is simply amusing. It is not even worth a big belly laugh because the understanding in the humans who offer these viewpoints, is like a little child who makes a simple mistake something that is not worth giving a great deal of attention. (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016)

Entrapment in matter. Gleaned from Pecci's (2016) research, housed within this design is the experience of extreme pleasure and severe pain. To experience the pleasure centers while in this construct of entrapment is to say to the universal Source that all previous selections were, in part, personally agreed upon by you and were made for the benefit of adding supreme value to the universe. Furthermore, you accept what has occurred to you in all its aspects and ask to be gently brought to a point where you can say, "Thank You" for the experience. (Pecci, 2016).

This admission reduces the period of entrapment in matter and raises the vibrational rate to higher energy levels where greater joy, happiness, awareness, and pleasure will be experienced in this 3rd dimension. There are several ways to enter into this state of pleasure:

Thank the universe and bless the opportunity
 Change your thoughts
 Release or surrender all judgments
 Be forgiving
 Ask for help from the Higher Self
 Attune the chakras and concentrate on the heart, crown, and 3rd eye
 Live in the flow of here and now
 Work with a master spiritual teacher
 Acknowledge and align with the abused inner child
 Open to love
 Remove self-doubt and criticism

Shift perception
 Open to new awareness
 Allow the feeling of heightened sensitivity
 (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016)

Construct detachment. The optimal way to detach from this construct is to recognize its value, be thankful, and move on to a new level. There is no way to mechanically become free from this construct. Pecci (2016) pointed out that forgiveness is acceptance, whereas release is a completion. The endpoint is to awaken. With this understanding, the more you can relinquish withholds, old patterns, despair, and discouragement, the more awareness and personal pleasure you will enjoy. There is an interrelationship between the construct and the ego. The ego determines one's identity, and the construct is the personality that is elected to shield it in an unfriendly, indifferent, and competitive world. Therefore, it is best to detach perceptions, which result in an awareness of energy flow meanwhile a defensive pattern distorts the energy flow of love. Much like breaking open the hard shell of a nut to get to its inner fruit, change is only possible when tenacity exceeds preservation. One of the major issues involved is that the old pattern has an extremely limited ability to make a consistent connection to the Higher Self. Therefore, reflecting and restoring awareness of that connectivity is a key feature of the change.

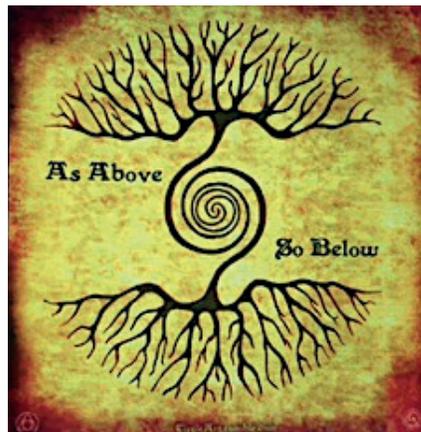


Figure 5. Divine Connection. (Internet, 2017). As above, so below, as within, so without, as the universe, so the soul...(Hermes Trismegistus, The Emerald Tablet)

As we review our pilgrimage from the perspective of the One Mind *I Am*, we are magnificent Light beings who have chosen to take up this journey into this 3rd dimension temporarily entrapped in matter as a physical body with limited awareness and limited understanding for the wisdom it brings to the infinite omnipresent. In light of this, our physical body alone is comprised of a trillion universes beyond our understanding in this construct. There is only One Mind; separation and distance are purely illusions. We have fallen into a dream of forgetfulness that makes this experience feasible. Our mind is split off and generated an ego where the belief of God is optional. The entire experience is quite an ingenious creation “filled with puzzles and paradoxes and interplay between opposite polarities that are used to create myths and archetypes to play them out” (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016), as recycled themes that repeat over again—“good guys and bad guys, love lost and love found, civilizations growing and crumbling, winning and losing and getting revenge” (Pecci, 2016). Billions of souls and master souls have elected to come here to have this experience that offers substantial transformative change with transpersonal expansion in these times.

Truly, the universe is neutral and has “no power over you except how you relate to it” (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, December 19, 2016). The only thing that really matters is your inner process. The mere fact that you are conscious of your existence is a wonder. Many loathe their lives and their existence on Earth. Therefore, the best way to enjoy this life is as a sentient child filled with love and awe. The way to raise your vibrational level is to love yourself up, thus becoming the vibration of love. To live any other way, is to live in fear, which is identified as your ego. Realize change is constant in this way of life and make peace with this existence.

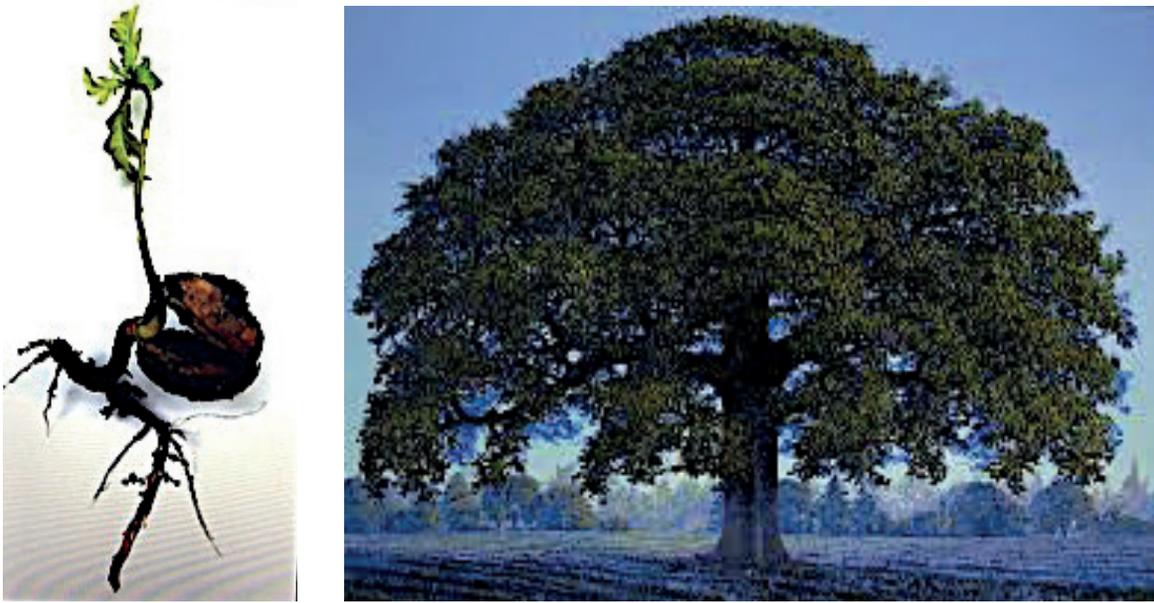


Figure 6 and Figure 7. Potential. (Internet, 2017). An oak starts producing acorns when it is at least 20 years old and then just once a year in the fall. While, remarkably, the whole of the mighty oak is contained in potential in the acorn, only about one acorn in ten thousand actually becomes a tree. (Taschen, n.d., p. 132)

In a nutshell.

The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn. What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us. And when we bring what is within us out into the world, miracles happen. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

How fortunate are we to have awareness of creation, to know instinctively what is unseen has the potential to materialize and become known, and influence life beyond our understanding and wildest dreams! As the acorn is guided by divine will “seeded to open, to germinate, to sprout, to push its branches and its leaves out, and grow into a mighty oak tree” (Wright, 2016, p. 2) intended to populate an entire forest, we too, are guided by an *inner image* seeded with potentials to develop, grow, actualize, and destined to contribute to human evolution of future generations (Hillman, 1997; Houston, 1996; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2001; Pink, 2006). Everything we do and everything we are attests to our individual coding and deeper character, “lifetimes of DNA, within all the experiences [we] have in this lifetime and every other one” (Wright, 2016, p.

2), “our handwriting, the vibrato of our voice...our way of using language, the look in our eyes, the pattern of whirling fingerprints on our hands—all these things are symptomatic of our original nature” (Nachmanovitch, 1990, p. 26). Our wisdom and knowledge are gifts to us from our ancestors who have come before us. We stand on their shoulders of vast worldly and spiritual experiences that infuse our soul to further what they have begun; “can you hear them whispering in your ear, ‘maybe this is the one who will move beyond the limitations that have held us back and carry our dreams’” (Ryan, 2009, p. 64). Our genuine composition is undisputed. We are one-of-a-kind, unique and called at this time in human history to make our mark and carry humanity forward. Meade (2016) expounded on this lived philosophy:

What calls us calls for the giving of the inherent gifts and natural talents we brought to life to begin with. Answering the call opens pathways of genius and imagination that can lead to finding one’s ‘dharma’ or nature way of being in life and serving the world. We are each called to become more fully ourselves and our transformation liberates our spirit, but it also serves something beyond ourselves. In transforming us, genius also transforms the world. (p. 5)

Our journey of self-discovery is much like the story of Michelangelo who was guided by a visionary intelligence or *intellecto* that involves a deep seeing of underlying patterns beneath appearances (Nachmanovitch, 1990, p. 31), to midwife a magnificent being, in which he saw the apparition buried in the stone and hewed away the pieces of stone to liberate the image. Children attempt to make sense of life and discover their place in the world:

They are trying to live two lives at once, the one they were born with and the one of the place and among the people they were born into. The entire image of a destiny is packed into a tiny acorn, the seed of a huge oak on small shoulders. (Hillman, 1997, p. 13)

Acorn tales. There are a number of interesting stories that speak of the acorn seed and oak tree having mythological, morphological, and etymological meanings, which suggest forms of strength and power, life, wisdom, nobility, family, loyalty, longevity, heritage, endurance, constancy, durability, purity, and honor (Acorn Symbolism, 2016; Acorns & Oaks, 2016).

Similarly, the acorn is considered a life-affirming symbol of patience and perseverance because the potential of the acorn appears only in a fully mature oak tree that lives beyond 200 years. Historically, the Celts, Romans, Greeks and Teutonic tribes held the oak as a revered tree, as it was associated with deities in many pantheons, particularly, the deities that controlled thunder, lightning, and storms. The *Book of Symbols: Reflections on Archetypal Images* (Taschen, n.d.) draws upon the words of Meister Eckhart to further describe the importance and guiding principles of symbols, “When the soul wants to experience something she throws out an image in front of her and then steps into it” (Eckhart, as cited in Taschen, p. 6). Further, he credits Jung with envisioning the acorn as “a beautiful evocation of the self, the unconscious core of the personality” (p. 132).

The acorn theory. Hillman (1997) used an acorn seed as a metaphor that embodies the essence of human life. Convinced we enter into this life called, already having a sense of fate, destiny or character bearing “a uniqueness that is asked to be lived,” (p. 6) this defining genius or inner muse is all there at once, a full gestalt “in the co-presence, of today, yesterday, and tomorrow, and constitutes the ‘acorn theory’” (p. 7). As told in the stories of antiquity, the original image is a gift upon our birth from the guardians who have our interest at heart. Meade (2016) concurred with this, as “an old idea found in many traditions [that] holds that each person comes to this world of change at a time when they have something meaningful to offer” (p. 13):

The ancient Greeks had a metaphor for understanding how it could be that a child would display genius-like qualities at a very young age. They called it the “acorn theory,” for it drew upon something hidden inside the seeds of their revered oak trees. The theory, which seems more of a mythic imagination, suggests that inside the small seed there resides an entire tree. If the seed takes root somewhere and the shell cracks open, what will be revealed is a living shoot that can become a deeply rooted and branching tree. In other words, the full-grown tree is hidden inside the opaque seed. Not just any tree, not an average tree, but an exact inner shape waiting to take root and bear fruit on the Earth. (Meade, 2016, pp. 89-90)

The genius myth. Similar to the acorn theory, Meade (2016) coined his outlook on incarnation the *genius myth*, as an intrinsic being or genius seeded with a destiny. A patterned calling, bearing traits and talents within its core aimed at becoming realized. Further “the genius myth offers the sense that each soul enters this world gifted in certain ways and distinctly shaped from within” (p. 7). Meade (2016) united two fundamental words he claimed are highly misunderstood by contemporary society that diminishes their meaning. Typically, the term *genius* is retained for those who possess eminent levels of intelligence or exhibit extraordinary talent. The term genius used in this investigation adapts Meade’s (2016) definition:

Genius is the entirety of traits and talents that are already there in the soul of each person born. Some are born with prodigious gifts and talents; but each of us bring to life some inner gifts and our own genius of being. (p. 37)

We Do Not Come Into the World Alone

Divine guidance within. According to Hollis (2000/2010), Jung believed “humanity is a partner in the continuing incarnation of Being, which springs forth from the Mystery, from inexplicable cosmic energies” (p. 50). Perhaps, “as far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being” (Jung, as cited in Hollis, 2000, p. 51). Continuing along this line, clearly, we incarnate with an *inner knowing* and *inner drive* to support “our nature to seek purpose, [and] our deep-seated desire to direct our own lives, to extend and expand our abilities and to live a life of purpose” (Pink, 2009, pp. 144-145). But there is something other than drive at play here; something deeply embedded that calls out for our attention, an intermediate power of divine order, and a distant voice from within us that provides counsel. Whatever this is, it is more than what most of us know as our ordinary human self.



Figure 8. *Presence the Muse*. (Internet, 2017).

Whatever it is that drives us toward our calling has been given many names throughout human history, indicating that something that is unseen and somehow greater than we are can be experienced; it has always been there, accompanying us when we came into this world and as we live our lives, whether we recognize it or not:

That mysterious factor of surrender, the creative surprise that releases us and opens us up, spontaneously allows something to arise. If we are transparent, with nothing to hide, the gap between language and Being disappears. Then the Muse can speak. (Nachmanovitch, 1990, p. 30)

The Romans name it your *genius*; the Greeks your *daimōn*; and the Christians your guardian angel. The Romantics, like Keats, said the call came from the heart, and Michelangelo's intuitive eye saw an image in the heart of the person sculpting. The Neoplatonist referred to an imaginal body, the *ochema* that carried you like a vehicle. It was your personal bearer or support. For some, it is Lady Luck or Fortuna; for others a genie or jinn, a bad seed or evil genius. In Egypt, it might have been the *ka*, or the *ba* with whom you could converse. Among the people we refer to as Eskimos and other who follow shamanistic practices, it is your spirit, your free-soul, your animal-soul, your breath-soul. (Hillman, 1997, p. 9)

Throughout history, modern civilizations, and indigenous cultures mention this activating intelligence or inner voice that guides us in life and calls us to discover our higher, or essential self (Houston, 1998). Socrates was one such example who followed and was guided by what he referred to as his *daimōn*. Another was “the Greek playwright Euripides [who] once wrote that

myths are the arena for activities of the daimōn, and it is the daimōn that gives shape to our characters as well as to the unfolding of the events of our lives” (Houston, 1996, p. 321). The Greeks referred to the “higher source of inspiration and enlightenment” (Merton, 2015, p.1) as the daimōn, invisible spirits, god(s), goddess(es), or guardian(s), that are “intermediary beings located between the celestial objects and the terrestrial inhabitants” (*Dictionary of Spiritual Terms*, 2015) “an energy or being in the Universe” (Daimōn, 2015) that distributes destinies.

Hillman (1997) posited:

The soul of each of us is given a unique daimōn before we are born, and it has selected an image of pattern that we live on Earth. The soul-companion, the daimōn, guides us here in the process of arrival; however, we forget all that took place and believe we come empty into the world. The daimōn remembers what is in your image and belongs to your pattern, and therefore your daimōn is the carrier of your destiny. (p. 8)

Angel or demon. In identifying this carrier of our destiny, Meade (2016) articulated its two sides by saying, “Call it the devil within or the angel looking over us” (p. 178). The author continued:

Daimōn was an old Greek word for the unique spirit that inhabits each soul, and the word for happiness was eudaimonia, meaning “a satisfied daimōn” or fulfilled inner spirit. In this ancient view, being truly happy depends upon discovering and living close to the pattern set within our soul before birth. On the other hand, if neglected or rejected, our inner daimōn can turn into our worst demons. The inner spirit of our lives cannot remain neutral, but must express itself in some potent way. If it is not welcomed or becomes rejected, as it happens in the story, something dies or becomes seriously distorted. (p. 179)

In light of Hillman’s (1997) and Mead ‘s (2016) commentaries, I propose we yield to whatever is and enter into a *receptive* and *collaborative* arrangement of sorts as an optimal way to relate to our guardian angel. Accordingly, we begin by (a) recognizing the call, (b) openly receiving the call, (c) aligning with the call, and (d) responding to the daimōn’s directives. As each individual is both artist and author of his or her own life, I draw on this favored poem that best captures the receptive arrangement to which I refer:

Painting is the result of the receptivity of ink: the ink is open to the brush: the brush is open to the hand: the hand is open to the heart: all this in the same way as the sky engenders what the Earth produces: everything is the result of receptivity. (Shitao, as cited in Berger, 2001, p. 20)

In the chronicles of *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*, Jung (1975) credited the daimōn as the creative agent or archetypal spiritual authority responsible for much of his life and work in developing analytical psychology. He spoke of being *in the grip* fully absorbed in the creative act (p. 44). Moore (2001) frequently spoke of the daimōn's emergence, as a compelling force that captures our attention, "we are driven from a place beneath awareness, and what drives us, hurls us toward our identity and our place in time and space" (p. 56). Teacher-poet and potter Richards (1989) stressed, "we have to realize that a creative being lives within ourselves, whether we like it or not, and that we must get out of its way for it will give us no peace until we do" (p. 27). At first, however, as difficult as it may seem, we must "develop a capacity for 'inner listening'" (Miller & Cook-Greuter, 2000, p. 220). Critical to this viewpoint is the notion "each person is called in some way to awaken and learn to give the gifts that are set within their soul, [which] is of such great importance that the calling keeps calling" (Meade, 2016, p. 96). Moreover, "a calling may be postponed, avoided, intermittently missed. It may also possess you completely. Whatever: eventually it will out. It makes its claim. The daimōn does not go away" (Hillman, 1997, p. 8). Feinstein and Krippner (2008) professed that our exposure to the daimōn "is an urge in every being 'to affirm itself, assert itself, perpetuate and increase itself'" (p. 133) particularly the more our unconscious is split off from consciousness, the larger and more powerful the daimōn is. The task at hand for the daimōn is decidedly arduous. Hillman (1997) explained:

The daimōn's "reminders" work in many ways. The daimōn motivates. It protects. It invents and persists with stubborn fidelity. It resists compromising reasonableness and often forces deviance and oddity upon its keeper, especially when it is neglected or opposed. It offers comfort and can pull you into its shell, but cannot abide innocence. It can make the body ill. It is out of step with time, finding all sorts of faults, gaps, and

knots in the flow of life—and it prefers them. It has affinities with myth, since it is itself a mythical being and thinks in mythical patterns. (p. 39)

The Journey Following Our Descent Into Life

Corporeal descent. Through the past millennium up to present day, the Hebrews, Greeks, and Christians have ascribed to spiritual growth as the ascent to heaven (Hillman, 1997; Meade, 2016; Pecci, 2016; Tolle, 2016). Along these lines, we enter into this world headfirst and depart from this world feet-last. As claimed by conventional traditions of body symbolism, the soft spot on the infant’s head is the place the soul has been left open so it might still be influenced by its origins. For example, Hillman (1997) pointed to “the slow closing of the head’s fontanel and fissures, its hardening into a tightly sealed skull, signified separation from an invisible beyond and final arrival here” (p. 42). Quite noticeably, small children have enormous difficulty “growing down into the practical, their tight won’t-let-go grip, their fear, their strain to adapt, and their puzzled wonder over the little things of the Earth around them show us every day how hard it is to grow down” (Hillman, 1997, p. 42). Similarly, Meade (2016) commented, “growing old...can be a time of truly growing down and incarnating further. Because the inner genius tries to incarnate through us the calling for us to awaken further until we come to the end of our life adventure” (p. 96) and added, “after all, to be successful in life does not mean to reach an outer goal, but to reconnect to the source of one’s life and the hidden message found on the ground of one’s being” (p. 96). Furthermore, Hillman expounded on this philosophy, as over the lifetime of the human journey, we gradually establish footing or *growing down* through our experiences that ultimately leads us back to our original spiritual connection.



Figure 9. Tree Rooted in Heaven. (Internet, 2017). According to Charles Ponce, a psychological interpreter of Kabbalah, “the Kabbalist tree, as first elaborated in thirteenth-century Spain, imagines the descending branches to be conditions of the soul’s life, which becomes more and more manifest and visible as it descends. The lower it gets, the more difficulty we have grasping its meaning.” (Ponce, as cited in Hillman, 1997, p. 44)

Tree of the Kabbalah. Hillman (1997) developed his perspective of human growth as an adaptation from the Tree of the Kabbalah in Jewish and Christian mysticism that aligns with previous ancient and current beliefs of spirituality, and as an illustration in which he turned the tree upside down showing the roots of the tree originating in the heavens, and gradual descent of human development onto Earth. The foremost Kabbalist book, the Zohar clearly stated the descent is laborious; and the soul reluctant to come down and become sullied by the world:

At the time that the Holy One, be blessed, was about to create the world, he [she] decided to fashion all the souls, which would in due course be dealt out to the children of men [and women], and each soul was formed into the exact outline of the body she [he] was destined to tenant.... Go now, descend into this and this place, into this and this body.

Yet often enough the soul would reply: Lord of the world, I am content to remain in this realm, and have no wish to depart to some other, where I shall be in thralldom, and become stained.

Whereupon the Holy One, be blessed, would reply: Thy destiny is, and has been from the day of thy forming, to go into that world.

Then the soul, realizing it could not disobey, would unwillingly descend and come into this world. (Hillman, 1997, pp. 43-44)

As we transcend into this life, we have forgotten the previous happenings according to Jewish myth, and as remembrance of the preexisting soul-life with the daimōn, the angel pressed its

forefinger sealing the lips, and leaving an indentation in the crevice below our nose. As we bring to mind an insight or recall a lost thought, oftentimes our finger returns to this hollow (Hillman, 1997; Meade, 2016).

Plato's Republic. Through the ages, Plato's words have personified ancient societies, and his philosophy has withstood the test of time. Even today, he is still revered by scholars who find his wisdom, ideology, and foresight thought-provocative and relevant. It is against this backdrop and with the deepest appreciation of Plato's acumen that I incorporated Hillman's (1997) translation, a condensed and lighthearted version of Plato's (400-300 B. C.) *Myth of Er, The Republic*, which infuses a mythical/spiritual realm that is integrated as a prominent theme apparent throughout this study and discussed in Pecci's (2016) *The Nature of the Earth Experience*, Hillman's acorn theory, and Meade's (2016) genius myth.

Accordingly, Hillman's (1997) transcription of Plato's (circa 400-300 B. C.) *Myth of Er, the Republic* follows:

The souls are all hanging around in a mythical world, having arrived there from previous lives, and each has a lot to fulfill. This lot also called a portion of fate (Moirai) that is somehow representative of the character of that particular soul. For instance, the myth says the soul of Ajax, the intemperate and mighty warrior, chose the life of a lion, while Atalanta, the fleet young woman runner, chose the lot of an athlete, and another soul chose the lot of a skillful workman. Ulysses' soul, remembering its long life of trials and tribulations, "and tired of ambition, went about a long time seeking the life of a private man of no business, and with difficulty found it lying somewhere, neglected by the rest."

"When all the souls had chosen their lives according to their lots, they went before Lachesis [*lachos* = one's special lot or portion of fate]. And she sent with each, as the guardian of his life and the fulfiller of his choice, the genius [*daimōn*] that has been chosen." Lachesis leads the soul to the second of the three personifications of destiny Klotho (*klotho* = to twist by spinning). "Under her hand and her turning of the spindle, the destiny of the chosen lot is ratified." (Given its particular twist?) "Then the genius [*daimōn*] again led the soul to the spinning of Atropos [*atropos* = not to be turned inflexible] to make the web of its destiny irreversible."

"And then without a backward glance the soul passes beneath the throne of Necessity," sometimes translated as the "lap" of Necessity.

Precisely what a "lot" (*kleros*) is imagined to look like does not come clear from the text. The word *kleros* combines three closely connected meanings: (a) piece of the earth,

like our sandlot, car lot, empty lot, which expands to mean; (b) that “space,” which is your portion in the overall order of things; and (c) an inheritance, or rightfully comes down to you as an heir.

I understand these lots in the myth to be images. Since the lots are each particular and encompass a whole style of fate, the soul must be perceiving intuitively an image that embraces the whole of a life all at once. It must be choosing that image, which attracts: “This is the one I want, and it is my rightful inheritance.” My soul selects the image I live.

Plato’s text calls this image a *paradeigma*, or “pattern,” as translators usually say. So, the “lot” is the image that is your inheritance, your soul’s portion in the world order, and your place on Earth, all compacted into a pattern that has been selected by your soul before you ever got here—or, better said, that is always and continually being selected by your soul, because time does not enter the equations of myth. (“Myth,” said, Sallust, the Roman philosopher of paganism, “never happened but always is.”) Since ancient psychology usually located the soul around or with the heart, your heart holds the image of your destiny and calls you to it.

Unpacking the image takes a lifetime. It may be perceived all at once, but understood only slowly. Thus, the soul has an image of its fate, which time can show only as “future.” Is “future” another name for fate, and are our concerns about “the future” more likely fantasies of fate?

Before the souls enter human life, however, they pass through the plain of Lethe (oblivion, forgetting) so that on arrival here all of the previous activities of choosing lots and the descent from the lap of Necessity is wiped out. It is in this condition of a *tabula rasa*, or empty tablet, that we are born. We have forgotten all of the story, though the inescapable and necessary pattern of my lot remains and my companion *daimōn* remembers. (pp. 44-46)

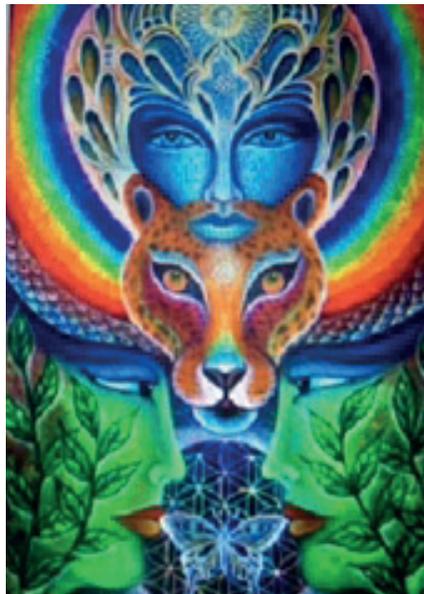


Figure 10. Moira. (Internet, 2017). My interpretation of the soul’s choice of fate before entering the transit into the Earth’s 3rd dimension.

Along the Platonic line, Hillman (1997) referred to Plotinus who summarized the myth in these several lines: “Being born, coming into this particular body, these particular parents, and in such a place, and what we call external circumstances...form a unity and are as it were spun together” (p. 46). Hillman proposed, “Each of our souls is guided by a daimōn to that particular body and place, the parents and circumstances, by Necessity—and none of us has an inkling of this because it was eradicated on the plains of forgetting” (p. 46).



Figure 11. Summoning the Warrior. (Internet, 2017). The only journey is the one within. (Rainer Maria Rilke).

The call and The Grail. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell (1949/2008) portrayed *the call* as a sacred pilgrimage that beseeches an adventurer with a courageous spirit. During the excursion, the hero uncovers the mystery of his soul and is, forever, transformed. This quest symbolizes an important rite of passage, a metaphoric journey, which Campbell (1990/2003) wrote about in *The Hero's Journey*, experienced as an inner exploration, which a person might played out as an outer expedition into the world. Campbell pointed out:

The call to adventure signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred [the] spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of this society to a zone unknown. This fateful region of both treasure and danger may be variously represented: as a distant land,

a forest, a kingdom underground, beneath the waves or above the sky, a secret island, lofty mountaintop, or profound dream state; but it is always a place of strangely fluid and polymorphous beings, unimaginable torments, superhuman deeds, and impossible delights. (p. 1)

In continuing along these lines, I reintroduce Hillman's (1997) translation of Plato's *Myth of Er* and *the Republic* that support Campbell's (1990/2003), Pecci's (2016) and my perspective that indicates, "before the souls enter human life...they pass through the plain of Lethe (oblivion, forgetting) so that on arrival here all of the previous activities of choosing lots and the descent from the lap of Necessity is wiped out" (Hillman, 1997, p. 46) because "it is a journey of forgetfulness, of loss of identity" (Pecci, 2016) in which we appear as blank slates or *tabula rasa* that we enter. Accordingly, we yearn "for something beyond, desirable and yet [what seems to be] unattainable" (Wood, 2016, p. 2) at first, is to discover who we are and why we are here. In the beginning, we are unaware that this search for "The Holy Grail [is] the highest *spiritual* pursuit" (Lupack, 2016, p. 4), which determines our place in the cosmos of human evolution. The undertaking of such a journey does not come lightly, for the expedition into the unknown and undiscovered is a "perilous territory to be traversed" (Campbell, 1990/2003, p. xix), laden with challenges that require heroism that tests the true mettle of a warrior and proves a life worthy of greatness. Simply stated, "it's not the *agony* of the quest, but the rapture of the revelation," all the more reason to envision "life [as] not a problem to be solved but a *mystery* to be lived" (p. xvii).

The Holy Grail. In pursuit of this mystery, there are those enthralled in the immediacy of the search and others disenchanted from the outset. Nevertheless, The Grail speaks to both travelers for those disinterested at first may have a change of heart, as awakenings develop and insights are revealed that induce a call-to-action. Whether enrolled at the beginning or later in time, we learn the search prevails as it continues to call our attention to a preordained destiny

until we draw our final breath (Hillman, 1997; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2001; Pecci, 2016; Robinson, 2009). My research on The Holy Grail readily disclosed there was “no one original Grail myth” (Miesel, 2004, p. 3) but rather a myriad of medieval tales and tellers who spun mythological stories that spread throughout Europe from Iberia to Iceland. The term *Grail* comes from Old French *graal* derived from the Latin *gradale* meaning a broad and capacious dish or salver (Holy Grail, 2016) on which food was served during various stages of a medieval banquet, (Lupach, 2016; Miesel, 2004) and typically identified today as a chalice used at the Last Supper and later sought by Arthurian heroes. Other legends illustrate The Holy Grail as a horn of plenty, a book, and even a stone (Holy Grail, 2016; Lupach, 2016; Wood, 2016). The term *Grail* first appears in the French unfinished romance poem *Perceval* (Wood, 2016) written by Chretien (as cited in Wood, 2016) the foremost medieval writer of Arthurian romances in the twelfth century. Chretien introduced The Holy Grail as “suffused by a light so brilliant that the candles lost their brightness as do the moon or stars when the sun rises” (p. 2). It was described as being made of the finest quality of gold inset with precious jewels that became known as the symbol of the “human quest” (p. 2). Wood explained Poet Robert de Boron expanded the story turning The Holy Grail from a dish into a cup at the Last Supper. The legend of The Grail ranges from Christian accountings that portray the quest as a “spiritual odyssey that only the most virtuous can complete” (p. 2) to the Celtic source that draws on rich Irish roots of ceaseless flowing, drinking horns of journeying to the Happy Otherworld.



Figure 12. *In Search of The Holy Grail*. (Internet, 2017).

Over the past decades, fascination with The Holy Grail and Arthurian tales have continued to captivate a rise in scholarship, novels, theatre productions, and video games that depict their versions of these stories with Eliot's (1925/2016) *The Wasteland* that used The Grail as a metaphor for contemporary life. Brown (2003), in his fiction book, *The Da Vinci Code*, insisted that The Grail involves Mary Magdalene who bore Christ's child and continued the bloodline that inferred the divine feminine (Miesel, 2004, p. 4), and The Holy Grail video game: *Lancelot's Hangover* (2016). Moreover, The Holy Grail has piqued the interest of modern filmmakers with *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), *Monty Python and The Holy Grail* (1975), *Excalibur* (1981), *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989) and *The Fisher King* (1981). The continual use of metaphors and symbols regarding the grail further suggests a mythological appeal of the human quest *to be*, the highest form of spiritual pursuit, spiritual odyssey, and spiritual transformation. This quest evokes the elusive object of desire; life-giving properties; Holy Communion; inspiration; and good and evil (Lupack, 2016; Miesel, 2004; Wood, 2016). According to Miesel (2004), "The Grail as a symbol for secret knowledge also fascinated Adolf

Hitler. The occult-infatuated Nazis set up twelve SS officers as Grail-knights in a rebuilt castle at Vevelburg, Westphalia, where their sinister rites may have included human sacrifice” (p. 4).

However, as fascinating as these stories seem, The Holy Grail for some, have only an outward attraction, as a treasured cup of gold laden with jewels that likely appreciates in time. As for others, The Holy Grail signifies the ultimate inward spiritual connection to one’s Higher Self of One Mind and what has been called, *The I Am of All There Is*, which is indelible and impervious to a space-time continuum. Comparatively speaking, a great number of individuals profess there is no equal value between the two. This frame of reference is clearly subjective and mirrors personal values and perceptions of reality.

The hero’s journey. In continuing on this trajectory in search of a unique identity and calling, I introduce my last scholar, Campbell (1990/2003), who is regarded by many as the foremost American mythologist, writer, and lecturer of our time. As a young boy, Campbell’s initial fascination in Indian cultural myths and stories blossomed into a lifelong career in research that led to global travel where he uncovered similar patterns across multicultural genres in myths and stories of the hero’s quest. In this last but most important section, relevant to this investigation, is Campbell’s description of the journey taken by heroes as depicted in his 17-Stage *Monomyth* that follows a standard mythological “formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation—initiation—return*” (p. 23) that appears in his acclaimed book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Importantly, not all *monomyths* involve 17 stages; others have presented journeys taken by heroes in multiple versions. In general, the overview of this narrative involves a hero who enters into a mysterious adventure, encounters deep-seated and outer-most opposition and emerges victorious. Impacted by these experiences the hero returns home transformed and contributes to the greater whole of humanity. This is for me, what life truly is about—adventure,

discovery, lessons, and contribution made to the greater good of all, having left my unique legacy that my life has mattered. With that understanding, Campbell's own journey of myth and story has touched countless individuals, from poets to artists to filmmakers, and more. One such filmmaker is George Lucas who attributed his *Star Wars* series to Campbell. What follows is Campbell's 17 stages of the hero's journey, to which I would add, the heroine's journey, as well, although, Campbell did not include the heroine in his own work. Each stage includes a scene from Lucas' *Star Wars* listed as an example of popular story, as it relates to current times. A chart maps out his monomyth.

According to Campbell (1990/2003), the hero's journey, is:

a movement beyond the known boundaries of faith and convention, the search for what matters, the path of destiny, the route of individuality, the road of original experience, a paradigm for the forging of consciousness itself: in short, the hero's journey. A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man. (p. xix)

Campbell elucidated further on the journey, as:

the universal quest for self-transformation. The journey of the hero is about the courage to seek the depths: the image of creative rebirth; the eternal cycle of change within us; the uncanny discovery that the seeker is the mystery, which the seeker seeks to know. The hero's journey is a symbol that binds, in the original sense of the world, two distant ideas, the spiritual quest of the ancient with the modern search for identity," always the one, shape-shifting yet marvelously constant story that we find." (p. xix)

The path of the *true* hero's journey, as well as the journey a heroine could take, is The Holy Land inside ourselves, our unknown mystery waiting for us to uncover whatever that mystery might be (Campbell, 1990/2003; DeAngelis, 2015; Hillman 1997; Houston, 1996; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2001). Whatever the stage, the mystery of transformation implies "a rite or moment, of spiritual passage, which, when complete, amounts to a dying and a birth" (Campbell, 1949/2003, p. 43).

Table 2

Joseph Campbell's 17 Stages of the Hero's Journey

Departure—According to Campbell (1990/2003), the hero lives in an ordinary world and receives a call to experience an adventure journey. At first, the hero is hesitant to pursue the call. Nonetheless, he is met with a guardian/mentor that comes to his aid.

- **The Call to Adventure:** In this stage, the call to adventure “signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown” (p. 48). This may appear as a blunder, mere chance, or unexpected relationship, a guide or carrier that empowers a new stage of destiny, one of biography termed by mystics as “the awakening of the self” (p. 42). What once has been familiar may now be void of value. Intended to cause new birth as a form of “separation” often produces anxiety. Typically, these circumstances are known to occur in a dark forest or babbling spring.
 - *Star Wars:* R2D2’s cryptic message from Princess Leia.
- **Refusal of the Call:** In this stage, oftentimes appearing in myths and folktale, the call is unanswered and refused to the detriment of the individual, who “becomes a victim to be saved” (p. 49). However, those that hesitate may not be lost and are destined to be saved, for the “refusal of the call proves to be the occasion of a providential revelation of some unsuspected principle of release,” (p. 53) which can bring transformation to new levels of understanding that yield an unexpected resolution.
 - Luke refuses the call until he learns of his uncle and aunt’s death.
- **Supernatural Aid:** In this stage, for those who have accepted the call, “the hero comes under the protection of the Cosmic Mother [and] cannot be harmed” (p. 59). A guardian angel appears; a mentor that is committed to support the present yet stands in the future. Supernatural helpers tend to appear in male form “a little old crone or old man” (p. 57) wizard, shepherd, hermit, guide, or teacher whose sage advice guides the young apprentice.
 - Obi-wan Kenobi rescues Luke from the Sand people.
- **The Crossing of the First Threshold:** In this stage, with destiny as a guide and aid, the hero ventures into the “mystery” of the unknown beyond familiar boundaries that have kept him safe. The unknown is often portrayed in myth as the “desert, jungle, deep sea, alien land, etc.” (p. 65). The hero advances forward in his adventure until he reaches the “threshold guardian” who bears magnified powers in the bound world of four directions and vertical world of the unknown. Regardless of danger, he stands committed to discover his destiny beyond the horizon.
 - Luke escapes Tatooine.
- **Belly of the Whale:** In this stage, the belly of the whale symbolizes the hero is willing to be swallowed up and die and be reborn. As such, the hero leaves behind the outer visible

world of known existence and readily goes inward to the unknown world where he undergoes a metamorphosis.

- Trash compactor.

Initiation—In this stage, the hero having crossed the threshold successfully, embarks upon trials and ordeals he must successfully navigate by himself with the help of supernatural powers such as an amulet or with the support of his mentor.

- **The Road of Trials:** In this stage, the hero faces a “perilous path of initiatory conquests and moments of illumination” (p. 90) that tests his mettle and prepares him for the ultimate tests. He is victorious at slaying dragons, and successfully continues to conquer his enemies.
 - Constant practice with the light saber.
- **The Meeting with the Goddess:** In this stage, as the hero has met his challenges he is met with a mythical marriage of a hero soul with the Queen Goddess. She merges the nature of being of the good and bad. He comes to know himself better, as “the two, the knower and the known, will be released from every limitation” (p. 97) ...He takes her with assurance as “she requires, ...potentially the king, the incarnate god of her created world” (p. 97). This is the “final test of the talent of the hero to win the boon of love (charity: *Amor fati*), which is life itself enjoyed as the encasement of eternity.
 - The hero meets Princess Leia who represents the mystic order.
- **Woman as the Temptress:** In this stage, the hero is faced with physical pleasures that can lead him astray from completing his quest. The term “woman” represents a metaphor for physical lust and/or material possessions that can influence the hero from completing his spiritual journey.
 - Luke is enticed by the dark side.
- **Atonement with the Father:** In this stage, the child has outgrown his place and is initiated into parental duties of a parental role. He must readjust to the emotional relationship with the parental image. However, in many myths the father has the *say-power over life or death* of acceptance. It is the encounter or confronting over which of the two holds authority that the hero must make his way.
 - Luke reconciles with Darth Vader.
- **Apotheosis:** In this stage, greater understanding has been accomplished, and the hero is ready to proceed on to more laborious tasks of the adventure.
 - Luke emerges as a Jedi.
- **The Ultimate Boon:** In this stage, “the ease with which the adventure is here accomplished signifies that the hero is a superior man, a born king” (p. 48). He has won the favor of the god and spiritual illumination as the hero has broken through all limitation to spiritual growth.
 - Death star is destroyed.

Return: the hero, having mastered the dark world and the realm of light, is transformed and knows he must return to the ordinary world to further humankind, particularly to share the wisdom he has attained of mastery of both worlds.

- **Refusal of the Return:** In this stage, as the hero's journey has gone full circle, the criterion of the monomyth requires the hero to endure the drudgery of bringing the mysteries of wisdom, back into the domain of humanity, where the community will benefit from all that was learned. All too often the responsibility has been refused.
 - Luke is prepared to avenge the death of Obi-Wan.

 - **The Magic Flight:** In this stage, the hero has either been bestowed with a "blessing of the goddess or the god and is then explicitly commissioned to return to the world with the elixir" (p. 170) to restore society. Or if the "trophy" has been obtained in opposition of its guardian, or "if the hero wishes to return to the world that has been resented by the gods or demons, then the last stage of the mythological round becomes a lively, often comical, pursuit" (p. 170).
 - Millennium Falcon.

 - **The Rescue from Without:** In this stage, the hero might not be too eager to return to a world that he has cast off and may need the assistance of guides and guardian angels to return him back to ordinary life, particularly if the individual has been fatigued or injured by the experience.
 - Hans rescues Luke from Darth.

 - **The Crossing of the Return Threshold:** In this stage, the hero's difficult task is how to re-enter a world that offered little fulfillment after experiencing a soul-satisfying vision of life. For the hero, the task would entail integrating all that was learned in both worlds and share what was learned.
 - Millennium Falcon annihilates pursuing TIE fighters.

 - **Master of the Two Worlds:** In this stage, Campbell (1990/2003) uses Jesus as an example of the master vision that is resurrected from the world from which he left. His "disciples are his initiates, not themselves masters of the mystery, yet introduced to the full experience of the paradox of the two worlds in one" (p. 197).
 - Victory celebration.

 - **Freedom to Live:** In this stage, life is a continual battlefield where the hero must fight to survive, and so he becomes a master of his existence. This can be seen as he lives in the moment without regret.
 - Rebellion is triumphant over the empire.
-

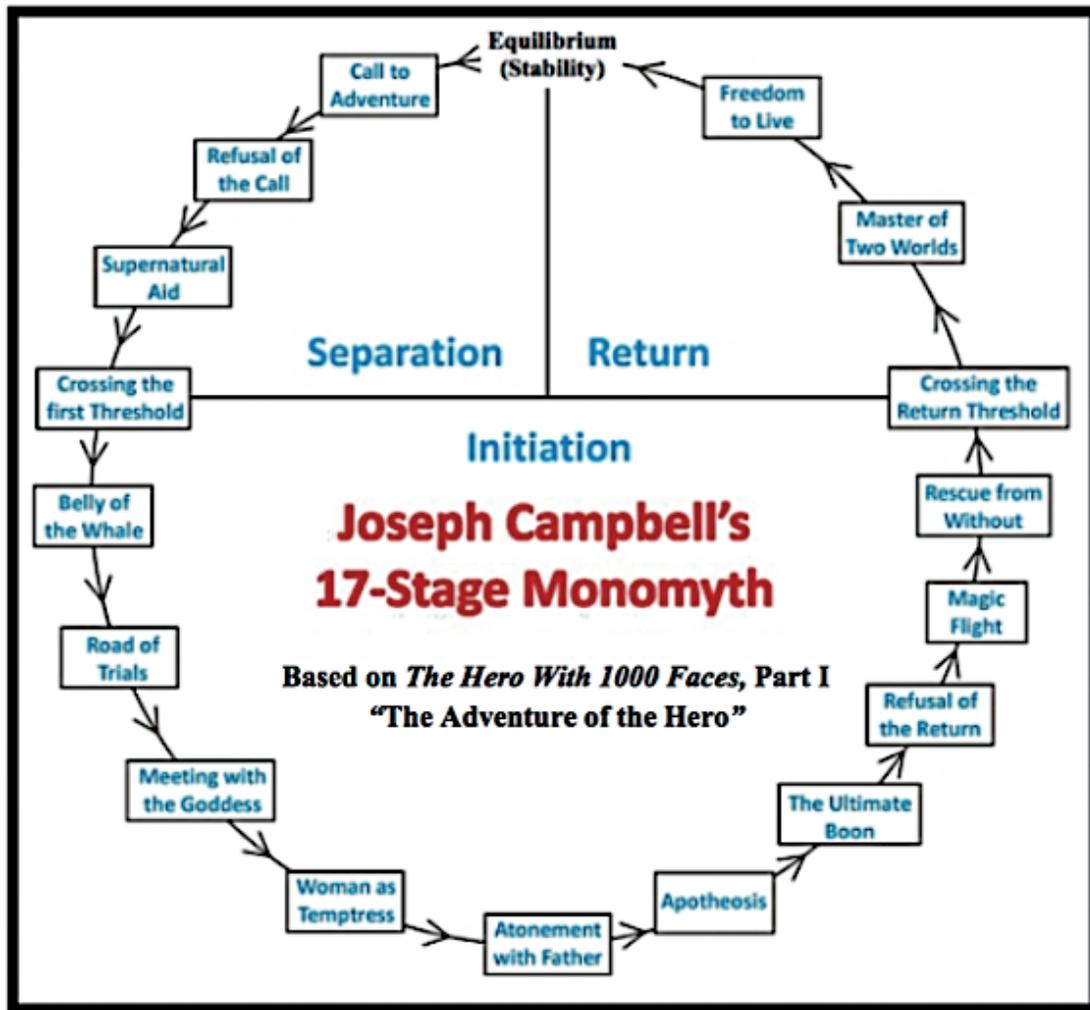


Figure 13. *Joseph Campbell's 17-Stage Monomyth*. (Internet, 2017).

Summary of Making Sense of Our Calling Into Life

Leading scholars presented their insights on the quest of calling, having a calling, or being called. Although each scholar delivered a unique approach on the particulars of calling, they arrived at the same or similar conclusion. This answered the first question sought in the literature review, which was, "How is a quest or calling revealed?" Moreover, the quest of calling, having a calling, or being called, was found to be as old as civilization, itself.

In the segment that follows, I address the second question of this investigation: Why is the phenomenon of Neverland essential? Toward that end, I begin with Neverland's origin,

which includes the information related to the author and central characters, followed by the significance Neverland plays throughout our lives, and closes with a study of Peter Pan, Neverland's main character.

Neverland

So, come with me, where dreams are born, and time is never planned. Just think of happy things, and your heart will fly on wings, forever, in Never Never Land! (J. M. Barrie, 1906, *Peter Pan*)



Figure 14. *On the Way to Neverland, Second Star to the Right*. (Internet, 2017). Wendy, John, and Michael Darling follow Peter Pan and fairy, Tinker Bell, to Neverland.

Neverland began in the imagination of Sir James Matthew (J. M.) Barrie, the highly acclaimed Scottish playwright and author, best known as the creator of *Peter Pan*, the legendary tale of a boy who refused to grow up. Barrie's (1906) *Peter Pan* series is recounted in various forms—stories, novels, and theater productions that first appeared in—*The Little White Bird* (1902) a novel; followed by *Peter Pan*, or *The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up* (1904) a play; *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* of Barrie's original work, *The Little White Bird*, and separately published chapters that incorporated a-book-within-a-book (1906); *When Wendy Grew Up: An*

Afterthought (1908) a play later published as a novel in (1957); and *Peter and Wendy* (1911), a novel, later published as *Peter Pan and Wendy*, modified as a novel from a play that integrates events from *When Wendy Grew Up - An Afterthought* (Merriman, 2006).

Barrie's (1911) initial reference to the far-away land that Peter Pan used to introduce the Darling children—Wendy, John, and Michael—was what he called *Never Never Never Land*. How Barrie arrived at the name *Never Never Never Land* is not known. Perhaps, Barrie was influenced by the colonization of the 1800s in which the Australian outback was called Never Never Land—a name spoken with fondness by the *Maluka* residents who never wanted to leave. Conversely, the colonizers referred to this name with great disdain as they saw the Outback as a place to never, never go (The Phrase Finder, 2017). In time, the triple name was changed to Never Never land in Barrie's explanation of where Peter Pan wanted to take the children and still in other references he addressed and cited this place as *Never Land*. Later, as others wrote or created stories about Peter Pan they used the name, as a single word, *Neverland*. For this reason, all spellings appear in this work reflecting the names used in the context of the sources cited. The important point is that no matter how the name was spelled, they all referenced the same place, which seekers can find by flying toward the “second star to the right and straight on till morning” (Barrie, 2016, p. 28).

The characters in the *Peter Pan* series are—Peter, the main character; the Darling children—Wendy, John, and Michael; Tinker Bell, Peter Pan's fairy Tinker Bell; the orphaned Lost Boys; Captain Hook, and his pirates; Indians; and fairies. This story has “inspired numerous adaptations to stage, television, and film, [in which] the 2004 film ‘Finding Neverland’ is based on Barrie's life, starring Johnny Depp as Barrie” (Merriman, 2006, p. 1). Since the play's inception, *Peter Pan* has been continuously performed throughout the Western world and

celebrated by audiences, young and old, as the century's most beloved and enchanted story of all time. Barrie has been favorably compared to "Lewis Carroll and Hans Christian Andersen for his creation of one of the most popular children's works ever written" (Barrie, 2009, p. 2). The story of *Peter Pan* is brimming with symbolism, metaphors, and allegories (Barrie, 2016; Peter Pan, 2009) that are "part fantasy, fairy tale, adventure story, and pantomime, [where] *Peter Pan* has been described as a modern myth in its archetypal treatment of childhood innocence, separation, and death" (p. 2). However, in this dissertation the word *Neverland*, is used as a metaphor to express the inner world of imagination based on Barrie's (1911) explanation of it being the place without boundaries in the imaginations of those who seek it.

Barrie's Chance Meeting

They met on the day, Barrie strolled through Kensington Park with his St. Bernard, Porthos; he encountered the older Llewelyn Davies boys, George, Jack, and Peter who were at-play overseen by their nanny. He introduced himself and Porthos, befriended the boys, and began to entertain them. From that day forward, Barrie's frequent visits to the park coincided with the boys who later included the two younger Llewelyn Davies brothers, Michael and Nico. Soon after, Barrie's relationship blossomed with the children who affectionately called him *Uncle Jim*, and his connection to their mother Sylvia developed to entail family outings and holidays. The Llewelyn Davies boys precipitated Barrie's inspiration for *Peter Pan*. As chronicled, "it was to them, through whom he began to live again the experience of childhood, that he told his first *Peter Pan* stories" (Barrie, 2016, p. 3) in *The Little White Bird* (1902), and *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (1906). Barrie was ultimately entrusted with the boys' legal and financial guardianship, as the result of their mother Sylvia's untimely death.

Neverland: Our Eternal Home

Gottschall (2012) stated, “We may leave the nursery, with its toy trucks and dress-up clothes, but we never stop pretending. We just change how we do it. Novels, dreams, films, and fantasies are provinces of Neverland” (p. 7). Gottschall professed, “You are a creature of an imaginative realm called Neverland. Neverland is your home, and before you die, you will spend decades there” (p. xiv). Imagination’s connection to story is like Peter Pan’s connection to his shadow; it is seamless. We are entrenched in story and cannot seem to get our fill or resist the gravity of journeying to alternate worlds. For example, every time we purchase a movie ticket, we allow ourselves to be taken over and drawn into the world of the film producer’s choice of genre—espionage, science fiction, romance, or comedy. The same holds true for music. When I attend the symphony, it feels as though my dad is sitting next to me. As I listen to Tchaikovsky, I am back in time as a little girl standing in my stocking feet in our living room with dad raising our invisible batons to conduct symphonies we hear on a record. All at once, I feel one with the music, what Csikszentmihalyi (1994) referred to as *flow*, and my body is immersed in utter joy.

Art is another medium of story where I open to the process of creative imagination. For example, when I am working with pastels, I feel as if I lose myself completely as the pastel melts into the paper; a feeling of bliss comes over me, and I am one, as orchestrator, as the chalk, and recipient as the paper. Similarly, when I am exposed to or participate in the multiple forms of storytelling such as reading a book, singing a song, or writing a poem, I open myself to the unfolding experiential process of story.

Of course, like everyone, my very existence is an ongoing story in which I am my own historian of my biography who witnesses my life experiences in the making. The types of stories include, but are not limited to “fictions, fantasies, dreams—these are, to the humanistic

imagination, a kind of sacred preserve. They are the last bastions of magic” (Gottschall, 2012, p. xv). In short, I could not agree more that Neverland is our eternal home:

Humans are creatures of Neverland. Neverland is our evolutionary niche, our special habitat. We are attracted to Neverland because, on the whole, it is good for us. It nourishes our imaginations; it reinforces moral behavior; it gives us safe worlds to practice inside. Story is the glue of human social life—defining groups and holding them together. We live in Neverland because we can’t *not* live in Neverland. Neverland is our nature. (Gottschall, 2012, p. 177)

Summary of Neverland

This section provides information on the originator of Neverland, J. M. Barrie, and the Llewelyn Davis boys, who the author-playwright credited as rekindling his childhood imagination and shaped his *Peter Pan* series. Gottschall (2012) claimed imagination’s Neverland affects the human condition, which is our natural habitat that fills out our daily lives. He further substantiated and answered the second question of this literature review: Why is the phenomenon of Neverland essential to human well-being?

The following section, addresses the third question of this investigation: How do social consequences impede the expression of imagination and the process of the original human story? Established from the outset and continued throughout this segment, discussed are the egregious complexities and multifaceted web that socialization weaves into our daily lives.

Social Consequences, Imagination and Story—Egregious Complexities

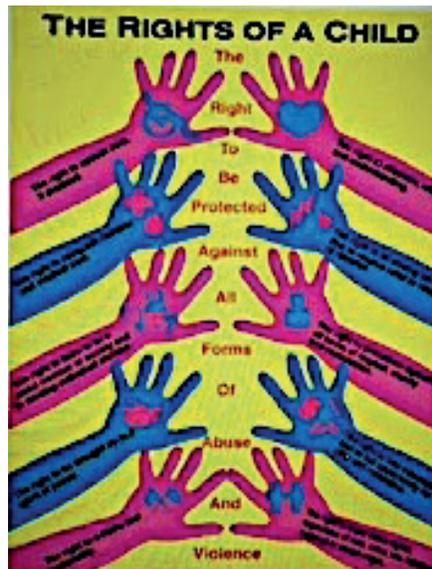


Figure 15. Children Have Rights. (Internet, 2017). This poster is a reminder that each child is a precious gift endowed with certain inalienable rights—to be loved, cared for, protected, and stewarded to fulfill his/her inner genius and potentials. After all, children are the future humanity.

The acorn draws the line, and no one can force it to cross into the territory of its incompetence. It is as if the oak cannot bend or pretend to be a lovely poplar. (Hillman, 1997, p. 102)

Social Impositions

We are treasure troves of untapped potentials codified with specific abilities to evolve. Although our spirit is mighty, primed, and willing, we enter life small, vulnerable, and reliant on others for our survival. We are like putty in the hands of humanity. Those with whom we come in contact influence us appreciably by imposing their perceptions, biases, and social conditioning on us without our knowledge or permission. Before we have words suitable to express our deepest feelings, our lifeline to the spiritual world, imagination, and our original intrinsic biography or *soul's code* and narrative are adversely compromised (Breton & Largent, 1996; Hillman, 1997; Liu & Noppe-Brandon, 2009; Meade, 2016; Moore, 2001).

Initiation. Our indoctrination to conformity begins with our closest sphere of influence,

which usually is our parents or guardians who guide us to follow the dictums of society believing it is in our best interest for attaining success and approval. According to Breton and Largent (1996), the roles of the “families are a dress rehearsal for what’s to come, and they’re designed to function that way. They prepare us emotionally to fit into society as it is. They’re our first encounter with society’s control paradigm” (p. 22). Thus, enacting one of the invisible, unspoken, and unwritten universal laws in social systems that families/guardians perpetuate whatever is the acceptable mainstream norm that steers many away from their preordained calling and potentials that Robinson (2009) called the *element*—the things we love and the things we love doing.



Figure 16. Compliance 101. (Internet, 2017). Children unknowingly become early captives of social systems abuse that use their naiveté and dependence to manipulate conditioning. Therefore, after curtailing their original calling, imagination, creative proclivity, innate wisdom, and self-expression, is it any wonder they become adults who have no idea of who they truly are?

Educational system. Our educators and educational system, once revered as the bedrock of intellectual, moral, and social training often dissuade our natural gifts enticed by pay to keep students contained, undoubtedly easier for the instructor to control the masses. Hillman (1997) proclaimed, “School failures are common; is this because the child fails school or because school fails the child? Either way, the gap widens between the innate intuitive ability of the child and

the formalized tuition of school” (p. 102). For instance, Hillman noted that Nobel prize winner Thomas Mann found school to be boring and unsatisfying; Indian scholar and poet Rabindranath Tagore left school at age 13 because he was miserable; Gandhi seldom appreciated his teacher, had little to no aptitude for lessons, and was usually unhappy; John Lennon was dismissed from kindergarten; General George Patton was held back and dyslexic; and Jackson Pollack was expelled for not following the dress code (Hillman, 1997, pp. 101-103). Breton and Largent (1996) referred to “award-winning teacher John Taylor Gatto” (p. 4) who corroborated these findings with a statement:

I began to realize that the bells and the confinement, crazy sequences, the age-segregation, the lack of privacy, the constant surveillance, and all the rest of the national curriculum of schooling was designed exactly as if someone has set out to *prevent* children from learning how to think and act, to coax them into addiction and dependent behavior. (p. 4)

Gatto (as cited in Breton & Largent, 1996) suggested as far from modern schooling being thought a sanctuary that develops mind:

it was designed to teach conformity, obedience to authority, tolerance for performing boring task, and other qualities useful in factory life. Schools run like factories, and students in them behave like zombies before they ever set foot on the factory floor. They’re well trained as do-what-you’re told, don’t-think-for-yourself works. Active minds are the bane of a military-model workplace, and schooling makes sure they’re unplugged. (p. 25)

Robinson’s (2009) research in educational systems identified “a one-size-fits-all mentality” (p. 14), where educators implement ridged protocols to teach students that “marginalizes all of those who do not take naturally to learning this way” (p. 14). As such, they use (a) critical analysis and reasoning with particular attention to words and numbers; (b) a specific hierarchy of subjects deemed a top priority of foremost importance—mathematics, sciences, and language skills, while humanities are relegated to secondary and tertiary proficiencies in the arts that include music and visual arts, theater, and dance, and lastly (c)

standardize assessment tests are administered to assess knowledge, not understanding.

Csikszentmihalyi (2006) commented, “values and institutions no longer provide a supportive framework as they once did, [as such] each person must use whatever tools are available to carve out a meaningful, enjoyable life” (p. 16). Supporting this frame of reference, I follow with a poignant story about a child named Gillian, as conveyed by Robinson (1990):

Gillian. At 8 years of age, Gillian’s future looked dim, at least as far as her teacher was concerned. She fidgeted in class, turned her assignments in late, tested poorly, lacked focus, and her handwriting was even problematic. Upon receiving this news in a letter from school, her mother acted without delay and scheduled an appointment with a psychologist. During the appointment, Gillian sat on the other side of the room while her mother discussed in detail the difficulties her daughter was experiencing in school. After a while, the psychologist approached Gillian and thanked her for her patience, saying it would be just a little longer as he needed to talk with her mother privately outside. Right before he left the room he reached across his desk and turned on the radio. In the corridor was a window that looked into the room where Gillian was confined. As he stood with Gillian’s mother, he directed her to wait a few minutes and see what Gillian did. In no time, the child was up on her feet moving around the room to the rhythm of the music. Precipitously, Gillian’s face reflected a palpable radiance, as she was one with her higher self. She flowed with the agility and grace of a choreographed dancer. The psychologist turned to Gillian’s mother and said, “Gillian isn’t sick. She’s a dancer. Take her to a dance school” (p. 3).

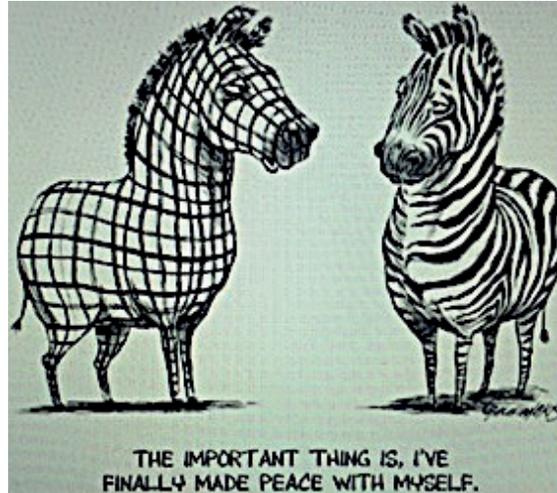


Figure 17. Owing Your Genius. (Internet, 2017). You are well on your way to an amazing life when you honor who you truly are.

Robinson (2009) said when he spoke with Gillian she described how wonderful it was to enter a room full of people just like herself who could not sit still and had to move to think. The rest is history. Eventually, Gillian was accepted into the Royal Ballet School in London, and went on to form her own musical company. Later, she met Andrew Lloyd Webber and entered into a collaborative partnership to create some of the most memorable and widely acclaimed musical theater productions that included *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera*.



Figure 18. Groupthink. (Internet, 2017). When we become so consumed with what the group thinks, we lose our personal identity, integrity, and authentic purpose.

Group identity. Conformity “means following the crowd down conventional paths and maintaining the status quo” (Grant, 2016, p. 3). Surprisingly, some of our closest friends who we have specifically chosen to extend our sense of identity may have jumped on the bandwagon of group thinking, also called *herd-mentality* (Trotter, 1919/2016), which applies peer pressure to enforce a sense of belonging and unanimity, as the group knows best, and overrides our initial response to take an alternative course of action (Robinson, 2009, pp. 142-143). In this respect, Hillman (1997) noted, “the danger of group think is that it dulls [our] individual judgment [where] schools of people are like schools of fish” (p. 96). Moreover, he pointed to unseen and unspoken intermediaries looming in our daily lives:

We live among a throng of invisibles that order us about: Family Values, Self-Development, Human Relationships, Personal Happiness, and then another, more fierce set of mythological figures called Control, Success, Cost-Effectiveness, and the biggest and most pervasively invisible, the Economy. Were we in old Florence or ancient Rome or Athens, our invisible dominants would have statues and altars, or at least painted images, as did the Florentine, Roman, Athenian invisibles called Fortune, Hope, Friendship, Grace, Modesty, Persuasion, Fame, Ugliness, Forgetfulness....But our task here is not to restore all the invisibles but to discriminate among them by attending to the one that once was called your *daimōn* or genius, sometimes your soul or your fate, and now your acorn. (p. 96)

Unfortunately, cultural constraints heighten feelings of displacement and frustration that cause many to question their identity and motives, as though something is wrong with them. According to Breton and Largent (1996), “there’s little room for individuality in a control model, since individuality is potentially threatening to the established order. It’s up to our social systems to drive it out of us—to make us obedient and compliant” (p. 20).



Figure 19. *Unmasking*. (Internet, 2017). Why fit in when you were born to stand out? (Dr. Seuss, 2017)

There are those who attempt to adapt to their environment and identify with others much like the story of the *Ugly Duckling* who attempted to comply with the larger pond of ducklings in order to fit in and be accepted. His efforts fell flat because he was not meant to be a duck. From his inception, he was divinely destined to be a phenomenal swan, which many consider to be the most beautiful of birds.

Addressing this quandary, Breton and Largent (1996) explained:

When we're ticking away within a paradigm's framework the norm is well defined, and we conform. Coping skills mean finding ways to fit into the norm, whether it's healthy or not. In fact, "healthy" is whatever the paradigm says it is. Becoming healthy means adjusting to the paradigm's definition. (pp. 6-7)

Try as they might, their daimōn will have no part of this false identity and will re-emphasize the attention to their unique identity and purpose (Jacobsen, 1999). Still there are those who refuse to heed their call, and sacrifice their soul to discover they have jeopardized their aliveness to live an incongruent life. Moore (2001) addressed this misinformed effort:

If we suppress this deep vitality and lose touch with our original self, we might well fall into a depression that is not just personal but that reflects the failure of this society, for all its praise of the individual, to nurture and support the wide-ranging possibilities of human life. (p. vii)

Robinson (2009) claimed, unfortunately "many people never connect with their true talents and therefore don't know what they're really capable of achieving...and don't know who they really

are” (p. xi) or what would fulfill them because of personal, cultural, and societal limitations (p. 155). Breton and Largent (1996) described:

our social systems reward soul-negating habits—those that blast our innate worth, creativity, and spirituality—and penalize people who put inner-directedness first. As long as social systems operate on a control paradigm, they reinforce habits that put souls need last, because that’s how we’re controllable. (p. 11)

Social systems’ cacophony. Meade (2016) eloquently explained what the problem was that modern life has created:

The problem isn’t a lack of calling, for each of us is called to something meaningful. The problem is hearing the call amidst all the distractions and confusions of modern life. The problem is that most people now fail to hear the call or else fail to answer to it, so that there can be little evidence of genuine calling to learn from or be encouraged by. (p. 5)



Figure 20. Staying Connected at What Cost? (Internet, 2017). In the current state of mass culture, it is all too easy to feel lost “in the river of distractions and in the waves of meaningless trends” (Meade, 2016, p. 200) where our most fundamental connection to ourselves is nearly impossible to hear.

We are inundated by noise that drowns out our connection to our inner muse making it more difficult to follow the directives that lead us to discovering who we are and why we are here. Buried in an avalanche of media-induced focus on an obsession with world problems of economics, politics, religion, health issues, global warming, war, and world hunger, many find themselves entangled in the ever-widening net of technology that delivers messages to their fingertips amidst cybernetics. In today’s world, staying in touch is a priority. These technological advancements transmit leading-edge information as happenings occur that allow us to reach across time lines where situations could be as critical as life and death and financial gain or loss.

Yet, our energies are being diverted away from the unfolding experiences where life and relationships happen. In this reality, we have become both slave and victim of the machine that threatens our intrinsic nature creating chaotic disorientation (Jung, 1990/2011). Meanwhile on the home front, the gap of disparity grows, intensifies, and divides the *haves* and *have nots* that become more evidenced in organized chaos (Breton & Largent 1996). More than ever, “as the realm of reason has grown, there has developed a loss of imagination and lack of the deeper understanding of mythos needed to make real sense of the world” (Meade, 2016, p. 57). Furthermore, “the sad fact is that until a person awakens to the presence of spirit and genius in their own life, they can reject it in the lives of others, including those they love the most” (p. 184). Moreover:

Through the tyranny of facts and horizontal connections, we lose the surprising and mysterious presence of the imaginative view of life and the metaphoric mind that can find connections where none were visible, that can locate openings where all paths seemed closed. We lack the inherent, instinctive poetics of language and lose familiarity with the innate creativity of the human mind and soul. (p. 184)

Accordingly, a narrowly defined world tragically results in human suffering, thus, changing our preordained story in which healing toward wholeness becomes even more problematic.



Figure 21-25. Living in a Material World. (Internet, 2017). Materialism coarsens and petrifies everything, making everything vulgar, and every truth, false. (Henri Frederic Amiel)

According to Fine (2006), “We must define success ourselves...generally [we] do not have a clear understanding of what we are trying to achieve in more measurable terms.

[Therefore,] we put ourselves at the mercy of others to define the end results” (p. 17). Western society’s definition of a successful life often drives us away from our intrinsic self, if not divides our loyalties. Our society pays homage to a superficial God whose primary focus is on external trappings—money, power, fame, and possessions—that do not, alone, add to the quality of a meaningful life.



Figure 26 and Figure 27. *Tap Dancing to the Tune of New World Order*. (Internet, 2017).

Thurman (2006) posited:

The gods of materialism, prestige, power, self-pity, and anxiety all demand full allegiance. They promise a complete identity and feelings of fulfillment, but they are incapable of delivering these for the full stretch of life. Their primary purpose is not to fulfill the self, but to enslave it. (pp. 129-130)

In as much, German psychologist-psychoanalyst, sociologist and humanistic philosopher, Fromm (1955) observed we are primed by psychological conditioning and mass suggestions that promise monetary rewards. Modern industrial society ceases to function satisfactorily because the emphasis on happiness is projected on future accomplishments, not on present happenings. In our pursuit of material gain we lose our deepest sense of self, our authentic self in our social system and begin to see ourselves as a commodity to be traded to the highest bidder in the market place. As such, “in control-paradigm systems, we’re not human beings on quest for meaning; we’re money-making, job-doing machines” (Breton and Largent 1996, p. 13). Meade

(2016) elaborated:

We may rarely feel or fully grasp our greatest inheritance: the sense of inner meaning and purpose seeded in our lives. The ancient reverence for the individual, at times so clear and important, becomes easily lost amidst the collectivism of mass culture. For, despite touting themes of individual freedom, modern cultures are permeated with an atmosphere of literalism, materialism, and collectivism. The growing despair under the shining surface of mass culture arises from the sense that collective life increasingly lacks meaning and individual life serves no purpose. (pp. 8-9)

In hopes of achieving a life worth living, many continue to chase after happiness like the hare chasing a carrot, with the anticipation of finding lasting meaning to confirm their life truly matters. Many keep their false identity in play because they have bought into the illusion of success and fear the consequences and reprisal. Hence, they are riddled with unease, emptiness, and a sense of knowing those they trusted lied to them. Caught in a vicious cycle of *not enough*—being enough, doing enough, or having enough—eventually, causes them to realize the cycle is unending, and this form of so-called happiness is unsustainable. Csikszentmihalyi, (2006) posited, “daunted by the futility of trying to keep up with all the demands we cannot possibly meet, some will just surrender and retire gracefully into relative oblivion” (p. 13). Should we continue on this trajectory, our fate appears inevitably regrettable.

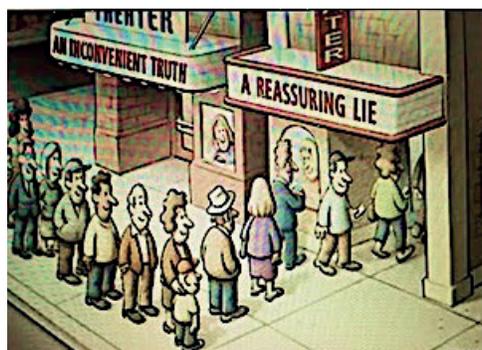


Figure 28. Now Playing—A Reassuring Lie. (Internet, 2017). For many, facing the truth is much too harrowing. From appearances, following the crowd is the easier way to go. After all, society has given the story top rating. Now, how could we possibly go wrong with that? However, the reassuring lie in this picture projects a false identity and ignores each individual’s unique offering.

Socialization. Continuing on this line of thought, I refer to Campbell (1990/2003) who depicted socialization as the corrupt mechanism that erodes the human spirit and robs humanity of its genius. Campbell remembered, “as a kid, seeing a caterpillar into which an ichneumon wasp had laid its eggs and the eggs had hatched, and this poor caterpillar was being consumed from inside by maggots while it was still alive” (p. 65). Campbell argued, “social pressure is the enemy” (p. 65), and maintained his position and asserted:

How in heaven’s name are you going to find your own track if you are always doing what society tells you to do? ...those who followed their zeal, their bliss, they have led decent, wonderful lives; those who did what Dad said they should do because it’s safe found out it’s not safe. It’s disaster. (p. 64)

Csikszentmihalyi (2008) built on this point of view and posited:

The essence of socialization is to make people dependent on social controls, to have them respond predictably to rewards and punishments. And the most effective form of socialization is achieved when people identify so thoroughly with the social order that they no longer can imagine themselves breaking any of its rules. (p. 17)

Social cultures promote “contagious behavior [like lemurs], spirits of the dead” (Robinson, 2009, p. 149) many follow like sheep being herded through the turnstile of mindless conformity to *follow the leader* directives. It is against this background that Fine (2006) posited, “the greatest obstacle to our success is the lack of power—both perceived and actual,” (p. 12) which “is reflected in a fear-filled environment in which we follow rules not of our own making, having virtually no voice...and keep taking it on the chin” (p. 15). Many are outraged by such abhorrent behavior, viewed as an attempt to decimate the unique genius of creative expression. Still others find this infrastructure a safe haven of expected outcomes directly affected by—what to do and who to be.

Social consequences influence our imagination, biography, and narrative.

Blocks that bury identity beneath layers of prescribed “should” and “should not” behaviors enslave the self, veto its gifts, and ultimately eclipse the soul. Ironically,

tolerating the false self for too long, remaining loyal to the given societal script, makes us feel increasingly invisible. The predicament is this: Which kind of invisibility is less damaging, more likely to cure chronic emptiness—hiding the Self's light under a bushel and pursuing the unfulfilling grind, or resuscitating the lost Self? (Jacobsen, 1999, p. 185)

Given the circumstances within our life each of us face innumerable situations that challenge our authentic self, which can have detrimental effects on the overall quality of how we live life. Regardless of the extent of the circumstance, whether long or short in duration, the incident is less relevant when compared to the effect the occurrence has on our intrinsic ethical codes, which tell us if we are either connected or disconnected with our higher self. The following two examples demonstrate my supposition.

The family systems dynamic had a life altering effect on Neverland's author Barrie whose mother withdrew from life after losing her favored son in an ice-skating accident. Young Barrie at the time was only 6 years old. After seeing his mother gravely affected, he took it upon himself to rouse his mother in an effort to return her to her former self. In the beginning, Barrie's attempt fell flat, that is, until he dressed in his brother's clothes and imitated his brother's voice. Change was inevitable, for in that moment—the boy James vanished and the adult James appeared, forever defining Barrie's life. What many may not know is that Barrie's mother viewed J. M. as his brother, literally frozen in time, a boy forever young that *never grew up* or aged. This may indeed be one of two thematic threads of *Peter Pan's* underlying issues. The *other*, in this case, is Barrie who, as an adult lived, his childhood imaginings through his writings and/or presumably a combination of both. As fate would have it, what seemed to be a chance encounter with the Llewelyn Davis boys in the park, in fact, was an opportunity for Barrie to rekindle his lost childhood imagination. In due course, Barrie (2004) wrote numerous books and versions about the boys, which became known as the *Peter Pan* series and eventually evolved into the Movie, *Finding Neverland*, (2004).

Emphasizing the guardians roll and its effect on young minds, Dobson (2009) argued, “every day, in large and small ways, well-meaning parents impose their own opinions, dreams and realities on budding imaginations” (p. 2) intending for their child to have the best opportunities that include financial stability, they abide with social dictates of everyday acceptable norms. In so doing, they unconsciously send messages that undermine their child’s innate intelligence, imagination, and giftedness.



*Figure 29. **Imagining.*** (Internet, 2017). Our dreams of becoming begin early as children. No idea is too BIG or too small; our imagination sees everything as possible.

One such instance involved a 7-year-old 1st grader, Katie, who was learning about the food pyramid in class. Suddenly, Katie imagined yanking a carrot from the ground, smelling the earth, rising to the rooster’s crow, and selling vegetables at the farmer’s market. Enthusiastically, Katie raced home to share the good news with her mother, who replied, “A farmer? Ick! All that hard work for so little pay? Keep working at your math and you can do better than that! You could be a doctor” (p. 2)!

Liu and Noppe-Brandon (as cited in Dobson, 2009) formerly with Lincoln Center Institute (LCI) for the Performing Arts and co-authors of the book *Imagination First*, wondered, “if millions of these small ‘deaths of possibility,’ in homes and in schools, are adding up to something really dangerous for our country and our future” (p. 2). They elaborated further on this point:

I think there is a crisis of imagination right now. If you look all across our society,

you realize that a lot of the challenges we face in our schools—and a lot of our social problems at the neighborhood and national level—boil down to either failure of imagination or neglect of imagination.

Our education system doesn't do nearly enough to emphasize, reward, honor and teach imagination and creativity, largely because of the emphasis on testing. We're losing some of the spirit of imagination. If we merely cram kids full of a lot of what, we leave them utterly unready for what if...and it's that 'what if' that is at the underpinning of personal—and institutional—success...The crisis of imagination is the direct result of abundance. When you have more video games and media products, and places to go and trips to go on, a lot of possibility is presented to you leaving no room for imagination. (p. 2).

Hubbard (2012) added to the concern of children's imagination not being adequately exercised and insisted technology has “changed a child's imaginary play in a negative way” (p. 2) after having observed children as young as 2 years old with limited verbal skills sit passively watching video games. Hubbard worried about children lacking the opportunity and knowledge of how to use and express themselves through their imagination with the simplest of toys, Tupperware, wooden spoons, blocks, building forts, making tents, telling stories, which Hubbard believed will likely present a problem to children adapting to changes in life.

When young, most children are told they can be anything they want to be. So, they set out into the world with an open heart, a trusting spirit, and a bag full of dreams only to be met with tremendous opposition, society-at-large and its requisite socialization, which has established social standards indicating what are acceptable or unacceptable behaviors and preferred ways of being. Socialization determines what social skills, beliefs, and values need to be adopted by the children given the context of specific groups and social settings of family, institutes, religions, and organizations, which call for social norms to be met. Fortunately for some gifted individuals, creative connections steward them along the way to reach their destiny. However, not everyone is as privileged. The less fortunate are left behind, vulnerable, and unprepared to fight the quagmire of resistance of socio-cultural mandates. Stopped in their tracks and devastated by a

world that rejects their giftedness, the aftermath takes its toll leaving them deeply wounded. In earnest, they attempt to scrape together their emotional remains and move forward with their lives. Jacobsen (1999) elaborated, “What we see is listlessness, a distant look in the eye like a dim flickering flashlight powered by weak batteries. No stimulation is being absorbed, so no stimulation is being released” (p. 257). Breton and Largent (1996) asserted:

The social systems requiring us to behave in soul-disconnected ways must also change. And no matter how hard we try to change social systems, they won't budge until we tackle the belief structures, rules, methods, and goals—the paradigm—that require “soul loss,” as shamanic traditions call it, to create a “healthy” society.

Micro without macro recovery is where most recovery people are these days. We're dealing with original-family as well as self-esteem issues, which means we're challenging the power-over, soul-be-damned messages we got while growing up. We're doing our best to make a personal paradigm shift and to honor our souls in ways that were never modeled for us. (pp. 12-13)

With that said, these individuals grow up and become adults that insulate themselves from the outer world and bury their intrinsic nature deep within themselves.

Meade (2016) shared the bigger picture and demystified the original intent:

This inner imprint of the soul is the hidden message we each carry into the world: it is the source of a unique identity that is reflected in both body and soul. Each birth begins a once-in-a-lifetime adventure, and each life presents the question of whether we awaken to what is unique within us or not. The much-heralded idea that “you can be anything you want to be” is not true now and never has been. Imagining that you can become anything you wish misses the greater and deeper point that each person is already aimed and shaped from within.

The human soul is a living paradox—neither a predetermined personality nor a completely open possibility. The point in this life is not simply to “become somebody,” but to become who we were each intended to be when we first entered this world. For each of us has the most to give and contributes most meaningfully when we become who we were intended to be from the beginning. That is the inside story and the hidden message that has been etched upon each soul. (p. 94)

Further elaborating on this conversation was psychologist, Jacobsen (1999), author of the book *The Gifted Adults*, who at the time of her writing, worked exclusively with adult clients to support them to revive wonder, awe, and giftedness and taught them to live out their imagination.

She commented about hearing antithetical messages of what others told her she could become:

Though I was taught that uniqueness and individually were the American way, this proved to be more myth than reality. So, I stayed on the approved track and played my prescribed part quite successfully. I put away my watercolors and poems and lived a conventional adult life that by most people's estimation should have been 'good enough'.

For a long time, I made believe that I was content, because that was true on many fronts. Yet in my quiet times I was bothered by a profound feeling of emptiness, as though I had lost something vital. I couldn't figure out the source of my discomfort. Years later, in midlife, this memory came to the forefront when I hit the identity wall, suddenly unable to recognize myself. Worse still, I noticed that instead of becoming more clear minded as the years went on, I felt increasing uneasy and scattered. I started to think that the possibilities of life I had always imagined were destined to be nothing more than faded childhood fantasies. After all, I concluded, I had "lost so many years" being unclear about the direction I wanted my life to take. (p. 131)

Zander and Zander (2000), co-authors of *The Art of Possibility*, poetically reflected:

Remember how we used to dream as children of the
delicious freedom and power of being grown-up?
And somehow the dream vanished along the way,
and we were energized only here and there by a job
well done, a spirited gathering, or an occasional
week in the sun? Now that we know it's all
invented, let's revise this story. Let's just say that
somewhere along the journey we carried too much,
or slipped too often, or heard too many voices in our
heads, and wandered off track. The possibility we saw
so clearly as children got lost in the *downward spiral*,
and we forgot the promise of our birth. (p. 200)

In light of this, I was left wondering whether this was a missed opportunity, or a golden opportunity that awaits us. Pioneer psychologist, author-speaker of the human potential movement, Houston (1998) was convinced that "personal wounding opens us, as nothing else can, to the larger reality that we contain. Suffering cracks, the boundaries of what we thought we could stand. And yet, through these cracks sprout the seeds of healing and transformation" (p. 85). Frankl (1946/2006) Australian neurologist, psychiatrist, holocaust survivor, and author of the remarkable book *Man's Search for Meaning* said:

The way in which a man accepts his fate and all the suffering it entails, the way in which

he takes up his cross, gives him ample opportunity—even under the most difficult circumstances to add a deeper meaning to his life. (p. 67)

Miller and Cook-Greuter (2000) elucidated on the benefits of suffering:

the crisis of acute suffering can provide a crucible for the mysteries of life, involving, as it does, an encounter with forces that decay and destroy, together with those that resuscitate and inspire. Suffering can thus become a vehicle to a higher level of consciousness and self-awareness if the seeker has kept alive his or her inner fires, and used them as a means of directing his or her life. These inner fires, ignited from fierce passion of combat with illness and suffering, may be employed to inspire others as well. (p. 53)

With this understanding in mind, it is possible to rise anew like a Phoenix from the ashes if we choose. Harrell (1995), nationally acclaimed speaker, consultant, and trainer known as Dr.

Attitude preached, “attitude is the difference-maker. Attitude dictates whether you’re living life or life is living you. Attitude determines whether you are on the way or in the way” (p. 3).

Betwixt and between.

We are like lightening bugs, imprisoned by societies glass jar, bumping up against the lid of self-expression, attempting to break free. Our air supply is cut from endless skies to jar lid holes. We fight to stay airborne; weariness settles in. If our prison lid is unscrewed it goes undetected, we fly no higher. (Baroff, 2016a, p. 16)

Many of us are *soul-sick* and entrapped by ethical determinism:

This position assumes the essential rationality of human beings...that a person will necessarily act in accordance with what he or she perceives to be good, whether or not it really is good, or that a person will act consistently with what he or she perceives to be good, where what is good is what is in that person’s self-interest. (APA, 2007, p. 344)

Breton and Largent (1996) posited, “Unfortunately, soul loss is hard to escape—and even harder to acknowledge—in a society dominated by a paradigm that regards our souls as the enemy” (p.

18). Meade argued:

Amidst the onslaught of mass information and misinformation, it takes courage and determination to grow up and become oneself; were that not the case, more people would do it. To awaken to the living dream within one’s life and remain awake in a world that tries to lull everyone to sleep involves a repeated struggle yet it also presents something truly worth fighting for. Given even half a chance, most people will seek a way to be part

of something greater than the obvious level of social life. Something deep within us instinctively seeks to be part of “larger than life.” (pp. 94-95)

We are malcontents caught in the crossfire between personal and social values confronted by an ethical conundrum of how we define life by our own terms, our soul’s code, and concurrently co-exist in a society that is determined to define us! Jung (1990/2011) interjected, “the individual is increasingly deprived of the moral decision as how he [or she] should live his [or her] own life” (p. 8). This discord rides on the coattail of approval, our own and/or another’s. The torment of social conformity carries with it many invisible messages, Breton and Largent (1996) argued:

Feeling pain is threatening—it threatens our commitment to the control paradigm—so we’re trained to silence it: “Buck up and do your duty!” “Fit in!” “What’s wrong with you today?”

There’s no place for feelings, especially so-called unpleasant ones, in rules/roles/systems-governed life. To avoid them we plunge ourselves into work, hobbies, churches, and families, numbing and rumblings of discontent with food, alcohol, shopping, or drugs. We try to make up for what’s missing—to dull the pain of loss. (p. 19)

As confirmed by previous examples, we find ourselves faced with having to choose between acceptable social standards of success in which our essential self is ultimately threatened by not living our element or potentials of who we are born to be or by deviating from the norm and swimming against the current. If we rationalize conforming to what society deems worthy, we chance a life of suffering for not expressing our true nature. Csikszentmihalyi (2006) disclosed:

A thoroughly socialized person is one who desires only the rewards that others around him have agreed he should long for...He may encounter thousands of potentially fulfilling experiences, but he fails to notice them because they are not the things he desires. (p. 18)

Fromm (1955) stated, “Thus, alienated man feels guilty for being himself, and for not being himself, for being alive and for being an automaton, for being a person and for being a thing” (p. 205). Fromm (1955) explained:

The person who is overwhelmed by a feeling of his own powerlessness and unworthiness, by unceasing doubt as to whether he is saved or condemned to eternal punishment, who is hardly capable of genuine joy, suffers from a severe defect. Yet this very defect was culturally patterned; it was looked upon as particularly valuable, and the individual was thus protected from the neurosis which he would have acquired in a culture where the same defect gave him a feeling of profound inadequacy and isolation. (pp. 15-16)

Instinctively, we know “our lives aren’t when we’re clamoring for validation from others, but...listening to our own voice—doing something that matters, doing it well, and doing it in the service of a cause larger than ourselves...it’s an affirmation of humanity” (Pink, 2009, p. 146). Nonetheless, the world of duality drives some of us deeper inside ourselves in search of our truth. Houston (1998) posited, “Are we in a cauldron of pain or a chalice of opportunity? Shall we fret and whine, or can we see our suffering as a hand coming from the Higher Power to pull us in to a new story?” (p. 85). Out of the darkness of our life, “hope springs eternal in the human breast” (quotation from Goodreads.com). Liu and Noppe-Brandon (2009) asserted, “Our lives are boxed in by limitations, material and attitudinal, that we inherit or create. It takes intentional practice to see those limitations not merely as something to tolerate but as the source of new invention” (p. 73). We might question whether we have the courage to step through the portal of conformity to claim our personhood “to become nobody but [our] true self and to struggle against the tide of sameness and the false security of simply fitting in, [which, decidedly,] is a fight worth having” (Meade, 2016, p. 95). The question that confronts us is, whether we will heed the call or maintain the guise. The quality of our life is determined by this single choice. If we do nothing, do we play it safe? Holocaust survivor and Nobel Laureate, Wiesel (1999) commented:

To be indifferent to that suffering is what makes the human being inhuman...Indifference is not a beginning, it is an end. And, therefore, indifference is always the friend of the enemy, for it benefits the aggressor—never his victim, whose pain is magnified when he or she feels forgotten. (p. 2)

Jacobsen (1999) found, “the ‘safe,’ ‘riskless’ life—is sentencing ourselves to go through the motions of life like the walking dead” (p. 194). Moral philosopher, Singer (2000) professed, “we are choosing between different possible ways of living, [a] way of living in which self-interest is paramount, or that in which ethics is paramount, or perhaps some trade-off between the two” (p. 242). Singer (2000), who was influenced by French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, “saw this kind of choice as an expression of our ultimate freedom. We are free to choose what we are to be, because we have no essential nature, that is, no given purpose outside ourselves” (p. 242). Silently we cogitate the weighted cost and ask, “Does it matter what we do? It matters to the extent that we matter. Indeed, our acts matter incarnate-*in* us, for they make us what we are” (Macy, 1991, p. 94). Graham (1991) purported:

There is a vitality, a life force, and energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and it will be lost. The world will not have it. It is not your business to determine how good it is nor how valuable nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business to keep it yours clearly and directly, to keep the channel open. (p. 264)

Meade’s (2016) message reinforces our vital importance:

The individual soul must have its share of genius and an exact core of imagination that can transcend the collective attitudes and the flattening of the world. Yet, we cannot truly believe in ourselves until we reveal to ourselves the hidden message and inner purpose of our lives. If we fail to use our innate gifts and God-given qualities, we leave the field open for those who have little genius and narrow purposes to determine the course of history. If we fail to live out the allotment of genius given to us, no one will ever live it. Our real job in life is to become our true selves in such a way that we are seen as irreplaceable. (p. 95)

The Paradigm Conspiracy

What is fueling this form of abuse towards moral/ethical corruption and false identity, is that which drives us away from our intrinsic self, thus bankrupting humanity with a tainted social systems structure composed of disconnected people. Our educational institutes, families,

governments, businesses, and religious organizations cause this abuse. But the next question that calls for an answer is, “Why is our social system doing this to us?” I turned to Breton and Largent’s (1996) book *The Paradigm Conspiracy* to find answers.

The root problem. Personal abuse begins with *addictive* social systems and the *control* taken by persons or groups in positions of power in any particular system. Currently, in the Western culture, and much of the rest of the world that has been culturally westernized, our paradigms are configured mental models generated by a culture that elevates scientists who give form to an internal structure that becomes the map of reality—the blueprint that informs our worldview, life perspective, and philosophy regarding the way we think and feel, and what we do. These mental models, from a science-based perspective are not just random structures; they typically begin from outstanding models such as Newtonian science or Einstein’s theory of relativity that “weaves together theories, standards, and methods in a way that makes better sense than anything else” (Breton & Largent, 1996, p. 6). Where once these ideas were separated from current reality, they become the new accepted worldview of reality. After a while, the once distinguishable components fade away and the scientists forget the paradigm exists. As time progresses relative to human evolution and revolutionary developments, new ideas, thoughts, perspectives, and informational findings surface that no longer fit the existing paradigm that reached a crisis. According to Breton and Largent (1996), scientists felt threatened by these new discoveries because they call into question everything they have learned and know; therefore, to feel secure, they set out to justify the existing paradigm and keep it in place. This creates a condition in which a scientific paradigm could be called “extraordinary science,” which decries the situation we have today, a corrupt paradigm that is causing unhealthy abusive and addictive systems:

In Buddhism, knowledge is regarded as an obstacle to understanding, like a block of ice that obstructs water from flowing. It is said that if we take one thing to be truth and cling to it, even if truth itself comes in person and knocks at our door, we won't open it. For things to reveal themselves to us, we need to be ready to abandon our views about them. (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1987/1992, p. 42)

Campbell (1990/2003) advised:

There's something rather... exhilarating about putting yourself on the side of *life*, instead of on the side of protective *ideas*. When all of these protective ideas about life that you've been holding on to break down, you realize what a horrific thing it is, and you are it. This is the rapture of the Greek tragedy. This is what Aristotle called *catharsis*. Catharsis is a ritual term, and it is elimination of the ego perspective: wiping out ego-system, wiping out rational structuring. (p. 65)

Therefore, in order for human conditions to change, we must recognize and call out those responsible for these paradigms. The social systems will continue to erode our moral fiber that produces inhumane suffering affecting all areas of human life until we are committed to make a change that we actually implement. How do we solve this enduring problem? We can wait for the practitioners of the old-paradigm to die, or we die under the addictive model. The thought of either alternative equates to an imprisoned soul and long-term suffering, which certainly, does not seem to be a viable solution. For "what is destroying our world is the persistent notion that we are independent of it" (Macy, 1991, p. 13).



Figure 30-32. Planetary Atrocities. (Internet, 2017). If we continue to abuse our natural resources, we will have nothing left to sustain life.

Breton and Largent (1996) insisted that changing the paradigms changes everything:

The fact that the control paradigm draws its power from our shared commitment to it

gives us the leverage we need to make a paradigm shift, since we can withdraw our commitment at any time. Because we're part of our social systems, every shift we make precipitates shift in the systems around us. They can't stay the same. (p. 28)

One excellent example is:

Mahatma Gandhi's approach to ending British rule in India illustrates the power of shifting a paradigm commitment. This led to the Indian independence movement in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Gandhi argued that several thousand British couldn't enslave several million Indians if the Indians didn't accept British control. The Indians allowed the British to rule them by accepting their model of domination. Once they refused to accept this paradigm, the British had to leave. (Breton & Largent, 1996, pp. 28-29)

Change often begins when one bold individual holds firmly to his or her convictions and stands in the face no agreement.

Waking up to the spiritual purpose the social systems and envisioning social structures built on this model represent a major paradigm shift. The Control paradigm, of course, says it can't be done. Nonetheless, if every person is worthy of honor and respect, if every person is sacred and carries hidden treasures, then we need a paradigm that enables us to tap our soul's treasures and to let them flow through our lives together. Why shouldn't we be able to this? (Breton and Largent, 1996, p. 31)

Paradigm anatomy. Once we identify the constituents that comprise a paradigm's anatomy and assemble the four-fold process of recovery, assumptions change, strategies, responses, and goals shift, we can determine how to develop a new paradigm that makes possible a transformational, soul-nurturing, egalitarian system. Breton and Largent's (1996) outline follows as presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Paradigm Anatomy

-
- a. *Assumptions* are what we take for granted and assume to be true, the premises from which everything else follows. Do we assume, for example, that control is our top priority or that our souls are [top priority]? Both are assumptions. We're free to choose.
 - b. *Strategies* include the theories, concepts, rules, roles, and methods that put our assumptions into practice. An assumption that says control is everything spawns strategies that tell us how to get control and keep it. An assumption that puts soul at the center gives rise to strategies that respect the inner creative powers of all human beings and help us develop those powers.
 - c. *Responses* show the everyday face of a paradigm through our habits, reactions, social structures, and patterns of behavior. Whatever happens, we respond from one paradigm or another, even if we don't sit down and analyze it first. To some people, for instance, every interaction is a chance to prove who's better, smarter, more successful, more important, wealthier, even more "spiritually advanced." That's a control-paradigm response. To others, every interaction is a chance to learn and evolve in mutually supportive ways.
 - d. *Goals* are how paradigms guide our actions. A control-paradigm goal might be to establish military model of social order, for example, or to establish ourselves in a superior position. Soul-based paradigms, by contrast, give us goals that have to do with inward evolution. (p. 34)
-

Importantly, for the paradigm to change, all aspects named must change. The prototype requires a total shift. If not, it is not a shift at all, just the old model masquerading as something new. In the process of testing out new strategies the goal intended is to create the optimal model that works.

Table 4

Three-Fold Rhythm of Shifting Paradigms

How do we shift paradigms? Through the threefold process of recovery: (1) by confronting pain, (2) waking up to our souls, and (3) reclaiming our innate creative powers. Through this process, we withdraw our commitment to a paradigm that's not working and start evolving another. To our assumptions, strategies, responses, and goals, we ask the following questions:

1. *Where are we, and where are we going?* What are our social systems' assumptions, strategies, responses, and goals, and where do they lead? What kind of worlds do they create? Here's where pain comes up, as we confront abusive social structures. We take stock of what's going on—and the paradigm reasons for it.
 2. *How do we get from here to there?* What process takes us, for instance, from a control to a soul-centered paradigm or from a power-over to a mutual-support model? Spiritual awakening. We wake up to who we are and to what our systems can be, and this new awareness gives us the courage that transformation—micro and macro—requires.
 3. *How can we make the shift and go for change?* In the third phase, we withdraw our commitment to the old model and put it behind transformation. As Captain Picard says on *Star Trek, The Next Generation*, "Make it so." We no longer tolerate the abuse that goes with "life as usual." Instead, we demand soul-honoring paradigms and work to restructure ourselves, our relationships, and our social systems accordingly. (Breton & Largent, 1996, pp. 35-36)
-

The combination of the constituents of four elements with the threefold rhythm of shifting a paradigm equates to what Breton and Largent (1996) referenced as the twelvefold path for transformation that begins at the paradigm stratum and trickles down to transforms the whole system, us included. This model has been well tested for confronting crises in paradigms and beginning paradigm shifts, AA's Twelve-step program is linked to this model. Ancient history relates to archetypal consciousness of the number twelve, similarly used in Buddha's twelvefold chain of causation. In addition, traditionally used as symbolic representation—in astrology as the

twelve signs, and twelve houses, the twelve tribes of Israelites, the twelve Babylonian gods, the twelve-tribe constitution in Plato's *Laws*, the twelve knights of King Arthur, and the twelve disciples of Jesus (Breton & Largent, 1996). All of these examples seem to point to the same concept of human movement into and through a series of 12 paradigms, perhaps indicating that each holds an aspect of truth, but does not contain all there is to know or understand about being human. Remaining stuck or forcing the society to remain attached to one paradigm impedes the process of our growth, both personally and as the whole of human experience.

In bringing this section to a close on the ravages of social consequences that affect our life force of imagination and biography I capitalize on Houston's (1996) words:

We look about us and see the hazards of mass destruction through nuclear and biological weapons; threats to privacy and freedom; overpopulation; the savaging of women and children; exacerbated unemployment. Everywhere we find an encroaching wasteland of air, noise, water, and land pollution and the depletion of the Earth's resources; the overload of information and our vulnerability to collapse and breakdown; the dehumanization of ordinary work; the decline of family. The wasteland looms in the proliferation of institutional megastructures that have created a vast chasm between public and private life, such that the political order is seen as detached from the values and realities of individual life, and the individual gives neither moral sanction nor legitimacy to political order. (p. 102)

Summary of Social Consequences, Imagination, and Story

This segment furnishes comprehensive explanations with examples of social consequences that indicate its beginning and insidious advancement that encroaches on the human story, narrative, and the creative force of imagination. Discussed is socialized conformity of a false self in opposition to independent originality of the authentic or essence self. Accordingly, emphasized is the goal to achieve sustainable happiness. Materialism and collectivism are examined counter to spiritual fulfillment. Suggestions are offered of possible solutions that could induce new paradigms that support and enhance creative proclivity as healthful solutions that revive the human spirit of humankind. The literature reviewed answered

the question I had asked, “How did social consequence impeded the expression of imagination and the process of the original human story?”

In this upcoming fourth segment, we explore the background, historical events, and underlying nuances of imagination that answers three questions: What evidence is there to identify when our species developed imagination? How has the use of this knowledge affected my understanding of the evolution of the human story? Why is imagination undervalued?

Imagination



Figure 33. *Time Flies*. (Josephine Wall, *The Fantasy World of Josephine Wall*, 2013, p. 62). The world is but a canvas to imagination (Henry Thoreau).

I have chosen two of Blake’s (1793/2017a, 2017b) well-known verses that I believe envelop imagination’s function as our most precious resource that furnishes us with our ideas that, in turn, become our experiences through which we imagine and create both our inner and outer worlds from which we live.

To see a World in a grain of Sand and a Heaven in a Wild Flower, Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand and Eternity in an hour. (p. 7)

If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to [humankind] as it is, infinite. (p. 1)

Defining Imagination

As a scholar of imagination, my research avails diverse perspectives that attempt to corral the term to fit a determined *meaning* set within parentheses. Personally, I hold imagination as one such term that defies the shackles of language, and exceeds the bounds of description for its unique function and experience is highly personal. Nevertheless, since language's intent is to provide common ground to understand and inform, and this investigation's focus on imagination is appreciable, the term warrants substantial depiction. In which case, it is imperative the definition incorporates every possible version germane to the purpose imagination provides. However, given the scope of this study this task is virtually impossible. Instead, I provide you with a dichotomy of philosophical attitudes from Eastern and Western cultures. As such, I refer to Corbin (1958/1997), philosopher, theologian, and scholar of Islamic studies, known as a prominent authority of imagination and to Sussman (2005). Their perspectives, when combined into one concept, define imagination, as the holistic experience I imply in this work.

Western outlook. The Western views of imagination include two components of ordinary thought and perception—*intuition*, involving the ability to know our senses, and *concept*, which concerns abstract ideas that contribute to understanding. Sussman (2005) commented:

There is a critical link between learning and imagination. Eidetic images are key in learning as they are an experiential nucleus that involves thoughts, perceptions, and sensation. Knowledge comes from processing ideas through the medium of visual images . . . All learning utilizes mental images to concretize ideas, which then ignite the mind with their various possibilities. Without seeing images, comprehension cannot occur. (p. 46)

Language usually given to describe imagination typically relates to a phenomenological experience, one of noetic value that provides a temporal description—fantasy, aesthetic images and concepts of thought that identifies imagination as unreal and the source of aesthetic creation

(Corbin, 1958/1997). Where this may in part be true, this point of view ultimately relies on where one places his or her focus of reality. Accordingly, as it stands, I find this explanation by itself restrictive and insufficient, and certainly not the only acceptable explanation that pertains specifically to this investigation underway. For this reason, it was essential I garnered other bodies of knowledge that would fill the void of missing expressions of what imagination is.

Eastern reality. Documented throughout the centuries, the Eastern traditions—Chinese, Taoism, Tibetan Buddhism, and Indian Vedanta emphasize spiritual expressions that extend beyond conventional physical laws that defy being measured at its core nature. Accepted as the mainstream of Eastern philosophies, their approach is grounded by an inward focus that is ontological, experiential, and spiritual (Epstein, n.d.). The *Chinese Book of Changes* or *I Ching*, based on the spiritual worldview that integrates scientific and magical thinking, and said to connect the imaginal dimension with the light of the gods or *shen ming* where upon the individual can reshape reality (Main, 1999). Tibetan Buddhism downplays the ego and places attention on emptiness or *mushin*, the application of no mind. Thus, the experience of emptiness is achieved by practices of repetitive action such as painting, calligraphy, or archery until the movement becomes automatic without thought. Indian philosophical discourse discerns between the mind or *prakriti* and consciousness or *purusha* that represents the metaphysical world in which the practitioners unite with supreme truth through the practices of yoga (raja, hatha, laya, and mantra).

The core of this study relates to the fundamental meaning of imagination, as derived from the imaginative function, which correlates with a universe peculiar to it, such as the intermediate plane between empirically verifiable reality and unreality. Corbin (1958/1997) elaborated on this spiritual expression:

For them the world is “objectively” and actually threefold: between the universe that can be apprehended by pure intellectual perception (the universe of the Cherubic Intelligence) and the universe perceptible to the senses, there is an intermediate world, the world of Idea-Images, of archetypal figures, of subtle substances of “immaterial matter.” This world is as real and objective, as consistent and subsistent as the intelligible and sensible worlds; it is an intermediate universe “where the spiritual takes body and the body becomes spiritual,” a world consisting of real matter and real extension, though by comparison to sensible, corruptible matter these are subtle and immaterial. The organ of this universe is the active Imagination; it is the *place* of theophanic visions, the scene on which visionary events and symbolic histories *appear* in their true reality. (p. 4)

Corbin (2017), displeased with the term *imaginary* as unreal, noted, “something that is and remains outside of being and existence-in brief, something *utopian*” (p. 1) in contrast, he introduced the concept imaginal or *mundus imaginalis* that conveys the world of the image in contemporary thought as “ontologically as real as the world of the senses and that of the intellect” (Corbin, as cited in Epstein, 1981/1992, p. 14). In this context, Corbin (1997) held “the imaginal realm [as] a concept generous enough to embrace both the spiritual and the aesthetic” (p. xix). Affirming the existence as a real constituent of the imaginal world is Price’s (as cited in Epstein, 1992) statement:

Paradoxical as it may sound there is nothing imaginary about a mental image. It is an actual entity, as real as anything can be. The seeming paradox arises from the ambiguity of the verb “to imagine.” It does sometimes mean “to have mental images.” But more usually it means “to entertain propositions without believing them”; and very often they are false propositions, and moreover we disbelieve them in the act of entertaining them. This is what happens, for example, when we read Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest*, and that is why we say Prospero and Ariel are “imaginary characters.” Mental images are not in the sense imaginary at all. We do actually experience them, and they are no more imaginary than sensations. To avoid the paradox, though at the cost of some pedantry, it would be well distinguish between imagining and imaging, and to have two different adjectives “imaginary” and “imagery”...Indeed, to those who experienced it an image-world would be just as “real” as the present world is. (p. 15)

Baroff (2008) said, “Imagination is a mystical phenomenon, a wellspring of creative form, indefinable, ubiquitous, and midwife to our ideas and images. Imagination breathes form into our creative nature and fills our world with aliveness and meaning” (p. 4). Epstein (1986) suggested

this perspective most often reflects the nonmaterial reality behind the sensory reality, and deduced, “imagination is unique in offering a new way of thinking about things. Unlike the habitual perceptions of the world that we achieve with our ordinary faculties, imagination establishes unfamiliar, fresh, and novel ways of discerning our life circumstances” (p. 2). Further, he expressed the imaginal realm frequently changes, is not directed by individual goals or concerns, and routinely transports the individual mentally to an alternate world that is not bound by linear logic or natural laws, the world of vertical reality that transcends the space-time continuum in which transformation takes place. Baroff said Blake’s quotation from *Auguries of Innocence* transports the mind to ascend vertically to one of boundless reality, “To see a World in a grain of Sand and a Heaven in a Wild Flower, Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand and Eternity in an hour” (p. 7). Frenier and Hogan (n.d.) brilliantly captured the essence of imagination in their description, “When we open to the imaginal, what comes is like water for the thirsty traveler in the desert. It moistens, softens, and lubricates us, giving us a sense of depth and enriching our lives immeasurably” (para. 16). Furthermore, it is well known that the imaginal realm is said to be accessible through meditation, prayer, dreams, and other spiritual approaches.

Imagination—A bridge. The term *imagination* is generally used to explain something about us and to connect with others as a form of agreement or understanding. On a typical day we might say, “Can you imagine this? Imagine that? Imagine how? Imagine when? I cannot imagine. I can only imagine.” Applied in this way, imagination is like describing the visual portion of an iceberg that grabs our immediate attention, albeit the truest meaning lies beneath the surface, one that is experientially known only to the individual using the term. Psychologist,

Roth (2008) suggested that imagination is a distinctive aspect of human thought, which is marked by supposition, flexibility, and invention in any endeavor.

Liu and Noppe-Brandon (2009) viewed imagination through the lens of holism as, “the capacity to conceive of what *is* not—something that, as far as we know, does not exist; or something that may exist but we simply cannot perceive. It is the ability to conjure new realities and possibilities” (p. 19). Oftentimes the terms *imagination*, *creativity*, and *innovation* are used interchangeably, yet each word is an independent concept of distinct phases of a continuum:

If imagination is the capacity to conceive of what is not, then creativity, in turn is imagination *applied*: doing something, or making something, with that initial conception. But not all acts of creativity are inherently innovative. In our view, innovation comes when an act of creativity has somehow advanced the form.

For example, if a child thinks of a ten-foot flower, she is exercising her imagination. If she sits down and actually draws that flower, she’s exercising creativity. But only if that drawing is an advancement of the form of drawings of flowers can she be said to have innovated. In our sequence of *imagination*, *creativity*, and *innovation*—we call it the ICI Continuum—imagination comes first.

Imagination—> Creativity (imagination *applied*)—> Innovation (*novel* creativity).

That’s not just in the temporal sense. We believe that of the three elements, imagination is foundational and the most important, and demands proportionate attention. Imagination is the *sine qua non*. Without a healthy and well-fed imagination, there is no creativity or innovation. (p. 20)

Regrettably, my research confirms Liu and Noppe-Brandon’s findings to be distressing, which indicates imagination gets the least ink compared to the voluminous printed materials found on creativity. Even more unsettling is that public interest—involving business, politics, economics, and the arts—clamors for the magical 10-foot flower, a metaphor for innovation, which is the third element in the intensity, complexity, and drive (ICD) sequence. Here again, imagination is overlooked as the springboard to all creative form:

We have a corollary point of view, which is that imagination matters even if you don’t care a whit about innovation. That is to say, the true utility of imagination is measured not by some ration of innovations-per-ideation. It is best measured by whether the

ecosystem as a whole is richer in possibility, and whether the society we feed with our imagination enables all participants in the market or the community to participate to their fullest potential. (p. 21)

Types of imagination. Betts (1916) noted there are two types of imagination: (a) *reproductive* and (b) *creative* or *active*. Reproductive imagination reproduces pictures in our mind, that germinates from the pictures described by others and our past experiences that lack the complete structure to be called a true memory. In contrast to reproductive imagination is creative or active imagination, which takes images from our past experiences and combines them with those garnered from others parts to form new and original structures. Jung (1997) explained creative and active imagination are essentially the same process with “the difference... that creative imagination is turned to the creation of the age-old cultural forms (art, religion, philosophy, society, while active imagination is turned to the creation of the personality, [as in] Know Thyself” (p. 17). He continued, “active imagination is most often done alone, away from the analyst. But some forms, particularly Sandplay and Movement usually include the analyst as witness” (p. 17). Betts (1916) elaborated on the practical nature of imagination:

Imagination is not a process of thought, which must deal chiefly with unrealities and impossibilities, and which has for its chief end our amusement when we have nothing better to do than to follow its wanderings. It is, rather, a commonplace, necessary process, which illumines the way for our everyday thinking and acting—a process without which we think and act by haphazard chance or blind imitation. It is the process by which the images from our past experiences are marshaled, and made to serve our present. Imagination looks into the future and constructs our patterns and lays your plans. It sets up our ideals and pictures us in the acts of achieving them. It enables us to live our joys and our sorrows, our victories and our defeats before we reach them. It looks into the past and allows us to live with the kings and seers of old, or it goes back to the beginning and we see things in the process of the making. It comes into our present and plays a part in every act from the simplest to the most complex. It is the mental stream what the light is to the traveler who carries it as he passes though the darkness, while it casts its beams in all directions around him, lighting up what otherwise would be intolerable gloom. (p. 1)



Figure 34 and Figure 35. *Imaginal World*. (Internet, 2017). Imagination is a full-time adventure to destinations unknown that are worth entering.

Children's Imagination

Sagan (1980) insinuated we could be likened to butterflies that flutter for a day and think it is forever. Leslie (as cited in Roth, 2008) described the initial signs of imagination, which are noticeable in infants. As such, basic forms of pretense are exhibited in substituting one object for another as early as 12 months. This is known as ‘meta-representation’ where “a banana is decoupled from reality to allow acceptance of the proposition, in pretense, that this is a telephone” (p. 1). More detailed forms of make-believe unfold into separate acts of pretend that include complex sequences like making a cup of tea and adapting to roles of fantasy such as Wonder Woman or Spiderman or mothers or fathers. Similarly, children delight in stories of fairies and magic and they enjoy make-believe characters like the Tooth Fairy, Father Christmas, or the Snow Maiden. Some children invent imaginary companions or imaginary worlds (Singer, 1975). Language develops parallel to imagination, which undoubtedly aids in children’s progression to create more elaborate scenarios of pretend (Roth, 2008).

Apparent in children between the ages of 2 and 3, are signs of *counterfactual* thinking or alternative *what if* thinking where they dream up thoughts about future and improbable

happenings. By age 4, children have advanced in their capacity to envision and perceive the thoughts, feelings, and beliefs of others. As situations present themselves, they are aware of different points of view expressed openly in front of others. Leslie (as cited in Roth, 2008) noted, it stands to reason, “the more inventive a child is, the more ideas they will have for use in pretend and fantasy scenarios. And engaging in these activities may itself stimulate further inventiveness” (p. 1).

When I think of children, I am amused by a story told by educationalist-speaker, and author, Robinson (2009), a story that truly emphasizes children’s limitless imagination and abounding receptivity to possibility:

An elementary school teacher was giving a drawing class to a group of six-year-old children. At the back of the classroom sat a little girl who normally didn’t pay much attention in school. In the drawing class, she did. For more than twenty minutes, the girl sat with her arms curled around her paper, totally absorbed in what she was doing. The teacher found this fascinating. Eventually, she asked the girl what she was drawing. Without looking up, the girl said, “I’m drawing a picture of God.” Surprised, the teacher said, “But nobody knows what God looks like.” The girl said, “They will in a minute.” (p. x)

Oxygen is likened to children’s imagination, ingrained within and drenched without. Imagination in children’s development is perhaps the liveliest. Named Dallas’ best pediatrician, Hubbard (2012) insisted, the development of imagination in early childhood is of monumental importance, and it is more “than constraining a child with academic skills such as learning letters and numbers” (p. 1) adding, “by allowing children to think creatively and imaginatively, you are also helping them become more adaptable to other situations while also learning self-regulation” (p. 2). Harding (2012), an educational director, saw this from a neurological perspective:

When children engage in imagination and creativity, their brains are signal processing at a higher level: they are literally seeing, sensing, hearing and feeling more of the world. Imaginative activities need never be seen as a luxury, but rather a necessity to all-round development. (p. 1)

The unfolding of imagination occurs quite naturally as the capacity to entertain novel and unusual ideas different from physical reality. Children’s minds frolic with make-believe and escapades of fantasy and role-play. Gottschall (2012) wrote, “It is obvious that small children are creatures of story” (p. 7) as he witnessed his daughters, Annabel and Abigail, who at the time were 4 and 7 respectfully, spent nearly all of their waking hours traipsing merrily through Neverland. He elaborated on his observations of his daughters’ use of imagination, story and play:

They are either enjoying stories in their books and videos or creating, in their pretend play, wonder worlds of mommies and babies, princes and princesses, good guys and bad. Story is, for my girls, psychologically compulsory. It is something they seem to need in the way they need bread and love. To bar them from Neverland would be an act of violence. (p. 7)



Figure 36. Little Girls Play Pretend. (Internet, 2017). Make-believe is a natural form of counterfactual thinking. In this way, imagination allows children to act out their imaginings as a dress rehearsal for things to come that otherwise may not have been.

It is plain to see children come by imagination effortlessly, “just like a tiny seed grows into a mature tree, one hardly noticeable trait, if encouraged, can flourish into a character quality that

will ensure a child’s success as an adult: imagination” (Majors, 2012, p. 1). Children “need to engage in creative thoughts and activities that ‘belong to them’ that help them feel unique. These creative expressions need be valued by adults around them” (Harding, 2012, p. 2).

Have you ever watched children at play? They come up with some of the most amazing stories; they are *Imaginaires* in over drive, *mini-MacGyvers*, troubleshooting and solving complex problems by making things out of ordinary objects.



Figure 37. Little Boys Immersed in Imagination. (Internet, 2017). Two young explorers can play alongside one another and each can be transported through the portals of their own imagination to different destinations.

Even more impressive is their uncanny ability to improvise, which they do with aplomb. Such an example was taken from Robinson’s (2009) son who was at the time 4 years old, in his preschool production of the Nativity story:

During the show, there was a wonderful moment when three little boys came onstage as the Three Wise Men, carrying their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. I think the second boy lost his nerve a little and went out of sequence. The third boy had to improvise a line he hadn’t learned, or paid much attention to during rehearsals, given that he was only four. The first boy said, “I bring you gold.” The second boy said, “I bring you myrrh.” The third boy said, “Frank sent this.” (p. 15)

At this early age, children do not have the sense of being wrong, they are free to explore and imagine without inhibition. Unfortunately, this feeling of freedom without judgment is short-

lived because society enforces children to color within the lines early, do what they are told, and keep their head down, such was the situation that will be presented in chapter 4 of Brooklyn and my international students. Given Katie's story and the stories from professionals in the field of human development, is there any wonder why children learn to keep themselves in check? It is most important that we are free to discover our inherent genius, which was ordained from our beginning, has always been to fill out our inner image with the purpose of serving and advancing the human species. This is why we have come; this is what is needed in the world, and who we are, uniquely authentic.

Young Geniuses Become Old Masters

It's commonly believed that originality flows from the foundation of youth. In the words of famed venture capitalist Vinod Khosla, "People under 35 are the people who make change happen. People over 45 basically die in terms of new ideas." (Grant, 2016, p. 108)

As one over the age of 45, I found this statement disparaging. However, the supposition piqued my curiosity, and I decided to indulge my inquisitive nature because I often heard imagination wanes along with originality as we age. In light of this, I set out on the path to find the answer. I discovered the likelihood that for every genius that peaks early there may well be the same number of old masters that ascend later. I believe I am one such master. The reason why, according to Grant (2016), is there are two types of innovators identified as conceptual and experimental, who have dissimilar approaches. Conceptual innovators seem to make their most important contributions to their field of study after their first exposure. They are more like sprinters who formulate, implement, and solve large ideas of concern and finish the job quickly. Whereas, experimental innovators are more like marathoners who solve problems by trial and error, learn, integrate, and evolve over longer periods of time. Their findings, however, may require years or even decades to garner the information needed; nonetheless, their results are

sustainable and highly original, which I find quite promising. Galenson (as cited in Grant, 2016)

elaborated on his findings:

The inability of...aging conceptual innovators to match the brilliant achievements of their youth is not a product of their depletion of a stock of some magical elixir of artistry. Instead, it is caused by the impact of accumulating experience...The real enemies of conceptual innovators are the establishment of fixed habits of thoughts... Conceptual innovators may become the captives of an important early achievement. (Italics in the original) (Galenson, p. 111)

Table 5

Innovators and Their Innovations

Conceptual Innovators	Experimental Innovators
	(Medicine)
James Watson—age 25 helped to discover double helix structured DNA	Roger Sperry—age 49 identified different specializations between the right and left hemispheres of the brain
	(Film)
Orson Welles—age 25 feature film, <i>Citizen Kane</i>	Alfred Hitchcock—59, 60, 61 featured film, <i>Vertigo</i> , <i>North by Northwest</i> , <i>Psycho</i>
	(Poetry)
E. E. Cummings—age 22 penned his first influential poem and more than half of his best work before turning 40	Robert Frost—age 40 and beyond wrote 92% of his most reprinted poems



Figure 38-41. *Metaphorical Journey* (Vladimir Kush, 2002). Figure 38. *Departure of the Winged Ship*. (p. 35); Figure 39. *Kite*. (p. 128); Figure 40. *Crusaders*. (p. 82). Figure 41. *Sunrise by the Ocean*. (p. 63). *Surrealism*. Such interpretations are wondrous expressions of counterfactual thinking that depicts the mystery of imagination; here, not only is imagination alive, it thrives.

Adults' imagination inspired in childhood. Zuck (1997/2009) quoted Picasso, who acknowledged his uniqueness who said, “When I was a child, my mother said to me, ‘If you become a soldier, you’ll be a general. If you become a monk you’ll end up a pope.’ Instead I became a painter and wound up as Picasso” (p. 351).

Imagination is universally distributed to all, and accessed to a lesser or greater degree. Many psychological tests reveal, “Our creative efficacy varies more in ratio to our output of mental energy than in ratio to our inborn talent” (Osborn, 1963, p. 15). The good news is, the more we use imagination, the more imagination is available to use. To this end, an inordinate number of individuals believe the misnomer, which expresses a belief that as one ages,

imagination wanes. Contrary to this belief, there are innumerable instances that document ordinary individuals displaying extraordinary imaginative powers. For instance, the war inspired millions of ideas from patriots who never thought of themselves, as *gifted creatives*, which confirmed “the part that effort plays in activating this talent” (p. 16). Osborn, addressed the issue of sustainable creative imagination, as he pointed to psychologist Lawton who maintained, “Our mental power can keep on growing until 60. From then on, according to Lawton, mental ability ebbs so slowly that, at 80, it can still be almost as good as 30” (Osborn, 1963, p. 18), where “older people are apt to lose other faculties such as memory, ‘creative imagination is ageless’” (p. 18). Osborn explained that one of Lehman’s studies covered famous individuals who created ideas important to the world. Of the 1,000 creative achievements “the median age at which such creativity occurred was 74” (p. 18). I find that encouraging. Even more reassuring is learning that outstanding discoveries originated from amateurs, not individuals with specialized training.

Osborn (1963) provided a short list of examples:

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said: “If you haven’t cut your name on the door of fame by the time you reach 40, you might as well put up your jackknife” (p. 17).

Holmes’ own life belied that statement. Until he was 48, he was an unknown physician and professor. His literary fame started with his *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, which he wrote when nearing 50. His most creative period was between then and when he wrote his biography of Ralph Waldo Emerson at the age of 75.

The career of Holmes’ own son likewise refutes the theory that creative powers necessarily wanes with youth. Chief Justice Holmes wrote his first great book, *The Common Law*, when he was 72. During the panic of 1933, when Holmes was over 90, the President of the United States leaned upon him for suggestions on how to pull the nation through its crisis.

“Writers die young” (p. 17), they say. But this, too, is untrue. Milton lost his sight when 44, wrote *Paradise Lost* when 57, and wrote *Paradise Regained* when 62. David Belasco still wrote successful plays when he was 70. Mark Twain at 71, turned out two books—*Eve’s Diary* and *The \$30,000 Bequest*.

Julia Ward Howe wrote *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* when she was 43. But Alexander Woollcott once told Osborn the best writing she ever did was *At Sunset*, which she penned at 91. The first time George Bernard Shaw won a Nobel Prize was when he was nearing 70.

Thomas Jefferson retired to his homestead in Virginia when he was 66. Visitors at Monticello [were] amazed at the many innovations he thought up in his 70s and 80s. Benjamin Franklin was likewise both a statesman and an inventor. He was also a creative writer. One of his masterpieces was his appeal to Congress for the abolition of slavery. He wrote that in 1790, when he was 84.

Among the creative scientists, Doctor George Washington Carver, at 80, was still turning out new ideas—so many that *The New York Times* hailed him as “the man who has done more than any other man for agriculture in the South” (p. 18). An earlier scientist, Alexander Graham Bell, perfected his telephone when 58, and when past 70 solved the problem of stabilizing the balance in airplanes.

History records that many great ideas have come from those devoid of specialized training in the problem involved. The telegraph was worked out by Samuel Morse, a professional painter of portraits. The steamboat was thought up by Fulton, likewise an artist. A school teacher, Eli Whitney, devised the cotton gin.

Early in the war, a new shell-fragment detector was thought up by an unscientific employee of New York City’s transit system. From Pearl harbor on, that device saved many a life. (pp. 17-23)

The role imagination plays in our interpretation of life experiences. When we reflect on what kind of impact imagination has on our understanding of life experiences, the answer is quite apparent—Everything! The power of imagination determines our ability to know our experiences as it heightens our awareness of story’s effect on another, and provides us with the opportunity to fully embrace life in general. To reinforce my point of view, I provide you with 3 examples: (a) the historical event of the battle of Gettysburg, as if it were happening in this moment: Soldiers struggle, entangled in arm-to-arm combat, fists firmly squeezed on bayonet loaded rifles while echoing shrills pierce the frigid midnight air as cannon’s roar plow through bodies that spray blades of grass crimson; (b) a scene taken from the beloved fairy tale of Cinderella: A fairy appeared from a burst of light, reciting an incantation—*Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo*—instantly turning an ordinary pumpkin into a coach; a horse into an impeccably clothed coachman; a dog into a distinguished footman, a pack of mice into a team of white horses; Cinderella’s tattered dingy rags into a radiant, white ball gown, and her worn shoes into a pair of glistening glass slippers; and next, I describe my impression of (c) Chagall’s (1964) interpretive

painting of William Shakespeare's story of love gone wrong in *Romeo and Juliet*. Here, Chagall attempted to capture the wonder and torment of love's bittersweet emotions: Young lovers embraced, floating above familiar earthly surroundings that appear in a circular image mirroring love's unending emotion. The painting captures the city of love, Paris, and the *Arc de Triomphe* that honors those who have fought and died for the love of their beloved country. Flanked on either side of the couple is a horse's head painted green, separated from its body of red. The head might depict the lover's ideals and their bodies tormented by their families' divide, as both were opposed to the union. In this example, colors affect our interpretation as symbols of emotions: red—love, passion, power, fury; green—envy, youth, new love; yellow—innocence, curiosity, hope; blue—sadness, tranquility. As previously observed, and research confirms, we often take the gift of imagination for granted as something we seldom consider. That is to say, we remain inadvertently unconscious of how fortunate we are to have within us this magnificent resource.

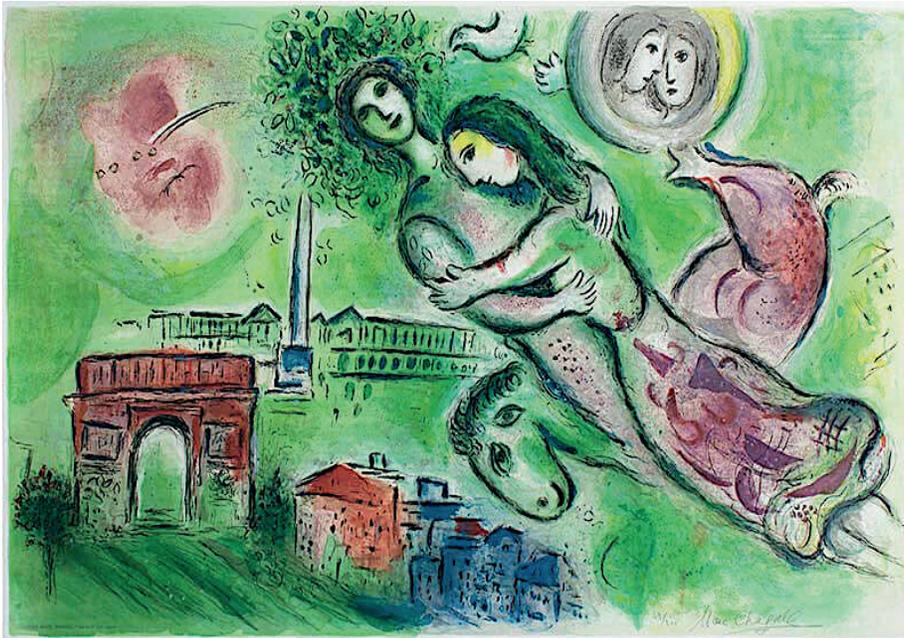


Figure 42. Romeo and Juliet. (Chagall, 1964). This picture has been midwived through the recesses within Marc Chagall's imagination and is his interpretation of youthful love.

If we were to consider barring imagination, life would indeed occur as a barren wasteland of tumbleweeds tossed about through the desert of life. Justifiably, imagination colors our world with rousing vibrancy. Furthermore, if you were unable to use imagination to visually assign a perceived meaning to words that I used to describe the former narratives, as seen through my mind's eye, the words would fall flat for you, void of understanding, and the message that recounted the happening would be lost. Imagination provides us with a connection to another's way of viewing the world. Essentially, without the resource of imagination, our attempt to connect to and understand another fails. Moreover, we escape the intended reality that was meant for us to benefit from its message (Betts, 1916). Clearly, the connections of words, images, and emotions bring us in touch with our humanity and original purpose, whereby enhancing our lives, each other's life, and all life in general. Still another example, is the recording of Apollo 11's historical flight to place a man on the moon. Because of imagination many were able to perceive this event. The subsequent message follows:

And the world waited. July 20, 1969. It is said that 500 million people gathered around the television sets around the world to wait for the 1st Earthling to set foot on the moon. Countless millions more listen on the radio of the voices from the moon. Never before had so many people been attuned to one event at one time. The world waited, curious, wondering, aware, like a sleeper wakened in the night by a faraway sound, a moment sensed more than understood.

Captain Neil Armstrong spoke, "One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind" (NASA, 2007, Go for Landing on the Moon).

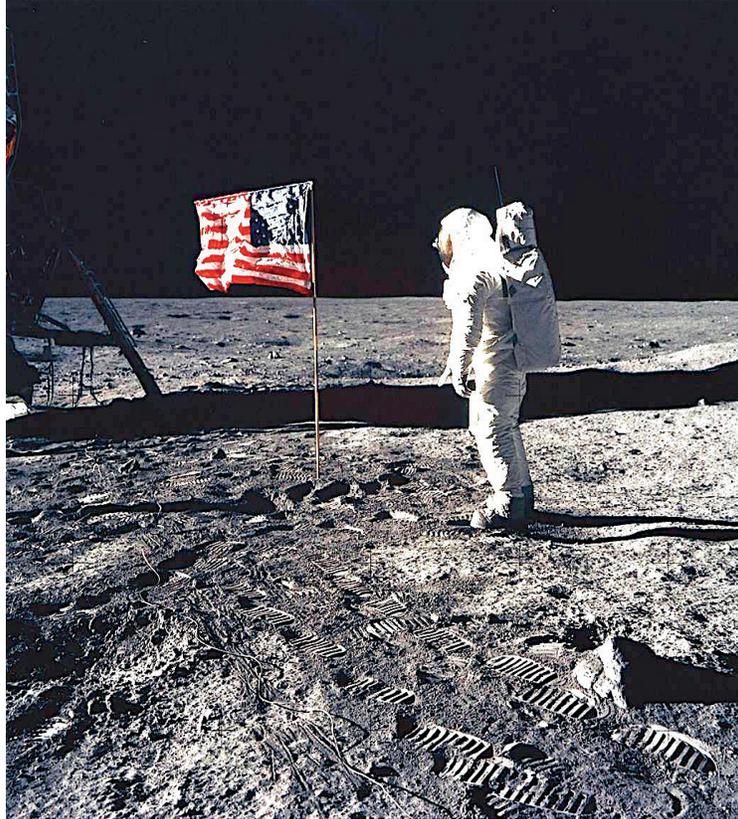


Figure 43. Apollo 11 Moonwalk. (Internet, 2017). Astronaut Edwin (*Buzz*) Aldrin Jr., lunar module pilot of the first lunar landing mission Apollo 11. Astronaut Neil Armstrong, commander, took this picture July 20, 1969.

The power of imagination allows us to envision the possible, to venture beyond limitation of the space-time continuum, and affirms our birthright and unique destiny.

Everything begins in our imagination from our dreams and goals, to our need to know and understand, to our curious nature to explore and discover ourselves and another's place in the universe. Indeed, every human achievement both large and small germinate in the human imagination, which leads us from darkness and delivers us into light such as those provided by discoveries in quantum physics and epigenetics, agricultural drones, and smart wind and solar power.

Imagination's Historical Events: The Possible Human

The right of people to guide their own destiny, to create authentic, nurturing, sustainable

communities, to control their resources, to govern themselves and guide their own evolution is a most fundamental human right. If people learn *how* to exercise this right, then they shall have the power to create a truly democratic civil society: a society that is motivated by voluntary commitment, in which people can design and organize their lives for the development of their full potential, and individually and collectively serve the common good. (Banathy, 2010, p. 2)

Research in cognitive archaeology, paleoanthropology, and evolutionary psychology suggest that fully developed imagination may have emerged as recently as the last 100,000 years, as a distinctly universal characteristic of *Homo sapiens*. Two million years ago, members of the first species of genus *Homo* (*Homo habilis*) exhibited minimal capability to ‘imagine’ a future outcome, in their ability to shape stones into basic tools. According to King (2012), a great number of researchers have identified the time between 300,000 and 200,000 years ago as a pivotal stage in evolution, coinciding with exceptional increase in brain size. During this period, humans had advanced and adapted to live in complex social groups. From 50,000 years ago, there is evidence for what is known as *symbolic explosion* (King, 2012).

In viewing King’s chart, it is clear that a rapid increase of creative activity, including cave art in the form of drawing, painting, and other art forms, represent scenes as imaginary that reflect real life. Roth (2008) suggested that evidence of diverse aspects of imagination-imagery, along with theory of mind and the ability to express novelty, thinking that is *counterfactual*, and creative production during this period of human history reveal that imagination, as we know it, began in this setting 50,000 years ago. What follows is a timeline that charts human evolution taken in part from anthropologist, King (2012) and Universe Today and Astronomy Space News (2015).

Table 6

Human Evolution and Indications of Imagination

Era in Human History	Event in Human Experience
6.7 million years ago:	Began human lineage. A split in the lineage followed containing chimpanzees and gorillas
2.6 million years ago:	Onset of late-scale making and use of stone tool technology
2.5 million years ago:	First human ancestors in our own genus, <i>Homo</i>
200,000 years ago:	First modern humans, <i>Homo sapiens</i>
50,000-30,000 years ago:	Cave paintings and rock paintings begin to emerge on multiple continents
12,000 years ago:	Onset of agriculture and human settlement. Up until this period, all human groups lived by hunting and gathering. [This transition was neither linear nor simple.]
6,000 years ago:	Civilization as we know it began in the Indus Valley
1800s:	Emergence of Industrialization

My coverage on human evolution is cursory given the scope of this investigation and the complexities of our species genealogy. Nevertheless, I compare these findings with Banathy's (2010) work on the evolutionary journey of our species documented in *Guided Evolution of Society a Systems View* in which he used nine markers, or what he called *The Cultural Pyramid*, to explore and characterize transformational stages of human development. Pott (1997) saw this as "seven culture-building components—*transmission, memory, reiteration, innovation, selection, symbolic coding, and intuitions* to assess cultural advancements at the various stages of human evolution" (p. 79). It is against this backdrop that I emphasize certain developments that I believe amplify the vertical realm of creative imagination. Neither Bethany nor Pott previously

mentioned creative imagination in their designs. Importantly, what they left out is a key component of this research, which offers a more in-depth perspective that led to these occurring events.

According to Banathy (2010), there were three seminal events that took place: (a) the initial occurrence, roughly 7 million years ago, with our humanoid ancestors; (b) the second and most remarkable event occurred with the inception of the first *Homo sapiens* appearing somewhere around 6 million years ago, and purported to have established the phenomenon of *human revolution of cultural evolution*; and (c) the third revolution of today, which introduced us to the threshold of the *revolution of conscious evolution* and design space in a way that could guide the evolution of our species. Building on the preceding template, included is Banathy's (2010) matrix that identifies the stages of human and societal evolution.

Table 7

Characterization of the Evolutionary Stages

Stage	Era	Time	Consciousness	Communication	Social	Technology
Stage 1	Ancestors	7M-0.5M	Contracted	Signs	Family, small group	Tools
Stage 2	Transition	0.5M-35K	Magical	Vocal signs	Small group	Tools
Stage 3	Cro-Magnons	35K-10K	Magical, reflective, sensory	Speech	Tribe	Tool chest
Stage 4	Agriculture	10K-0.5K	Mythical, Reflective, emotional	Writing	Ancient civilizations	Agriculture metal

Stage 5	Scientific/ industrial/ technological	0.5K- Today	Rational reflective	Print, electronic	Nation- states	Industrial
Stage 6	Information/ knowledge ?	Future	Reflective, spiritual, ethical	Internet ?	Regional, global	

(Banathy, 2010, p. 157)

The earliest discovery of ritual life is said to have occurred during the Neanderthal era in Europe 150,000 to 50,000 B.C. that Campbell (1990/2003) identified as the first evidence of a “ritualized burial with sacrifices and with grave gear” (p. 70). Along these lines, situated in an 80,000-year-old-structure not far from Rome was a brown bear cult. Found in a stone-lined pit, were carefully arranged bones of a brown bear, and a Neanderthal youth skeleton whose skull had been smashed at the base, likely implying the youth’s brain had been extracted. The bodies were “surrounded by a circle of stones indicating ritualized cannibalism” (Shreeve, as cited in Banathy, 2010, p. 84). This evidence could be viewed as the cult’s awareness of extinction and evolution. Further, chronicled are these two stories:

The story is told of the burial of an old man in the Neanderthal period, who was laid out on a bed of plant material, surrounded by many types of spring flowers, many with medicinal value, indicating that the old man was a medicine man or a shaman. (As a dramatization of differences between interpretations, one experts says that the flower petals were blown into the cave and covered the body).

A young man’s body was found in France, arranged in a flexed position, sprinkled with red ocher. The burial ceremony expressed the commitment of the group to a kin after his death. Commitment to the living is indicated by skeletal remains that are that are evidence for Neanderthals caring for the sick and wounded. (Banathy, 2010, p. 82)

Campbell (1990/2003) wrote of two findings evidenced during the Cro-Magnon timeframe, one in southwest France and the other in northern Spain. He noted forms of plastic art that were small faceless and footless female nude figurines likely originating as part of a shrine. These figurines were indicative of the domestic element of how people lived. Accordingly, these representations

were connected to the female power or goddess. Combs (1996) viewed these “figures strongly suggest the symbolic worship of the feminine principle and fertility” (Combs, as cited in Banathy, 2010, p. 98). The Aboriginal Homo sapiens culture shaped their lives around dreamtime, mythology, and magic, which was associated with a strong connection between the land and the spirit of their ancestors. Banathy pointed out that according to Wilber (1981), the Cro-Magnons eventually separated themselves from the cosmos, and recognized the self as an entity. Regarding their ethics and morality, the Cro-Magnons set in place an egalitarian society. Another important development was the oral tradition of stories being told around the campfire of the day’s events or other past events.

Several days before completing this section of the dissertation, a new development was released dating our speciation of Homo sapiens as evidenced much earlier than formerly documented. S. Krippner (personal communication, June 13, 2017) brought this groundbreaking discovery to my attention with the article “Oldest Member of our Species Discovered in Morocco” that appeared in the June 9, 2017 publication of *Science* magazine. Gibbons’ (2017) article stated:

Researchers have re-dated a long-overlooked skull from a cave called Jebel Irhoud to a startling 300,000 years ago, and unearthed new fossils and stone tools. The result is the oldest well-dated evidence of *Homo sapiens*, pushing back the appearance of our kind 100,000 years. (p. 993)

In addition, evidence as reported in *Nature* suggests, “our species came into the world face-first, evolving modern facial traits while the back of the skull remained elongated like those of archaic humans” (p. 993).

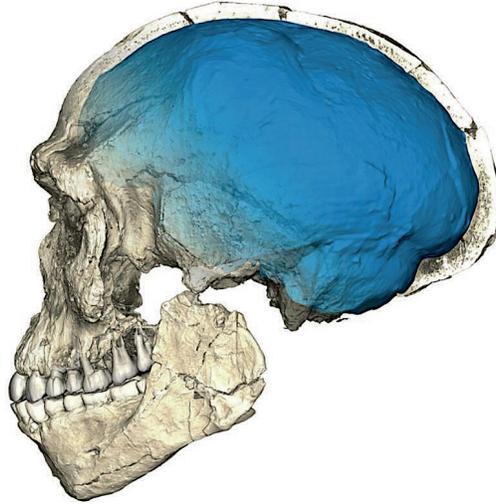


Figure 44. *Oldest Member of Our Species*. (Gibbons, 2017).

I have chosen to retain the previous two charts because at the time, the data represented gave accurate information of a growing baseline of facts. As life, in itself, is an evolutionary process in discovery, similarly is this dissertation alive with emerging information and modifications. This awareness serves as a reminder to keep an open mind, adjust assumptions, and heed biased meaning-making thoughts. Most important in this investigation is this groundbreaking news that imagination is now evidenced as existing 300,000 years ago. I wonder if story and/or narrative began then, as well. The article suggests the human story of our species unfolded “as part of a larger interbreeding population that spread across Africa when the Sahara was green about 300,000 to 330,000 years ago, who later evolved as a group toward modern humans” (p. 994). According to Gibbons (2017), “some researchers thought that archaic humans such as *H. heidelbergensis* invented these tools. But the new dates suggest that this kind of toolkit, found at sites across Africa, may be a hallmark of *H. sapiens*” (p. 994). An imminent comprehensive diagram displays these recent findings.

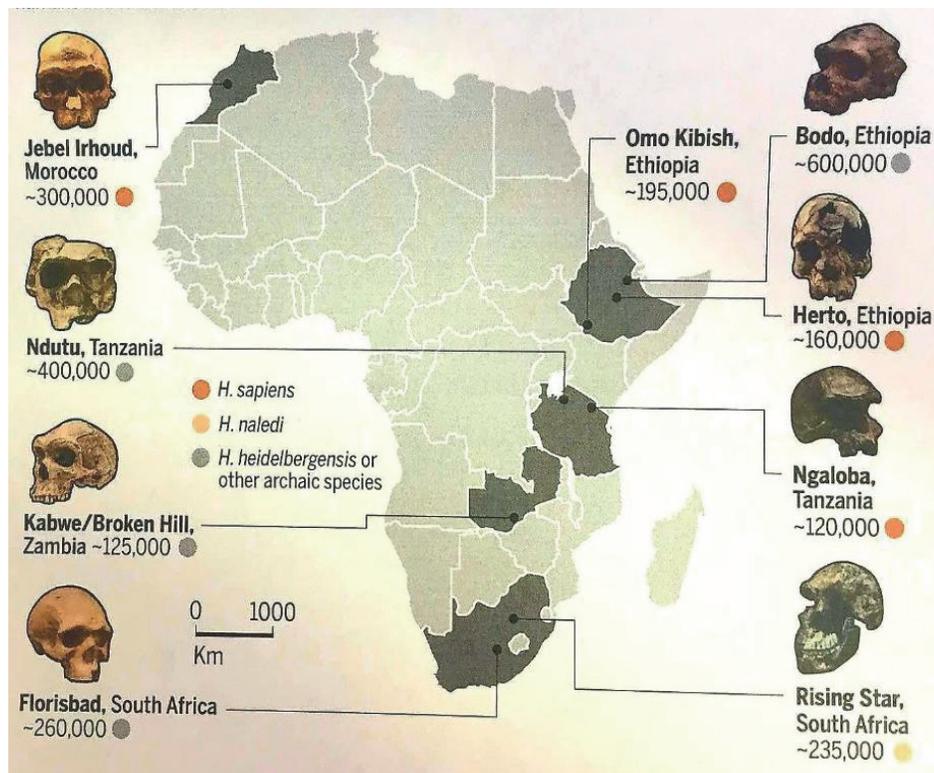


Figure 45. The Pan-African Dawn of Homo Sapiens. New dates and fossils from Jebel Irhoud in Morocco suggest that our species emerged across Africa. The new findings may help researchers sort out how these selected fossils from the past 600,000 years are related to modern humans and to one another (Gibbons, 2017).

Although these tables identify imagination, they do not specifically explain the rise of imagination, as a human faculty that emerged in different places at varying times. However, it is evident in the cave painting that portray images of humans (hands, stick figures), animals (horses, bison, bears), and abstracts of other creations. These might have been preceded by imaginative play, songs, and storytelling, for which there are no existing records. As a result, the best estimates rely on the origin of imagination's artistic productions in caves, rocks, decorative instruments, and other artifacts that resisted the ravages of fire, floods, drought, and erosion.



Figures 46-47. Figure 46. Chauvet Cave; and Figure 47. Lascaux Cave. (Internet, 2017).



Figures 48-50. Figure 48. The Hindsgave Dagger. Figure 49. Venus of Willendorf. Figure 50. Images of Prehistoric Cave Paintings. Dates between 24,000-22,000 B.C.E., which makes these among the oldest and most famous surviving works of art. (Internet, 2017).

Here is a sampling of documented events, which have implemented imagination and advanced human evolution throughout the timeline of the human experience. Ferdinand Magellan circumnavigated the globe; the Beatles music changed a generation; Alexander the Great conquered the known world; the Soviet Sputnik was the first artificial satellite to orbit the Earth; in Apollo 11, Neil Armstrong was the first person to walk on the Moon; the Manhattan project pushed the boundaries of physics; the Transcontinental Railroad connected the East to the West in the United States; Henry Ford produced the first Model T automobile; the Wright

Brothers created the first airborne flying machine; the cell phone; artificial heart; personal computer; and microchip all transformed our daily lives; Disneyland was followed by many other theme parks; The Declaration of Independence, The Bill of Rights, The Constitution; Relativity and Quantum Theory; Sigmund Freud pioneered the working of the unconscious, Alexander Graham Bell, Nikola Tesla, and Thomas Edison harnessed the power of electricity for use in various forms; private spaceflight, ocean exploration, driverless cars, Coco Chanel, Shakespeare, Joan of Arc, Alan Turing, Michelangelo, Billie Holiday, Cirque de Soleil, Helena Rubinstein, Mohandas Gandhi, Confucius, Simon Bolivar, Freda Kahlo, Margaret Thatcher, the Taj Mahal, The Great Wall of China, The Egyptian and Mexican pyramids, the Hubble telescope, the poetry of Rod McKuen, Peter Tchaikovsky, Mother Teresa, String Theory, J. K. Rowling, the Olympics, Marie Curie, Star Wars, Stephen Hawking, Virginia Woolf, Nelson Mandela, Anne Frank, the Mona Lisa, Stonehenge, and the whole cornucopia of the possible trajectory in human achievement. I believe the German-born theoretical physicist Einstein said it best, “I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world” (Einstein, as cited in Nilsson, 2010, p. 1).

Imagination: Overlooked and Undervalued

Often it is just lack of imagination that keeps a man from suffering very much.
(Proust, http://www.thinkexist.com/english/Author/x/Author_940_1.htm)

It seems we rarely acknowledge the seeds of imagination as the source of our inspiration and underestimate its value unlike the value we place on our senses and intellect (Robinson, 2009). With such an impressive pedigree in human achievement, why is imagination overlooked and undervalued? Perhaps, imagination is overlooked because its use is invariably ordinary and quite transparent. For instance, imagination is used in planning a simple to-do list, or anytime we

want to understand *how* something occurs and *what if* or *if only* the outcome were different. This type of reasoning is known as alternative or counterfactual imagination, which is central to human life. Counterfactual imagination is profound because it opens us up to the realms of *What is Possible*, which is limitless thinking that pushes human evolution forward. Imagination and rationality were once viewed as opposites, but no longer. Research has established imaginative thought to be rational due to counterfactual imaginative thinking. Irish, cognitive scientist-author, Byrne (2007), wrote extensively on human reasoning. In *The Rational Imagination*, Byrne claimed counterfactual imagination and rational reality are contingent on three steps: “1) humans are capable of rational thought; 2) they make inferences by thinking about possibilities; and 3) their counterfactual thoughts rely on thinking about possibilities, just as rational thoughts do” (pp. 198-200). Byrne asserted, “The human mind can take the facts of the present or the past and transform them into a new creation, an imaginative alternative to reality. Human mental life is made undeniably richer by the existence of the counterfactual imagination” (p. 215).

As children, we looked at the world with fresh eyes with everything appearing in the here-and-now. As adults, we often routinize imagination with a *been-there-done-that* attitude; “having seen it all, we stop looking, having been there, we stop going” (Liu & Noppe-Brandon 2009, p. 60). Social scientists call this *path dependence*, when we are locked into a certain way of doing, which becomes a self-reinforcing habit. For example, the QWERTY layout of the typewriter keyboard began by avoiding common paired letters from clashing or jamming. In time, this familiar pattern became entrenched as an industry standard. Although the thought of a friendlier, intuitive keyboard would be easier for consumers, economists inferred the switching cost was far too great. Thus, indicating, “the lock-in effect is a great enemy of imagination—and this is true everywhere, not just in keyboard design. Life is filled with QWERTYs” (p. 9). So

often have we heard or repeated the proverbial axiom, *If it ain't broke, don't fix it*. The same truism applies. Most of us are blind to this way of being until someone brings this to our attention. Often times we resist using imagination because of pre-conditioned programming that undermines the value of imaginations significance; thus, riveted in fear, ridicule, conformity, exclusion, isolation and punishment. What is there to fear? The words, *what if*, have power. These words may incite what if as a tall order to fill in which we have to come up with the right answer, or chance not finding any answer at all. The words, *what if*, too often seem as interruptions or wasteful distractions and indulgences, as forms of critical thinking, especially when compared to societies' established ways, which reinforce conformity. Liu and Noppe-Brandon (2009) provided a comprehensive explanation:

What makes *What if* seriously adult is that these two words turn out to be the key to successfully performing the experiment called being human. For what separates us from the beasts—and from the best artificial intelligence programs—is that we humans have a capacity to bootstrap from *What is* to *What if*. In fact, it is this capacity, and our ability to express in word and image, that makes human consciousness the miracle it is. And yet, most of the time most of us squander this absolutely miraculous pile of genetic lottery winnings. (p. 33)

As adults, we may be concerned about looking foolish having attained a certain status and reputation. In our efforts to fend off failure and not appear to look like a fool, “we hug the status quo tight, because that is the rational way to avoid the cognitive dissonance of being possibly wrong” (p. 189). Having a good sense of humor can deflect a serious attitude. For instance, past president of Harvard University, Dr. James Bryant Conan kept a picture of a turtle on the wall of his office; the motto read: “Behold the turtle. He makes progress only when his neck is out” (Osborn, 1963, p. 47). Conformity “militates against creativity [and] carries the curse of conventionalism, and ‘convention is a great discourager of originality’” (p. 46). Unfortunately, over time, most of us have experienced countless incidents to recall times we have suffered from

ridicule. Many have been told we have an “overactive imagination [or] it’s all in our imagination” (Robinson, 2009, p. 57), as though our imagination is problematic or we have come down with a case of *imaginitis* and should seek immediate medical attention. Chances are, most of us have experienced situations when a teacher, friend, or boss made an unwarranted derogatory comment or gave what we called *the look* that expressed, “What are you thinking? That’s not how we do it here!” Projecting the common words of many in authority, “my way or the highway,” has been known to kill countless imaginations, leaving an unprecedented number of casualties in the wake of potentials unrealized that occur as a “universal tragedy of untapped talent of imagination fully seeded but never sprung” (Liu & Noppe-Brandon, 2009, p. 7). Apparently, these messages are worded to dismiss imagination as the powerhouse it could be without seeing imagination as, “one of the great workhorses of learning” (Egan, 2011, n. p.).

Summary of Imagination

In the forgoing segment, the concept of imagination was presented from holistic bodies of thought as a way to integrate Western and Eastern perspectives. This unified concept, at its core, accentuates spiritual expression and reaches beyond conventional physical laws that defy being measured. Imagination is identified as a bridge that connects us to the metaphysical and aesthetic world as well as to each other. Addressed and discussed were the two types of imagination. The first type involved the significance and effects imagination has on children and adults, and the second type included imagination’s historical events.

Before I address and answer the primary question central to this investigation, it was essential that I examine a rudimentary question: How can we know if we have an imagination, a story, and a narrative? As I pondered this question, it occurred to me that we must initially be aware of our being-in-the-world and of having a self, before we can know we have imagination,

which furnishes us with our story that becomes our narrative. It is also important to mention that most often many of us give little to no thought of our being in the world. For much of our lives, most of us are aware of some of our biological drives, our physical sense of pleasure and pain, whether we feel happy or sad, angry or at peace. In light of this, we could actually go through our entire lives without ever considering the stories we live, and the narratives that direct our paths originate from our imagination, which underscores the expression of our authentic self. However, in this investigation the very nature of these underlying essentials gives form to our larger questions. Shakespeare (1603/1992) wrote, “To be, or not to be, that is the question” (*Hamlet*, act 3, scene 1, p. 3). Existential psychology views being from the context of *being-in-the-world* in a way that infers a specific kind of being, which is typical of humans when compared to the kinds of being of animals, inanimate objects, or abstractions. Philosopher Heidegger (1889-1976) examined human existence, as it relates to being in time as in an activity centered toward human development (APA, p. 112) he related to “the particular kind of being manifest in humans...that allows human beings access to the larger question of being in general, since our access to the world is always through what our own being makes possible” (APA, p. 256). Operating from the context of existentialism, which emphasized the idea of *being-in-the-world*, psychologist May (1975/1994) expressed our relationship to our world as a pattern in which we participate, as in an activity, where “world is interrelated with the person at every moment. A continual dialectical process goes on between world and self and self and world; one implies the other and neither can be understood if we omit the other” (p. 50). Thus, “We express our being by creating. Creativity is a necessary sequel to being” (May, 1975, p. 8). Our awareness of being leads to our understanding of having a self. How do we discover and know a self exists? We see ourselves evidenced in thought as part of human existence in philosopher,

Descartes' *Discourse on Method* (1637) from which the famous saying, *Cogito ergo sum* "I think; therefore I am" takes its meaning "as a first step in demonstrating the attainability of certain knowledge" (I think therefore I am, 2017). Coleman (2008) pointed to "the distinctions between being conscious ('core consciousness') and *knowing* that one is conscious (self-reflective consciousness), as a starting point for differentiating between three different aspects of the self" (p. 351), which included:

(a) the overall process of psychosomatic *being*, which we share with all living creatures and which expresses itself through action (self as totality), (b) the conscious awareness of *knowing* the self that is a peculiarly human phenomenon consequent on the development of symbolic imagination (sense of self including numinous experiences of the self), and (c) *having* a self (or soul) as an essential attribute of being human that can only be achieved through being endowed with a self in the mind of others (self-identity leading to the self as the center of the personality). (p. 351)

Therefore, from our existential being-in-the-world, comes the realization of having a self and the awareness that we have imagination, which is the faculty that provides ideas and images in which story manifests our narrative. Imagination generates story as both a living biography, as we are history in the making that is derived from our experiences, which then becomes the narrative we share with ourselves and with another.

As we embark in this next section, "Imagination and Story," I re-establish this investigation's foremost question: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my soul's code that becomes my personal narrative?

Imagination and Story

In an unpublished essay from 2016, I wrote, "Imagination is a kaleidoscope of imagery against a back drop of ideas that become our living narrative" (p. 4). I find myself spellbound and intrigued by the spirited dynamics of imagination and story that seem inseparable. The human story is so infused with imagination it is difficult to fathom one without the other, as both

creative processes are foundational to human evolution. Simply expressed, life, as we know it, would not exist without this dynamic. We would lack awareness of our inner world, states of being, variation of selves, stages of human development, curious nature, accumulation of knowledge and experiences, appreciation of life, drive to become our potentials, and desire to discover who we are and why we are here. Moreover, we could not imagine and create our outer world, initiate optimal solutions to improve ourselves and our world, connect to others meaningfully, and impart the wisdom of story that validates and strengthens our individual human life journey. Conceived from the wellspring of imagination, story instantaneously informs our biography and, thus, becomes our personal narrative we regularly use to connect with others.

Not a day goes by that we are not immersed in story—the actual living of our story—hearing about others stories, the process we use to tease out past occurrences and future outcomes by ourselves and with others, and the means we use to reference and gain understanding or agreement. For example, when we want to indicate a familiar happening, we say, “the same old story,” when we attempt to condense a situation, we say, “to make a long story short,” when we emphasize no other comment is needed, we say, “end of story,” or “but that’s another story.” *The Oxford Living Dictionaries: English* (2017) defines story as:

an account of imaginary or real people and events told for entertainment; a plot or story line in a novel; a piece of gossip; a rumor; a false statement or explanation, as in a lie; and account of past events in someone’s life or in the evolution of something; a situation viewed in terms of the information known about it. (Story, 2016, n.p.)

Story as Narrative

Our stories are commonwealth, the stories and myths of our lives, in which we share what we have in common. It is like a collection plate into which we can all put ‘something,’ our stories, our myths, and the ease in which we are able to in some ways cross boundaries. (Pakula & Mulligan, 1962)

Although the terms *story* and *narrative* are said to have similar meanings, the *Oxford Living Dictionaries: English* (2017) defines both terms differently:

Story is an account of imaginary or real people and events told for entertainment; a plot or story line in a novel; a piece of gossip; a rumor; a false statement or explanation, as in a lie; and account of past events in someone's life or in the evolution of something; a situation viewed in terms of the information known about it or its similarity to another; the facts about the present situation; the commercial prospects or circumstances of a particular company. Middle English (denoting a historical account or representation): shortening of Anglo-Norman French *estorie*, from Latin *historia*. (Story, 2017)

Narrative is a spoken or written account of connected events; a story, part of a literary work as distinct from dialogue. The practice or art of telling stories. A representation of a particular situation or process in such a way as to reflect or conform to an overarching set of aims or values. Late Middle English (as an adjective): from French *narratif*, from late Latin *narrativus* 'telling a story', from the verb *narrare*. (Narrative, 2017)

Cron (2012) in *Wired for Story* provided her rendition of story:

A story is how what happens affects someone who is trying to achieve what turns out to be a difficult goal, and how he or she changes as a result. Stories are about how we, rather than the world around us, change. They grab us only when they allow us to experience how it would feel to *navigate* the plot. Thus story...is an internal journey, not an external one. (p. 11)

Four critical elements are essential in all stories, and without them the story has no meaning.

According to Cron, these elements include, “What happens,” [which] “is the **plot**”; “Someone,” [who] “is the **protagonist**”; The “goal” [which] “is what’s known as the **story question**”; and “how he or she changes” [which] is “**what the story itself is actually about**” (p. 11). Cron pointed out that an additional character or characters known as the antagonist or antagonists will likely appear in a story to heighten the opposing force of conflict that tests the mettle of the protagonist. For the story to hold our attention, J. B. Kaplan (personal communication, September 27, 2016) claimed, “the juice must be worth the squeeze...[In other words]...The narrative must follow an emotional cause-and-effect trajectory from the onset” (Cron, 2012, p. 148). Therefore, as we become engrossed in the story we want to find out more, *if this, then that*.

Theme and tone are significant elements included in story. Theme is the compelling point the author drives through the story, intended as a take-away or lesson learned. The tone is the emotional mood projected in a story much like the tone of our voice or soundtrack in a movie, invisible yet felt (Cron, 2012).

Our brain on story. Have you ever wondered why story seems like a second skin? It is not by accident the most recent research in neuroscience, psychology, and evolutionary biology confirms who we are and what we are about is simply because we are hardwired for story. Boyd (2009) acknowledged our brain contains:

mirror neurons, whose function [is to] fire when we see others act or express emotion as if we were making the same action, and allow us through a kind of automatic inner imitation to understand their intentions and attune ourselves to their feelings (pp. 103-104).

According to Cron, (2012), neuroscientist Damasio asserted, “the brain is a born cartographer” (p. 187). We are endowed with a pattern detector; its mission is to keep us safe like an Indian scout sent ahead to survey the area for imminent danger. We automatically look for patterns that connect the puzzle pieces of story to identify what is developing. If patterns suddenly change in a story, the story term is called a setup much like bait dangling from a fishing line, the setup grabs our attention and hooks us by bringing us deeper into story.

The importance of story. Story is used as a means of entertainment, education, cultural conservation, and instills moral values (Boyd, 2009). Importantly, story is critical to our survival and paramount to human evolution in that it can command our attention by foretelling future occurrences that prepare us for other happenings, one of which allows us to simulate others experiences that guide us in making better choices. As previously discussed, story offers us a way to explore “our own mind and the minds of others, as a sort of dress rehearsal for the future” (Cron, 2012, p. 9). Because we are hardwired for story by mirror neurons, we feel the slings and

arrows of what others feel minus the wounds that allows us *have our cake and eat it too* (Boyd, 2009; Cron, 2012). Significantly, “story originated as a method of bringing people together like ‘social glue’ to share specific information that might be lifesaving” (Cron, p. 3). In a nutshell, “Stories help us navigate life’s complex social problems—just as flight simulators prepare pilots for difficult situations” (Gottschall, 2012, inside book cover).

Ancestral roots. When did story begin? Does anyone really know? Anthropologists have been engaged in unearthing this puzzle piece for hundreds of years, searching for the origins of story in humanities past. Could the beginnings of story have started with our cousins, the chimpanzees and gorillas 6.7 million years ago while making eye contact, exchanging grunts, or following the leader to a watering hole or a lush area of vegetation, or might it have been initiated while mating? What about 2.6 million years ago at the onset of large-scale making and use of stone tool technology or 2.5 million years ago when the first human ancestors in our own genus, *Homo* appeared? Surely, human story originated 300,000 years ago with the first modern humans called *Homo sapiens* were evidenced. The official consensus among anthropologists suggests 50,000-30,000 years ago with the emergence of paintings and drawings on multiple continents (King, 2012).

The phenomenon continues. You might ask, “Where is story today?” My answer is, “Story is everywhere.” Story is the transparency of thought from the still small voice inside our head that materializes outside our head to form oral, interpersonal, written and non-verbal communications. Story informs personal experiences and those experiences of others. Our life is story. We are always in story either consciously as daydreams, make-believe, play, and pretend play, or subconsciously as in night dreams. Story is conveyed or transmitted by a myriad of creative forms and cultivated by imagination, which includes and is not limited to art, dance,

music, theater, film, photography, comedy, radio, television, Internet, DVD, CD, telephone, and textiles (Boyd, 2009; Gottschall, 2012).

The emergence of story in children. Children come fully equipped for story. Mirror neurons are foundational to their ability of simulations (facial, gestures) and have been witnessed in newborns as early as 40-minutes old (Gottschall, 2012). Within the 1st year, children become familiar with their surroundings and themselves much like a photo taken from a Polaroid Instant camera that develops indistinguishable blurs into clear identifiable objects, parents' faces, and eventually their discovery of themselves. Before age one, a baby can hold a phone or use an object like a banana to represent a phone, smile into the phone as though taking a picture and hold the phone to her ear.



Figure 51. Imagination and Story: Seamless like Peter Pan and his Shadow. (Internet, 2017).

At two, children begin role-play with their parents often switching positions. They pitch their voices, often imitating different animals (dog-barking, cat-meowing) and characters they have seen in storybooks, television and school. At ages three and four, children enter the golden age of pretend-play where they will become masters at make-believe, play and storytelling for the next 4 years and live out their imaginings in Neverland (Boyd, 2009; Gottschall, 2012).

Fantasy

Most of all, fantasy is closely connected with the innocence and imagination of childhood. For young children, life itself is belief and wonder. They have little proof of

many things that they accept anyhow. Fantasy for children is as natural as the air, which they cannot see and likely do not understand but breathe in and out nonetheless. (Martin, 2009, p. 23)



Figures 52-54. Innocence, Imagination and Wonder in Childhood. Figure 52. Nature Boy, (The Fantasy World of Josephine Wall, 2013, p. 51). Figure 53. Mystical Meeting (www.josephinewall.co.uk/artgallery.html); Figure 54. Caught by a Sunbeam (The Fantasy World of Josephine Wall, 2013, p. 42).

What is fantasy? Specific to this essay, “the meaning of fantasy transcends the world of the ordinary in which it pays homage to the Truth” (Martin, 2009, p. 11). The term fantasy or *phantasia* is Greek in origin and can be understood as a lie, as in an unlikely happening; a mental perception or interpretation shaped by unseen aspects of the mind; or dreams and daydreams interpreted by reality. My experience of fantasy occurs when we take leave of the ordinary world and open ourselves to the imaginative landscape of magic, awe, and wonder. It is an exhilarating plunge into the mysterious journey of the unknown, one rollicking adventure after another, where everything is infinitely possible.

In *Rediscovery of Awe*, Schneider (2004) was able to see awe as a touchstone that ignites children’s vivid imagination and unquenchable sense of discovery. Children readily identify with fantasy characters that can fly, leap, and navigate land, sky and sea. Because “they evoke the range of feelings about life—its fragility and its power, its mystery and its pageantry, they also help children to manage these primal realities” (p. 53). In *A Guide to Fantasy Literature*, Martin (2009) wrote:

Fantasy creates a world to the highest degree, full of inventive creatures, rules of magic, and places remarkably different from the real world we see around us. Fantasy is the place for mischievous elves, hairy-footed hobbits, wand-waving magicians, talking animals, and other odd creatures never seen before. (p. 21)

Mathews (2002) offered a robust explanation of fantasy in *Fantasy: The Liberation of Imagination*:

Fantasy enables us to enter worlds of infinite possibility. The maps and contours of fantasy are circumscribed only by imagination itself. The breathtaking sweep of its scope can be awesome and even frightening, but this powerful, vivid mode of human consciousness has been part of artistic expression from the earliest known oral and written texts right up to the present day. In fact, the literary genre of modern fantasy is characterized by a narrative frame that unites timeless mythic patterns with contemporary individual experiences. Its stories at their hearts are *about* the relationship between the individual and the infinite.

Although it is difficult to define literary fantasy precisely, most critics agree it is a type of fiction that evokes wonder, mystery, or magic—a sense of possibility beyond the ordinary, material, rationally predictable world in which we live. (p. 1)



Figure 55. *Alice in Wonderland*. (Internet, 2017).

In *A Guide to Fantasy Literature*, Martin (2009) identified and discussed the purpose and popularity of fantasy in Table 8: As Martin's Types of Fantasy: The Five Rings of Tradition.

Table 8:

Martin's (2009) Types of Fantasy: The Five Rings of Tradition

Five Rings of Tradition	Description
High Fantasy	<p>In high fantasy, good and peaceful characters – at the start of the story, generally minding their own business are threatened by appearances of evil forces, usually intruding from the outside, seeking to disrupt, dominate, and oppress.</p> <p>High fantasy is about lofty purpose, with great struggles in which entire ways of life are at stake. It reflects the idiom of Crusade or Quest. With a sense of grand destiny, this ring of fantasy tackles head-on the question of Good and Evil, and tends to view Evil as a great force, often personified. The struggle is clearly drawn, often in near-religious terms: the forces of right versus the forces of wrong.</p> <p>The small, somewhat ordinary, often young or immature heroes are forced to battle with forces far more powerful than they. They struggle to come to grips with their own role in this great undertaking.</p> <p>Eventually, they often must face a big decision: to do the right thing, perhaps involving some terrible sacrifice – to relinquish a magical object to its rightful owner, fight a duel with a Dark Lord, or fulfill a grand prophecy.</p> <p>The “struggle” or “quest” may also involve a personal journey of enlightenment or coming of age – growing up and leaving childhood, searching for one’s real identity, discovering hidden powers. Often, this personal quest is woven into the larger political or religious struggle.</p> <p>Examples of High Fantasy: The Narnia books by C.S. Lewis, the Harry Potter Series by J.K. Rowling.</p>

Adventure Fantasy

Adventure fantasy embraces the notion of adventure for its own sake. The over-riding purpose is to seek adventures, small and large, and to have a rollicking good time doing it. The episodes in adventure fantasy are shaped mostly by the internal desires of their protagonists, rather than epic struggles between Good and Evil.

Adventure fantasy is driven by the core desires of its diverse characters and the situations their interactions create.

Adventure fantasy is closely linked to the patterns of comic-book heroes and fantasy gaming, playful genres driven by endless serial possibilities, with a focus on rules of engagement and powers of individual characters.

Adventure fantasy has long been popular in America. Perhaps this has to do with America's preference for self-propelled, often transient adventure over the ancient, rooted-in-place legends of the Old World.

American fantasy stories often hinge on the whims of individuals and their passing adventures. The American frontier spawned wondrous tall-tale heroes such as Mike Fink, Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, and others whose escapades were absurd and as endless as the teller's imagination.

Examples: Robert E. Howard's *Conan*, George R. Martin, whose lengthy books in his series, *A Song of Fire and Ice*, L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

Fairy-Tale Fiction

While in many ways a smaller canvas, it is no less ambitious; think of a miniature painting, which still contains an entire world within its borders. Fairy-tale fantasy serves up a cluster of psychologically rich stories. These deep tales are rife with domestic problems, dreadful challenges, and astounding transformation and redemption.

Fairy tales have several significant features. First, they tend to deal with personal transformation. People (or creatures) change in dramatic, often miraculous ways. The ugly duckling is transformed into a beautiful swan,

the toad into a prince, the cinder-maid into a princess, the fool into a wise person. Second, these tales are easily recognized by their domestic settings, close to home, full of familiar detail. But in fairy tales, these are homes or villages full of shadows and sometimes hidden malice. On a very personal, psychological level, fairy tales explore some invisible boundary between the safety of home with proper behavior – ideally a place of good parents, obedient children, a loyal spouse, a protective lord not far away – and what happens when some boundary is overstepped.

Capricious dangers abound, in the dark forest nearby, or force their way into the cottage or manor house itself, to lurk in dark corners until the wrong word is said or wrong deed done.

The traditional tales so often introduce dangers from within or very near home: the careless or evil parent, the jealous sibling, the scheming spouse, the old crone, or strange man at the door.

In some cases, the transgression is caused by our own penchant for foolishness, vanity, greed, or curiosity, to transgress a command or forget a promise, to open the door or talk to strangers or look into the forbidden chest or mirror or behind the locked door.

When the stories venture outside the home, they quickly leave the relative security of the cottage, village, or protective castle to cross the boundary into the dark forest, the foreign land, the wilderness full of monsters.

Today's authors use resilient forms of these old traditional tales to explore modern relationships. The stories blend fairy-tale themes of mischief, malice, and moxie with contemporary issues of dysfunction, alienation, disenfranchisement, poverty, abuse. The evil stepparent, the child bride, the wicked witch, are reinterpreted to expose social injustices and evil deeds.

Fairy tales, and their modern expressions in fiction today, deal ultimately with choices we make every day; to help a stranger, face a fear, stand up to the powerful, or conquer our base instincts. The fairy tale often comes down in the end to a practical lesson, usually learned the hard way, of

personal or household value – about the difference between foolishness and wisdom, cowardice and pluckiness, laziness and industry, dumb luck and just desserts.

Examples: K.Y. Craft's *Cinderella*, Grimm's *Snow White*, Jeanne-Marie Le Prince de Beaumont's *Beauty and the Beast*, and Brother's Grimm *Little Red Riding Hood*.

Magic Realism

Magic Realism, produces stories in which fantastic things happen, often unexpectedly, in the midst of realistic everyday settings events. In these stories, magic is more likely to act as an independent force rather than a tool used by the story's characters.

A characteristic feature of “enchanted realism” is that, unlike in classic fantasy or fairy tales: “The [protagonists] of enchanted realism do not change the world; instead they themselves are changed...” (p. 53).

In magic realism, the world contains both black and white, yin and yang. These stories often avoid simple division into good and evil. They suggest that, as in the yin/yang symbol, each half has the seed of the other within it. The two natural forces ebb and flow, in a mysterious dance, achieving a balance that might be unclear to the story's characters.

The line between good and evil is often blurred, as are the lines between reality and dreams, history and story, actual events and metaphysical truth.

In magic realism, abstract thoughts and concepts can become real. Magic realism often seeks to refine and express concepts more purely than in the murkiness of real life.

Examples: William H. Gass's *Worlds Within*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Laura Esquivel's *Like Water for Chocolate*.

Dark Fantasy

Dark fantasy encircles the historic core of horror and gothic fiction, but has grown broader and harder to define, sidling up to themes of sharp satire, urban decay, erotic fiction, and other edgy, marginal topics.

If magic realism is a branch of fantasy that scrambles

the sharp edges between good and evil...dark fantasy makes no bones about it. Evil is out there, and it's going to get you. As a branch of fantasy, it is the one that deals most directly with the question on a gut level: what do you do when faced with evil in its most menacing forms?

In popularity, this branch of fantasy has seen a tremendous rise since the 1970s, with the burgeoning careers of masters of the craft Stephen King, Anne Rice, and others.

Before that, tales of the macabre were well established in literature in the novels of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*. The roots of horror go far back, to *Beowulf*, to *Gilgamesh* and the *Bible*.

These stories are morality plays; often the plot hinges on unraveling the mystery of what was done wrong – to discover how this can be corrected or reversed. Dark fantasy explores the consequences of misguided action. Sometimes the act is wrongful in intent, like the secret medical experiment gone wrong, but sometimes the act is just some accidental transgression that unleashes a dark power into the world.

Then there are tales of erotic fantasy, such as the vampire tales of Ann Rice. Another branch might be called pure horror. In these stories, anything goes – usually straight for the throat. Early in these stories evil begins to appear, usually after a brief opening scene of calm and quiet tranquility, in small measures. The first insignificant signs – the solitary bird trapped in the house – will eventually become a throng of squealing, eye-pecking birds overrunning the entire town.

Dark fantasy, whether written in a serious or comic tone, makes fun of our fears. It entertains us by showing us ourselves – a typical, normal, at first gullible protagonist and his or her foolish friends. It laughs at our weaknesses. It ridicules the magnetic power that dares us to spend a night in a haunted house, or go down in the cellar alone, or walk from the campfire out into the dark woods – despite the fact that everyone else who has done so up to that point in the story has strangely disappeared.

Fairy Tales

If I had a world of my own, everything would be nonsense. Nothing would be what it is because everything would be what it isn't. And contrary wise, what is, it wouldn't be. And what it wouldn't be, it would. You see? (Alice in Wonderland, Film 1951)

In the beginning. Von Franz (1996) mentioned in *The Interpretations of Fairy Tales* that the discovery of specific themes of tales existed as far back as 25,000 years ago. Fairy tales have also been found in Egyptian *papyri* (papyrus) and *stelai* (stone slabs, columns), and again during the time of Plato, where fairy tales were known as symbolic stories called *mythoi* used to educate children. Apart from a child's intellectual life and life experiences within the family, fairy tales stimulate the child's imagination, nurture fantasy, and answer some of the child's more pressing questions: Who am I? What is the world like? How can I be myself in this world (Bettelheim, 1975/2010)? In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, fairy tales existed in remote areas of civilization. In Europe, they were used as forms of entertainment and viewed as spiritual teachings. Their lack in Christian teachings influenced the Grimm brothers, Jakob and Wilhelm, to collect folktales. Until then, folktales or fairy tales were basically taken for granted unless experienced in dreams and given value of a talisman or magic. The motifs of fairy tales over time have remained unchanged. However, some tales were mixed with other tales and not credited in the original form. The Brothers Grimm publishing of fairy tales met with tremendous success (von Franz, 1996).

After I began delving into the messages of older fairy tales and nursery rhymes, I came to realize how brutally disturbing their meanings can be. For instance, the *Three Blind Mice* had their tails cut off by the farmer's wife; *Sleeping Beauty* was poisoned by an apple and could only be awakened by a kiss from a true love; orphaned *Cinderella* was forced to live under the command of her grueling step-mother and two step-sisters; *Rapunzel* was locked away in a

tower, where her only escape was to let down her hair. Then there are the nursery rhythms sung by parents to their children of *Rock-A-Bye Baby*, which has babies falling out of trees “cradle and all,” *Little Red Riding Hood*’s grandmother eaten by the big bad wolf, and *Humpty Dumpty* falling off a wall that could not be put back together (Gottschall, 2012; Martin, 2009). These stories tell of harmful effects where the tale insights a negative outcome. Still there are other fairy tales that impart encouraging messages, which empower children to be true to their authentic self, such as: *The Ugly Duckling*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, *The Neverending Story*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Harry Potter*, *Frozen*, and *Inside Out*.

Fairy tales: Importance to children. According to Bettelheim (1975/2010), fairy tales:

...carry important messages to the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious mind, on whatever level each is functioning at the time. By dealing with universal human problems, particularly those which preoccupy the child’s mind, these stories speak to [the] budding ego and encourage its development, while at the same time reliving preconscious and unconscious pressures...without belittling the most serious inner struggles which growing up entails. Fairy tales offer examples of both temporary and permanent solutions to pressing difficulties. (p. 6)

Many fairy stories tell of real-life issues at the beginning such as the death of a mother and/or father as in *Frozen* and *Cinderella*, and good and evil, as shown in *The Wizard of Oz* and *Harry Potter*, which are but two examples. In so doing, they explain the differences between good and evil to children. Bettelheim (1975/2010) elaborated on the benefits of fairy tales by saying:

Fairy tales, unlike any other form of literature, direct the child to discover his [her] identity and calling, and they also suggest what experiences are needed to develop his [her] character further. Fairy tales intimate that a rewarding, good life is within one’s reach despite adversity—but only if one does not shy away from the hazardous struggles without which one can never achieve true identity. These stories promise that if a child dares to engage in this fearsome and taxing search benevolent powers will come to his [her] aid, and he [she] will succeed. The stories also warn that those who are too timorous and narrow-minded to risk themselves in finding themselves must settle down to a humdrum existence—if an even worse fate does not befall them. (p. 24)

In addition, fairy tales teach morality, and meet the child where he or she is in their life and reaffirms to the child that they are not alone.

Raising a child certainly comes with challenges. There are parents that vehemently object to fantasy and fairy tales believing this means of education will undoubtedly corrupt the child's head with false information and irrational perspectives about his or her place in the real world. However, filling the child's head with explanations that are beyond his or her comprehension only confuses the child even more by overwhelming the child with unsettling feelings, which prevents the youngster from feeling safe and secure. Bettelheim (1975/2010) addressed this situation specifically:

I have known many examples where, particularly in late adolescence, years of belief in magic are called upon to compensate for the person's having been deprived of it prematurely in childhood, through stark reality having been forced on him [or her]. It is as if these young people feel that now is their last chance to make up for a severe deficiency in their life experience; or that without having had a period of belief in magic, they will be unable to meet the rigors of adult life. Many people who today suddenly seek escape in drug-induced dreams, apprentice themselves to some guru, believe in astrology, engage in practicing "black magic," or who in some other fashion escape from reality into daydreams about magic experiences, which are to change their life for the better, were prematurely pressed to view reality in an adult way. Trying to evade reality in such ways has its deeper cause in early formative experiences, which prevented the development of the conviction that life can be mastered in realistic ways. (pp. 50-51)

Story and Story Telling Evolution

Ackroyd (as cited in AZ Quotes, 2014) urged historians to shift how they write history, encouraging them to recognize the importance of imagination:

It may seem unfashionable to say so, but historians should seize the imagination as well as the intellect. History is, in a sense, a story, a narrative of adventure and of vision, of character and of incident. It is also a portrait of the general drama of the human spirit. (p. 1)

Narrative story was recorded around 40,000 years ago with Neanderthal paintings and drawings that appeared in caves that told the story of survival, which included images of animals hunted

for food and shelter and dangers to avoid. In Greece 10,000 years later, stories appeared in spoken words from such poets as Homer who used compelling stories of heroes and sex to charm his audience. During the 5th century in Rome, primitive forms of handcrafted books, known today as classic writings, were produced in small numbers. A thousand years later, still great numbers of people were unable to read, which prompted Shakespeare to craft stories to appeal to both elitist intellectuals and illiterate commoners that combined body scenes that entertained all members of his audience. Three hundred years later the industrial age emerged that introduced machine technologies use of sophisticated devices used to influence story by means of motion picture and radiobroadcasting, this allowed for large audiences to view images simultaneously. Where radio stations and movie theaters appeared across the country that developed into burgeoning business. What has been called the *Golden Age of Television* appeared after World War II that promoted commercial advertising, making individual storytelling no longer common, that is, unless the individual was a large broadcasting company. This opened the door to more advanced technology and the birth of the Internet, which appeared concurrently and combined all forms of storytelling, including visual stories, spoken words, and written words. These developments allowed for wide audiences, which returned the brand storytelling back to the masses. According to research to date, the video seems to have the widest appeal to audiences because we identify with the emotions of the individuals we see or want to be, and products we want to own (Storytelling, 2012).

Story as Cultural Identity

Story defines us like the Paleolithic paintings found in the Lascaux Cave in the Pyrenees Mountains of southern France, and The Valley of the Kings tomb that were laden in hieroglyphics that lead to the mummified bodies of ruling pharaohs (e.g., Tutankhamun,

Ramesses) of Egypt. *Project Imagination*, a creative venture in digital film hosted by Canon U.S.A. and Academy Award winning actor-director Ron Howard exemplifies the fact that photographic images have significance in narrative storytelling. Howard professed *creative inspiration* as being the driving force behind his film making. For Howard, everything in life has the potential to lead to great story-making-themes that define us (Storytelling, 2012). While heavily engaged in research, I came upon what I consider the *pièce de résistance* in my research, which referenced the ultimate fusion of imagination and story. This find is called *The Library of the History of Human Imagination*, which is housed in Ridgefield, Connecticut and owned by one of 50 most influential entrepreneurs of our time, Jay Walker of Priceline of Walker Digital, and other concerns. Privately, a bibliophile and collector of artifacts on an epic scale, Walker constructed the library in 2002 off the wing of his home. The library houses scientific and historical artifacts that include maps, artworks, 30,000 books and charts that Walker has collected over the past 20 years. A few of the items on display include the 1957 original Russian Sputnik, the first world's space satellite; a page from an original Gutenberg Bible; one of two Anastatic facsimiles of the original 1776 U.S. Declaration of Independence made from a wet-copy process of the original; a working encrypting machine known as the Nazi Enigma; the 1768 first edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica; a United States flag from Apollo 11, the first successful flight to the moon; and treasure troves of limitless findings (Walker, 2013).

Stories have power; they can mesmerize and draw us in like a moth to light by holding us captive while we are suspended in animation, waiting with growing anticipation to hear a release of words, view actions, or listen for sounds that allow us to join in the story that is unfolding. Why, some people are such charismatic storytellers listening to them is almost as good and may be even better than actually being there. Genius storyteller Walt Disney, suspended reality

brilliantly by using animated characters that were non-threatening to connect us to universal themes we hold dear such as being special and loved for being unique like Mickey Mouse, being a part of something more like Pinocchio's longing to be a *real* boy, and engaging in the unknown like Peter Pan who has unlimited adventures, never ages, and was able to fly. Disney was a master at infecting us through storytelling that invited us into his many worlds of fantasy, using television's Mickey Mouse Club, such movies as *Lady and the Tramp* and *Bambi*, theme parks Disneyland, Disney World, and present-day Disney cruises (Dover, 2014). In Gottschall's (2012) book, *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*, the author-editor, elaborated, "story is the glue of human social life—defining groups and holding them together" (p. 177). Gottschall argued that we are creatures of an evolutionary niche none other than Neverland, in which we spend a lifetime engaged in make-believe. Where once it seemed that we left the nursery of make-believe of pseudo worlds, the stories and nursery rhythms remain within our imaginations. We are seeded with imagination and story it's in our DNA. These resources are ever present in our waking hours as daydreams, brainstorming, and thinking that flow generally uninterrupted into our sleeping hours as night dreams and nightmares. Consciously or subconsciously our mind is wedded to imagination and story. When we open a book, see a movie on the silver screen, or listen to the Beatles and R &B, we have only to pay attention to the way we feel to know the power of imagination and story. We are storytelling creatures addicted to the forms of story—fiction, fantasy and dreams (Gottschall, 2012). There is no shortage of phenomenal storytellers throughout human history, one of which is the master storyteller Mark Twain, who both completes this part of story, as its evolution relates to imagination, and it also begins the next piece of biography.

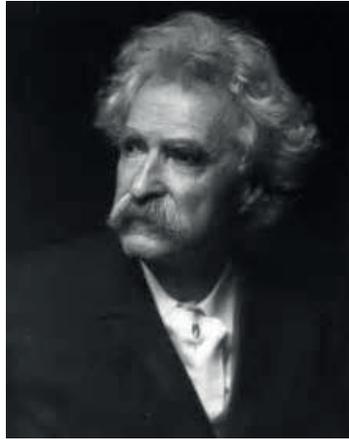


Figure 56. Mark Twain. Biographies are but the clothes and buttons of the man. The biography of the man himself cannot be written. (Keillor, *New York Times Sunday Book Review*, 2010, p. 1)

Biography as Story

Originating in the late 17th century, the term biography *biographie* (French) or *biographia* (Latin) and Medieval Greek, *bios* ‘life’ + *graphia* (writing) is a sequence of events that accounts for an individual’s life written by someone else: a human life in its course (*Oxford Living Dictionaries: English*, 2017). In using the later part of the definition, it can be said, we are history in the making, a living story in which we are both author and artist of a personal narrative of past, present, and thoughts of future experiences prompted by a curious nature in earnest pursuit of The Holy Grail that answers human existence. We ask, “Where did we come from? What is our purpose? What is the meaning of life?” These existential universal questions are the underpinnings that drove my research, as I asked, “Who am I, and why am I here?” Finding the answers to these questions are intrinsically important because the answers define who we are and validate our significance.

Researchers in every discipline have dedicated their lives to authenticate the origin of human existence. Each field of study, in body, mind, and spirit, maintains an ideology that purports to explain our nature of being. Sagan (1980), well-known philosopher-scientist asserted,

“The cosmos is within us. We are made of star stuff. We are a way for the universe to know itself” (n.p.). The discipline of psychology considers “the idea that at birth the mind is like a ‘blank tablet’ or *tabula rasa* (Latin) and that all knowledge is subsequently derived from sensory experience” (VandenBos, 2007, p. 920). The domain of world religions adheres to the universal belief that there is a superhuman controlling power, a personal God [Goddess], gods [goddesses], a deity or deities of various ranks that affect various aspects of a person’s life. As we have learned in my research from scholars, we enter this 3-dimensional life having been seeded with the essential qualities to fulfill our destiny. In other words, our souls are fertile with what Houston (1998) referred to as *A Passion for the Possible*.

The Intrigue of Mythology

Myth. Feinstein and Krippner (2008) cited Larsen as saying, “Myth is the bubbling lifespring of our consciousness...of our highest creativity as well as our worst delusions, and the secret is all in how it is tended” (p. 229). Houston (1998) captured the lighter side of mythology, as she asked, “Did you know you were the Mything Link? Well, you are” (p. 122). She continued this thought by proclaiming:

You are the living connection between the great stories of all times and places and the playing out of these stories in everyday life. Beneath the soil of your everyday world lies the vast root system of the Once Was and the Could Be. (p. 122)

Myths are deemed to be sacred stories that communicate fundamental truths about life, which incorporate archetypal symbols that are accessible through our imaginations. Here we can recall the stories of god’s and goddesses, such as Thor and Athena, as well as heroes and heroines like Sir Lancelot and Lady Macbeth, and Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia. As we will learn, our sense of our essence self is rooted in archetypal symbols that spark our inquisitive nature that embody our origin and foretell of our becoming, which reflect a society’s essential

concerns of its people. Campbell (1990/2003) believed a whole mythology reflects how people live as individuals and a collective. He asserted, “A mythology is an organization of symbolic narratives and images that are metaphorical of the possibilities of human experience and fulfillment in a given society at a given time” (p. 134), and puts “you in touch with the mystery that is the ground of your own being” (p. 135). According to Campbell (as cited in Houston, 1996, p. 100), myth offers four major psychological functions:

1. Myth brings us into communion with transcendent realms and the eternal forms.
2. Myth gives us the art, the music, and the poetry to express the realization that we are members of a larger universe and that there is meaning and purpose behind it all. Myth provides a “revelation to waking consciousness of the power of its own sustaining source.”
3. Myth tells us that wherever we are in time, space, or culture, the rituals of living and dying have spiritual and moral roots. When the rituals no longer work, a pervading sense of alienation from society often ensues, followed by a desperate quest to replace the lost meaning of the once-powerful myths. People become mean-spirited and withdrawn, even ready to comply with totalitarian regimes when all else fails. Wholesale leaps into one or another variety of fundamentalism reduce consciousness to a limited though comforting notion of the way things work. Often, people replace an outgrown mythology with one that belongs to a still earlier worldview. The society is in danger of making a U-turn to the past.
4. Most important function of myth, is to “foster the centering and unfolding of the individual in integrity” with the self (the microcosm); the culture (the mesocosm); the universe (the macrocosm); and the pan-cosmic unity, the ultimate creative Mystery, which is “both beyond and within [the self], and all things.”

McAdams (1993) posited that myths “capture given psychological, sociological, cosmological, and metaphysical truths” (p. 34) of a given society where narrative forms of storytelling help to preserve the culture’s integrity and assures cultural continuity and health (Feinstein & Krippner 2008; Houston, 1996; McAdams, 1993).

Campbell (1990/2003) held German psychologist, Durkheim as the polestar and quoted him as saying:

The whole problem of life is to become “transparent to transcendence”: so that you realize that you are yourself a manifestation of this. That you live the myth. That you live the divine life within you. Yourself as a vehicle; not as the final term but as a vehicle of consciousness and life: This is the great theme that I find there. (p. 40)

Jung (1989) once said, “Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart” (p. 58). Along those lines, Campbell (1990/2003) espoused, “a mythology doesn’t come from the head; a mythology comes from the heart” (p. 228). Furthermore, “the difference between an ideology and a mythology is the difference between the ego and the self: ideology comes from the thinking system and mythology comes from the *being*” (p. 228). As nature has the four seasons, mythology mirrors our own process and cycling of life. Cassirer (as cited in Epstein, 1992) wrote:

Nothing has a definite, invariable static shape. By a sudden metamorphosis everything may be turned into everything. If there is any characteristic and outstanding feature of the mythical world, any law by which it is governed—it is this law of metamorphosis. (p. 205)

Personal myth. I agree with Houston (1998) who referred to myth as “the immense gift the universe has given us to help us on our way through the obstacle course of life” (p. 128), which “sustains and shapes our emotional attitudes, provides us with life purposes, and energizes our everyday acts. It gives life meaning and momentum” (p. 129). Meant in this way, and in this investigation, by relating to archetypal figure—as *story in the form of narratives*—it strengthens our resolve and confirms our malleable biography on our way to becoming more than we fathom who we are to be. McAdams (1993) warned us that “fashioning a personal myth is not an exercise in narcissistic delusion, or paranoid attempt to establish oneself as God” (p. 35), but rather can be seen as taking psychological and social responsibility because our world can no longer define who we are and how we should be, we must figure this out on our own.

Personal myth begins. My research on myth revealed that myth came in our bundling of

DNA. We are exposed to myth as infants and children, which imparts information regarding how our world works and what are the expected ways we must to be. We are introduced to characters that imprint their stories and teach us invaluable lessons that we bring with us through our lives. We also learn about love, death, good, evil, hope, dreams, and so much more. It is not until our late-adolescent years, when we are confronted by an identity crisis that we become self-conscious mythmakers. From that time on, myths are seen as valuable coping mechanisms that come to our aid through life's challenges that remain our constant source of guidance (Hillman, 1997; Houston, 1996, 1998; Feinstein and Krippner, 2008; McAdams, 1993).

Archetype

Let us then imagine archetypes as the deepest patterns of psychic functioning, the roots of the soul governing the perspectives we have of ourselves and the world.
(Hillman, 1977, *Revisioning Psychology*)

The past president of Pacifica Graduate Institute, Pearson (1986), described archetype as being “nothing more than the deep structures in the psyche and in social systems, [which can be thought of as] inner potentialities, allies, or guides that always are available to you” (p. 19). Houston (1996) referred to the word archetype as indicating the first types or primal patterns from which people derive their sense of essence and existence. Quintessentially, archetypes are about relationships. Standard interpretations describe archetypes as the primary forms and constellations of energy that govern the psyche” (Houston, 1996, pp. 132-133). Jung (as cited in Houston, 1996) “observed that when archetypes are repressed—whether within one person or in an entire society—we are cut off from nature, self, society, and spirit” (p. 133). In the beginning of this chapter, I wrote of a personal conundrum that persists within me: a divide between my spiritual essence and socialized identity. This division spawns great disharmony and inhibits my natural proclivity to actualize. Houston addressed this dilemma as:

The mechanistic view of the world that we have inherited infects us with a split between subject and object (mind and body, inner and outer realities), between individuals and their relationships, and between the world of human culture and the natural realm of biophysical processes. Archetypes, in their finest sense, serve to heal these splits...archetypes bridge spirit with nature, mind with body, and self with universe. They are always within us, essential elements within the structure of our psyches. Without them, we would live in a gray, two-dimensional world. That is why even when archetypes are repressed, they bleed through into other realms of human experience, showing up in dreams, religious knowing, visions, artwork, ritual, love—and madness. (p. 133)

Many of the cited authors agree that archetypes are semantical metaphors that have a double existence. This is evidenced by the fact that they consist of a myriad of internal oppositions, which could be interpreted as positive *and* negative polarities. Historically, societies have used these mythic metaphoric images to represent the doublings of internal self-contradictions that are known to aid us in our journey as we travel through life. Most of these scholars regard these archetypes as having properties that are—recognized as unknowable, and yet, known through these images; embody spiritual and instinctual qualities; are congenital and not inherited; and are solely conventional structures and contents that are psychic and extrapsychic or psychoid. These contributing scholars who have clarified archetypes did not believe in resolving these opposites, philosophically, empirically, or semantically because they reflect the human condition of contradictions that remain an unresolved mystery.

Jung (1990/2011) viewed archetypes, as “primordial images’ inherited *tendency* of the human mind to form representations of mythological motifs, representations that vary a great deal without losing their basic pattern” (p. 108). Moss (2007) referred to Jung’s archetypes not as structures but as “habitual currents of psychic energy [and] systems of readiness for action” (p. 110) that are as much physical as psychic. He suggested these “physical forces that play with us through coincidence may include our parallel selves in parallel universes, interacting with our world in constant and complex weavings through what quantum physics has taught us to call

‘interference’ patterns” (p. 110) that continually shift the balance of probabilities for a specific outcome.

Medical intuitive, Myss (2013), viewed archetypes as the “engine of human unconscious, [the] new language of power [and the] vocabulary of intuition” (p. xii) the new *inner-net* that speaks to us through myths and symbols that presents us with universal patterns that literally bridge us to the world in which we live. Myss insisted:

It is impossible to know who we truly are unless we understand our own personal archetypes, because it is the psychic lenses through which we view ourselves and our world [providing us with] how we function psychologically, what makes us the way we are, and what makes us heal. (p. xii)

Much like our daimōn, our archetypes aim is to lead us toward our higher potentials, and the sooner we learn what they are and how to work with them, the sooner we will experience balance and harmony.

Many of us have not been trained to tap into our inner potentials in which “the fundamental structures of the psyche can help us decode our own inner workings, as well as the inner lives of other people, groups, and social systems, so that we can rise to the challenge of contemporary life” (Myss, 2013, p. x). There are ample literary sources available, many of which I have provided in this study, which will aid you if you desire more information to discern these basic archetypes. Most importantly, Myss imparted:

Our archetypal patterns are imprinted in us from birth perhaps even earlier in the womb. You cannot change your primary archetypes but you can mature their influences. You can transform a Wounded Child into a Magical Child, but the roots of your Wounded Child will always be with you. (p. 16)

Educator, author, and speaker, Bradshaw (1992), suggested in his book, *Homecoming*, it is only when we turn our attention to heal our *wounded* child archetype that we accept ourselves completely and know sustainable happiness:

This is crucial for us to know. Adult children often believe that they are the *only ones* who suffered as children. Out of our hurt and pain, out of our lack of nourishment, we try to concretize things. We often concretize our wounded child and lose sight of the wonder child. We get bogged down in the literal and lose sight of the symbolic. To lose the symbolic is to lose sight of the spiritual. This creates what Marion Woodman calls the “materialization of consciousness.” We see no world beyond the world of our actual historical wounded child. To be bogged down in your wounded personal history is *never to get beyond your wounds*. Never to get beyond your wounds is to explain everything that’s wrong in your life as your wounded child’s contamination. When we hear others’ stories, they connect us with something larger. They connect us to our archetypal depths.

The wonder child archetype calls us to spiritual regeneration. It represents our soul’s need for transformation. The wonder child opens us to the mythical divine child expressed in the infant-in-exile motif. It takes us beyond the literal child of our personal histories. All of our stories tell of a hero/heroine, a divine child who was exiled and who is on a journey to find his [or her] true self. (p. 268)

In the context of healing and transcendence, I applied the three modalities of Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy that made it possible for me to journey deep within myself. Quite organically I was energetically directed to those places within my wounded child that wanted healing, which then created an opening for me to connect with my wonder child. When I reflect upon these processes I was able to broaden my perspective of this study’s central question “How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative?” I came away with a richer learning that informed both my healing and transcendence.

Researchers who study archetypes believe we received our archetypes concurrently while we received our life calling or life assignment as part of our intuitive survival mechanisms (Hillman, 1975/1977; Houston, 1996; Jung, 1990/2010/2011; Myss, 2013; Pearson, 1998). There are an infinite number of archetypes some of which are ancient—Heroes or Heroines, Healers and Storytellers—that have stood the test of time. Nevertheless, as contemporary societies change, our mythical figures adapt to current times. Such legendary warriors like Hercules, Odysseus, and Achilles advance to include Robin Hood and Braveheart, Superman, Batman and

Spiderman, and celebrated heroines, such as Artemis, Joan of Arc, Catherine the Great transcended to incorporate Gloria Steinem, Oprah Winfrey, Golda Meir, Princess Dianna, Malala Yousafzai, and even Wonder Woman, Lucile Ball, and Carol Burnett, all of whom challenged society's conformity. Myss's (2013) book *Archetypes* provides an updated gallery of archetypal figures that relate to our current social climate. I found Pearson's (1998) explanation interesting and informative in which she stated how the cycling of our personal story unfolds:

We all begin in infancy and early childhood as Innocents, trusting that we will be cared for and still in awe of beauty of the world. Soon we fall from this state of grace, as Adam and Eve fell from the Garden of Eden. Being Orphans, we are forced to face disappointment and pain. From these experiences, we learn realism and how to tell the difference between guides and tempters.

Growing older, we often experience our lives as confining and limiting, even oppressive. As Wanderers, we take off to find ourselves and seek our fortunes. Then, as Warriors, we gain the courage to face our dragons and to develop the discipline and skill necessary to succeed in the world. As Altruists, we discover that our existence is more meaningful if we commit to something greater than ourselves by, for example, giving back to others and to life itself.

As returned Innocents, we can find the treasure of true happiness, once again trusting in the process of being alive. Finally, as Magicians, we become capable of transforming our lives and our kingdoms. (p. 20)

Table 9

Pearson's (1998) Diagram of the Six Fundamental Archetypes

ARCHETYPE	HELPS US	OVERCOME FEAR	GAIN VIRTUE
Orphan	Survive difficulty	Punishment	Empathy
Wanderer	Find ourselves	Conformity	Authenticity
Warrior	Prove our worth	Defeat	Courage
Altruist	Show generosity	Selfish	Kindness
Innocent	Achieve happiness	Abandonment	Faith
Magician	Transform our life	Illusions	Integrity (p. 280)

Pearson's (1998) chart is one example that incites a more in-depth perspective of archetypes in relationship to the cycling of our personal stories.

Although we have many more than six archetypes, these six likely affect us to the greatest degree (p. 20). The more these archetypes are activated in our lives, the closer we are to understanding the truth of our histories, our stories, and our healing. As we move through these archetypal changes our paradigm shifts; therefore, they affect how we see ourselves, and how we find our place in the world. As a result, we are finally able to distinguish between objective reality and subjective reality. By uncovering these archetypes that govern our lives, Myss (2013) explained, “you step into the core of your being, perhaps for the first time” (p. xiv). Subsequently, Pearson (1998) listed eight major ways in which archetypes can assist us on our life journey:

Table 10

Pearson’s (1998) Eight Major Ways Archetypes Assist Us on Our Journey

- 1) When an archetype is activated in your life, it provides a structure that makes immediate growth possible.
 - We are living a story in a way that is inappropriate to our current situation or untrue to who and how we are at heart.
- 2) Archetypes help you grow and develop.
 - As archetypes are expressed in our lives, they evolve as we do.
- 3) Understanding the archetypes can help you make peace with your life.
 - Many of us have ideas of who we should be that are at odds with how we are. Different archetypes dominate at different stages in our lives—and in different situations. Each gives a gift. When we stop beating ourselves up for not living up to how we think we should be, we can begin to notice what gifts we have developed.
- 4) Recognizing archetypes can provide you with the freedom to choose the life you want.
- 5) Recognizing archetypes can help you achieve balance and personal fulfillment.
 - Anytime we feel our lives are out of balance, it means that the archetypes currently dominating our behavior no longer coincide with those active in our inner lives.
- 6) Awareness of the archetypal plot lines that determine your life can give you the freedom to avoid making mistakes—or making the same mistakes over.

- If you develop an understanding of your inner mythic landscape, you also can recognize the kinds of people who are likely to be able to manipulate you.
 - 7) Archetypal recognition can help you better understand others and how they see the world.
 - 8) Understanding the archetypal basis for the ways in which people see the world cannot only make you smarter, but also help you see beyond the unconscious bias scholars and journalists often bring to their work. (pp. 21-30)
-

In bringing this segment to a close, I refer to Jung's (1964) book, *Man and His Symbols*:

All we can see now is that the archetypes have an enormous impact on the individual, forming his [or her] emotions and his [or her] ethical and mental outlook, influencing his [or her] relationships with others, and thus affecting his [or her] whole destiny. We can also see that the arrangement of archetypal symbols follows a pattern of wholeness in the individual, and that an appropriate understanding of the symbols can have a healing effect. And we can see that the archetypes can act as creative or destructive forces in our mind: creative when they inspire new ideas, destructive when these same ideas stiffen into conscious prejudices that inhibit further discoveries. (p. 377)

Summary of Imagination and Story

Reintroduced in the segment was the primary question central to this investigation: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? Although each is a separate entity, this section detailed the naturally occurring confluence of imagination and story in their symbiotic relationship. The phenomenon of both imagination and story were discussed and included in the historical background and evolution of story as biography, which is our history in the making. Also explored is how narrative, as a form of storytelling, accesses our imagination and reveals that we incarnate with our brain on story, and as such, we recognize the value of fantasy, fairy tales, myths, and archetypes that is, in part, our evolutionary process.

Being Gifted and the Gifted Being

In this final section, I reinstitute the principal research question: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? I also address and answer this investigation's last question: What does it mean to be *gifted*?

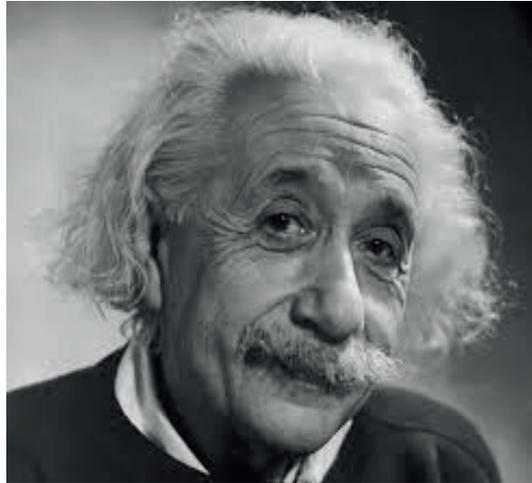


Figure 57. The Gifted Adult: Lost and Found. (Internet, 2017). Albert Einstein had an insatiable, curious mind, and his brilliance was often misunderstood. He was thought arrogant by many of his professors and colleagues because he dared to question accepted scientific findings until he proved his theories in physics and quantum mechanics, specifically the formula of relativity, $E=mc^2$, thus, making his name synonymous with Genius. He was considered one of the most brilliant minds of our time.

When I think of gifted adults, my mind is drawn to such celebrity status figures as Golda Meir, Susan B. Anthony, Helen Keller, Maya Angelou, Mother Theresa, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Nelson Mandela, Stephen Spielberg, Stephen Hawking, Marc Chagall, and Albert Einstein. From appearances, these exemplars are living their element congruent with their natural gifts and passions that, from my perspective, allowed them to transition as actualized *transcenders*, ones who have reached the highest level of self-actualization where transcendence of the self allows them to guide the progress of evolution (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993). For many, they appear to be an overnight success, when in fact these personalities were unknown until they moved into the public eye. Even so, from their inception, they carried within them the seeds of giftedness they chose not to ignore despite imposed social restrictions and personal hardships. Each triumphed over obstacles that could have impeded personal growth and instead chose to move towards the ultimate expression of his or her authentic Self. Rarely do we factor in the immeasurable courage and tenacity these personalities had, and we conclude they possess supernatural abilities we lack.

The gifted life is one of paradox: “Cherish the product, chastise the person,” (Jacobsen, 1999, p. 22) at best and at worst, a great many of us feel inferior and undeveloped in our accomplishments when we compare ourselves to those in the spotlight. Yet, within each of us are seeds of gifted potentials waiting for us to express them, like the oak tree encoded within the acorn intended to fulfill its destiny.

Jacobsen (1999) postulated, perhaps, the reason we feel inadequate is related to our assumptions of what being gifted means. Gifted was once thought to exist only in school children and bright people (p. 6). What follows is the current understanding of the relationship of intelligence to giftedness, for example, the higher the intellect the more gifted the person. My research revealed French psychologist, Binet (as cited in Binet & Simon, 1916, see also Hunt, 2011), received a commission from the French government to produce an instrument that would identify slower learners from more advanced learners. The instrument is known as the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test, which became the test used to forecast student’s success performance in school and thought to project how well the student will do in life. The assessment defines the understanding of cognitive intelligence in five areas: (a) initially having and using natural abilities without benefit of formal training; (b) rapid learning; (c) creative and productive thinking; (d) high academic achievement; and (e) superior proficiency in one or more domains, such as mathematics, performing arts, and leadership (Hunt, 2011).

Conversely, Goleman (1997), psychologist, science journalist, and author, along with developmental psychologist, Gardner (2006), argued in favor of non-cognitive skills having equal importance in assessing intelligence, which shattered the notion of the IQ test as the sole means of determining intelligence. Goleman (1995) postured *Emotional Intelligence* as, “the capacity to be aware of, control, and *express* one’s emotions, and to handle inter-personal

relationships judiciously and empathetically: emotional intelligence is the key to both personal and professional success” (Emotional Intelligence, 2014). Goleman’s five domains of Emotional Intelligence include (a) knowing one’s emotions, (b) managing emotions, (c) motivating oneself, (d) recognizing emotions in others, and (e) handling relationships. All domains represent independent competencies unrelated to IQ measures. Each domain is adaptable to change when reinforced actions are applied that alter both habit and response (Goleman, 1997, p. 44). While the IQ test is based on innate intelligence unchanged with age, training, or experience, Gardner’s (2006) multiple intelligence (MI) theory originated with developing knowledge taken from human biology and human psychology to “solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community [such that] the creation of a cultural product allows one to capture and transmit knowledge or to express one’s conclusions, beliefs, or feelings” (2006, p. 6), where scores are changeable. Gardner’s work on Project Zero, (human cognitive exploration) and *The Theory of Multiple Intelligence* expanded our understanding of intelligence in eight domains: (a) musical intelligence, (b) bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, (c) logical-mathematical intelligence, (d) linguistic intelligence, (e) spatial intelligence, (f) interpersonal intelligence, (g) intrapersonal intelligence, and (h) naturalist intelligence (pp. 8-20).

According to Jacobsen (1999), fewer individuals possess the traits of giftedness as we advance in categories. The baseline of giftedness involves multiple intelligence and first nature traits that consist of intensity, complexity, and drive (ICD). The next MI category is a level that contains highly evolved and everyday geniuses endowed with potential traits for advanced development in humanistic vision, a mandated mission, and revolutionary action (p. 14).

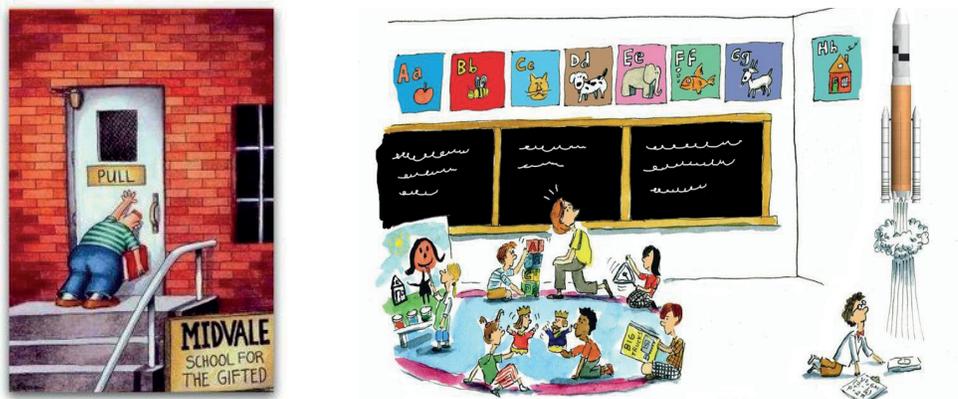


Figure 58 and Figure 59. *Gifted*. (Internet, 2017).

Giftedness begins with children and continues as they grow into adults. The gifted child is fundamentally different from other children in that they intuit the world from the advantage of having heightened sensory apparatus called *hot receptors* that detect the smallest changes in the external environment and promote the *urge to perfect* (Jacobsen, 1999). These two traits, heightened receptivity and the urge to perfect, are genetically hardwired and known as first nature traits (p. 12). Since mainstream society sets the standard of expectations of how we should behave, this causes a moral quandary for those gifted but unable to express their traits without censure. Pressured by social constraints, they pigeonhole their natural behavior by collapsing it or exaggerating it. Jacobsen explained these emotions:

To feel like an outsider, to constantly pressure yourself to hold back your gifts in order to fit in or avoid disapproval, to erroneously believe that you are overly sensitive, compulsively perfectionistic, and blindly driven, to live without knowing the basic truths about the core of your being—too often this is the life of Everyday Geniuses who have been kept in the dark about who they are and misinformed about their differences. No one ever took them aside and explained: Of course, you're different. You're intense, complex, and driven because you're gifted. No one told them they cannot escape the fact that they will always be *quantitatively, qualitatively, and motivationally* different from most other people. Nor do they know that these very same things that are the basis of criticism are fundamental building blocks of excellence and Advanced Development. (p. 17)

Jacobsen, in summarizing the stages for the gifted adult, stated:

They spend the first part of their lives trying to be who they are meeting with

disapproval. The second part is spent pretending to be someone they are not in order to fit in. And, if they're determined and lucky, they can spend the third part chipping away at the rock that created the false self and moving closer to being the authentic individuals they were uniquely destined to be. (pp. 20-21)

It is all too easy to stay lost in a society that does not support self-actualization or honor and cultivate genuine purpose in living a life that matters! Thus, multitudes of gifted persons often feel riddled with fear and apprehension; they become stuck in a quagmire of inner incongruence and tension, caught up in a society that is determined to define them by mandates from *cultural consensus* and trapped by the limitations of their own hardwiring of patterned behaviors and inherited beliefs. Yet, many world citizens attempt to climb out from the entrapment of limitations and liberate themselves to realize their gifts. In this struggle, many fall prey to social pressure and forsake their inner nature, which robs them of their true biography, the destiny written in their acorn. Consequently, these adults proceed tentatively because they have not yet recognized and embraced themselves as becoming gifted adults and revolutionaries who “have been able to liberate and integrate their gifts to perform revolutionary acts that, in large or small ways, [can] change the world...and push progress forward” (p. 15). A prime example is the reticence of “the gifted population of an estimated 20 million American adults and roughly 3 million gifted school children [who] are the most under identified group of potential achievers in our society” (Jacobsen, 1999, p. 8).

In the United States, the flood of babies born between 1946 and 1964 following World War II—identified as the baby boomer generation—numbered about 80 million children. Many of these gifted children were, and remain, under-identified gifted adults because of the inability of social institutions to handle the onslaught of humanity; there was no time or money to invest in discovering giftedness. Distraught by the preceding silent generation, which some have identified as conformist people-pleasers who accepted “increasing power of corporate and

government organizations that influenced national character,” (Hill, 2007, p. 7), baby boomers set out to turn conformity on its head. Their platform was one of *change* and *self-expression* that virtually affected every area of life from politics: dodging the draft; anti-Vietnam-war protests; and women’s liberation referring to government policies on abortion, family planning, equal pay, which affected a woman’s role in society as a homemaker or employed woman. Other issues that defined this generation included segregation and integration of racial groups, namely African-Americans, music—rock-and-roll and rhythm and blues (R&B) and a newly created language—*hipster lingo* (pp. 14-15). This era was identified as the beatnik, anti-establishment generation that sought the authentic self through experimental practices: Eastern spirituality, psychedelic drugs, and sexual freedom in the form of *free love* (Hill, 2007, pp. 2-15). Today, baby boomers, who are still living, are transitioning or have already transitioned beyond midlife into what is identified as senior life. Many find themselves once again affected by identity issues of long ago (Jacobsen, 1999, pp. 8-10).

The story of the gifted adult is a battle of the selves: the personal, spiritual, authentic self, verses its imposter, the socially constructed false self. The personal self is known by many names—our intrinsic nature or essence, spiritual self, real self, true self and authentic self—while the spiritual self has been called “the nonphysical part of a person: the mental, moral, and emotional characteristics that make up the core of someone’s identity” (APA, 2007, p. 884). A true self is “the total of an individual’s potentialities that could be developed under ideal social and cultural conditions” (APA, 2007, p. 960). These selves constitute the authentic self. The false indoctrinated self is how we put ourselves together or package ourselves to fit into the conditions of society. It is a conditioned self, known as a social self, public self or social identity (APA, 2007, p. 869). The false self “develops as a defense against *impingements* and in

adaptation to the environment” in contrast to the *true self*, “which develops in an environment that adapts to the infant and allows him or her to discover and express his or her true impulses” (APA, 2007, p. 366). The battle of opposition leads to an avalanche of problems for the gifted adults who are driven genetically to self-actualize and must fend off their inner tension of self-doubts and setbacks to make their lives count and push evolution forward. Conversely, the false self kills individual potential. It denies the authentic self’s natural gifts and talents by adhering to conventional authority to gain obligatory approval from others and by demanding conformity. It becomes focused on attaining superficial success, which commonly entices the false self to move further away from the authentic self. Moreover, if they refrain from the guidance of their inner *daimōn*, they do so uncomfortably and regretfully, for they suffer endlessly for the duration of their life. In a nutshell, the inner story of the gifted adult is one of lost identity, inhibited self-expression, self-doubt, self-sabotage, and no strategy appropriate to manage themselves as assets rather than liabilities.

Be Yourself: Everyone Else Is Already Taken

As you embrace the gift you are, your destiny unfolds, and you become the life you were meant to live. What follows is Jacobsen’s (1999) Evolutionary Intelligence (EVI) Profile, in tables 11, and 12, which are tools “that will help you discover vital information about the very essence of who you are and provide you with a clearer understanding of your own unique strengths” (p. 92). This is a prototype inventory based on credible research designed to offer a systematic way to identify and assess your traits and habits as they relate to your potential of Evolutionary Intelligence. This profile is a questionnaire of 240 items that indicate five areas of giftedness: Multiple Intelligence (MI), Gifted Traits (GT), Humanistic Vision (HV), Mandated Mission (MM), and Revolutionary Action (RA). These five areas consist of two groups. The first

group is baseline traits of giftedness in MI, which is based on Gardner's (2006) model, and GT or first nature traits of ICD. The second group is advanced development of Everyday Genius called HV that identifies your current ability to make a contribution to society that aligns with your unique gifts including, MM that measures your capacity to self-actualize and RA, which evaluates your willingness to flout convention by resisting criticism and opposition so that you forge new pathways and execute your mission.

Table 11

Jacobsen's (1999) Evolutionary Intelligence (EVI) Profile of the Gifted Adult Section One: Multiple Intelligences (MI) and Gifted Traits (GT)

THE GIFTED ADULT

SECTION ONE: SPECIAL ABILITIES (MI + GT)

PART 1: MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES (MI)

Indicate how well each statement fits you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

I instinctively use my body to express ideas.	0	1	2	3
I'm good at making things with my hands.	0	1	2	3
I can convey ideas and feelings via movement.	0	1	2	3
I tend to understand things through my body.	0	1	2	3
I have above-average mind/body coordination.	0	1	2	3
I rely on my body's dexterity in highly skilled ways.	0	1	2	3
I prefer hands-on methods of learning.	0	1	2	3
I often touch things to better understand them.	0	1	2	3
Ideas come to me best when I am in motion.	0	1	2	3
I regularly participate in sports or physical activities.	0	1	2	3

Body-smart SUBTOTAL = ___ a.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE A.

Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

I'm highly verbal and an easy talker.	0	1	2	3
My ears are "tuned in" to the rhythms, subtleties, patterns, and nuances of speech.	0	1	2	3
I can use dialogue to fluently express my ideas and feelings.	0	1	2	3
I tend to think out loud and use others as sounding boards for my ideas and concerns.	0	1	2	3
I make sense of things through words.	0	1	2	3
I rely on my communication skills to succeed.	0	1	2	3
Books are an important part of my life.	0	1	2	3
I can entertain myself with meaningful and nonsensical combination of words.	0	1	2	3
Names, rhymes, and words run through my head all the time.	0	1	2	3
In school I found English and history classes were easier than science and math.	0	1	2	3

Word-smart SUBTOTAL = ___ b.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE B.

Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

I can turn mental images into something concrete.	0	1	2	3
I can re-create visual material from memory.	0	1	2	3
I have a reliable mental mapping system.	0	1	2	3
I can visualize things from various angles.	0	1	2	3
I notice details of arrangement in my surroundings.	0	1	2	3
I rely on graphs, charts, outlines, and diagrams.	0	1	2	3
I like puzzles, mazes, and visual brain teasers.	0	1	2	3
I liked geometry more than algebra.	0	1	2	3
I like to read things that have many illustrations.	0	1	2	3
I regularly doodle or sketch out my ideas.	0	1	2	3

Spatial-smart SUBTOTAL = ___ c.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE C.

Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

I'm sensitive to the pitch, tone, and rhythm

of sounds.	0	1	2	3
I respond to the emotional impact of music.	0	1	2	3
For me, sound and music are linked to important symbolic meanings.	0	1	2	3
I can express ideas and feeling with music.	0	1	2	3
I can play at least one musical instrument.	0	1	2	3
I experience music as a powerful mood maker.	0	1	2	3
I am a better-than-average singer.	0	1	2	3
I often find myself tapping out an interesting beat.	0	1	2	3
Songs and jingles regularly run through my head.	0	1	2	3
It bothers me when music is off-key.	0	1	2	3

Music-smart SUBTOTAL = ___ d.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE D.

Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

I look at problems as “if __, then __” questions.	0	1	2	3
I often solve problems <i>before</i> I’m able to articulate the solution.	0	1	2	3
I value lists, timelines, numbers, and equations.	0	1	2	3
I like to develop and evaluate theories.	0	1	2	3
I tend to be a rational, scientific thinker.	0	1	2	3
I rely on my objective observation skills.	0	1	2	3
I am most comfortable with things that can be measured or analyzed with numbers.	0	1	2	3
In school I preferred math and science classes.	0	1	2	3
I enjoy reading about science and inventions.	0	1	2	3
I tend to look for holes in people’s thinking.	0	1	2	3

Logic-smart SUBTOTAL = ___ e.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE E.

Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

I sensitively respond to others’ needs and feelings.	0	1	2	3
I’m keenly aware of mood, temperament, intention.	0	1	2	3
I have a sophisticated way of “reading” situations.	0	1	2	3
I value social prowess and meaningful				

relationships.	0	1	2	3
I rely on my ability to listen perceptively.	0	1	2	3
I'm skilled at picking up and interpreting the subtleties of body language and intonation.	0	1	2	3
People tend to come to me for advice and support.	0	1	2	3
It's easy for me to make and keep friends.	0	1	2	3
I enjoy social events and group participation.	0	1	2	3
I seem to be a natural leader.	0	1	2	3

Relationship-smart SUBTOTAL = ___ f.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE F.

Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

I regularly notice and categorize plants/animals.	0	1	2	3
I'm fascinated by the patterns and ways of nature.	0	1	2	3
I am environmentally sensitive and attuned.	0	1	2	3
I can match my "frequency" with natural settings.	0	1	2	3
I have an affinity for agriculture/biology/science.	0	1	2	3
I find the world of nature comforting and exciting.	0	1	2	3
In school I enjoyed outdoor activities/field trips.	0	1	2	3
It bothers me when I am not outdoors very much.	0	1	2	3
I have often thought I get along with animals better than people.	0	1	2	3
I feel directed toward the protection of nature.	0	1	2	3

Nature-smart SUBTOTAL = ___ g.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE G.

Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much

I comprehend my own emotions and goals.	0	1	2	3
I consider self-knowledge a source of guidance.	0	1	2	3
I have a good "working model" of my identity.	0	1	2	3
I can extract deep meaning from bits of daily life.	0	1	2	3
I have a private "observer-evaluator" at work within.	0	1	2	3
I enrich my life by reliving poignant memories.	0	1	2	3

I find personal-growth classes and counseling enlightening and helpful.	0	1	2	3
I regularly review my life goals.	0	1	2	3
I need time for contemplation and reflection.	0	1	2	3
I have an entrepreneurial nature.	0	1	2	3

Self-smart SUBTOTAL = ___ h.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE H.

~~~~~  
 PART 2: GIFTED TRAITS (GT) = INTENSITY, COMPLEXITY, DRIVE (ICD)

**A. INTENSITY (EXCITABILITY AND SENSITIVITY)**

*Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much*

|                                                                                               |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| My energy is a vital resource, not hyperactivity.                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| When I'm on task I can be so engrossed I neglect important relationships or responsibilities. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am known for my enthusiasm and exuberance.                                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have a wide array of interests.                                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have been prone to power struggles.                                                         | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| At times I have been too open and honest.                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I dislike mundane or routine activities.                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Staying calm and steady can be difficult for me.                                              | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can be demanding and insist on instant answers.                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| At times I struggle with intense feelings of insecurity.                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I'm often perturbed about not having enough time.                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can rouse enthusiasm in others.                                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My intensity can wear others out.                                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am usually unafraid to share feeling with others.                                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have flirted with dangerous forms of excitement.                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I struggle with recurring job dissatisfaction.                                                | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| As a child I was frustrated when I didn't yet have skills to produce what I envisioned.       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am easily bored and tend to "switch gears" often.                                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I often suffer from stimulation overload.                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I find life both exciting and stressful.                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Excitability** SUBTOTAL = \_\_\_ i.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198 , LINE I.

*Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much*

|                                                                                                      |   |   |   |   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| I am sensitive to the slightest noise, aroma, bright light, or irritant like a scratchy shirt label. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Sometimes I feel <i>for</i> instead of <i>along with</i> others.                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I feel awful when I think I hurt someone's feelings.                                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am attuned to the emotional tone of situations.                                                    | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Other people think I'm touchy or too sensitive.                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| When I feel and emotion, I <i>really</i> feel it.                                                    | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I hear complaints that I am too easily bothered.                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My concern for others can take over my life.                                                         | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| As a child I was troubled by problems of right and wrong.                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| It can be difficult to limit my dedication to a cause.                                               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have struggled to set limits with other or to distance myself when I need time to myself.          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Too often I want to "save the world," feeling like a one-person Salvation Army.                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have longed to feel understood and accepted.                                                       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I rely on my feelings as a valuable source of information.                                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can easily be worn out by over responsibility.                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I empathize with the plight of the oppressed.                                                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| At times I am overcome with worry.                                                                   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Sometimes I am overly attached to ideals.                                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| It is easier to deal with others' feeling than my own.                                               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| It can be hard to separate my identity from the identities of those close to me.                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Sensitivity** SUBTOTAL = \_\_\_ j.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE J.

**B. COMPLEXITY (COMPLEX THINKING AND PERCEPTION)**

*Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much*

|                                                                                   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| I have an insatiable curiosity.                                                   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I prefer creative responses to problems.                                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I like puzzles, mysteries, and “can’t-be-done” challenges.                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I learn rapidly and apply what I learn.                                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am energized by intense discussion.                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I think on multiple levels at the same time.                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have always been a vivid fantasizer.                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I tend to be an independent thinker.                                              | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Given the choice, I would prefer to work in a think-tank atmosphere.              | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Sometimes group effort feels like too much conformity, and I become resistant.    | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| At times I have done poorly in situations requiring political correctness.        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I tend to “rock the boat” of the status quo.                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My thinking allows me to easily bridge concepts.                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| As a child, I was considered relatively advanced.                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Frequently I find the processes of others to be insufferably slow.                | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can readily discern cause-effect relationships.                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I find humor in the absurdities of life.                                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am considered versatile and adaptable.                                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I rely on my exceptional memory.                                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My preference for the complex can fool me into underestimating the simple answer. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Complex Thinking** SUBTOTAL = \_\_\_ k.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE K.

*Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much*

|                                                                                    |   |   |   |   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| I seem to notice and take in everything.                                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have learned to rely on my intuitive resources.                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can see many sides of an issue.                                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I grasp multiple facets of others’ personalities.                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can “sniff out” falsehood and hidden agendas.                                    | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am intolerant of insincerity and deceit and grapple with my urge to confront it. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

|                                                                                                                    |   |   |   |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| At times I have had difficulty trusting others.                                                                    | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I seem to see, hear, and feel things others do not.                                                                | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can quickly zero in on the heart of the matter.                                                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am a proficient problem finder.                                                                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Transcendent moments are very important to me.                                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| When others don't share my insights, I am prone to doubt my perceptions.                                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I understand and value metaphor and symbolism.                                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I monitor myself and try to objectively evaluate my intentions and behaviors.                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My in-depth understanding of another can be threatening or off-putting.                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Honesty, integrity, and ethics are important to me.                                                                | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I don't understand others when they seem less determined than I to find the truth or a better way of doing things. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can help other understand themselves better.                                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am a seeker and champion of ultimate truths.                                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Now and again I get trapped by my own values.                                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Perception** SUBTOTAL = \_\_\_ 1.

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET, PAGE 198, LINE L.

### C. DRIVE

*Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much*

|                                                                                              |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| I push myself to work at things until I get it right.                                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I set high standards for myself and others.                                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I persistently evaluate my performance.                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I tend to seek security in systems, rules, and order.                                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can work hard and concentrate for long periods.                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I endure and regroup in the face of setbacks.                                                | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Many consider me driven.                                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I need to feel positive to be my most creative self.                                         | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I force myself to wait to be happy until I reach the current goal. ("I'll be happy when...") | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can and do work myself to exhaustion.                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

|                                                                                                         |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| I expect a great deal of myself.                                                                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I enjoy organizing, but can organize far too long.                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Even when successful, I struggle with self-doubts.                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I wrestle with perfectionism.                                                                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can be too self-sufficient, and resist others' input.                                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I tend to be competitive in many areas of my life.                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can be my own worst critic.                                                                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| It's hard to let go of interesting ideas if the timing is wrong or they're not meant for me to develop. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I seem to stick with things longer than others.                                                         | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Lack of self-confidence is more inhibiting to my goals than nearly anything else.                       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Drive** SUBTOTAL = \_\_\_ m.

---

Table 12

*Jacobsen's (1999) The Gifted Adult Section Two: Advanced Development (AD), Humanistic Vision (HV), Mandated Mission (MM), and Revolutionary Action (RA)*

THE GIFTED ADULT

SECTION TWO:  
ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT (AD) =

Humanistic Vision (HV) + Mandated Mission (MM) +  
Revolutionary Action (RA)

A. HUMANISTIC VISION (HV)

*Indicate how well each statement fits you.      Not at all   Slightly   Moderately   Very much*

|                                                                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| I have maintained my childlike sense of wonder.                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am capable of deep concern and compassion.                                               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I had an early awareness of the power of the spiritual.                                    | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I tend to have a philosophical nature.                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Since childhood I have been easily upset by both large and small injustices.               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I fare best when I employ my spiritual resources.                                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have always carried a sense of the ideal.                                                | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I see life as a journey toward transcendent wisdom.                                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am appreciative of the interconnectedness of everything.                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I maintain a "seven-generation" view of life.                                              | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Humanitarian issues are of great concern to me.                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am drawn to the goals of ecumenisms.                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am intent on searching out universal truths.                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My life is greatly enriched by divine dialogue.                                            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My peak experiences have an otherworldly quality.                                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Integrity, honor, and character mean a lot to me.                                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am intensely lured by the possibility of betterment.                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am deeply disturbed by inequity, exploitation, corruption, and needless human suffering. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I examine my actions against a backdrop of                                                 |   |   |   |   |

|                                                                                                 |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| service.                                                                                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I increasingly feel like an instrument or vessel of abilities for a purpose higher than my own. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Humanistic Vision (HV) TOTAL = \_\_\_\_**

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION TWO SCORE SHEET, PAGE 199.

**B. MANDATED MISSION (MM)**

*Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much*

|                                                                                              |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| I passionately seek out new challenges and opportunities.                                    | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| For me, self-actualization is a <i>need</i> , not an option.                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I want to clarify and respond to my overarching sense of personal destiny.                   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I struggle with an inner sense of urgency.                                                   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can feel shattered when a dream falls apart.                                               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have always felt a pull toward wisdom.                                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I battle with feelings of inner pressure, possible failure, or a fear of being “too late.”   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Authenticity is very important to me.                                                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am committed to advancing the collective good.                                             | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have questioned my true identity many times.                                               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| It is important for me to do something that really makes a difference.                       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I feel a duty to develop and share my gifts.                                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I envision the ideal and strive to reach it.                                                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am motivated and guided from within.                                                       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Crises and transcendent moments have helped shape my life’s direction.                       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| The integration of mind, body, and spirit is essential to fulfilling my potential.           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Calculated risks are leaps of faith toward fulfilling my destiny, not simply taking chances. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Being “successful” is not the same as fulfilling one’s inner call.                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I derive happiness by living up to my expectations.                                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My life is as much an inner journey as outer                                                 |   |   |   |   |

|                                                                              |   |   |   |   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| action.                                                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I feel compelled to match my abilities and actions with my soul's intention. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Mandated Mission (MM) TOTAL = \_\_\_\_**

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION TWO SCORE SHEET, PAGE 199.

### C. REVOLUTIONARY (RA)

*Indicate how well each statement fits for you. Not at all Slightly Moderately Very much*

|                                                                                  |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| I feel compelled to find ways to reduce suffering and preserve nature.           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have always been interested in social reform.                                  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My efforts are founded on a sense of universal responsibility.                   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I empathetically identify with many others.                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I value and will defend diversity.                                               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am willing to engage in acts of constructive dissent.                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am energized by teaching and drawing out the abilities of others.              | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have frequently found myself in leadership roles whether I sought them or not. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I seem to be able to inspire others to action.                                   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have a strong need to make a difference.                                       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have a penchant for risk taking.                                               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can bring enthusiastic energy to a group.                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I have an earnest need/desire to take charge.                                    | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am good at rallying the support of others.                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can create order and direction in muddled or chaotic situations.               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I'm good in an emergency.                                                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can foresee and predict trends/problems.                                       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I can and do ignore my own needs for the sake of others.                         | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I am willing to tolerate the loneliness of being a pioneer or frontrunner.       | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I'm not the type to wait for others to act.                                      | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Revolutionary Action (RA) TOTAL = \_\_\_\_**

ENTER THIS SCORE ON THE SECTION TWO SCORE SHEET, PAGE 199.

SECTION ONE SCORE SHEET  
DETERMINING YOUR SPECIAL ABILITIES

**MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES (MI) SCORES**

1. Transfer each of your eight Multiple Intelligences sub scores to the corresponding blanks below.

|                         |                              |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Body-Smart = ____    | e. Logic-Smart = ____        |
| b. Word-Smart = ____    | f. Relationship-Smart = ____ |
| c. Spatial-Smart = ____ | g. Nature-Smart = ____       |
| d. Music-Smart = ____   | h. Self-Smart = ____         |

2. Add each of these numbers together to determine your Multiple Intelligences raw score. To correctly interpret your results, divide this raw score by 4. Record this number below.  
*Round up or down to the nearest whole number.*

**MI raw score** \_\_\_\_ divided by **4** = \_\_\_\_ **1. MI**

**GIFTED TRAITS (GT) SCORES**

1. Transfer each of your five Gifted Traits sub scores to the corresponding blanks below.

|                        |                            |           |
|------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| INTENSITY:             | COMPLEXITY:                | DRIVE:    |
| i. Excitability = ____ | k. Complex Thinking = ____ | m. = ____ |
| j. Sensitivity = ____  | l. Perception = ____       |           |

2. Add each of these five Gifted Traits sub scores to determine your Gifted Traits raw score. To correctly interpret your results, divide this raw score by 5. Record this number below.  
*Round up or down to the nearest number.*

**GT raw score** \_\_\_\_ divided by **5** = \_\_\_\_ **2. GT**

## SECTION TWO SCORE SHEET

HV = \_\_\_\_\_ (from total, page 196)

MM = \_\_\_\_\_ (from total, page 197)

RA = \_\_\_\_\_ (from total, page 197)

$$AD = \frac{\quad}{HV} + \frac{\quad}{MM} + \frac{\quad}{RA}$$

To correctly interpret your results, divide the raw score by 3. Record this number below.  
*Round up or down to the nearest whole number.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **3. AD**

DETERMINING YOUR EvIQ

**Multiple Intelligence (MI)** = \_\_\_\_\_ (from page 198)

**Gifted Trait (GT)** = \_\_\_\_\_ (from page 198 )

**Advanced Development (AD)** = \_\_\_\_\_ (from above, on page 199)

$$EvIQ = \frac{\quad}{MI} = \frac{\quad}{GT} + \frac{\quad}{AD}$$

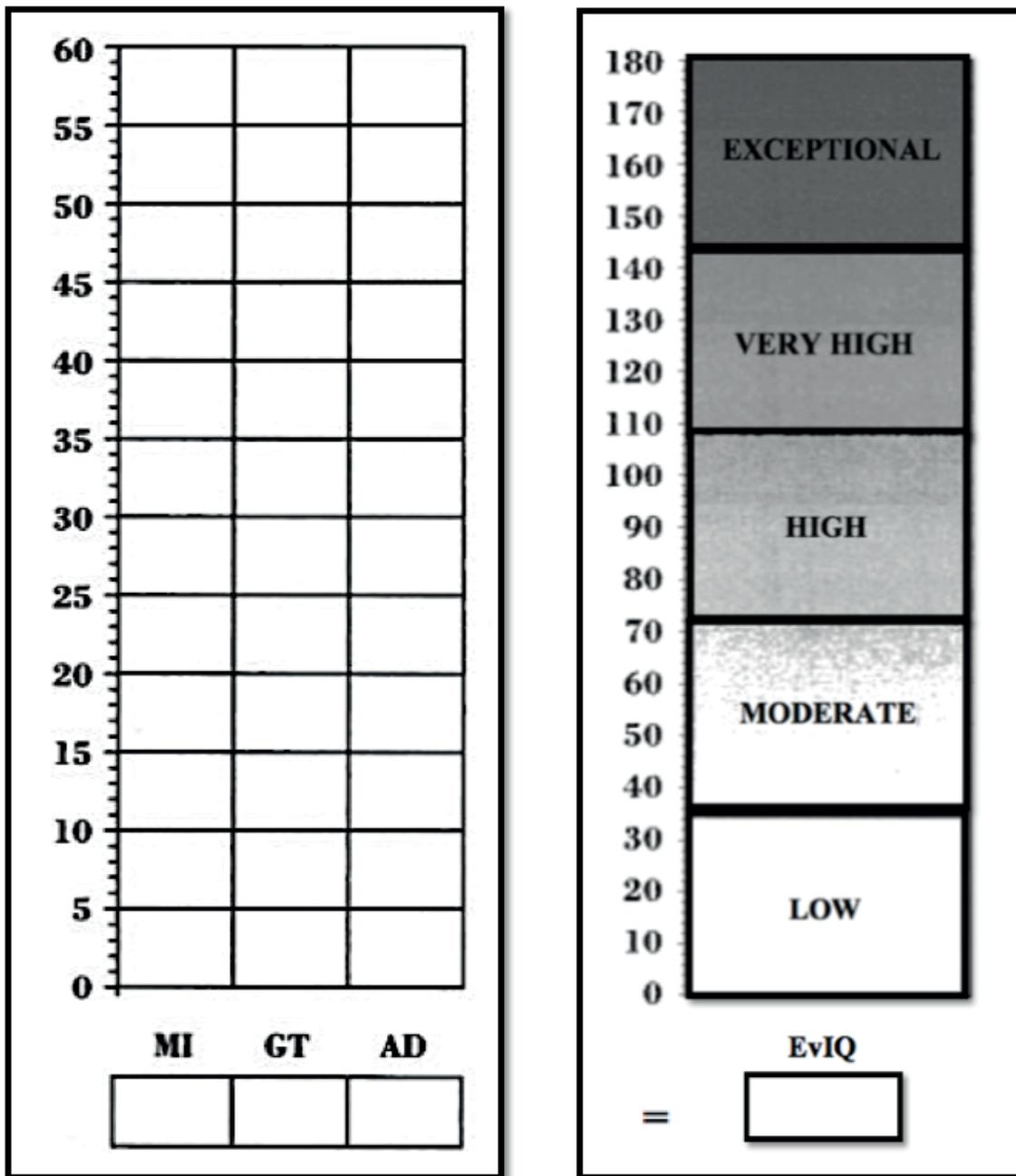
EvIQ = \_\_\_\_\_

Plot your scores from Section One and Two Score Sheets on the EvIQ Profile on page 200.

Table 13

*Jacobsen's (1999) EvI Profile Consolidated Scores From Tables 11 and 12*

**Jacobsen's (1999) EvI Profile\***



\* To learn more about the profile questions and evaluation, you will benefit from reading Mary-Ellen Jacobsen's book, *The Gifted Adult: A Revolutionary Guide in Liberating Every Day Genius*.

### **Summary of Being Gifted and the Gifted Being**

Many of us defer to celebrities as being the chosen ones who are gifted. However, that is far from the truth. As mentioned earlier in the first segment of this chapter, each of us bears seeds of greatness; each person is unique, called here at this time to make his or her contribution to humankind. Unfortunately, as discovered, Binet's (as cited in Hunt, 2011) original intent, as commissioned by the French government, was to produce an instrument that would identify slower learners from more advanced learners in school, which was misrepresented in the United States. The Intelligence Quotient test or IQ test was said to forecast a person's success in school and life. This instrument was incorrectly used as the means to measure intelligence in specific categories and did not take the individual's unique innate talents in to consideration. We discovered the inner story of many gifted adults is one of lost identity, inhibited self-expression, self-doubt, self-sabotage, and no strategy appropriate to manage themselves as assets rather than liabilities; the result has been harmful social consequences because a great many cultures have discouraged the unique gifts in most human beings. Furthermore, the gifted were forced to conform to societal mandates as best they could to navigate through life.

### **Conclusion of the Literature Review**

This literature review surveyed the findings of previous studies and developed a conceptual schema that I applied to guide my research. It grounds my study in scholarly research that serves as the context for my autoethnographic inquiry.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY: COMING TO AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

We shall not cease from exploration. And the end of all our exploring. Will be to arrive where we started. And know the place for the first time. (T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, 1942)

#### Introduction to Research

Before I began my academic journey, my knowledge about research was limited in scope. I was naïve and unaware that research could alter my frame of mind and point of view in understanding processed thought used in asking questions related to planning, analyzing, and executing an idea and its findings. This new learning took me beyond theorems of cause-and-effect to include important aspects of the human condition found in existential-humanistic-transpersonal psychology; this was entirely the reason I came to Saybrook.

My debut into the world of research began with a preliminary course in Information Competency and Library Use (Saybrook Catalog, 2006-2007) taught by Director of Library and Information, who used Mann's (2005) *The Oxford Guide to Library Research: How to Find Reliable Information Online and Offline*. This course taught me about the fundamentals in understanding academic information and proved to be indispensable.



*Figure 60. Follow the Yellow Brick Road.* Like T. S. Eliot, Dorothy Gale, and Joseph Campbell, my curiosity beckons me to venture beyond my usual way of life. The method of autoethnography offered me an inroad to chronicle my exploration and discoveries that allowed me to share my personal findings with others.

The course was my *metaphoric yellow brick road* leading to another *Emerald City* in a quite different *Land of Oz* where I discovered how to locate and use search engines, key words, citations, and reference materials, which included encyclopedias, journal articles, books, theses, and dissertations (pp. vii-xi).

The subsequent research trajectory entailed a robust curriculum that introduced me to useful courses and texts: (a) Understanding Research; Methods of Research and Disciplined Inquiry I, (b) II, and (c) Qualitative Research Methods (Saybrook Catalog, 2006-2007 that acquainted me with the work of Creswell's (2003; 2007) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, and Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) text, *Educational Research, An Introduction* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.), and Locke, Silverman, and Spirduso's (2004) *Reading and Understanding Research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).

Advanced Research initiated a comprehensive progressive baseline of traditional orthodoxy that led me to become a proficient researcher. At the time, I approached the director of research with a request to delve into a qualitative method unlike conventional methods customarily used, that of autoethnography. She welcomed my request without reservation and encouraged my undertaking, applauding my initiative, and remarking that she looked forward to reading a research paper that had a fresh approach apart from the typical papers she usually received. This was a turning point for me in academic research. I could finally apply a personalized focus to a method of research that aligned with my self-expression and areas of interest.

## Research Strategies

Qualitative research begins with the assumption that a study involves a social or human problem (Creswell, 2007, p. 37). The inquiry is grounded in the field of social sciences—anthropology, sociology, and psychology with applications that include liberal arts—philosophy, history, and literature. This type of research applies a first-hand, subjective experience that introduces the investigator to the phenomenon being studied (Locke et al., 2004, p. 95). Typically, the researcher uses an undetermined agenda that contains flexible, open-ended variables that offers the investigator the opportunity to interview research participants' who share their perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge of specific happenings. This approach requires direct observations of human experiences—activities, behaviors, conversations, and interpersonal interactions, and includes written documentation that frequently originates from fieldwork (Patton, 2002, p. 4). I chose subjective qualitative research because it permitted expressions of human development—intentions, motivations, emotions, and actions (Adams, et al., 2015, p. 20) that place the participant(s) at the center of the study.

Quite transparent was my selection of qualitative autoethnography, which seems identical to the approach I use in my non-academic life for finding information leading to solutions of challenging problems. As an ethnographer, I found the procedural approach favorable in that it offered emerging, open-ended questions in a manner that includes several ways to garner data through interviews, observation, documents, and audiovisual materials, and accepted two forms of image and text analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A most important aspect of autoethnography involves understanding human behavior as a contributing factor and valuable asset of the *insider's story* that places the researcher and researched personal and social life stories at the heart of the investigation (Creswell, 2003; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). The ongoing

dialog that unfolds uncovers the *how* and *why* explanations that influence interpretations of reality held as truths in a way that extends beyond standardized means in quantitative research (Robson, 2002). This is what Locke et al. (2004) referred to as *interpretive research*:

In this kind of study, by acting as the primary instrument for data collection, the investigator builds an extensive collection of *thick description* (detailed records concerning context, people, actions, and perceptions of participants) as the basis for inductive generation of an understanding of what is going on or how things work (an *explanatory* theory). Often, the purpose of interpretive research is to understand the setting for social action from the perspective of the participants. (p. 150)

Moreover, autoethnography is considered by autoethnographers themselves to be the agency that amplifies lived experiences; encourages reflexive and creative methodologies; focuses on human suffering, loss, trauma, injustice, subjectivity, and feeling; and legitimizes unorthodox forms of “documenting and expressing in literary, lyrical, poetic, and performative ways” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 45). Furthermore, autoethnography addresses many of the same core components that underscore my investigation namely, “questions of identity and selfhood, of voice and authenticity, and of cultural displacement and exile” (Reed-Danahay, 1997, p. 3). According to Monarth (as cited in Khoun, 2014), this approach to research is able to go “where quantitative analysis is denied admission: our hearts” (p. 11), the place where much of what is human exists.

As a progressive researcher, one main objective for me was to expand my research library with books in qualitative research and autoethnography application: Chang’s (2008) *Autoethnography as Method*; Goodley, Lawthom, Clough and Moore’s (2004) *Researching Life Stories: Methods, Theory and Analyses in a Biographical Age*; Miles and Huberman’s (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.); and Patton’s (2002) *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Collecting resources in qualitative research was straightforward because the method was well established in academic study in contrast to autoethnography, where scholars ruminated on the method as to its reliability, validity, and acceptability (Creswell, 2003; Locke,

2004; Robson, 2002). As a result, procuring resources in 2010-2011 were nearly non-existent. Nonetheless, I continued to use autoethnography to write my practicum and critique essay. Fortunately, this proved beneficial in advancing my proficiency as a researcher in that it augmented my frame of reference as both researcher and observer. Since 2011, the interest and popularity of autoethnography has been favorable, increasing book publications, which afforded me the opportunity I longed for, to expand my research collection with leading-edge scholars who held diverse perspectives. Some of these included Adams, Holman Jones, and Ellis's (2015) *Autoethnography: Understanding Qualitative Research*; Bochner and Ellis's (2016) *Evocative Autoethnography: Writing Lives and Telling Stories*; Denzin's (2014) *Interpretive Autoethnography* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.); Holman Jones, Adams, and Ellis's (2015) *Handbook of Autoethnography*; and Reed-Danahay's (1997) *Autoethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social*.

**Academic research.** The fundamental components of my training and development in academic research included and not limited to (a) the nature of research; (b) planning a research study; (c) developing a research proposal with the introduction, the purpose statement, research questions and hypotheses; (d) definition of research terms; (e) ethical, legal, and human relations issues in research; (f) how to review literature; types of research methods, designs, approaches, and application in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods; (g) selection and collection of research data through multiple means such as tests, self-reports, questionnaires, interviews; observations, content analysis, and statistical techniques; the history of research; and (h) criteria for selecting, writing, and evaluating credible quantitative and qualitative research reports (Creswell, 2003, 2007; Gall et al., 2003; Locke et al., 2004).

**A narrative approach.** Academic research and the inquiry of human and social sciences assign multiple meanings to the term narrative. I believe the term noteworthy of clarifying in the context of this study. Narratives communicate the reality of personal and social experiences in verbal and nonverbal language that take the form of telling stories—fables, myths, folktales, and anecdotes—in a variety of formats including film, books, theatre productions, ballets, and musicals (Gall et al., 2003; Patton, 2002). The story at the heart of a narrative “involves not only the story being told but the active engagement with the audience” (Goodley Lawthom, Clough, & Moore, 2004, p. 62). Larson (as cited in Goodley et al., 2004) added, “when researchers share their ways of seeing, understanding and interpreting life events with story-givers, they surface the fissures between their own life worlds and those of the people they portray” (p. 62). Qualitative research defines narrative research as both a method involving procedure or strategy, and a product dealing with result or effect; autoethnography describes narrative as a personal study that focuses on the participant’s experiences as it relates to the sociocultural group (Patton, 2002). The process entails an individual journeying back and forth using a *progressive-regressive method* to reenact and emphasize a lived experience (Creswell, 2007). Gall et al. (2003) elaborated:

Many acts of communication take the form of telling stories, folktales, anecdotes, and so forth in a variety of formats, such as stage plays, oral storytelling, novels, and film. These communicative acts are **narratives**, which we define as the use of a communication format to organize interpretive representations and explanations of personal and social experience. Researchers have used the methods of various disciplines to study the characteristics of narratives and how they are constructed through interpretive acts by the speaker or writer. The methods include: **discourse analysis**, which is the study of the interpretive processes that individuals use to produce their accounts of reality; **conversation analysis**, which is the study of the rules of speech acts between two or more people; **sociolinguistics**, which is the study of the effects of social characteristics such as age, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity on language use; and **narratology**, which is the study of literary narratives. The methods developed by cognitive psychologists, ethnomethodologists, and analysts of events structures... also have been used to study narratives. These methods collectively have been called **narrative analysis**.

Educational researchers recently have begun using the methods of narrative analysis to study the social organization of the lives of teachers, students, and other groups.

Anthropologists have developed several qualitative research traditions that focus on the study of a culture's communication patterns. **Ethnoscience** (also called *cognitive ethnography* or *cognitive anthropology*) involves the study of culture's semantic systems for the purpose of revealing the cognitive structure of culture... **Ethnographic content analysis** involves the examination of the content of documents found in field settings as reflections of social interactions in the culture... Finally, the **ethnography of communication** involves the study of how members of a cultural group use speech in their social life. (p. 505)

Patton's (2002) view on narrative inquiry focuses on life stories:

Life stories are subjective, as is one's self or identity. They contain "narrative truth," which may be closely linked, loosely similar, or far removed from "historical truth." Consequently, our stand is that life stories, when properly used, may provide researchers with a key to discovering identity and understand it—both in its "real" or "historical" core and as narrative construction. (p. 551)

### **Autoethnography as Method**

Autoethnography inhabits a space between science and art; between epistemology and ontology; between facts and meanings; between experience and language; between the highly stylized conventions of fact-based reporting and the unfixed alternatives of literary, poetic, and dramatic exposition; between a cold and rational objectivity and a hot and visceral emotionality; between a commitment to document the reality of what actually happened and a desire to make readers feel that truth coursing through their blood and guts. (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 66)

In the section that follows, I examine autoethnography's constituents, epistemology, backstory, and research design.

**Autoethnography defined.** According to Bochner and Ellis (2016), "the origin of the term 'autoethnography' has no comprehensive history to date, though the origin of term has been acknowledged in many publications" (p. 47) (see also Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Holman Jones, et al., 2015). The term *autoethnography* stems from an integration of the terms, *autobiography* and *ethnography*. The root words originate from the Greek language—prefix, self (*auto*), and suffix, culture (*ethnos*), and writing process (*graphia*), (Adams, et al., 2015; Chang, 2008; Holman Jones, et al., 2015). Gall et al. (2003) described autoethnography as "an approach to qualitative

research that involves autobiography and investigation of multiple levels of individual consciousness in relation to cultural phenomena” (p. 619). Reed-Danahay (1997) defined autoethnography:

as a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context [as] both a method and text, as in the case of ethnography, [and] can be done by either an anthropologist who is doing ‘home’ or ‘native’ ethnography or by a non-anthropologist/ethnographer, [and] can also be done by an autobiographer who places the story of his or her life within a story of the social context in which it occurs. (p. 9)

Adams et al. (2015) saw autoethnography as an “artistic and analytic demonstration of how we come to know, name, and interpret personal and cultural experiences” (p. 1). Autoethnography, as storytelling, extends beyond verbal or nonverbal expressions and art forms that cut through personal and social boundaries to reveal the underpinnings of life’s impact on humanity. Thus, it offers the autoethnographer and reader “a way for us to be present to each other; the act provides a space for us to create a relationship embodied in the performance of writing and reading that is reflective, critical, loving, and chosen in solidarity” (Holman Jones, 2015, p. 5). Denzin (2014) associated autoethnography as a process of endless transformation:

Lives and their experiences, the telling and the told, are represented in stories, which are performances. Stories are like pictures that have been painted over, and, when paint is scraped off an old picture, something new becomes visible. What is new is what was previously covered up. A life and the performance about it have the qualities of *pentimento*. Something new is always coming into sight, displacing what was previously certain and seen. There is no truth in the painting of life, only multiple images and traces of what has been, what could have been, and what now is. There is no firm distinction between the texts and performances. (p. 1)

Autoethnographers saw the value of autoethnography as a way of life:

For most of us, autoethnography is not simply a way of knowing about the world; it has become a way of being in the world, one that requires living consciously, emotionally, and reflexively. It asks that we not only examine our lives but also consider how and why we think, act, and feel as we do. Autoethnography requires that we observe ourselves observing, that we interrogate what we think and believe, and that we challenge our own assumptions, asking over and over if we have penetrated as many layers of our own defenses, fears, and insecurities as our project requires. It asks who and how we want to

be. And in the process, it seeks a story that is hopeful, where authors ultimately write themselves as survivors of the story they are living. (Adams et al., 2015, p. 10)

**Autoethnographers' foreground: Personal experience in research and writing.** A thread running through the literature regarding autoethnography involves the personal experience of the researcher. This can be found in six areas outlined by (Adams et al., 2015) as the core ideals of autoethnography:

- Our ideas for research projects are often—perhaps always guided by the ideas, feelings, experiences, and questions we have in and about our lives. Rather than silence or disguise the personal reasons that lead us to choose our research projects, autoethnographers make use of personal experience and subjectivity in designing their research. As such, autoethnographers take up an array of topics.
- Some autoethnographers share their experience about conducting their *fieldwork* alongside their insights about cultural phenomena.
- Some write about their *feelings, attitudes, and beliefs* they have about/toward cultural phenomena, their experiences in a particular setting (e.g., a high school reunion), traumatic interactions such as abuse and neglect, or their experiences with health/medical conditions.
- Some autoethnographers discuss their experiences with *identity*, such as what it means to be lesbian, gay bisexual, or queer in the context of families, Black women in the academy, parents and children, lower social class, or a person living with minor bodily stigmas.
- Autoethnographers also write about *epiphanies*—those remarkable and out of the ordinary life-changing experiences that transform us or call us to question our lives. In the process, epiphanies can motivate trauma, confusing us and moving us to sadness and discomfort, and sometimes resulting in a more satisfying life. (pp. 26-27)

**Autoethnographers illustrate sense-making processes.** Adams et al. (2015) pointed out that by using personal experiences, the autoethnography method offers insights to the rest of society how a person could make sense of cultural norms, experiences, and practices that most people accept without thought or question. As a result:

Through the use of personal experience, autoethnography offers insight into how a person makes sense of cultural norms, experiences, and practices. Autoethnographers offer complex, insider accounts of *sense-making* and show how/why particular experiences are

challenging, important, and/or transformative. In turn, autoethnographers provide a perspective that others can use to make sense of similar experiences. (p. 27)

**Autoethnographers use and show reflexivity.** Adams et al. (2015) further explained the concept of reflexivity, which is characteristic of this form of research. It allows for bias, when clearly stated and understood, to avoid the problem of generalizing an individual's experience and the meanings attached to those experiences to others, which might or might not be applicable:

- Autoethnographers use reflexivity to trouble the “relationship between researchers’ ‘selves’ and ‘others,’”; being reflexive means “taking seriously the self’s locations(s) in culture and scholarship.” Reflexivity consists of turning back on our experiences, identities, and relationships in order to consider how they influence our present work. Reflexivity also asks us to explicitly acknowledge our research in relation to power. (p. 29)
- As an autoethnographer, I do my best to account for my identities, limitations, and perspectives and show readers that while I use my experiences to offer insight into cultural experiences, the way I make sense of these experiences is not the only way to make sense of them. (p. 30)

**Autoethnographers offer insider knowledge of cultural phenomenon/experience.** The encounter of an experience from the inside is too often missed in traditional, quantitative research as well as in many forms of qualitative research because the stance of both is from the outside looking in, which limits what can be learned from the self in becoming conscious of experiencing the experience. Adams et al. (2015) explained:

- Autoethnography is a method that affords an *insider’s* perspective on the practices, meanings, and interpretations of cultural phenomenon/experiences. Researching and writing from the lived, inside moments of experience allows autoethnographers to cultivate an “epistemology of insiderness,” of being able to describe an experience in a way that “outside” researchers never could. Further, insider knowledge can be used to call attention to the complexities of commonly held, taken-for-granted assumptions about these cultural phenomena. (p. 31)
- Autoethnography also provides insights into social experiences that we *cannot* observe directly, because the experiences occur in their own time, uninterrupted by a researcher’s presence. These experiences cannot be recreated in an experiment or laboratory and often

are too sensitive to describe the nuance, complexity, emotion, and meaning of these experiences as s/he has lived them. (p. 32)

**Autoethnographers describe and critique cultural norms, experiences, and practices.** Similar to knowledge with deeper insight of cultural phenomenon, is careful and reflective description of those phenomena that add to societal awareness of the experiences that are often encountered but seldom deeply understood or critiqued regarding what is automatically assumed to be the accepted response to what happens in their lives. Adams et al. (2015) explained the role autoethnographers play in expanding the understanding a critiquing of human experience:

- Although most texts produce some kind of knowledge—every advertisement, movie, theatre production, or novel offers a window into an insight about society—autoethnographers *intentionally* use personal experience to create *nuanced, complex, and comprehensive* accounts of cultural norms, experiences, and practices. (p. 32)
- Autoethnographers offer these accounts—these “thick descriptions”—in order to facilitate an *understanding*, and often a *critique*, of cultural life by encouraging readers to think about taken-for-granted norms, experiences, and practices in new, unique, complicated, and challenging ways. (pp. 32-33)
- Similar to critical ethnographers, autoethnographers use their research to facilitate “social consciousness and societal change,” aid “emancipatory goals,” and negate “repressive” cultural influences. (p. 34)

**Autoethnographers seek reciprocal responses from audiences.** Adams et al. (2015) pointed out that it is not uncommon for “autoethnographers to invite participants, readers, [or] audiences to engage in the unfolding story of identities, experiences, and worlds” (p. 34), as they find a way creatively to express what they have worked through and what experiences they have had might show, tell, or mean to them. These researchers treat the work they do as a conscious, social, and relational act, in which they attempt to grow relationships that are reciprocal with those who become engaged in their work, perhaps as participants, readers, or audiences. Referring to reciprocity does not mean the *exchange* of stories, experiences, or resources, but

rather a “giving back for something received” (pp. 34-35), something that is commonly criticized in fieldwork relationships. Instead, autoethnography seeks reciprocal *responses* from multiple audiences through *relationships* and *participation*:

- To critique, make contributions to, and/or extend existing research and theory;
- To embrace vulnerability as a way to understand emotions and improve social life;
- To disrupt taboos, break silences, and reclaim lost and disregarded voices; and
- To make research accessible to multiple audiences. (p. 36)

### **Portraying Autoethnography**

Autoethnographers use a variety of materials to represent their understanding of experiences under investigation such as fieldwork, which includes forms of written narratives such as poems, essays, diaries, and journal entries; and artifacts including what might be considered hard copies of expressions found in artwork, photographs, newspaper articles, bulletins, concert tickets, recordings (CDs, DVDs, internet streams), and memorabilia. (Adams et al., 2015; Chang, 2008; Creswell, 2003; Denzin, 2014; Gall et al., 2003; Holman Jones, et al., 2015).

### **Choosing a Narrative Voice**

Typically, autoethnographers use a first-person subjective voice inviting the reader to experience a first-hand account of unfolding happenings. However, many autoethnographers prefer a third-person voice, which creates an air of objectivity of thoughts, feelings, and actions from the “outsider’s insider” perspective. Yet, other autoethnographers use a second-person voice that invites readers’ imagination to see themselves, as living through the experiences, events, or scenes. Still, a number of autoethnographers select to use all three voices in

combination that depict multiple outlooks to experience *story* (Adams et al., 2015; Bochner & Ellis, 2016; Holman Jones et al., 2015; Reed-Danahay, 1997).

### **The Backstory of Autoethnography**

According to Reed-Danahay (1997), during the 1920s and 1930s biographical life history, case study, case history and ethnographic methods were being used in the discourse of humanistic interpretive social science. Succeeding generations of sociologists changed their focus to “problems of measurement, validity, reliability, responses to attitude questionnaires, survey methodologies, laboratory experiments, theory development, and conceptual indicators” (p. viii). The notion that researchers could separate themselves from the research experience caused a *crisis of representation* in human disciplines such as anthropology, communications, gender and race studies, sociology, and psychology. There seemed to be an “identity crisis that prompted a rethinking of the form and purpose of sociocultural investigation and description” (Adams et al., 2015, p. 9). A number of conventional social research objectives and practices were called into question:

- The goal of seeking universal Truths, especially with regard to social relations.
- The possibility of making certain and stable knowledge claims about humans, experiences, relationships, and cultures.
- The prohibition against stories and storytelling as way of knowing.
- The bias against affect and emotion.
- The refusal to acknowledge “local knowledge” and how social identities (e.g., race, sex, age, sexuality, ability, class) influence how persons’ research, read and interpret, and write and perform.
- The (standard) use of colonialist and invasive ethnographic practices—going into and studying a culture, leaving to write about (represent) this culture, and disregarding member concerns, relational ethics, and what the representation might do to the culture. (Adams et al., 2015, pp. 9-10)

The tide turned in the 1970s and 1980s as sociologists and scholars noticed a renewed interest in biographical methods. Autoethnography was first mentioned in a brief article Heider (1975) wrote that appeared in the *Journal of Anthropological Research*. Heider labeled the report, *Dani autoethnography*, which was based on questions posed to 60 schoolchildren. His use of terms for the study were *auto* for autochthonous because it was Dani's account of what people do and *auto* for automatic (Reed-Danahay, 1997). Hayano (1979) referenced Heider in an article he published that appeared in *Human Organization*. Adams (2015) explained that Hayano used auto-ethnography to write ethnographies about his own people. Reed-Danahay (1997) suggested that writing *about insider studies or native studies*—now categorized as indigenous or aboriginal studies—was autoethnography. In the 1990s Ellis and Bochner (2000) developed a new concept of autoethnography that they identified as *transgressive research*, which extended conventional boundaries of ethnography, and addressed “disquieting concerns about silent authorship, the need for research reflexivity, or as a humanizing, moral, aesthetic, emotion-centered, political, and personal form of representation” (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 47). Bochner and Ellis (2016) further elaborated:

We simply were acknowledging that researchers live in the world too. The problems of being alive and facing serious existential and moral questions related to mortality, loss, belonging, loneliness, love, adversity, violence, racism, discrimination, and complicated feelings affect all people—researchers as well as non-researchers. Many of us were drawn to a life of research by our lived experiences of emotional epiphanies that changed or deeply affected us. We believe these experiences are worthy of observation, examination, and reflection. We also believe that these experiences strongly influence our perceptions and interpretations of other people's lives. (p. 50)

The authors were convinced this type of process penetrated the heart of those whose self-expression was stifled and discredited by methodological directives that inhibited their voice to be heard in their writing. Consequently, a paradigm-shift occurred that gave purpose to a new generation of qualitative researchers.

### **Research Focus in This Autoethnographic Study**

The fundamental questions, “Who am I, and why am I here” opened to the central question of this investigation: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? In support of this research question, other interests and questions were expected to arise, which they did that could have had the potential to extend beyond my own experience and intersect with other researchers, readers, or people who were affected by my research. In the first chapter, I commented:

Beyond my own meaning-making experience, there is a potential that others might be empowered—those teetering on the tight rope between social conformity and personal originality, and those that remain steadfast in pursuit of their calling—to draw from my experiences and explore these processes for themselves. (p. 9)

### **Participant**

Given my choice of autoethnography as a method, I was the only participant used in the research study.

### **Research Settings**

The research setting for this work encompassed a wide variety of locations I used in reviewing, recalling, and reflecting upon those experiences that took place, for the most part, in my home where I reviewed the three archival sources of information gathered from 2001 to 2009. The settings for these sources included (a) Regression Therapy, which occurred between January 2001 and September 2002 in Pleasant Hill, California; (b) Waking Dream Therapy preparation in March 2006 that took place in my home in Alameda, California, and the actual event April 2006 of Waking Dream Therapy that occurred in Manhattan, New York; and (c) Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy that was taught as a 2-year certificate program offered by Saybrook University, in the years 2007-2009. The training occurred in two classrooms, a

chapel, and on cottage decks, as well as in the woodlands at Westerbeke Ranch in Sonoma, California.

### **The Focus**

First, I selected Regression Therapy as one of three optimal therapies that offered determinable and sustainable results. Regression Therapy yielded both profound and indelible deliverables: (a) permeated social conditioning, (b) united me with my soul's code, and (c) enlivened my zeal for aliveness.

Second, Waking Dream Therapy is a singular modality, which (a) afforded me unlimited access anytime and anywhere, (b) provided me with peace of mind, and (c) allowed me to journey deep within my imagination.

Finally, the multimodal process of Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy presented me, as the artist, with fluid and copious forms of art to be used as a means of self-expression that united my spirit with my imagination, intuition, inspiration, and creativity.

All three therapies are known as reliable processes to support individuals, who suffer from a lifetime of wounding, to heal internal separation and splintering. Through the use of autoethnography, I entered into a personal process where I reflected on my understanding and meaning of wounding that spanned a chronology of events from age 4 onward and included my experiences with these therapies from 2001 to 2009. I gave myself completely to the process of experiential research trusting the results would yield even more profound healings.

### **Research Design**

I used autoethnography; and therefore, I was the only one to garner resource materials from Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy. The materials used in Regression Therapy included identification of (a) the

unpublished manuscript, *I Love You/I Hate You: The Inner Conflict and Programming that Creates Your Personality*; (b) a picture that depicts the inner conflict and programming that creates personality; (c) the document, *Regression Therapy, A Handbook for Professional's—Volume I: Past-Life Therapy, and Volume II: Special Instances of Altered States Work*; (d) two audio tapes; and (e) two sessions that revealed long awaited aspects of myself that were formally hidden; (f) materials in Waking Dream Therapy, included six components: (i) an instructional letter from the facilitator that entailed practices I was to carry out in preparation of Waking Dream Therapy; (ii) homework assignment sheets, (iii) a personal drawing of my Waking Dream, (iv) the journal I used to record Waking Dream Therapy sessions I conducted myself, (v) reference books, and (vi) an unpublished manuscript, *Using Waking Dream Therapy To Access Inner Wisdom And Healing*.

In addition to the materials presented in the list (a-f) above, I also had (g) artifacts used during Saybrook University's 2-year certification program of Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy and written materials from that experience; (h) Saybrook catalog course offerings, course syllabi, handouts, course assignments, journal entries, notes, books, visual objects; (i) DVDs, artwork, photographs, my memories; and (j) life experiences that occurred following the work that was included in my practicum in Spring of 2016, which were used to add additional sources of information from recall, reflection, and meaning-making that would not have been available to me without having lived through the intervening years between the time I had the experiences related to the three therapies and the time I began writing this dissertation.

## **Procedures**

This study used internal and external data collection as a portion of this work. Internal data collection began by retrieving personal memory (Chang, 2008). The following steps were

used to regulate internal data collection, which originally were included in my recording of experiences when:

1. I accounted for event(s), activity(s) or process(es), theme(s), and individual(s) that reflected and/or impacted my authentic self and promoted healing, acceptance, and self-expression through imagination.
2. In Regression Therapy, I selected three experiences; and in Waking Dream Therapy, I chose one experience; and in Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy, I singled out eight experiences. All practices harnessed my imagination that allowed me to access my intuition, and align with my soul's code, to promote healing, acceptance, and self-expression.
3. For each item listed in Step 2, I chronicled my experience.
4. For each item listed in Step 2, I noted my private thoughts, feelings, and reflections about the experience.

As I reconnected with this material and recalled these experiences, I opened myself to discover new information that emerged from experiences not originally included in my previous study. These were not known prior to the beginning of the study, as they developed from the current setting, which included not only the archived sources, but also material that surfaced from the experiences to which such a review created access as a result of having had the intervening years of life experiences.

### **Data Analysis**

Three activities were used in analyzing data from this study:

1. I reviewed the account(s) of experience(s) to reacquaint myself with the contents.
2. I noted any additional experiences and my responses to those experiences at the time they occurred as I recalled them from my memory, and I noted current responses and meanings attached in the present, that arose in my awareness.
3. I sifted through the accounts to identify themes, topics, symbols, and patterns that repeated, particularly as they related to the research question for the study, which is, "How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative?"

## **Ethical Considerations**

Autoethnography's focus is essentially on the self, the issues involving human subjects do apply to my research design. According to Holman Jones et al. (2015):

While some IRBs may not define certain autoethnographic methods and data—such as artifacts, field notes, interviews, stories, memories, constructed dialogue and art-based works (e.g., dance, performance, and music) as research this does not mean that autoethnography is exempt from undergoing at least an initial IRB review. (p. 247)

Chang (2008) reported information that led me to believe it was important that I treat my study with the same rigor and follow the same precepts, as other social research required by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Even though my research proposal and dissertation were exempt from a formal review process, the code of confidentiality still applied because my writing included others.

## **Limitations and Research Issues**

All research includes biases and limitations, and autoethnography is no exception. Criticisms have been lodged against autoethnography as a form of research. A leading charge is that it is “self-indulgent, narcissistic, introspective, and individualized” (Wall, 2006, p. 6), and “nonanalytic, irreverent, sentimental, and romantic” (Denzin, 2014, p. 69) with little value of the research to others. Some researchers question the academic rigor, reliability, generalizability, and methodological validity of the approach (Ellis, et al., 2011).

In particular, systematic replications in experimental results are not possible; therefore, a validation of the results is not possible, either. Nonetheless, these criticisms are also endemic to most qualitative research. Patton (2002) elaborated:

The debate is rooted in philosophical differences about the nature of reality and epistemological differences about what constitutes knowledge and how it is created called ‘the paradigm debate’... where philosophy and methods intersect to determine what kinds of evidence one finds acceptable. (p. 571)

There are those who judge autoethnography as having no scientific basis, theory, concepts, or hypotheses, and being too artful or not artful enough (Ellis et al., 2011). According to Adams et al. (2015):

Critics of the method have routinely refused to evaluate autoethnography as *scholarship* [in which they] base their refusal on the narrow view that personal, autobiographic, and aesthetic work cannot be assessed for its explanatory power, scholarly insights, or ability to cultivate social change. (p. 99)

However, Khuon (2014) postulated, “Narrative psychology is the view that human nature is fundamentally tied to stories. Stories drive everything we do—from how we think about our past, regulates our conduct, and even define our personalities” (para 1). Khuon continued:

Human beings evolved on a planet that has desperately tried to kill us for millions of years. Hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, mudslides, tsunamis, droughts, floods, famine, disease, and predators have been hacking away at the human population for a hundred millennia. Add to that the modern problems of age, heart disease, and cancer, and you’ve got a picture of life on planet Earth that is tough, except that we have survived...and thrived. We are a species that finds its greatest strength in living and working together. Collective survival has made a lasting imprint on our psychology. Our survival strategy we’ve used that has impacted our evolutionary psychology is storytelling. (para. 3)

Another limitation that has been placed on autoethnography has to do with the researcher’s biases and how they influence his or her outlook and the inability to replicate initial occurrences through memory recall. This is an accurate criticism if replication is a central need for the discovery being sought. According to ethnographers, replication is not significant; what is significant is accessing experience and its interpretation to discover the stories that emerge from individual experience, and it is the understanding that can arise from storytelling and story listening that have the potential to fuel human behavior. Ultimately, autoethnography is storytelling with meaning being sought. One might question a research field dedicated to discovery regarding human behavior without taking into account the deepest roots of that behavior, which has allowed us to survive. When discounted as irrelevant, this vast reservoir of

information available to us in the process of reflective understanding gained from meaning-making in autoethnography could be lost, and could potentially lead to our decline or our eventual destruction because no one has yet found a way to measure or quantify the process.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

Delimitations refer to aspects of a study consciously chosen by the researcher, which limit the scope of the inquiry. I have delimited this study to my experiences, without including other participants, and to a series of events from 2001-2009, with the potential for other experiences to arise from accessing archival records as well as memories of those experiences.

### **Summary**

The writing of this methodology chapter entailed considerable thought and reflection, which involved a mental weaving back and forth that autoethnography refers to as a *progressive-regressive method*. Additionally, this section also detailed another process used in autoethnography known as *thick description*, which in this case, facilitates the understanding of the experiences and practices that are translated into deliverables to which the researcher commits and is required to fulfill by the institutional review board (IRB). Although, writing this chapter seemed most demanding, it held vital importance. The researcher outlined a detailed plan that covered (a) introduction to research; (b) research strategies; (c) academic research; (d) the approach of autoethnography; (e) qualitative research; (f) research questions; (g) research design; and (h) particular projections of the participant's information, in this case the researcher and ways in which the information would be garnered, systematized, and finalized resulting in conclusions, which are presented in the chapters that follow.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Introduction: Vignettes and Psychotherapies

In this chapter, specific attention is given to *imagination* as the mythical repository and connection to the spiritual realm which functions as a power source and power feeder that transmits our *story* that is our biography that becomes our narrative we share with another. I use the method of autoethnography in a compendium to demonstrate two constructs of experiential phenomena. The first frames episodes taken from my life that form “Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination” that disclose character, possible potentials, and indications of calling. These vignettes include stories I have experienced with an entrepreneur, a child named Brooklyn, and my class of international students that are presented in unbounded frames of time. The second construct details incidents I experienced and illustrate psychotherapeutic practices in which I was personally engaged, which exposed the underpinnings of patterns I lived that obstructed inner wholeness devised by socially accepted convention of erroneous messages of a false identity. Once identified, my aim was to reconstitute personal harmony and reactivate selfhood. The three practices I used to promote healing were Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy that involves events bound by frames of time. I chose this trajectory, as the quintessential combination of practical and theoretical applications, which I believed would contribute to advance this scope of research. In this chapter I reinstitute and answer the primary question central to this investigation to fulfill the stated purpose: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? Morville (2017) expressed that when we are in search of something important, what we find changes us and directs us toward that which we become, which has precisely occurred for me.

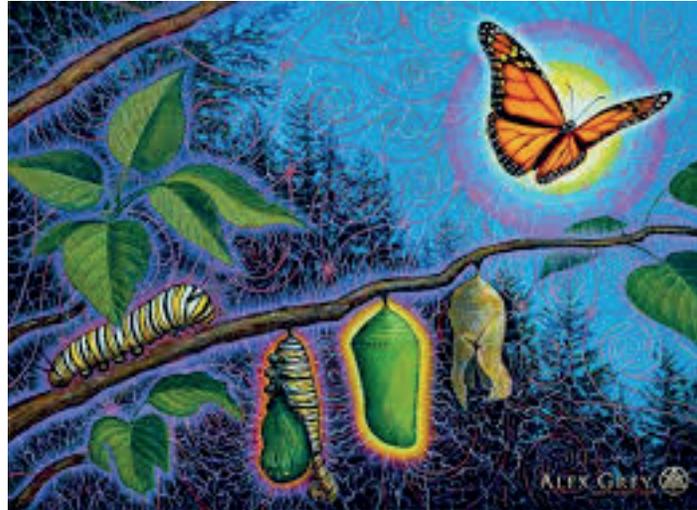


Figure 61. *The Nature of Becoming*. (Internet, 2017).

These experiences supplied me with life lessons. Certain I understood and completed the lesson, the cycle repeats and extends the lesson and learning that reveals yet another aspect of a greater held truth. The sequence of events framed dominant themes of spiritual awakening that connected me to my authentic or essence self. The subsequent section entails occurrences that embody spirituality, realization, and meaning channeled by imagination. I open this chapter with narrative vignettes and follow with an exhaustive personal inventoried accounting where I embellish on each event, cause/effect, overall effect, meaning-making, and self-disclosure. From there, the study advances to the next set of events and/or situations where I divulge and elaborate on personal stories in which I experienced 1 of 3 behavioral therapies that promoted healing and resulted in positive change to occur.

### **Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination**

We are here for remembrance. Now you know that you aren't looking for anything you won't be able to find, because you've always had it. There is nothing missing in you. You just forgot that it was there. You are a pulsation of Supreme Consciousness. No matter what has covered you, or painted over your radiance, rest easy knowing that underneath the shadows, you are shimmering. You cannot be anything but shimmering. (DeAngelis, 2015, p. 61)

## Intrinsic Childhood Knowing

I remember feeling an instinctual deep-seated knowing that called my attention to its weighted presence at the age of 4. At the time, I was obviously too young to articulate or express this feeling adequately, nonetheless, the feeling was undeniably sound. I recall being drawn to the dynamics of individual interactions and experiencing an energetic connection to others. Within the year, the story of *Peter Pan* instilled the power of belief, the potential of possibility, the importance of not growing up in the way the world seemed to demand that children grow, and the promise of living life as an ongoing adventure. This one story resonated with my soul and became an important link to my biography. Eventually, these early experiences would be known as preparation towards my calling that would gradually be revealed as I matured. I am fairly certain I intuitively knew who I was at age of 4, and have spent a lifetime pursuing the puzzle pieces that would complete the picture story of my encoded destiny. What follows is my introduction to the story of *Peter Pan*'s debut on national television.



Figures 62, 63, 64. *Peter Pan and Cast of Characters*. (Internet, 2017). Figure 62—Captain Hook and the fairy, Tinker Bell. Figure 63—Wendy with brothers John and Michael Darling, and the Lost Boys captured by Captain Hook. Figure 64—Peter Pan sitting with Chief Thunder Cloud who is smoking a peace pipe, and daughter Tiger Lily.

## Meeting Peter Pan

There is more in a human life than our theories of it allow. Sooner or later something seems to call us onto a particular path. You may remember ‘something’ as a signal moment in childhood when an urge out of nowhere, a fascination, a peculiar turn of

events struck like an annunciation: This is what I must do, this is what I've got to have. This is who I am. (Hillman, 1997, p. 3)

Such an indelible moment occurred for me when I was 4 years old. It was a typical evening in the Baroff household when my mother approached me and said, "If you brush your teeth, wash your face, and dress yourself in your pajamas, I will allow you to stay up later than usual to watch *Peter Pan*." My mother's offer intrigued me, as she was not in the habit of extending bedtime hours. I quickly readied myself for bed and centered myself on the carpeted floor in front of the television screen. On the exact hour, the story of *Peter Pan* began with a flying boy attempting to make his way through opened windows to the children's room of Wendy, John, and Michael Darling, when Nana, the dog, shut the windows and cut off the boy's shadow. The boy, Peter, returns the following evening with his fairy, Tinker Bell, in search of his shadow, which he finds. His attempts to attach his shadow fail. Frustrated, Peter sits on Wendy's bed and begins to cry, which wakes Wendy; she asks, "What is wrong." Peter says he cannot attach his shadow, and Wendy sews his shadow back onto him. During this time, Peter tells Wendy there is no one to tell stories to him and to his friends who live in Neverland. Intrigued by the idea, Wendy convinces Peter to take her with him, and wakes her brothers John and Michael. Peter teaches them to fly and off they go to Neverland, a magical place where childhood is eternal and life is one big amazing adventure, as we learn they are going to the "second star to the right and straight on till morning" (Barrie, 2016, p. 28).

Completely engrossed in the story, and unaware of my surroundings, I make my way all the way down the carpeted floor to find I am sitting one foot away from the television screen starring at pixels projected on glass. Quickly, I scoot my body in reverse to see a full picture of the characters. In what seemed to be a relatively short amount of time for a child of 4, the story at once comes to the end, but that was not at all the end for me. I promised myself that evening to

never grow up and live my life like Peter.

### **Peter Pan: The Story**

The story of *Peter Pan* has special meaning for me as imagination lives through the escapades of Neverland, *playland* to mystery, magic, and wonder of the free human spirit. Moreover, it is the seat of creation and vertical plane of spiritual connection in which the heart and soul of a person's unique qualities exist; where youth springs eternal, time stands still, and all things are possible. To live life as one big adventure is to delight in the present moment, which "is infinitely small; before we can measure it, it has gone, and yet it exists forever" (Watts, 2003, p. 10). Over the years, I have immersed myself in countless incarnations—novels, theatre productions and movies—leading me to conclude Neverland lives within us all. In the musical, *The Story of How Peter Became Pan: Finding Neverland*, the composers, Barlow and Kennedy (2004), suggested in the ongoing theme that we have only to remember our authentic self to bring imagination into being. The confluence of imagination and story are prime examples of Neverland's sway on my initial experience of *Peter Pan* that forever altered my world and continues to transform my life.

### **A Psychic Union**

My daily prayers of envisioning a baby sister materialized 9 years later, and the answer to my prayers brought a profound spiritual confluence unlike any other union I have ever experienced from that time to the present. Our bond was transparent and easily recognized by my parents who had gone through a succession of sitters who were unable to quell my sister's hysteria and tantrums that halted the instant I held her. In time, we discovered our psychic abilities as clairvoyants, and several decades later, my gift as an empath, which decidedly

clarifies our metaphysical attunement to each other throughout our lives, and my visceral connections to another.

### **Sensitivity Towards Another**

Subsequent incidents affected me as a child where I experienced intense empathy in the presence of another's wounding. These situations concerned classmate bullying in which the goading was invasively cruel and lasting. As I recall, the first of these happenings occurred when I was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The class bully taunted a girl unmercifully because she dressed differently, and her name was an easy target to ridicule. He routinely called her out among us. Many pretended to inoculate themselves from an imaginary virus to not catch what she had. The second incident occurred in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, this time two boys were excluded, picked on, prodded, and called names. A third and most catastrophic occurrence afflicted a frail, lanky boy who sat next to me in class. He had flaming red hair, and porcelain translucent skin, and his face was covered with acne. The class bully and followers chided him about his use of his first, middle, and last names, to which he proudly retorted to anyone who would listen. Rants continued about the boy's physical appearance, as the bully and others chanted "Pizza Pie!" In each incident, the tormented children stood apart from the crowd to defend themselves. Their stand against the pack took unyielding courage and conviction. I felt their deep wounding as my own. My heart ached with extreme heaviness, as I reached out to each one in silence, but I went no further. Unknowingly, these feelings were early clues of my empathic abilities to be identified, learned about, and appreciated much later in life.

### **Open to Clues**

My inward search to discover my true identity enticed me like a moth drawn to light. At the time, I was enamored by two actresses: the stunning Susan Hayward, who appeared smart,

cunning, and headstrong and the beautiful Loretta Young whose eyes were pools of sensitivity that typified hope and compassion. They modeled qualities I later emulated. Within the same year, I received a partial visual transmission where upon I saw myself standing on a lit stage. I reacted to this visual by performing in ways that might have included a spotlight. I tried my hand at acting and singing, whereupon, I shortly lost interest. At the age of 17, I received a full image where I saw myself speaking on a lit stage in front of a large audience. I sprang into action and began research on the topic of speaking, attended talks of speakers who drew my interest—Jim Rohn, Denis Waitley, Zig Ziglar, Brian Tracy, and Les Brown—and listened to CD's, read books, joined Toastmaster's International, and National Speakers Association. These actions led me to develop speeches on imagination and human potential.

### **A Gypsy Life for Me**

While growing up, my family relocated every 2-4 years. The transfers were career advancements and higher remuneration for my dad that also benefited our family, thus uprooting us from New York to Indiana to Texas and to Tennessee. For me, these relocations meant short-term relationships and tentative involvement in school activities. For example, in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade I was a finalist cheerleader, and unbelievably excited about the prospect, until my dad announced to the family that evening we were moving, again. As an impressionable teenager, all at once, my world shattered, I was crushed, and life as I knew it abruptly came to an end.

A similar occurrence happened to me in my senior year. After finally achieving the prestigious status admired by lower grades 9-11 that came with certain privileges like senior skip-day, and the senior prom, dad announced we were moving. Of most importance to me, was the fact that I was attending the #1 ranked college prep public high school in the United States. At long last, I was embedded in meaningful high school relationships and organizations, outside

affiliations, weekly carpooling with neighborhood friends, and special relationships with a great many of my teachers. I loved my school, my life, and living in Houston, Texas that at the time was the home to the Astrodome—then dubbed the 8<sup>th</sup> wonder of the world—in which my family held a membership. I watched famous baseball legends Don Drysdale and Sandy Koufax pitch the World Series and saw celebrity actors Gregory Peck, Cary Grant, and others in that stadium. Houston is where I toured the NASA Space Center where the astronauts trained, and experienced the weightless chamber that replicated what it is like to be an astronaut in outer space. Houston is where I met my first serious love and had a summer membership to the Shamrock Hilton where the cool Jewish kids hung out.

Typically, I went along with my dad's decisions about moving. However, with only 3 months to go until graduating from the largest class in the state of Texas (2,000 seniors) and the top ranked school in the country, moving at this time seemed unfathomable, unreasonable, and simply unbearable. I was so distraught that my best friend's parents came to my aid by offering my parents the option of allowing me to live with them until I graduated. My parents declined their generous offer; their reason was to keep our family together. Their response had a sobering effect that left me with no other alternative but to face the insufferable. I did so, with indignation of being plucked out against my will at the most meaningful time of my life. To my chagrin, soon after enrolling in the new school, I discovered my high school credits were enough that I could have easily graduated the preceding year by Tennessee academic requirements. Consequently, I sat in class putting forth a perfunctory effort, feeling bored, and downtrodden. I was so miserable; I ate to pass the time when I was at home. Luckily, through the mystery of synchronicity, I made a friend who shared my discontentment in a similar situation. Together, we teamed up, which made life moderately tolerable. She drove a Super Sport Chevrolet, and we

believed we were Super Sports for enduring such a disheartening situation. All the same, the name gave us an exalted feeling of having some control over our circumstances.

### **Writing My Hotline to Heaven**

As a young adult, I often woke with my head swimming in a pool of information while I was concurrently attempting to have my pen script what was coming through me while trying to keep pace. I experienced the task as virtually impossible. Nevertheless, I scribbled hastily, determined to capture the insights that made what I penned barely legible and potentially only somewhat decipherable. In this respect, I was nevertheless thankful to frequently catch the gist of the download, and considered myself blessed that my sensitivities actually provided me with a vantage point to experience this fervid sense of life. In short, writing for me became my *hotline to heaven*, my sanctuary to my higher self of One Mind. Accordingly, I remained grateful and receptive to updates from my spiritual guides that occur indeterminately.

As a young girl, my writing first began in journals that developed as I did. During those awkward teenage years, I rode the rollercoaster of raw emotions wherein writing became my outlet that expressed outpourings of feelings that formed poetry, prose, and songs describing social conditions, love, disappointment, and inspiration. When I began college, I gave my poetry and short stories to an attorney who registered these works to avoid plagiarism, and then I submitted my poems to the Tennessee Poetry Society that unanimously voted me into their fold. I continued writing in college, as a news reporter, where the editor gave me free reign to write on topics of my choice that included controversial issues.

With the intent of advancing my writing prowess, I shared my poems and short stories with my English literature teacher. On one particular day, I met with her to discuss English history and inquire if she had the opportunity to read my work. To my surprise, she told me she

had been steadily reading my articles in the school newspaper, and mentioned she enjoyed the way I expressed myself, elucidating, she would like to see more of this expression in English literature. She continued by stating she read all my writings, commenting I was a very good writer who had the makings of becoming a *great* writer. Naturally, I asked, “What would it take to become a great writer?” She articulated candidly, “You have to tell it all!” Everything?” I asked. “Yes, everything” she replied. Rebounding quickly, I insisted, “Disclosing myself so publicly would reveal my sensitivities and expose my vulnerabilities.” She responded, “Exactly! Your readers need to know you so well they can relate to you.”

As I began this dissertation, my English teacher’s advisory of years ago echoed in my ears, “Tell it all; hold nothing back, risk to be seen, and tell your truth.” For this reason alone, autoethnography was favored over other methods of research disciplines. Yet, I knew to write authentically on a topic I was impassioned about would place me on an emotional roller coaster, particularly as both investigator and subject of this inquiry. All the same, this was precisely the opportunity that I had been asking the universe to provide for me—a situation that would precipitate emotional healing to unify my existing spiritual/human divide and propel me into the next phase of refining my destiny. Certainly, this was an ideal time for the public to receive a stringent wake-up call. In view of this awareness, writing this research dissertation demanded I give myself wholeheartedly and narrate an influential message that would be instrumental in other’s lives as well. In this respect, it would require me to have unwavering courage and an unyielding commitment regardless of what emerged for me mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. In truth, writing this dissertation has truly become an emotional catharsis, which caused me to encounter myself more times than I care to recall. Nevertheless, the undertaking of

this project, which entailed excessive research and writing, after all, created optimal conditions for healing the divide of ethical incongruence (spiritual versus human) that existed within me.

### **Leading With an Open Heart**

In the years that followed, my sensitivities became more conspicuous, which often occurred with repeatable outcomes. My empathies connected me viscerally to another. People opened up to me freely and uninhibitedly, where they had remained closed and guarded to others. Typically made comments were, “I do not know why I am telling you this, I have never disclosed my feelings to anyone else,” followed by tearful eyes. Intrinsicly, I knew what spurred these emotions was their arrival into this 3<sup>rd</sup> dimensional Earth was experienced as unsettling. They were not received as a unique gift with distinct potentials that could make an authentic contribution to humankind because of socially conditioned conformity, which downplayed their specialness. Having been denied their true biography or sense of personal calling, they remained guarded and reluctant to express themselves. However, as I embraced their essence, they felt at ease. Instantly, the memory of having a calling flooded them with this awareness. The tears they shed were tears of joy of being seen and received for the gift they genuinely are. The subsequent vignette is one such profound illustration.

### **Being Seen and Received**

I met with a San Francisco entrepreneur who had designs to take her company to an International arena. As I sat listening to her describe her plan, without warning, her eyes welled up with tears. She groped to gain composure as she found herself speechless. Moments later, she gathered just enough energy and murmured, “You know me better than my best friends know me.” Gradually pausing, she collected herself, resumed speaking to discover more of herself, and once more, emotions and tears overcame her. She struggled to regain her dignity and control

over her voice. As she did, she whispered, “And you know me better than I know myself! You are very special and an exceptionally gifted person.”

The subsequent vignettes are 2 examples of cultural constraint that attempted to arrest and extinguish imagination, wonder, awe, and the creative human spirit. I openly confess, hearing these young people’s stories in current times, troubles me, as I considered these unspoken admonitions to be perpetrations against human rights and human dignity. Moreover, I have zero tolerance for social mandates that hold the human spirit captive while keeping outdated paradigms in place that continue needless human suffering.

### **Brooklyn**

This story is about Brooklyn, a former student in my self-esteem class who at the time was 5 years old. Brooklyn was a precocious child, who had a brainstorming, infectious personality that typified vitality, which resulted in weekly visits to the principal’s office. The reason was simple; Brooklyn was a *big-idea-thinker* who wanted to share her creative thoughts with her teacher and classmates to see them to fruition. Her teacher strongly avoided Brooklyn’s raised hand that reflected the child’s exuberance. She was convinced Brooklyn was deliberately undermining her authority to control the rest of the students, who she had already taught to be restrained. When I first met Brooklyn, she was like a bottle of champagne hastily being uncorked. Impulsively, she expelled vast amounts of information that had long waited to be set free and received by an attentive listener. Understandably, I gave her ample opportunity to purge her thoughts, while I listened intently. When the time was right, I acknowledged her insights and said, “Brooklyn you have amazing wisdom, and much to say, and I want you to be able to share these wonderful stories and your wisdom with me. This is a self-esteem class, and the reason your family enrolled you in this class is they knew as your teacher, I too have important stories

to share that will help you grow. This means I need to have enough time to share my stories with you. Since we both have much to say, we will take turns talking and listening to each other. I promise to listen to you fully, and I need you to promise you will listen to me fully.” Brooklyn agreed if I promised I would see *Chicken Little* then playing in the movie theater. I agreed and made good on that promise.

After three sessions with Brooklyn, I found her teacher’s suppositions unfounded and thought her teacher ill-equipped to work in concert with a student of Brooklyn’s caliber. Nevertheless, Brooklyn and I worked on various behavioral approaches of how and when to share her ideas, none of which altered existing conditions. Clearly the teacher and principal’s covert attempts were to curb Brooklyn’s enthusiasm and zest for innovative solutions, which only reinforced my determination to ensure Brooklyn’s self-expression was not confined! In light of the circumstances, I asked Brooklyn to buy a special journal, which she selected and her mother and grandmother acquired for her. She brought the diary with her to class our next session. When we met the following week, I explained to Brooklyn the journal was to be used to enter her writings and drawings that express all her amazing ideas so her thoughts would be remembered and not lost. Furthermore, she could keep her ideas all to herself or she could share some or all of her thoughts and pictures with her mother and grandmother or whomever she chose. My strategy was straightforward. I explained, rather than raise her hand daily to be ignored by her teacher and find herself in the principal’s office, she could use her journal instead to write down and/or draw all her big ideas. Upon hearing my proposal, Brooklyn’s face beamed with delight. Critical to this point of view Meade (2016) pointed to:

the loss of a felt connection to the divine spark hidden within each person may be the greatest curse of modern mass societies. Yet, the human soul, undeterred by the passage of time, retains its indelible birthright and a capacity to awaken to it and recollect the inheritance that keeps being lost. The idea each person bears, from the beginning and in

their own way, the flame of existence and a spark of genius is an open secret that keeps being forgotten. (p. 170)

On the last day of class, I spoke to Brooklyn's family and explained, "Brooklyn is an amazing soul meant to do wonderful things with her life and contribute to society-at-large." By the same token, I said, "The world needs more spiritual luminaries like Brooklyn to remind those who have forgotten that they too are divinely endowed as a unique gift to humanity." While looking into her mother and grandmother's eyes, I beseeched them both to steward Brooklyn to fulfill her fate. Her grandmother took my hand in hers, her eyes filled with tears, and both, her mother and grandmother pledged to devote their lives to steward Brooklyn to realize her destiny. Incidentally, her mother added, they just came from Brooklyn's school where they met with her teacher and principal who were at their wits end to arrive at an optimal solution for all concerned. Grateful for my encouraging words, her mother thanked me. Although my time with Brooklyn was relatively short, I treasured those moments. I value Brooklyn's presence in my life as a priceless gift, which she infused with her vitality, a godsend that forever altered and graced my life, ever-present and continually renewing my desire to be all that I was born to be. She was as much a teacher to me as I was to her. I trust wherever Brooklyn travels she is a radiant beacon of light, one who sparks the light within others and reminds them they too are filled with greatness.

### **My International Students**

My class of International acting students was composed of young people sent to the United States by their parent's as a form of punishment because they exhibited behavior independent of cultural mandates. The parents' attempt was to provide their child with a way to release pent up expression that would have them return home as obedient sons and daughters who accepted their predetermined place in society. After class, the youths spoke to me of feeling

unprecedented liberation that grew exponentially stronger with each passing day that allowed them to feel distanced from autocratic parental-cultural control. However, as the final days of their visa approached, emotional anxiety replaced the feelings of aliveness and freedom. Each faced an unfavorable quandary—should they live a life of dutiful servitude chosen for them by their parents and cultural precepts, or would they dare to risk the disavowal of their family for breaking through the traditional familial and cultural control to find a way to fulfill their life. The stakes of living a quality life seemed improbable for these students, and their situation was extremely tentative and complex. According to Breton and Largent (1996), as in this case, the “present family system does many things for people and society, but it’s not set up to nurture...souls, precisely because this underlying paradigm is suspicious of soul energies” (p. 22). Unaware of the outcome, I have often hoped they enlisted the wise counsel of their daimōn and followed its inner guidance.

### **Energy Vampires**

Conversely, it seemed my receptiveness and sensitivities to another also had a dark side. Occurring over a 4-month duration, I experienced enormous bouts of lethargy and could not figure out the root cause. I woke up refreshed, bright-eyed, and full of vibrancy, and soon fell under a spell of lethargy. As an empath, I actually felt my energy being siphoned away, and as a clairvoyant, I received a lucid image of schools of piranha viciously devouring my *chi*. Without delay, I researched and located spiritual healers who could instruct me on practices to protect my life force. The healers confirmed I was under attack from *energy vampires* on feeding frenzies, and explained further. I have 80-90% more energy than most, which made me an exceptional energy host. These healers taught me techniques that preserve my energy and remedied this depleting condition.

### **Enthralled by Imagination**

Beguiled since childhood, touched by the indelible story of *Peter Pan* and plausible counterfactual thinking, imagination embedded itself in every fiber of my being, so much so, it is the inspiration of my life, and my most prized resource. From the instant, I awake until the second I fall asleep, I enter into states in between brainstorming and daydreaming where imagination impregnates my world. Committed to lead others toward understanding the importance of actualizing their calling that contributes to the advancement of humankind and impassioned by imagination and human potential, I fashioned a company in which I coach, consult, and speak to audiences to support them in connecting to their genius. Thus, the subsequent story unfolds.

### **Imagination Sparks Aliveness**

Almost immediately and quite unexpectedly following a keynote presentation on imagination and human potential, an obvious pattern appeared among those audience members who stood in line waiting to speak to me. They came to hear my talk with the hope of *presencing* a glimmer of aliveness that fell dormant, which once gave their life meaning. Without exception, they shared a unique, yet almost identical message. My audience members recalled and fondly spoke of a time when imagination and story infused its magic into their lives. Each believed they had lost the ability to use their imagination they once had enjoyed as children. As I listened to their stories, I recalled Campbell (1990/2003) speaking of this particular experience, professing individuals mistakenly think they seek the meaning of life, when, instead, each person truly seeks the experience of being alive! In commemorating this wonder-filled passage of childhood innocence, I refer to Pakula and Mulligan (1962), producer and director of *To Kill a Mockingbird* who interviewed Foote on a special segment of the DVD version of the film. Here, Foot revisited

those impressionable days of youth. He described imagination and story as expressions that captured “the sights and sounds and smells and attitudes” (n.p.) of a time gone by, as he related to the story told in the novel and later presented in the film:

One reason people respond to this novel so greatly is that is so well informed by reality and emotional experiences and a memory of the time that is gone, and yet, we all want to hold on to...it’s a world that we recognize. Most of us have some distant feeling about childhood and that period of our life; as we get older, we give it certain kind of talisman and meaning that we went through so quickly and we did not even know that they had meaning. And all of a sudden you get older you think back this, this, and this and somehow this coalesces into something rather important and somehow that’s what memory can do for a talented writer it reforms it into another kind of experience.

There was layer upon layer of a gently evolving way of life. The most exciting time is when you had nothing to do at all; having fun required an active imagination. You made worlds out of sticks and shadows there was time for it, time to develop character. The challenge of all great art, like life itself, is to transform memory and imagination into an organism of enchantment and illumination. (n.p.)

I explained to the audience members who had been patiently waiting, that imagination resided inside them, and as they participate in activities that bring them joy, they will activate their imagination and the sense of aliveness. I must admit that the constancy of hearing these messages was unsettling and concerned me gravely. Their list of complaints was simply overwrought with discouragement and despair, as they were living lack-luster lives; having feelings of indifference; experiencing stifled self-expression; living with thwarted personal calling; and becoming individuals who do not truly know who they are, all of which has kept them from being themselves. Humanity’s insanity tolerates social dictums that perpetuate human suffering. This blanket of uncertainties that suffocates the human spirit left me wondering what kinds of actions would necessitate a change in the existing paradigm that would yield a positive outcome. This query sent me packing to find a graduate school that offered studies in human potential. It was at Saybrook University, through selected coursework in my master’s degree program that I embarked on investigative research and began to test my suppositions, which

sequentially evolved and culminated in this present work of my doctoral dissertation.

### **A Glimpse of Home**

The ensuing narrative felt like I was in an episode of Gene Roddenberry's popularized television series *Star Trek*. I was attending a speaker's Boot camp in Sedona, Arizona, and one day we were given the afternoon off with nothing in the schedule. My new Canadian friends dropped me off at a cluster of artists' shops along their way downtown. I window-shopped until reaching a store where the colors displayed in the window caught my attention and beckoned me into the store. After greeting the shop owner, she commented by saying, "You are a clairvoyant and empath, and you have had many lives in this 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension on planet Earth; this is your last life here." Taken back by her overture, I explained another individual delivered an identical message to me a few weeks earlier. Finding nothing of interest in the store, I proceeded to make my way out of the shop, and right before exiting, I reached the jewelry counter. My eyes fixated on a necklace that ordinarily would not have had the slightest appeal. As I stood there mesmerized by the item, my awareness of everything else receded into the background. In the foreground, I witnessed myself asking the shopkeeper to take the necklace out of the case. Although I was aware of the dynamics that were playing out between the amulet, the store manager, and myself, I interpreted my actions as being most bizarre, as though I was observing someone else remotely. She endorsed and emphasized my choice by saying, "Oh, this one, it's *very* special." Once the necklace was placed around my neck and fastened, my spirit shot out from my body at *warp* speed, as I felt myself being hurled into space beyond this 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension. Nearly losing consciousness, I landed back home in space from where my journey first began. I nestled cozily within the galaxy, as a ball of luminous energy, divinely magnificent. As the shopkeeper unclasped the necklace, my body became limp, and I began to quiver. I struggled to

keep my balance. She reached over, gripped my hand in hers, and led me to a tall quartz crystal while instructing me to lay my hands on the rock and wait for my spirit to settle back into my body. Decidedly frazzled by the unexpected and unusual experience, I felt the duality of excitement and uncertainty. Once my spirit had settled back into my body, I stood there at the jewelry counter asking the shopkeeper for the price of the necklace and artist's information before leaving the store.

I walked out to rejoin my friends, one of whom was the host of the forum, and I described in detail what had just happened. Everyone agreed this experience was the real reason I had come to the symposium. Later that evening, when I returned to my hotel room and inserted my key in the door, I heard the phone ringing; it was the artist calling. Our dialogue lasted 4 ½ hours during which we exchanged personal experiences about our psychic abilities. As the conversation drew to a close, she provided me with a distant attunement. As it turned out, the necklace was not to be; I did not buy it. Truthfully, after these many years, it was not until my recent exchange with Pecci on *The Nature of the Earth Experience* that I put this puzzle piece in its rightful place. This brought to mind a message I have often heard spiritualists blurt out, "Everything in divine time," meaning when the time is ripe, the answer(s) I sought would be revealed.

### **A Session With a Medium**

While staying in Tahoe I was referred to a well-known medium frequented by a number of famous Hollywood celebrities. My 2-hour session was extra ordinary, and unlike any other. A point worth noting is that as I have grown older, I have felt energetically incomplete, as though a piece of me was missing. I have never mentioned this to anyone. Revealed in this meeting was a previous life where I was an Indian princess who had a twin brother who loved me immeasurably

that after I died he could not bear to part with my spirit. In my exchange with the channeler, I discovered my twin brother's spirit was present. The spiritualist asked him if he would be willing to liberate my spirit now so that I could move on. He agreed to set my spirit free. As I left the psychic's home, I noticed I felt whole and complete, which continues to this day. In addition, during my healing session, I envisioned one of my spirit animals, a snow-white owl, and saw my hands were those of an elder woman's hands.

### **Shamanic Guidance**

My shaman mentor, a gifted Peruvian ethno-psychologist, was known to occupy several dimensional planes concurrently. Unexpectedly, he plucked me from the cadre or *ayllu* and summoned me to stand. Directly he asked, "Do you know you are a rose?" I paused, contemplated the question, feeling unsure about how to answer his question. He followed this question with a directive, and asked me to describe myself. In that present moment and without the least bit of hesitation, I responded naturally defining the vision I saw before my eyes. I was a spectacular enigmatic burgundy Ecuadorian rose bound into its bud-form except for a single outer leaf unfurled. The psychologist questioned, "Why is only one leaf separated?" I countered, "I was unsure I wanted to open fully." Brilliantly, my mentor had penetrated the impasse with which I was having great difficulty dealing. My omission raised uneasy feelings, as my *ayllu's* gaze fell upon me. Nonetheless, I sensed a spiritual transformation occurring within me, which held a significantly greater value. As I stood in my truth, I felt an energetic release of intrinsic alchemy happening. Anais Nin's (2015) poem I had read long ago, crystalized in the foreground of my mind, as I recalled her words "there came a time when the risk to remain tight in the bud was more painful than the risk to blossom" (n.p.). As the nature of divine order is known to

release the truth in perfect timing, my mentor proclaimed to the community of healers, I was the *Great Mother Spider* responsible for connecting others to their divine nature.

### **Life's Preview**

As I reflect on my earliest remembrance before my transit entrance into this 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension, I saw myself as radiant luminous energy looking out from distant galaxies at a gargantuan, fluorescent billboard containing *Help Wanted Ads* advertising positions showing biographies available on planet Earth. Intrigued, I began to read through a number of biographies until I came across one that piqued my interest. As I accepted the assignment, I made my descent shortly after my agreement to enter into this 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension. In hindsight, this image now explains many of my life choices and experiences I have had during my sojourn here. After gleaning insights from my contact with Pecci (2016), I understood fully why I was not given all the puzzle pieces of my life at one time; they would be released when suitable for obvious reasons. In light of my research in human evolution, spiritual transcendence, and the daimōn's effect on the human psyche, it was evident that my calling was postponed purposely. As Pecci informed me, my calling required the unified components of a youthful spirit and experienced wise soul. Accordingly, my experiences began to build on other experiences more frequently that provided me with copious clues of themes, and messages, which held substantial insights.

### **Stepping Out**

As a gifted being, I learned to suppress one of my natural abilities and drives as a loquacious speaker, who could easily dominate a conversation, and overpower those who might have found it difficult to get a word in edgewise. Soon after relocating to the San Francisco Bay area in 1978, I began to preview organizations known to develop orators, and I joined Toastmasters International. This action was a bold move in what I then considered *stepping-out*

of my comfort zone and claiming one of my natural gifts unabashedly. One particular evening was my *Icebreaker* speech that introduced me to members of the club. As my initiation talk, this experience exposed me to the conditions of being the focus of attention to an audience, and was intended to instill the importance of imparting a meaningful message that was worthy of another's time. This initial run also introduced me to the rules of effective speechmaking. After watching other speakers deliver their talks, I was well-informed of one award I did not want to win, it was the one called the *Burnt Toast Award*, which was given to a speaker who used excessive oral expressions of um's, ah's, and uh's during his or her presentation. As it turned out that evening, I was awarded the best speech for delivering the most engaging talk. The groups' encouraging support throughout my membership led to my ability to become a seasoned speaker earning me the highest award as a Certified Toastmaster (CTM). As I cultivated my abilities as a speaker, I finally felt ready to advance my skillset and joined the National Speaker's Association (NSA).

My first day of attending the NSA, San Francisco chapter, was captivating. When I first entered the room filled with the amplified buzz of messages surging through the air being generated from loquacious speakers, I felt the thrill of heightened energy course through my veins. As I evidenced these jabbering brainstorming personalities who had much to say, were just like me, compelled to contribute their message to others and have them transform. Feeling much like the ugly duckling who discovered he was a stellar swan, a great sense of pride and self-worth washed over me as I fit right in as one of the *birds of a feather*, and I knew I was home!

The preceding 19 vignettes serve as the bedrock of information I use to formulate Table 14, *Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination*; Table 15, *Lessons Cycled That Reveal a Greater Held Truth*; and Table 16, *Theme, Vignette, and Title*. The

subsequent section takes this material and disseminates this information into data categories labeled event, cause (c) and effect (e), overall affect, meaning-making and self-disclosure. These findings disclose relevant information, which answers the primary question central to this investigation: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my narrative?

Table 14

*Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination*

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**Event**

Intrinsic Childhood Knowing—Age 4

**Cause/Effect**

- Experienced a weighted deep-seated knowing—(c)
- Drawn to dynamic interactions of others and energetic connections—(e)
- Realized an unseen source resides within and without me—(e)

**Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition; Aligned With Soul’s Code; Impacted My Authentic Self

**Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- This power was somehow directing and protecting me
- I was first aware I had a knowingness that resided within me about things I had not yet to experienced
- Kept this secret of knowing, in fear I would be misunderstood and thought crazy
- Uncertain of my energetic connections to others

**Event**

Meeting Peter Pan

**Cause/Effect**

- Story of Peter Pan—(c)
- Instilled the power of believe, potential of possibility, importance of not growing up, and life as an adventure—(e)
- Became the foundation in which I built my biography—(e)

**Overall Effect**

- Harnessed Imagination; Impacted My Authentic Self

**Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- Believed the story of Peter Pan was about me

- Peter was showing me how much fun life could be as a lived adventure that required me to “believe” anything was possible
- Believe, adventure, and possibility are the key elements of how I established my life

### **Event**

Peter Pan the Story

### **Cause/Effect**

- The story of Peter Pan—(c)
- Ignites my imagination’s Neverland, where I live through those escapades—(e)
- Neverland—(c)
- Playland to mystery, magic, and wonder of the free human spirit—(e)
- Present moment—(c)
- Where all things are possible—(e)
- The authentic self—(c)
- Brings imagination into being—(e)

### **Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition; Harnessed Imagination; Impacted My Authentic Self

### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- Imagination is synonymous to Neverland
- This realm of adventure is accessible at any moment
- Herein lays the spiritual connection to my higher self that directs me, guides me, and protects me in ways known only to the One Mind, and my daimōn
- I am truly humbled by this most amazing resource that fills me with feelings of celebration
- Imagination, is the centerpiece of my life

### **Event**

A Psychic Union

### **Cause/Effect**

- Daily prayer of wanting a sister—(c)
- Materialized as a reality producing a baby sister—(e)
- Our immediate connection, unparalleled to that of any other—(c)
- We experience confluence and attunement—(e)
- Confirmed we were a part of a larger invisible power—(e)

### **Overall Effect**

- Harnessed Imagination; Accessed Intuition; Impacted My Authentic Self

### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- Convinced my constancy of prayer materialized my sister into being from the unseen world

- My sister's manifestation provided me with proof of how powerful the invisible world is
- Believed my sister was a unique gift given to me from the unseen world

### **Event**

Sensitivity Towards Another

### **Cause/Effect**

- Three incidents of bullying from the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grades—(c)
- Experienced an overwhelming connection to another, as I felt their wounding as my own—(e)
- Understood I had special abilities, yet unsure what for—(e)

### **Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition; Impacted My Authentic Self

### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- Deep connection to others was a constant reminder there was a larger controlling power overseeing me
- I felt a deep sadness of another's painful wounding

### **Event**

Open to Clues

### **Cause/Effect**

- My search for identity—(c)
- Opened me to clues—(e)
- Emulated qualities of two actresses I admired—(e)
- Willingness to try on calling—(c)
- Acting, singing, speaking—(e)
- Visual transmission of calling as a speaker—(c)
- Led to research, attending and listening to speakers, and joining speaking organizations: Toastmasters International and National Speakers Association—(e)
- Developed speeches on imagination and human potential—(e)

### **Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition; Aligned With Soul's Code; Harnessed Imagination; Promoted Healing and Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- Driven to find my calling and discover who I am and why I am here
- Adopted new identities in hopes of finding my authentic or essence self
- Not content going through life aimlessly, which concerned me
- Wanted to use my gifts in service to humankind
- Confronted by how to live harmoniously in this world and not of this world

**Event**

A Gypsy Life for Me

**Cause/Effect**

- Relocating—(c)
- Benefited our family—(e)
- Short-term relationships and tentative involvement in school activities—(e)
- Relinquished opportunities as a cheerleader, graduating from the top college preparatory high school in the country, and leaving a life I loved, which caused me frustration, disappointment, and unhappiness—(e)

**Overall Effect**

- Impacted My Authentic Self

**Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- New adventures in travel to different parts of the country
- Learning to handle a lot of unknowns
- Coping with situational disappointments

**Event**

Writing My Hotline to Heaven

**Cause/Effect**

- Sensitivities—(c)
- Vantage point, “hot line” to heaven—(e)
- Writing—(c)
- Outlet to work through feelings—(e)
- Search for identity and potentials—(c)
- Poetry, prose, and song writing described my own and social conditions—(e)
- English teacher’s advisory/message—(c)
- Confronted me then and now in writing this dissertation—(e)
- Dissertation writing—(c)
- It took tenacity and courage to reveal my sensitivities and risk to be seen—(e)
- Sensitivities and writing, gave me the opportunity to heal the ethical incongruences within me—(e)
- Advanced me to the next stage of discovering more of who I am and my calling—(c)

**Overall Effect**

- Harnessed Imagination; Accessed Intuition; Aligned With Soul’s Code; Promoted Healing and Self-Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

**Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- I asked the One Mind for this challenge so that I would advance to the next stage of becoming

- Writing this dissertation played out like a dichotomy of fears and doubts versus confidence and conviction
- Thoughts were random, which questioned whether I had the staying power to make it through to feeling overly capable and committed to accomplish this goal
- English teacher's words caused me to move through what was holding me back

### **Event**

Leading with an Open Heart

### **Cause/Effect**

- Sensitivities—(c)
- Visceral connections to another—(e)
- Embracing another's essence—(c)
- Flooded memory of having a calling—(e)

### **Overall Effect**

- Harnessed Imagination; Accessed Intuition; Aligned With Soul's Code; Promoted Healing and Self-Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- I was humbled to receive the sacred gift of another's spiritual essence
- Full of gratitude to be an empath who spurred the memory in others of who they divinely are

### **Event**

Being Seen and Received

### **Cause/Effect**

- Empathic connection to entrepreneur—(c)
- My empathic gift, penetrated the entrepreneur's known identity, catching her off guard, and rendering her speechless, teary-eyed and emotionally unbalanced—(e)
- She realized her essence was fully received and seen by me, and I knew her authentically without pretense—(e)
- She knew at once who she genuinely is—(e)

### **Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition; Promoted Healing and Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- My empathic connection to this entrepreneur returned my thoughts to how difficult it is to be received and seen by another; this situation reminded me to be true to my authentic/essence self
- This incident reminded me of the cost of shutting down the spirit of One Mind, the price is too dear a cost because it impedes individual realization and in turn has an impact on collective humanity's progress

- The gift of awakening and returning another individual to their soul's code as a light bearer filled me with joy and gratitude

### **Event**

Brooklyn

### **Cause/Effect**

- Brooklyn's imagination and intuition was uninhibitedly genuine. Her true intent was to share her notions and insights with her classmates and teacher—(c)
- Rather than being received for a pioneering spirit, her teacher loathed her self-expression, stymied her participation in class by not calling on her, as she felt this 5-year-old was undermining her authority and sending the wrong example to the other students who were already resigned and restrained—(e)
- Brooklyn was admonished and sent to the principal's office weekly for demonstrating inappropriate so-called behavior—(e)
- My strategy was in favor of Brooklyn being self-expressed—(c)
- I recommended she purchase a journal in lieu of having her sharing being ignored, and instead enter her ideas in the diary—(e)
- I urged Brooklyn's family to steward her to realize her destiny, as humanity is in need of luminaries—(c)
- Brooklyn's family agreed to support Brooklyn to realize her fate—(e)

### **Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition; Harnessed Imagination; Aligned With Soul's Code; Promoted Healing and Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- Typically, traditional education shuts down imagination and creativity and encourages sameness or conformity that is fear based and stifles the human soul
- With self-expression squelched is it any wonder many have no idea who they are destined to be
- I did not realize I had free choices to express myself in school. I vividly remember making art and having my art exhibited at the Chicago Art Institute. It seemed after that experience, school was a serious matter that did not include self-expression, and imagination
- I learned at a young age imagination and creativity happened outside the classroom, which is where I exercised imagination like Peter Pan

### **Event**

My International Students

### **Cause/Effect**

- Free-spirited young adults did not abide by cultural/social mandates—(c)
- Parents shipped their progeny off to America to express themselves in hopes of ridding their children of self-expressive behaviors with the intent they would return to follow a prechosen life of servitude dictated by their culture—(e)

- Life in America gave them the freedom of self-expression, which liberated their human spirit—(c)
- When it was nearing time to return home they faced a life dilemma—to have the freedom to realize who they truly are or return home to take up traditional mandates—(e)

#### **Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition; Harnessed Imagination; Promoted Healing and Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

#### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- The human spirit was not received and welcomed for their potentials and personal calling or was their unique gift considered to be of great value to the greater good of humanity
- Society dictates who we should be. This is my experience in this culture and with other cultures I have witnessed
- I believe each individual should be encouraged and supported to develop his or her unique gift and potential and, by doing so, our world would be honoring the human spirit, which would manifest a more harmonious planet

#### **Event**

Energy Vampires

#### **Cause/Effect**

- The Dark side—(c)
- Bouts of lethargy—(e)
- Energy being siphoned away—(e)
- Empath, as perfect energy host of 80-90% more energy than most—(c)
- Led me to healers to learn techniques to protect and prevent energy drain—(e)

#### **Overall Effect**

- Impacted My Authentic Self; Accessed Intuition; Harnessed Imagination; Promoted Healing and Acceptance

#### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- Reminded me that my sensitivities were also vulnerabilities
- Although, I use these gifts for the greater good, I also realized that there are those who would take advantage of my gifts

#### **Event**

Enthralled by Imagination

#### **Cause/Effect**

- Childhood imagination—(c)
- Impregnates my being and world—(e)
- Impassioned by imagination—(c)

- I fashioned a business to assist others to actualize their calling and potentials—(e)

#### **Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition, Harnessed Imagination; Aligned With Soul's Code; Promoted Healing and Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

#### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- The story of Peter Pan underlies the heart of my business model, which champions the human spirit in others

#### **Event**

Keynote on Imagination and Human Potential

#### **Cause/Effect**

- Speech—(c)
- Sparked imagination and the inner child in audience members—(e)
- Message identical from audience members—(c)
- Believed imagination no longer resided within—(e)
- Longed for meaning, aliveness, full self-expression through imagination—(e)
- Audience messages were of grave concerns—(c)
- Sent me back to school to explore the cause and to examine the paradigm—(e)
- Became my area of concentration in my master studies and this dissertation—(e)

#### **Overall Effect**

- Harnessed Imagination; Accessed Intuition; Aligned With Soul's Code; Promoted Healing and Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

#### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- I thought I had enrolled in school to express the voice of my audience members that had been silenced by social mandates to discover this was as much about finding and expressing my own voice that had been silenced, and needed to be set free

#### **Event**

A Glimpse of Home

#### **Cause/Effect**

- Boot camp and an afternoon off—(c)
- Led me to a particular store—(e)
- Necklace—(c)
- Returned me to my authentic origin and showed me who I am—(e)
- Pecci's (2016) Nature of Earth experience—(c)
- Placed this puzzle piece for me in its rightful place—(e)

#### **Overall Effect**

- Accessed Intuition; Harnessed Imagination; Aligned With My Soul's Code;

## Impacted My Authentic Self

### Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure

- Each of these events were purposely meant to unfold and reveal my essential nature with the intent to provide me with further insights
- The message evidenced for me, everything in divine time

### Event

Session with a Medium

### Cause/Effect

- Medium—(c)
- Session disclosed a previous life as an Indian princess and twin Indian prince—(e)
- My Indian brother withheld a part of my spirit, which validated my feeling of incompleteness—(e)
- He released the piece of my spirit so I could move on—(e)
- I also saw one of my animal spirit and my hands were that of an elder's—(e)

### Overall Effect

- Accessed Intuition; Harnessed Imagination; Promoted Healing and Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

### Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure

- My empathic sense unveiled a piece of me was missing, which became apparent
- As I kept stepping courageously where there was no visible path laid before me, I continued the search of my Holy Grail
- In trusting in the spiritual world and its process, more clues of information availed further insights, which in turn became wisdom

### Event

Shamanic Guidance

### Cause/Effect

- Peruvian mentor—(c)
- Penetrated the impasse I was having great difficulty coming to terms with—(e)
- He directed me to claim my spiritual power—(e)
- A fitting verse from Anais Nin (2015) further supported my forward development—(e)

### Overall Effect

- Accessed Intuition; Harnessed Imagination; Aligned With Soul's Code; Promoted Healing Acceptance; Impacted My Authentic Self

**Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- I was unsure I wanted to advance into my larger personal power because I knew it would require significantly more responsibility, and I was uncertain I wanted the responsibility of becoming more
- This incident could be compared to Joseph Campbell's (1990/2003) *The Hero's Journey* and 17-Stage *Monomyth* stage of departure of "Refusal of the Call" (p. 81)

**Event**

Life's Preview

**Cause/Effect**

- Earliest remembrance before my transit entrance into this 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension—(c)
- I saw myself as luminous energy reviewing bibliographies advertised on a billboard on planet Earth that were open to be occupied—(e)
- A bibliography piqued my interest—(e)
- Willing I descended to live out this destiny—(e)
- After gleaned insights from my communications with Pecci (2016), I understood why my puzzle pieces were not previously revealed as my soul's code required a youthful spirit and wise soul—(e)

**Overall Effect**

- Harnessed Imagination; Accessed Intuition; Aligned With Soul's Code; Impacted My Authentic Self

**Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- Through researching and writing this dissertation, emerged this earlier experience of a puzzle piece that could now be added to the larger puzzle of my life
- As I reflect on the richness of this event, and other events that comprise my life, I find I am filled with gratitude for the gifts I have been given from the One Mind that allows me to realize insights, and lessons that align me with my soul's code

**Event**

Stepping Out

**Cause/Effect**

- Me as a gifted adult—(c)
- Learned to suppress my enthusiasm and drive as a speaker—(e)
- Chose to step out of my comfort/uncomfortable zone—(c)
- Joined Toastmaster's International—(e)
- Icebreaker speech—(c)
- Presented me with the focus of having attention on me from audience members, and rules of effective speechmaking—(e)
- Awarded for the most engaging talk—(e)
- Encouraging support gave me confidence to earn the highest award, Certified Toastmaster, CTM—(e)

- Lead me to National Speaker’s Association or NSA and brainstorming personalities like me, where I felt right at home—(e)

#### **Overall Effect**

- Harnessed Imagination; Assessed Intuition; Aligned With Soul’s Code; Impacted My Authentic Self; Promoted Healing and Acceptance

#### **Meaning-Making/Self-Disclosure**

- The discomfort of downplaying my gift for speaking became unbearable
- I decided I had nothing to lose and stepped out to express one of my natural proclivities
- I have never looked back, and considered my stepping out as the fundamental action that is worth repeating to express my many other gifts

The information imparted in Table 14, titled *Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination*, answered the primary question central to this investigation: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my narrative? In Table 15 that follows, titled *Lessons Cycled That Reveal a Greater Held Truth*, data emerged as an outgrowth from my basic experiences expressed in *Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies*. This table evidences my irrepressible commitment to probe deeply within myself to locate earlier wounding experiences buried far below the level of consciousness that require healing and likely hold lessons of great value.

Table 15

*Lessons Cycled That Reveal a Greater Held Truth*

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- **Physic Union**

My sister's and my indefinable attunement to each other became evidenced in time, as we learned we are both gifted clairvoyants. Moreover, as I began my work with spiritual luminaries, my visceral connections I experienced with others became clear, and I learned I am an empath.

- **Sensitivity Towards Another**

Tucked away in the recesses of my mind, I recall my first experience with bullying and later incidents in various forms that began for me at age 9.

1. I was one of three students called up to the chalkboard by my 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, who explained to each of us she would be asking questions, and we were to write down the correct answers on the board. After answering each question, she asked each one of us to explain how we arrived at our answers. I was always the first student done, and the last pupil to explain how I came up with the answer as Miss Kravitz began her questions in clockwise rotation. For your information, my parents instructed me to address adults by Mrs., Miss, or Mr. accordingly; they told me this was a sign of respect and proper etiquette. With this in mind, every time I answered my teacher's question, I addressed her by Miss followed by her last name. Unlike the other two students, I answered every question correctly, and I was the only one who addressed my teacher in this manner. It was the final question, and my teacher turned to me, looked at my answer, and said, "Your answer is correct, again." I thanked her politely, addressed her accordingly, and noticed her facial expression change before my eyes. Occurring simultaneously, I witnessed the developing intensity of color in her face change from ivory to pink then to scarlet red, as her eyes

seemed to grow exponentially in size that now resembled the size of two golf balls. A flashback appeared in the foreground of my mind of an angry cartoon character with a steady stream of steam blowing out of both ears. After refocusing from that momentary pause, I went on to explain in the same way I had previously answered her questions. Without warning, Miss Kravitz blurted out, “Who do you think you are, addressing me the way that you do? You must think that you are really smart, more like a smart aleck trying to insult me. I won’t stand for it! You’ll soon see where this will get you.” I replied in a matter of fact answer, “No, Miss Kravitz, I am not being a smart aleck, and I am not being disrespectful. I am answering your questions the best way I know how.” In a huff, and having the last word, she shouted, “Now, sit down!” This incident happened in front of my entire 4<sup>th</sup> grade class. I could not understand why she was so upset.

When I arrived home from school, I told my mother what happened. Upon hearing this news, my mother called school, and set an immediate appointment. The following day we went to school. Our first stop was the principal’s office where I sat in the waiting room while my mother sat behind a closed door with the school principal. Next, we proceeded to my 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, where my teacher was waiting for my mother sitting at the far end of the room. I was instructed by my mother to sit nearby in case she needed my assistance. After that day, my teacher never uttered an unkind word to me. I was thankful my mother came to my aid because back in those days, societal mandates were stacked against a child being listened to and believed over the word of an adult. Strong social conditioning enforced the admonition that children were to be seen and not heard, which placed a child at a powerless disadvantage.

2. As I reentered undergraduate school as an older adult, I witnessed a similar dynamic unfold with my anthropology teacher who wielded her power as an educator inappropriately by

threatening the younger inexperienced students. I had great disdain for her deplorable behavior. Sceptically, I met her at her office one afternoon to discuss an assignment. From the outset, it was apparent we were checking each other out, testing individual boundaries. I am glad to say that during our meeting she did not attempt a power play with me then or later in the classroom. I deduced, she strongly sensed I would not tolerate her scare tactics, and unethical moral behavior. In fact, after our meeting she appeared less demanding and confrontational most days to these younger students.

3. I loved learning and participating in class discussions, and regularly raised my hand in my 5<sup>th</sup> grade class, especially when I was sure I had the right answer or felt I had something of importance to contribute, much like 5-year-old Brooklyn had demonstrated years later. Frequently, I stayed after class, and participated in engaging conversations with my teacher who presented learning as interesting and fun. She often said to me, it was a pleasure to have a bright student like me in class, eager to learn, and so enthusiastic. As I continued to raise my hand to contribute, and my teacher called on me successively, I detected a separation was beginning to develop that could distance me from my classmates. Concerned I might be seen as the teacher's pet, and shunned by these and other students, which could easily become rumors that circulated like the spread of wild fires, I stopped visiting my teacher after class, and curtailed the frequency of raising my hand. I fell into place with most of the others in class. Blending in felt awful, and learning was no longer fun and exciting. I thought long and hard about the choice I made. After giving much consideration, I feared this could set a precedence with other students who might avoid me, reject me, and even single me out due to peer pressure. With that in mind, I chose to operate under the camouflage of sameness, and I went about my own business, as I was not one to follow a crowd.

4. On this day, my brother, a girlfriend, and I went to play at the neighborhood park.

While I was walking along the field I came across a robin red breast that lay dead on the ground. Moved by the majesty of the bird, I decided the bird deserved a proper burial. With that thought, I instructed my brother and girlfriend to stay, and I would return with gardening tools, a shoebox, and a cloth. My mother helped me collect these items at home, and off I went. Shortly after I returned, we all began to dig a hole long enough and wide enough to accommodate a container. When our task was complete, I opened the box lid, lined the bottom of the box with the piece of cloth, and carefully cradled robin red breast in both my hands, placing the bird in the box, and closed the lid. We poured dirt over the box to seal the coffin. I reached for a twig that was on the ground, and wrote on the grave, "Who Killed Cock Robin?" and closed with words befitting the winged pilot.

A boy from the neighborhood approached and asked what this was all about. I explained. As soon as I finished, the boy viciously attacked the gravesite by kicking up the dirt where the robin had been buried. As I yelled out for him to stop, his hands went to my throat, and with all my might I fought back viciously and broke his grip. Then he squeezed my arm. I kicked him back. He lunged forward and grabbed my ponytail forcing my head all the way back, which immobilized me. My little 5-year old brother ran to my defense, and started kicking this brute, which forced him to break his hold on me long enough for me to regroup. As my brother was no match for the older boy, I stormed into him from behind with my girlfriend who joined in the struggle. Tired from our counterattacks, he finally left. As it turned out, this boy was in my class. Oftentimes he followed me home, so I made sure to walk with a crowd. He became known as the neighborhood and class bully. One day in the dead of winter I was walking home with a friend on the icy road, when he slid up behind me pushing me forward, causing me to lose my balance

forcing me to fall onto the frozen ground. I came crashing down face first, which caused my teeth to cut through my lip, and bloody my mouth. “This was the last draw,” said my dad, and with that declaration he walked across the street to talk to his father. This put an end to me being one of the many he picked on so cruelly.

5. In the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, a boy asked me to be his girlfriend. I politely turned him down and told him I was interested in another boy. Later that afternoon on the school bus he pushed me down on the floor. I got up, fixed my clothing, and sat down on the seat as though nothing out of the ordinary occurred. Luckily, my dad knew his dad who was the chief of police and talked to him on the phone. This halted further incidents. I was relieved to have my dad come to my defense on both occasions. As it turned out, this boy earned the flagrant reputation as the class bully that continued from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grades.

- **Unique and Different**

I surmised at a young age that being different put me at *risk*. It meant being ostracized and persecuted. If I dared to be different and true to being me, it meant I had to be willing to stand up against the masses, which took unyielding courage. Frankly, I did not feel safe stepping out and claiming those qualities that made me unique, one-of-a-kind, special, and different. I saw how this affected others who paid a horrendous price. After experiencing my own trials of being bullied, as well as observing others who were being oppressed, I made a conscious choice to keep my head down and go my own way, but, my deeply held yearnings did not let up, most likely, because my *daimōn* refused to be dissuaded. However, this created the perfect breeding ground for the toxic formulation of *ethical incongruence* that ultimately manifested in greater intensity and caused consistent warring between my authentic self and false identity. This inner war clearly provides evidence for how individuality stands in direct opposition to conformity in

each of us, with the former inviting us to follow our true self and the latter being governed by societal standards always dictating who or what we should be. This discord compelled me to search for my Holy Grail until I uncovered my destiny, which is a continual adventure.

- **A Gypsy Life for Me**

Although my experiences as a gypsy came with drawbacks, indeed, there were ample benefits as the newcomer to school who dressed, spoke, and thought eclectically. Most often, many students became curiously attracted to me and showed great interest because I was *different*. How ironic this lesson turned out to be for me, in lieu of earlier decisions I made, which involved concealing my identity because I was utterly fearful and wary of calling attention to myself for what my individuality might bring. This situation reminded me of an old adage, “When the student is ready the teacher will appear. When the student is truly ready...the teacher will disappear” (when the student-is ready. n.d., n.p.). Still, another valuable learning that has served me well in life is that once I categorize and identify a certain stereotype of individual, I know exactly what to expect. For example, after several relocations and changes in schools, I had experienced what I have lovingly referred to as the *great divide*, which is me, standing alone at the back of the class, apart from the pack of 25 sets of student’s eyes penetrating my outer anatomy as the teacher introduced me to the class. It was uncomfortable; however, in time, I became resilient, more at-ease and confident, as well as more tolerant of others. In referring to Job’s story of breadcrumbs, I wondered if these situations were given to me as preparation for the time I would become a speaker addressing audiences. The notion crossed my mind. Now, I can see how these relocations empowered me to handle myself effectively by teaching me how to land solidly no matter the situation in which I found myself.

- **Writing the “Hotline” to Heaven**

Before beginning graduate school, I consulted with two of my creative writing teachers and asked them about the odds of being a successful creative writer. Both teachers’ replies were the same. They said, “the odds of becoming a successful creative writer was extremely slim, adding very few writers really make it “Big.” I replied, “Well, I could be one of the few who do!” While I believed this was possible, I stopped myself from experiencing this creative endeavor. Like many, my practical side kicked in because, as a single parent who raised a 2-year-old alone, I remembered I once held down as many as three jobs to provide the necessities of life for my daughter and me. With that memory etched in my mind, rather than stepping out and risking the unknown, I placed my writing on hold, and stayed the course to earn 3 degrees with the intent to realize a stronger sense of financial security. I chose to play it safe rather than risk and step out boldly. Either way, I kept a lid on my search of securing my Holy Grail, or so it seemed. Thankfully, I maintained an unstoppable willingness to discover who I really am, and the willingness to work in a collaborative partnership with my daimōn in hopes of fulfilling all I could be. In undertaking this dissertation and research, I recalled profound advice with which my English teacher once conveyed to me long ago. She said, “Risk being truly known or withhold and censor your writing.” An explanation of what transpired can be explained in two ways.

First, as I wrote this dissertation, my connection to the spiritual realm through imagination became clear. When I risked to be seen, my writing was cathartic, my imagination’s channel to the spiritual realm was open, and writing came with ease. When I censored what I wrote, fear was present, blocking my imagination’s connection to the spiritual realm, which was shut down. These situations were consistent without fail. This was a prime example of opening my imagination to the spiritual realm, which allowed my human spirit flight as opposed to

placing governors on my imagination of what another might criticize, which instilled a sense of fear in me, and therefore, made writing all the more difficult for me to express my authentic self.

Second, research gave me the opportunity to explore and review the puzzle pieces of my life, and it accommodated my search for meaning and aliveness. It allowed me to deeply explore the power of imagination and story and how it affects the human experience. In addition, it unveiled the reasons I was not encouraged to develop my natural proclivities, but instead, enrolled me into hiding, as I bowed to social dictates that kept my human spirit entrapped and needlessly suffering rather than promoting show and tell of my unique self-expression. The research method of autoethnography sanctioned storytelling skills as narratives that represented, in this case, my authentic human experience, which revealed invaluable insights and reliable findings of data that I intended to contribute to this scope of study. Through my research of multi-talented gifted adults, I read about their painful frustrations in which they withheld their talents and self-expression in fear of differentness in order to fit in or conform due to social conditioning. The stories of these gifted adults' frustration and heartbreak evoked my own painful emotions from my having learned to shut away my gifts and silence my own voice. Honestly, it felt like I had opened Pandora's box, as I processed my feelings through research, writing, and emotional catharsis. After all, this allowed me to heal my wounds and forgive myself for living, in part, an inauthentic life, which revealed valuable, but often painful, information.

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In Table 16, *Theme, Vignette, and Title*, I selected all entries on the basis of aspects they share. Each theme evolved as an apparent message or lesson that once recognized and recorded, was then matched with a corresponding vignette(s) that evidenced similar properties found in the

narrative. Next the theme and vignette were paired with a coinciding topic located within this dissertation's title—the search of The Holy Grail, living in Neverland, social consequences, imagination, story, and gifted. The findings are of great value because each component reinforces its connection that answers the primary question central to this investigation: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative?

Table 16

*Theme, Vignette, and Title***Theme**

- Everything in Divine Time

**Vignette**

- Intrinsic Childhood Knowing; Leading With an Open Heart; A Glimpse of Home; Life's Preview

**Title**

- In Search of The Holy Grail

**Theme**

- Hide and Bid Verses Show and Tell—Pay Off and Cost

**Vignette**

- Sensitivity Toward Another; Writing My Hotline to Heaven; Leading With an Open Heart; Being Seen and Received; Brooklyn; My International Students; Imagination Sparks Aliveness; Shamanic Guidance; Stepping Out

**Title**

- Social Consequences; The Gifted Human

**Theme**

- Empathic Paranormal Ability, A Blessing and/or Curse

**Vignette**

- A Psychic Union; Sensitivity Towards Another; Leading With an Open Heart: Being Seen and Received; Brooklyn; Energy Vampires

**Title**

- The Gifted Human

**Theme**

- Perennial Search for Identity

**Vignette**

- Open to Clues; Writing My Hotline to Heaven; Imagination Sparks Aliveness; Shamanic Guidance; Life's Preview

**Title**

- In Search of The Holy Grail; The Gifted Human

**Theme**

- Storytelling Through Imagination Can Have an Indelible Impact

**Vignette**

- Intrinsic Childhood Knowing; Meeting Peter Pan; Peter Pan the Story; A Psychic Union; Sensitivities Towards Another; Open to Clues; Writing My Hotline to Heaven; Leading With an Open Heart; Being Seen and Received; Brooklyn, My International Students; Energy Vampires; Enthralled by Imagination; Imagination Sparks Aliveness; A Glimpse of Home; A Session With a Medium; Shamanic Guidance; Life's Preview; Stepping Out

**Title**

- Living in Neverland; Imagination; Story; The Gifted Human

**Theme**

- Spiritual Connection to My Higher Self Directs Me and Guides Me

**Vignette**

- Intrinsic Knowing; Psychic Union; Open to Clues; Writing My Hotline to Heaven; Leading With an Open Heart; Being Seen and Received; Energy Vampires; Enthralled With Imagination; Imagination Sparks Aliveness; A Glimpse of Home; Life Previews; Stepping Out

**Title**

- In Search of The Holy Grail; Living in Neverland; Social Consequences; The Gifted Human

**Theme**

- Bullying Comes in Many Forms

**Vignette**

- Sensitivity Towards Another; Leading With an Open Heart; Brooklyn; My International Students; Energy Vampires

**Title**

- The Social Consequences of Imagination and Story of the Gifted Human
- 

**Summary of the Introductory Section of Chapter 4**

In this first section of chapter 4, “Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination,” imagination is portrayed as the power source and power feeder, as well as the repository of story containing the moments that shape our living biography, as we are history in the making, and story as in storytelling becomes our narrative we share with another. These vignettes, both individually and collectively, serve as a rich baseline that developed into Tables 13-15. The purpose of each table is to expand and deepen the value of imagination and story as it addresses and answers the primary question central to this investigation: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? Tables 13-15 chronicle the deliverables in answering this question.

I begin the second section of chapter 4 by explaining the significance of psychotherapy, and why I have chosen this modality for this investigation. Next, I introduce the event(s) and follow with a description of each therapy, and illustrate how the methods of healing were used.

**Why Psychotherapy?**

In my search to understand myself, my relationship to others, and my world, I have found psychotherapy offers various ways of communication and interaction that assess, diagnose, and treat emotional, behavioral, and mental patterns. In addition, psychotherapy provides many forms known to penetrate the psyche such as behavioral therapy, cognitive therapy, and integrative therapy to name a few. My reasons as to why I have chosen these forms of therapy as my preferred choice and means of conducting this portion of this investigation are explained in the subsequent examples that are generated from personal life stories.

As I reflect on family life and values of earlier times, I thought everything my parents said and did was golden, and exactly the way the world was. During my adolescence and young adulthood, I remember watching the perfect role models of the typical American family life projected on television programs of *Leave it to Beaver*, *Father Knows Best*, and *The Nelsons*. While growing up, my parents sheltered my siblings and me believing those behaviors and messages would provide us with an optimistic attitude and outlook about life. Their theory must have appeared plausible to them; however, these ideals presented an unrealistic approach to life that would eventually backfire on the three of us, as we left the nest and ventured out on our own. This misinformation had deleterious effects, which caused the three of us to spend the beginning and the greater part of our mature adult lives adjusting to the ways life really is. Undoubtedly, I was unprepared in knowing the many ways the world worked due to a limited utopian schema. I welcomed life and others with a trusting and sensitive heart; I was naïve, impressionable, and believing the best in everyone. I approached everything in my life from this precept. This actually created a facade regarding life, which resulted in disappointment, despair, frustration, pain, and self-doubt. As I gradually became exposed to more of life's situations, the foundation my family gave me, upon which I built my life cracked, and the structures I built came toppling down onto me, leaving me with no semblance of reserves to draw from and nothing but a remaining sliver of ground on which I could stand.

In part, my education became the metaphoric *school of hard knocks* that undermined my intelligence and left me groping for straws to support me. My relationship with my mother was complicated. She did not understand my sensitivities, deep thinking, or the poetry I wrote, and could not fathom how I came to know these deeper experiences, which troubled her. Further, she viewed my sensitivities as vulnerabilities or weaknesses that were difficult for her to tolerate.

Yet, we loved each other dearly, and I had great admiration and respect for her. After a failed marriage that placed me as a single parent of a 2-year-old, and my strained relationship with my mother, I sought out new ways to approach and relate to life. This brought me to Erhard Seminar Training (EST) in 1979 that gave me the tools to critically examine societal dictums and recognize how to distinguish between facts from story. I proceeded to work with psychologists who introduced me to psychotherapies in internal processes that gave me solid grounding. As I journeyed through life, I explored different modalities that were able to penetrate my psyche and allowed for healing and wholeness to occur. With this background in mind, this is how I arrived at the conclusion to choose and apply my experiences with Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy in this investigation.

### **A Meeting and Session in Regression Therapy**

Formerly mentioned, I entered into a relationship with Ernest Pecci to discover who I was in previous lives and who I am in this life through the process of Past Life Regression Therapy. Each of my meetings with Pecci began with me drawing a picture of what he called *The Wheel*. Before putting a writing instrument to the piece of paper placed before me, I readied myself by opening my imagination to the spiritual realm; then I waited to receive a visual transmission that I believed wanted to make itself known. If a shape appeared in my mind, I midwived that form onto the paper. Most often from the outset, an image came through me. Other times, as I began drawing, an innate inner guide, whom I called my intrinsic companion, often intervened in my process meeting me, and together in unison, we synchronously gave form to an image. On earlier occasions, there were marginal incidents—ones in which spirit did not make itself known, which I drew without any instruction. On one particular day, my experience was entirely different. When asked to draw *The Wheel*, I placed four fingers on top of my belly, two from each hand. I

brought both thumbs together that made a straight line and joined my two index fingers that formed a point, which completed the shape of a triangle. Keeping all four digits intact, I then flipped the structure of the triangle over, which unified both configurations that completed and filled out the silhouette of a diamond. Oddly enough, Pecci gave me no indication this arrangement was out of the ordinary from any of my former drawings: although, I intuited something profound had taken place on a much deeper level than what happened in creating the previous drawings. Although, I was clueless about what this form actually signified, I proceeded to walk down the hall and into the room where Pecci worked with me as a collaborative partner in the process of Regression Therapy.

As I positioned my body on the couch, I entered into a hypnagogic state, where Pecci initiated questions that I answered. I experienced myself going back through time and found myself on the outskirts of the city walking on a dirt road headed toward the heart of some community. Once arriving in town, I found myself standing in a hovel partially underground peering out of the window witnessing an army of Roman soldiers above me who were marching evenly paced through the village with a strong command of deliberateness. Unquestionably, the energy felt suppressive and threatening. I was a man in this past life and a devoted friend of rabbi *Yeshua* (Hebrew name of Jesus, 2017) who was known as Jesus of Nazareth. I was hiding to avoid detection by the soldiers who were on the prowl for believers still adhering to Judaic law, believing in one G-d, as well as holding to the teachings of the rabbi, thought to be a threat to the Roman Empire. Instantly, I knew myself as a messenger who was tasked with speaking to the people and delivering the message that reminded them they were enough. Each person was a gift who was endowed with divine unique abilities, needed to contribute to the good of the people. A

flashback occurred where I saw myself assertively speaking out to many people, “The inner guidance you seek is not found in an idol or ruling government but within yourselves.”

Pecci slowly and meticulously brought me out of the hypnagogic state into consciousness. That day, my realizations were exceptionally validating from the moment my fingers projected inner guidance that formed the shape of a diamond and centered my hands on my belly, which would later let me know the image as my soul’s code. The hypnagogic process of Regression Therapy led me to uncover and actualize my task in this life, which was essentially equivalent to a previous life of long ago. My purpose was to get the word out to individuals to know they embodied the seeds of greatness that were divinely unique and intended to implement their gift, inspire others, and leave their legacy to the collective of humankind, thus enhancing this world as a better place. For each person who lives his or her life’s purpose, makes a difference to us all.

**The diamond within.** The day I placed my hands-on top of my belly to form two triangles that became a diamond was important, after all. This was evidence that my many sessions with Pecci had paid off. I had broken through countless years of admonitions of socialized conformity to reach the pristine state of my untarnished Soul, wholeness, and love that had been overlaid by layers of false messages that my ego constructed as a false identity that insulated me from my initial rejection of immediate limitation and separation from the source and empowerment of love (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, June 9, 2001).

**What is personality?** My take away message from my work with E. F. Pecci (personal communication, June 9, 2001) is that each individual is gifted with a divine and indestructible inner core—*the diamond: our pure essence self, our pristine Soul*, which is often quickly overshadowed by the outer world. Soon after we are born, the physical body, largely conditioned

by the immediate environment restricts us from experiencing and living the life we came to live. Our *diamond* is entrapped *deep within the physical body*, and it is not allowed to be expressed through the body.

The inability of parents to receive their child's radiance results in a decrease of his/her consciousness and spontaneity. The child experiences this reduction of energy as painful and does not want to repeat this experience ever again. Teenagers, often, express this initial rejection, by rejecting others. Over time, a defensive system develops in the form of a buffer against giving and receiving love. As we develop, our thoughts and feelings mirror our parent's biases, fears, and distorted perceptions that together form the basis of our thought processes, which provide us with a sense of identity. According to Pecci (2017), "this distortion begins before the second year of life and continues as we develop" (p. 15). The child experiences emotions such as anger and jealousy that he or she construes as his or her own emotions. Thus, the core image is replaced with something foreign and unlovable. This is Personality II.

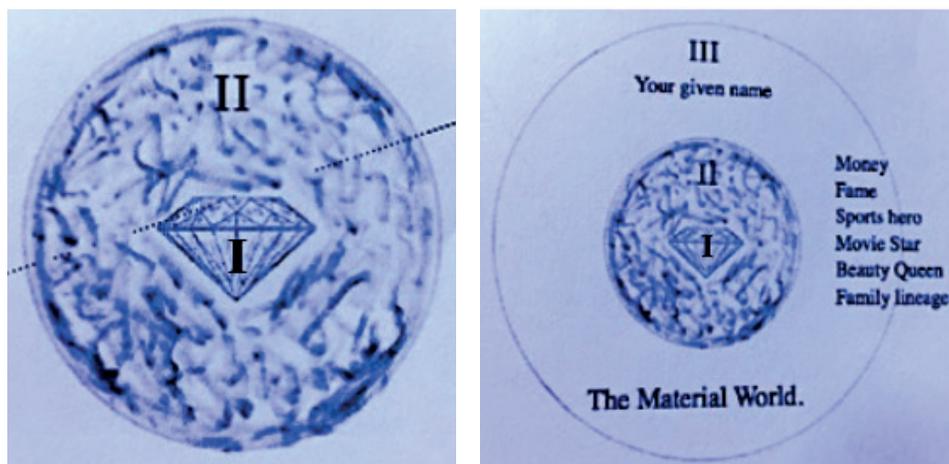


Figure 65. *Personality I and II*. Figure 66. *Personality I, II, and III*. (Pecci, 2017, pp. 16, 17)

Eventually and over time, the child develops and is invested in a personality that largely consists of defensive patterns and destructive judgments. These judgments are driven into the

subconscious mind and become attitudes and behaviors designed to gain acceptance and praise from others. This coating, then, covers over the inner diamond, which becomes a painful subconscious self-image where the ego's main function is to conceal its awareness. The existence of Personality II is reinforced by society. This painful feeling increases as though something is wrong with the individual. Therefore, the person believes at the core, he or she is unlovable. Given that condition, the ego assists the person to create a personality acceptable to society. This is personality III. There are different acceptable determinates throughout societies in the world, as such, in America we acclaim material wealth, fame, higher degrees in academia, beauty, and sports in high accord as an endpoint of success. However, in time we come to realize that trappings, alone, do not provide lasting inner peace because the emphasis is mistakenly placed on material possessions, worldly positions, or power of what a person does, rather than placed on who a person truly is (E. F. Pecci, personal communication, June 9, 2001). Individuals cope with this incongruence by engaging in actions such as seeking therapy, or other processes to enhance awareness, or numbing their pain with habit-forming addictions, which result in obsessive behaviors—drinking caffeine and/or alcohol, shopping, gambling, taking drugs, working, craving sex, wielding power to control another and/or the environment, taking on attitudes of cynicism or resignation, and ultimately, complying with socialized conformity. One thing, it seems, we all have in common is our search for love and acceptance of being loved.

As this day came to a successful close, Pecci said our next meeting was to include a *channeler*. I thought nothing unusual of this, since I have orchestrated meetings with mediums to discover personal information regarding past lives as a way to learn more about my present life. Experiencing past successes, I left his office enthusiastic about our next meeting.

The day arrived. I entered into the room where Pecci and the channeler were seated. Pecci introduced me to the medium, Susan, and explained how the session was to go. Susan was to lay on the couch while Pecci had her enter into a hypnagogic stage, and ask her questions about my life. I was to sit quietly and observe. Pecci taped the session with the intention of giving me ample time to process the download of information at my leisure. In the beginning, as Pecci presented Susan with the questions, I was calm. However, as the questions progressed, so did my level of anxiety and understandably so; these messages were extremely personal. I sat in my chair, attempting to decipher each morsel of information exchanged. I learned this was only one of two bookends about my life, and that I would return to receive the second bookend at a much later time because there was no way for me to understand this information now. With this news, I left his office befuddled.

I did not receive the information of developing my psychic abilities particularly well because I was deeply concerned others would judge my genius as most bizarre and conclude I was out of my mind. Due to this notion, I was unsure I wanted any part of these gifts. Five days had passed before I gathered up the courage to play the first side of the tape. Because of the emotional content on the tape, I decided to drive my car to a tranquil location, devoid of distractions, where I felt perfectly at peace. Having found that place, I parked my car in a spot overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Since there were considerable amounts of information for me to absorb, my index and middle fingers danced between play and pause on the car's cassette buttons. It is with great regret that I have not been able to locate this recording of 16 years ago, and therefore, it was impossible for me to reproduce the rich insights and information that held tremendous value for me then. For that reason, I can only share a snippet of what I remember. I learned my spirit did not enter my body perfectly aligned. This was not by accident; it was well

planned. Further, the frustrations I have identifying my calling is connected to how I came into this body, for who I am and what I am meant to do requires a youthful spirit and the sage wisdom of an older spirit. This information was not possible to know as a young spirit. Inasmuch, it was not feasible that my child-self would know my calling or recognize my gifts. My calling and the gifts to implement the calling included the fact that my awareness of them would begin later in life; what I was to offer, needed to wait until the world would be ready to receive it. My spiritual connection to others is most important, as I am to develop and use all of my psychic abilities that will be needed. I will use a great many of my gifts for my own pleasure that will serve others as well. Further insights might be found from reading the books of Abraham.

### **Waking Dream Therapy**

**Discovering a kindred spirit.** While thoroughly engaged in a research project on imagination as an undergraduate student, I came across stimulating information written by psychiatrist, Epstein ([drjerryepstein.org](http://drjerryepstein.org)) on his website that piqued my interest. Unable to contain my enthusiasm, I called New York. Epstein answered my call, and after a brief introduction and giving him the reason for my call, he asked me to call him later at home. Like me, Epstein's centerpiece of his life's work is imagination. My second call was a rich exchange on the topics of imagination, life purpose, and further resources, closing with remarks regarding remaining in touch. Once completing my project, Epstein invited me to study with him in New York. I explained, at the time, the likelihood was highly improbable. He then invited me to experience Waking Dream Therapy.

As synchronicity became apparent, I shared my recent discovery of Epstein, and his invitation to study with him to experience Waking Dream Therapy, with one of my classmates at

the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS), who experienced Waking Dream Therapy with Epstein, and the classmate insisted I go. This coincidence was something I could not dismiss. I accepted Epstein's invitation. Two weeks before flying to New York, Epstein asked me to record my dreams for 2 weeks and write down deliverables I intended to receive from the therapy.

**A session with Epstein.** The day finally arrived. Excited to meet Epstein in person, I entered into the room and presented him with the necessary paperwork. He reviewed my homework, asked a few questions, and I readied myself in a seated position. Epstein established an immediate dialog, as he guided me through the process by asking questions to learn of my whereabouts and about my actions. The following is a re-enactment of what happened:

I entered into my Waking Dream facing a tall 18-foot door made from the limbs of an oak tree riveted together with black bands of wide metal strips. As I stood there, my eyes drank in the mammoth composition. I imagined such an architectural structure of this kind was typical during the rule of King Arthur. I quickly examined the key latch surmising I had never seen anything like it before. The key needed to unlock the door was rare and one-of-a-kind, incredibly long, precisely keyed, adorned with gold filigree, bearing an emblem of distinction centered in the key head. In that instant, the key appeared, and I slipped it into the lock, which allowed the door to open easily. I leaned in and applied all of my weight to budge the door more fully open. Once inside, I entered into a tunnel that led me to an open field and a plot of land covered in clover fenced off by a black railroad tie that separated the taller grass. My eyes caught the images of two boys in the field tossing a football back and forth. My presence went undetected until the moment one boy launched the ball high in the air, which caused it to head in my direction. The boy closest to me ran with all of his might as he caught the toss causing him to

plough directly into me. Looking up, he said, “Sorry...my name is Robert” and tossed the ball back in play.

The rays of the sun warmed my body and comforted me. It was a glorious day. Overhead a clear powdered blue sky dolloped with cotton shaped clouds, and my favorite flowers were present and fragrant, beautiful lilacs and roses perfumed the air. Epstein asked if I had a message or insight. Robert approached me cupping both his hands over my ear and whispered, “You need to remember to have fun!” After receiving the message, I walked straight ahead into the field of taller grass. As I walked, my clothes brushed up against the grass echoing sounds of intrusion. My footprints lightly indented the earth, as I blazed my own trail. Interestingly, my body was enveloped in a shroud of cloth, my head was covered in a high cloth turban, and my chest was wrapped in gauze with silts that allowed openings for my neck and hands, stiffly weighted kaki formed my skirt that touched the heels of my knee-high boots. As I continued to walk, my body merged into a painter’s vanishing point. Epstein voiced, “It is time to leave. Remember to lock the door and place the key back where you found it.” I walked toward the door, stopped, and turned to garner a lasting impression of the environment. I closed and locked the door placing the key back where I had found it and faced an open sky.

Surprised about the brevity of time when I received a message, I asked Epstein why I received a message that quickly. He commented, “It’s just that easy when you are on the path, Caren.” To capture my journey, I was given paper and supplies for writing and drawing that included colored pencils, markers, and crayons. After completing my picture, I made a colored photocopy for Epstein to review the journey and provide feedback by using the framework of phenomenology of being. As such, “symbols are not used as an interpretation of our intellectual process, but the process of connecting ourselves to the commonly inaccessible knowledge of a

different self” (Baroff, 2009, p. 9). Epstein looked at my picture and suggested I purchase flowers before flying out to bring my Waking Dream journey into present reality. He further said, “Caren, it is important that you remember you have a special place that is yours alone, and you can go there anytime. It is your unique place that connects you to your higher self and source. I will assess your drawing and give you feedback within the week. Meanwhile, stay in touch and continue to engage in Waking Dream Therapy.”



*Figure 67. Walking Dream—Fun Place.*

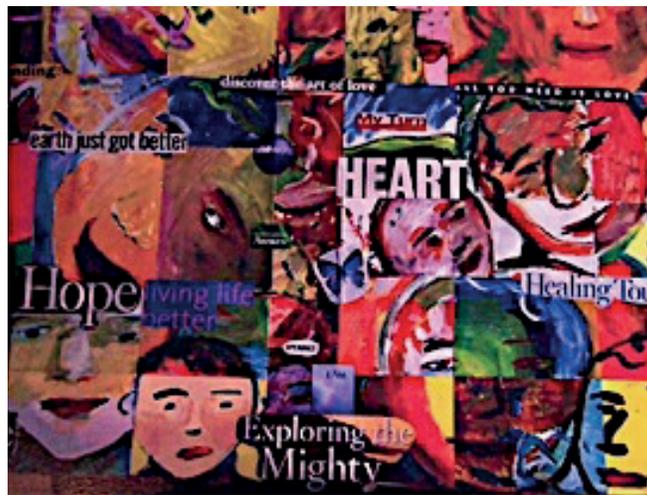
**Feedback from Epstein.** The door and key represented my own private sanctuary closing out the external world. The low groundcover separated from the railroad tie was familiar surroundings I have outgrown. Once I crossed over the threshold walking into the taller untamed grass, I began to blaze a new path intended for me to discover greater depths within myself. I was entering into a long journey of isolation in which my shrouded body was covered purposely to insulate me from intrusion and distraction.

**Imagination explored through the senses.** Given my love of art, writing, speaking, and psychology, it seemed only natural that expressive art therapy caught my attention. I experienced a weekend workshop with Daria Halprin at the Tamalpa Institute who taught a movement-based

approach, and used Gestalt therapy with expressive arts. Natalie Rogers of Saybrook University combined her father, C. Rogers' (1958) work of Person-Centered Therapy with expressive arts. Jack Weller (as cited in Halprin, 2005) at California Institute of Integral Studies offered expressive art in individual specializations such as dance therapy, drama therapy, and more. After considering all the options, the best fit for me at the time was Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy, in which I enrolled in a 2-year certificate program offered by Saybrook University.

### **Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy**

I have selected 8 pictures from Saybrook's coursework in Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy, or PCEAT.



*Figure 68. What the World Needs Now.* A collage returns us to the fascination we had as children as we use glue and scissors to cut out pictures that have meaning to us. N. Rogers (1993) says, "it is a relaxing, fun way to 'speak out' [that] can suspend our self-criticism" (p. 31).

#### ***Event.***

Collage

#### ***Emerged incident.***

N. Rogers instructed us to create a collage according to our feelings, needs, or purposes that are asking to be expressed. It can be "*Free Form*" or any pictures that have personal appeal, or "*This is me*" encapsulations of moods, aspects, or feeling about myself, or "*An Issue*" I choose to depict in my collage.

**Depicted illustration.**

These pictures are drawn by children and elicited feelings of love. I selected words and verses accordingly.

**Wounding.**

We all suffer from wounding's, no one goes unscathed. It is important to remember, our creator fashioned us from love, and *A Return to Love*, as in the book written by Williams (1992/1996) expresses the need individually, collectively, and planetary, to restore wholeness, in which we all become the beneficiary.

**PCEAT.**

Working on this project filled me with joy, peace, and love, as it renewed my commitment to self-love, brotherly and sisterly love, and love for this planet.



*Figure 69. Dancing Your Picture or Sculpture.* Look at your art and use your body to sculpt yourself, taking the shapes in your picture or sculpture ... Once in a pose that expresses the shape or feeling of your picture, try moving with the rhythm and flow of the lines you see. Use the picture or sculpture as a starting point; then move in any way to further explore the meaning of your picture or sculpture. Use sounds as you move. Or let words flow out freely. As you move, you can create a dance story. (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 79)

**Event.**

Dancing Your Picture or Sculpture

**Emerged incident.**

This exercise challenged me to be in my body and not operate from thoughts in my mind. This dance was not about looking good, and it truly represents body wisdom.

***Depicted illustration.***

I have chosen two ways to represent me. The picture on the left is my grounded Earth body, and the image on my right is my spiritual essence.

***Wounding.***

My wounding lies in both forms of me, as shown in my Earth body and my spiritual essence that represent spiritual and human incongruence. I find I am not completely immersed in either form.

***PCEAT.***

This session reminded me of my body's wisdom, which is equally as important as cognitive thought.



*Figure 70. This is a Depiction of Me in Clay.* This is the first image that came through me after loosening my body up to different rhythmic sounds of song.

***Event.***

My experience as Me in Clay

***Emerged incident.***

N. Rogers encouraged us to use clay to see what form emerged.

***Depicted illustration.***

This shows the muscles and fascia that support my backbone.

***Wounding.***

If we are hesitant to lay claim to our position, it is understood that a person lacks having a strong backbone. Through my wounding I have had to exhibit a strong backbone *come what may*.

**PCEAT.**

I gave myself over to this medium and completely connected with the clay. Although my fingers worked diligently through this thick substance, the experience was felt through my entire body. The clay gave me a new way to express my connection to parts of me. As I formed my backbone, I experienced its strength.



*Figure 71. Person-Centered Approach.* The therapist uses the arts as a healing process for self-exploration and understanding. A person-centered approach is based on the premise that the human being is basically a trustworthy organism, capable of evaluating the outer and inner situation, understanding herself in its context, making constructive choices as the next steps in life, and acting on those choices. (N. Rogers, 1993, pp. 98-99)

**Event.**

Person-Centered Therapy Exercise

**Emerged incident.**

The first demonstration of Carl Rogers' Person-Centered Therapy is performed in front of my cohort of counselors-in-training with Natalie Rogers as the counselor and me as the client.

**Depicted illustration.**

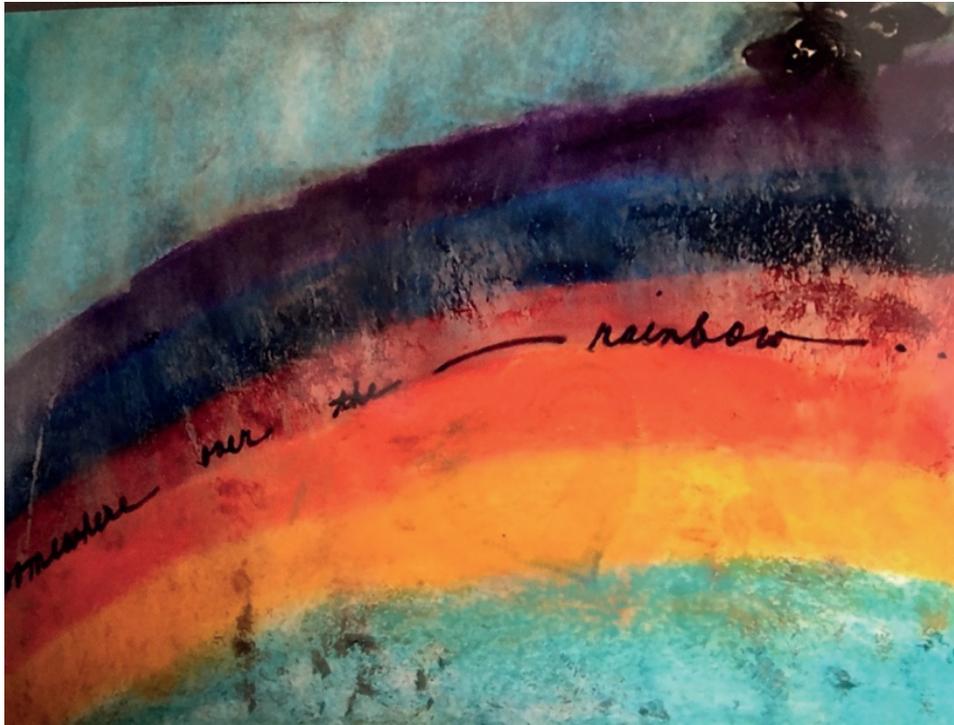
I am the little girl at-play with balloons and a hula-hoop in hand. I discovered through the process of PCEAT, the male figure is my matriarch mother.

**Wounding.**

In this picture, my mother is calling my personhood into question.

**PCEAT.**

This form of therapy utilized my imagination, and allowed me to work through my feeling to access my inner story. The illustration reveals deep wounding remained lodged within my body's cells that questioned my natural way of being.



*Figure 72. Saying Goodbye to a Loved One.* Usually we think of many things we wished we had told the person who has now departed. Now, write the deceased person a letter. Don't censor yourself. When trauma is too great for words, people may find that symbols, colors, movement, and sound provide acceptable paths for expression. (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 145)

**Event.**

Saying Goodbye to a Loved One

**Emerged incident.**

Halloween séance where I represented my dearly departed mother; memories flooded my senses.

**Depicted illustration.**

A rainbow, with a faded heart and a butterfly. These images represented my mother's passing.

**Wounding.**

I experienced emotional loss and recalled past memories.

**PCEAT.**

As my siblings, daughter, and I arrived home after my mother's funeral, we experienced a simultaneous rainbow in the sky, and felt this was my mother letting us know she was at peace. Through applying PCEAT I was able to connect to my sadness, loss, and memories, and process those feelings that allowed for healing, acceptance, and self-expression through imagination.



*Figure 73. Inner Polarities.* This exercise suggests ways to tap into your unconscious to accept your shadow and embrace your light. It begins with brainstorming or becoming conscious of your inner polarities (N. Rogers, 1993, p. 175).

**Event.**

Movement and Sound

**Emerged incident.**

Someone said, "Shut-up! You talk too much."

**Depicted illustration.**

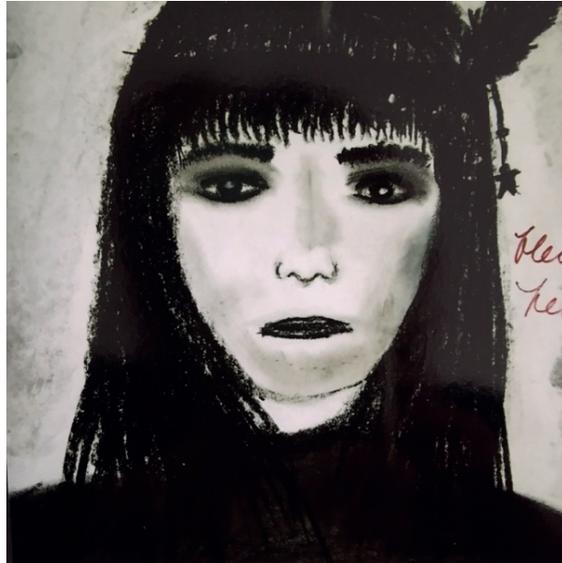
I am bound, which prevents me from talking and having a voice.

**Wounding.**

This remark brought up unusually deep feelings of wounding.

**PCEAT.**

This therapy allowed me to process unconscious polarities of light and dark, which promoted healing, acceptance, and self-expression through imagination.



*Figure 74. Middle Phrase of the PCEAT Program (a).* This picture emerged from my experience after the toxic group session where individuals release their discontent with either the program, the group, and/or with each other. N. Rogers said, every cohort experiences this occurrence. I was not told this would happen and had no idea why so many individuals had considerable angst.

***Event.***

Middle Phrase of the PCEAT Program where the cohort sits around in a circle and palavers

***Emerged incident.***

A member in the group asked me to apologize to another member. I thought nothing of it and apologized thinking this would be one less negative vibration in the group exhibiting the shadow side. On the contrary, members of the group voiced their irritation to the person who asked me for the apology. I left the group wondering whether I had lost face by appeasing the malcontents.

***Depicted illustration.***

This picture is titled “Bleeding Heart.”

***Wounding.***

Confusion and doubt set in after this meeting. Unable to sleep, I traipsed down in the pouring rain at 2 a.m. to process my feelings by making art alone in silence. The results provided me with a complete sense of harmony.

***PCEAT.***

This modality allowed me to journey deep within myself and access my imagination where I birthed “Bleeding Heart” who healed my energetic block and returned me to wholeness.



*Figure 75. Middle Phase of the PCEAT Program (b).* This is the final picture of the set of three that includes “Saying Goodbye to a Loved One.” She is “Joy!”

***Event.***

Middle Phase of the PCEAT program

***Emerged incident.***

After birthing the former two pictures. I noticed my vibrational level lift, and knew I had one more picture to midwife. She is joy!

***Depicted illustration.***

A strong and loving heart can be felt and seen through the windows of her eyes. Joy’s hair flows freely like the love in her heart.

***Wounding.***

Any wounding Joy previously experienced was released through the heart chakra and returned her soul to enlivened wholesomeness.

***PCEAT.***

I am grateful for the multimodal forms of art that represents my original spiritual self.

In the preceding portion of this work, I described my 8 photographs of art that use multimodal forms of Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy for self-expression. I provided a comprehensive account of each experience, which analyzed my private thoughts, feelings, and

reflections of what occurred in 5 categories: event, emerged incident, depicted illustration, wounding, and PCEAT. The PCEAT processes I used answered the primary question central to this investigation: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative?

### **Summary of the Second Section of Chapter 4**

In this second segment of chapter 4, I share with you a portion of my personal background that pertains to how I came to choose psychotherapy as a healing modality that restores the authentic/essence self to wholeness. Further, I discuss how I was introduced to the behavioral therapies of Regressive Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy that include a detailed description of the event(s), the effect the event had on me, and the ultimate outcome that the event produced, all of which answer this investigation's primary question: How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative?

### **Research Questions Revisited Through My Experiences**

#### **Main Research Question**

How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? This was the question that stimulated this extensive search. After completing a thorough investigation of the literature on this and related subjects, I reviewed information from my past work as disclosed in chapters 2 and 3. In preparation of this chapter 4, my careful study led to reflections and insights from vignettes related to experiences in my life and with therapies I encountered along my journey to self-discovery.

The chronological unfolding of these vignettes occurred organically to reveal new findings that emerged once I penetrated the outer layer of data. This manifested in 3 tables: (a) Table 14, *Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination* that name and

discuss the underpinnings of the event, cause/effect, overall effect, meaning-making/self-disclosure; (b) Table 15, *Lessons Cycled That Reveal A Greater Held Truth* that denotes additional stories, which emerged from journeying deep within myself; and (c) Table 16, *Theme, Vignette, and Title*, which integrates a theme with an appropriate vignette(s) that correspond(s) to one or more topics found in the dissertation's title. These insights opened to abstruse discoveries that began with imagination as the power source, and story as in biography as the power feeder that becomes my narrative, and repeats this cycling of imagination—> story—> narrative—> imagination, until something interrupts the pattern and new meaning is sought, and new imagination is needed to write a new story to live a new narrative. From a specific outlook, my reflection sparked 19 vignettes. Each vignette tells a story and within that story are evident signs of experiences.

### **The Three Therapies**

How did imagination and story reveal and develop my personal narrative? In what follows, I first recounted my use of three therapies, which included Regression Therapy, Waking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy, and second, I described and reflected on Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination. In Regression Therapy, the three occurrences I have included were when Pecci asked me to draw the wheel and my fingers gave form to 2 triangles on my belly that when flipped merged into a diamond. I followed with the second happening, my session in which I journeyed back in time through a past life and recognized myself as a messenger tasked with delivering a message of vital importance. The third occurrence was during my experience of witnessing the session with a medium, and Pecci, which led to my processing of the downloaded information imparted through the medium. I now recognize my experience mirrors Campbell's 17-Stage Monomyth of

*Refusal of the Call* and *Accepting the Call*. As I experienced the method of Waking Dream Therapy, my imagination opened me to experience my story that materialized into a final picture that resulted in a narrative of that event. Lastly, through coursework in Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy the multi-modal processes resulted in 8 creative expressions of artwork that became my narrative of those events.

### **The Vignettes**

In the section titled, “Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination,” I chronicled all 19 accounts; each episode is an intimate expression of imagination and story that becomes my narrative I write about by using the method of autoethnography. The very formulation, of this dissertation, from start to finish entails me accessing imagination, which leads me into a compilation of stories that convey an assortment of personal narratives. In conclusion, imagination gives form to my experiences that become both my biographical story and my narrative as a storyteller. These discoveries that resulted from my research will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 5.

### **Conclusion of Chapter 4**

In this chapter, I identified and discussed the findings or results of this investigations inquiry. Accordingly, I addressed and answered the main question central to this investigation. The constituents clearly identified were research findings framed in autoethnographic methodology, Vignettes—Spiritual Awakenings and Epiphanies Through Imagination, Regression Therapy, Walking Dream Therapy, and Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes (Jung, 1989, p. 58).

### Introduction: Discussion and Concluding Remarks

In this last and final section of this investigation, I acknowledge the method of autoethnography, I discuss my relationship to what I have been studying, I reflect on emergent developments that engender discovery, and I invite you to make your contribution to this significant field of study.

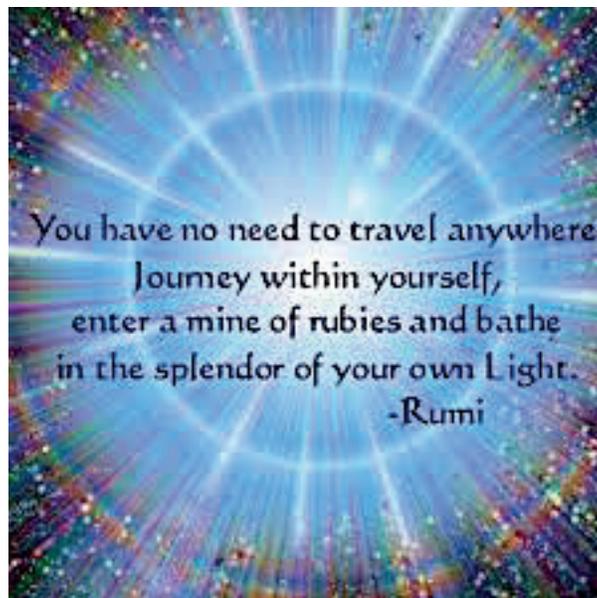


Figure 76: **Radiance.** (Internet 2017). You are not a body. You are not a mind. You are infinite light, infinite intelligence, the radiance of all beings, the *dharmakaya*-the endless light of creation (Lenz, 2017, Radiance).

### Autoethnography as Self-Expression

In this investigation, the method of autoethnography was the ideal application of social science praxis that illustrates qualities of what it is to be human. Holman Jones, et al. (2015) pointed out that philosopher Charles Taylor argued, “We human beings are selves only insofar as certain issues matter to us. We attribute significance and meaning to our actions and experiences. Indeed, a person’s identity is contingent on the significance these things have for him or her”

(p. 53). Further, Holman Jones, et al. (2015) wrote of Heidegger's proposition:

Humans are beings whose lives are “at issue” or “in question,” (Richardson, Fowers, & Guignon, 1999, p. 220), then we can understand autoethnography as a form of inquiry, writing, and/or performance that puts questions and “issues of being” into circulation and dialog. (p. 53)

As an evocative autoethnographer, I portrayed subjective parts of my personal biographical journey as history in the making. I augmented my study by supplementing aesthetic imagery in conjunction with my writing for the purpose of appealing to and engaging with a broader range of readership. In light of this, I referred to *The Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research* by Knowles and Cole (2008) in which Scott-Hoy and Ellis (2008) wrote a chapter titled “Wording Pictures: Discovering Heartful Autoethnography.” They present ideas about how arts-based research supports the *unmasking* of the artist who uses pictures to tell a story. Accordingly, I drew upon the subsection titled, “Arts-Based Research: Unmasking the Artist/Storyteller” that further explains their perspective:

In line with autoethnography, arts-based researchers include the artist's subjectivity and presents their work as embodied inquiry: sensuous, emotional, complex, intimate. They expect their projects to evoke response, inspire imagination, give pause for new possibilities and new meanings, and open new questions and avenue of inquiry. (Bochner & Ellis, 2003, as cited in Knowles & Cole, 2008, p. 135)

Many arts-based researchers combine their art with story. The art part of the project, which creates moods and images, combines with writing, which is better at directing emotions. In many cases, published words are used more to explain the art, rather than enhance the emotional mood. (e.g., Barone, 2003; Slattery, 2001; as cited in Knowles & Cole, 2008, p. 135)

Importantly, the use of autoethnography allowed me to critique culture and break through the silence of social injustice with the focused intention to reclaim my voice. Although, this inquiry is my soul journey, the dissemination of information was intended to support others who might also be seeking a pathway to discover and express their authentic self. As I shared my personal experiences that speak to the continuing incongruences of the dual warring selves within each of

us—the public imposter false self and the spiritual authentic/essence self—I offered you insider observations into cultural beliefs and practices that cause bifurcation of wholeness.

### **My Relationship to What I Have Been Studying**

My relationship to what I have been studying is intimately personal and highly subjective, as it is at the core of my lifelong experiences in endeavoring to unravel the most fundamental existential human questions: “Who am I, and why I am I here?” Specifically, these questions deal with the intention to validate that my life matters! This work was grounded in philosophy based on the work of those who have ruminated about these questions, as it related to their own significance of human existence since antiquity. Although, this exploration was a path specific to me, it also could provide a general and universal path for the collective of humankind because humans have been asking themselves these two fundamental questions throughout recorded history. My quest was to uncover The Holy Grail of my personal calling, as I personally related to this study as a gifted human who had been robbed of her true biography, “the destiny written in the acorn,” (Hillman, 1997, p. 5). This theft has been replicated on a planetary scale across cultures and societies affecting humans everywhere by both stifling and ignoring this inner need to self-actualize. This corruption begins shortly after we enter into the world and continues throughout a lifetime. Without awareness and consent we are presented with oral and silent social mandates, “admonitions, exhortations, and instructions for doing our life” (Beckwith, 2012, p. 1). Eventually, the onslaught of this conditioning compels some of us to seek asylum in professional therapy, perhaps, to find a way to release the stifling conditioning that disconnected us from our authentic self, which was provided by our own personal acorn. Still others choose to desensitize the pain of ethical incongruence by addictive or distracting behaviors, which impede the use of imagination as the connection to their own spiritual wisdom.

This gift of imagination is a powerful pathway that contains the potential to unite us with our divinity; therefore, it can disconnect us from our socially ordained destiny, and reconnect us with the unfolding of our authentic/essence self. This study was a profound and intensive intrinsic pilgrimage within that also required nearly an equal in-depth extrinsic exploration into other scholar's minds that have also witnessed, experienced, and shared similar concerns.

### **Reflections of Emergent Developments That Engender Discovery**

In this autoethnographic investigation, I experienced unprecedented insight, growth, and healing, as I interacted with the focus of this study. As I entered into each phase of this research, invariably, my emotions oscillated between extreme states of profound highs and radical conditions of confrontational lows where I re-examined whether a correlation existed between being fully alive in life and life having meaning. Without exception, this endeavor demanded interminable determination that called me to commit myself to a higher cause. Periodically, I questioned if I was capable of rising above these instances of intense internal pressure that interjected domineering chatter enmeshed with antithetical emotion to complete this dissertation. At every step along the way, I willed myself through the struggles, at times reaching out to family members, and my editor who lovingly championed my mission. In the end, I discovered this form of intimidation only strengthened my resolve.

As a messenger, I believed my task was to deliver this message to a sizeable audience, which held far greater importance over my personal quandary. Nevertheless, regardless of my discomfort, I knew it was time for me to move into the next chapter of my life. Knowing this, however, did not make the internal predicament I faced any easier. Clearly, my perseverance and courage to triumph over these challenges is a testament to finalizing this work. I owe much to the valued method of autoethnography that openly “embraces [this] uncertainty and emotionality,

[as] it attempts to make sense of the ways in which our identities...impact what we see, do, and say” (Holman Jones et al., 2015, p. 35). As I attempted to understand my experiences that reflected on the past that impacts the present occurrence, I discovered I needed to honor both uncertainty and emotionality. In this context, I turn now to Bochner and Ellis (2016) who elucidated on this phenomenon with these subsequent words:

Subjectivity and temporality play a significant role in what and how I remember. Once the past was there; now it is gone. I want to be faithful to the past, but what I remember of experiences I lived through is anchored by what summons me *now* to remember; and my memory is, in part, a response to what presently inspires my recollections. (p. 251)

When I began my research, all I had were the memories of my experiences that depicted my personal stories. I believed my stories would be compelling and worthy enough to support my suppositions and query. I took a leap of faith, and gave myself fully to the process of journeying within myself expecting the outcome would promote healing those deep-seated wounds buried inside me, and induce transformative, as well as transpersonal wholeness. In that instance, my thoughts drew upon De Angelis’s (2015) words that endorsed my feelings, “you aren’t looking for anything you won’t be able to find, because you’ve always had it” (p. 61). In the subsequent segment, I share multiple unfolding events that signify the overarching effect the acorn had on me, particularly during the course of this investigation.

**The subtle message of the acorn.** From the outset, while embroiled in incessant deep thought and impassioned by a silent proclamation of everything I wanted this study to communicate to others with immediacy, Emerson’s (n.d.) words returned to me announcing their significance:

The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn. What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us. And when we bring what is within us out into the world, miracles happen.

Sheer joy coursed through my veins as his message embodied the heart of this investigation. Soon after, I discovered Hillman's (1997) book *The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling*, with concepts that clearly aligned with Emerson's words. Hillman vehemently claimed, "We have been robbed of our true biography—that destiny written in the acorn" (p. 5). He referred to this concept as the *acorn theory* that actually originated with former civilizations centuries ago that believed in the mystical powers of the unseen world and in the manifestation of the invisible human potential that has the capacity to create miracles. Together, these resources formed the groundwork of this study.

Content with this discovery of the acorn theory, I found myself present to my immediate surroundings. I noticed my office was filled with acorns. Images of them were on two Chippendale chairs; a glass brown speckled paperweight, and a desk drawer that harbors a collection of many natural acorns from various forests I brought home with me over the years. I wondered where this all began. My mind caught a glimpse of my mother and I watching a squirrel deposit acorns on our apartment's fire escape landing. That image with my mother connected to another 3 years later, which brought to mind a picture of myself deep in the bowels of the neighborhood forest capturing the sights, smells, noises and the acorns. For all these years, I literally had no idea what my attraction was to the acorn until I began this dissertation, which led me back to Emerson's verses, Hillman's book, and my initial meeting with Pecci, as I unpretentiously expressed, "The world is such a sad place because people cannot be themselves; they have to be someone else in order to be accepted."

**Acorns in my unconscious.** My unconscious connection to acorns and what they represented for me included my collaborative work with Pecci in Regression Therapy that revealed both my current and a previous identical calling that included insights from the stories I

shared, as well as awareness of the cycling of lessons that were being exposed. I ascertained, in a subtle and profound way, my life, my calling, and my unrelenting drive to complete this dissertation began with the acorn. I found that what many people call *Divine Providence* makes itself known in *perfect time*, and I noticed the acorn's tremendous value. I did not know that it would contain everything else that has ever crossed my life. There are acorns all along the way, and we do not see them. Much like Jobs (2005) mentioned in his Stanford Commencement Address, "You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So, you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future" (n.p.). It is so clear to me that everything is interrelated.

### **The Significance of the Appendices**

In itself, each appendix is a poignant expression that reinforces the valuable lessons I have learned and have genuinely presented throughout this investigation. These bodies of work have been purposely placed for you—the curious, the adventurous, the unstoppable, the unyielding, the courageous, the powerful, the visionary, the transcender, the you I have saluted throughout this dissertation process—in a way that offers a summary of both events and experiences intended for you to reflect on a specific world that I believe will emancipate you to live a life of optimal aliveness and meaning. Shortly after beginning this dissertation, I introduced a few lines taken from the prose titled *Two Worlds*. Woods (n.d.) vividly delivered a description of the *Two Worlds* of being that fully appears in Appendix A. In this composition, I shared my thoughts, as I perceived the distinctions between the extrinsic and intrinsic world. As this dissertation drew to a close, I extended Oriah's (1999) *The Invitation* in Appendix B. Here, I asked you to take a sobering look into your soul that has been concealed and covered over by socialization that has prevented you from knowing who you truly are. *The Invitation* is followed

by Appendix C, which is a summons given to you “To be or not to be” as the truer choice featured in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. In Appendix D, Pecci (2017) provided more than 8 pages of a *Master List of Common Admonitions*, many of which most of us have taken as truisms, but they are false. Appendix E expresses what is in all of us in the Song, This is Me, a right we all have, but few seem to know how to express. The intention of this dissertation was to provide the pathways for us to become our true selves, as was gifted to us in our unique acorns. In Appendix F, Lee Ann Womack’s song, *I Hope You Dance* embodies our aliveness where the composer invites us to take a chance and dance in the splendor of our spirited body and soul rather than sit it out on life’s sidelines. Throughout this dissertation, I have wholeheartedly emphasized the magic that is available to us in life, if we only allow ourselves to remember our true identity and not turn away from imagination’s Neverland that connects us to our intimate and personal story.

We all are geniuses, but far too many of us do not know how to access the gifts we possess every day. Appendix G provides a list of characteristics that are a part of everyday geniuses. Appendix H challenges us to become aware of our dreams, to choose to connect with what is inside us instead of what often distracts us from what really matters. In Appendix I, last of the appendices, is the poem *Invictus*, which reminds us that we are the master of our fate and the captain of our soul, even if we choose to give the mastery over to a society that does not care about our longing to express our acorn and live a fulfilled and meaningful life. I have insisted we have but one choice to live congruently from our soul and risk it all to live life free and unafraid. Unknowingly, there seemed to be a well-thought-out ploy, perhaps delivered to each infant who enters into any society, to keep us small and frightened throughout our lives. As formerly stated, I continue now to remind you of my perspective that determines our current paradigm:

We are like the lightening bugs, imprisoned by societies glass jar, bumping up against the lid of self-expression, attempting to break free. Our air supply is cut from endless skies to

jar-lid holes. We fight to stay airborne; weariness settles in. If our prison lid is unscrewed it goes undetected, we fly no higher. (Baroff, 2016a, p. 16)

Like the lightning bug, our light is doused when we join the social constraints that enforce a fear-based victim mentality. This, undoubtedly, *robs us of our true biography* and presents us with painful incongruence that causes an inner war between our divination and humanization. I submit to you a question: Is it any wonder that many of us never know who we truly are and never discover our natural proclivities after repeatedly being bombarded by messages of conformity? The result of this investigation is a storehouse of insider knowledge that is incredibly powerful, and I offer it with the hope that these insights apprise you to know that you have more control over your life than you realize. In that regard, I *re-presence* the importance of the *hero* and the *gifted human genius* that lives within us all:

*The modern hero, the modern individual who dares to heed the call and seek the mansion of that presence with whom is our whole destiny to be atoned, cannot, indeed, must not wait for his community to cast off its slough of pride, fear, rationalized avarice, and sanctified misunderstanding. "Live," Nietzsche says, "as though the day were here." It is not society that is to guide and save the creative hero, but precisely the reverse. And so, every one of us shares the supreme ordeal—carries the cross of the redeemer—not in the bright moments of his tribe's great victories, but in the silences of his personal despair. (Italics in the original) (Campbell, 1990/2003, p. 199)*

### **Continuing This Work**

There is much to be done. We all know that the destructive individuals of the world have a way of finding each other, organizing, and building a forceful assembly that at times has had the power to destroy us all. The similar but opposite opportunity has been handed to us as Everyday Geniuses. Despite our need to gather our constructive forces together. The inner sense of responsibility that comes with giftedness urges each of us to create the Next Network—an alliance of Everyday Geniuses who have liberated their gifts from the ego to become the community of world servers.

We have no choice but to build a future that will be more than just a faster, more technical, and more dangerous version of today. And because we hear the evolutionary call, we must answer, make our way toward each other, and together give progress a forward and humanistic push with all of our collective might. (Jacobsen, 1999, p. 378)

There is no one else in the world exactly like you; that is just how important you are! Simply put, you are one-of-a-kind, a diamond in the rough, a unique genius, an acorn seeded with special abilities brought here at this time to influence and forward human lives and planet Earth. As I share this compilation of information with you, my greatest hope is I have touched your humanity and spirituality in such a way that compels you to take up the mantle and contribute to this field of study for the sake of the greater good of all.

## AFTERWORD

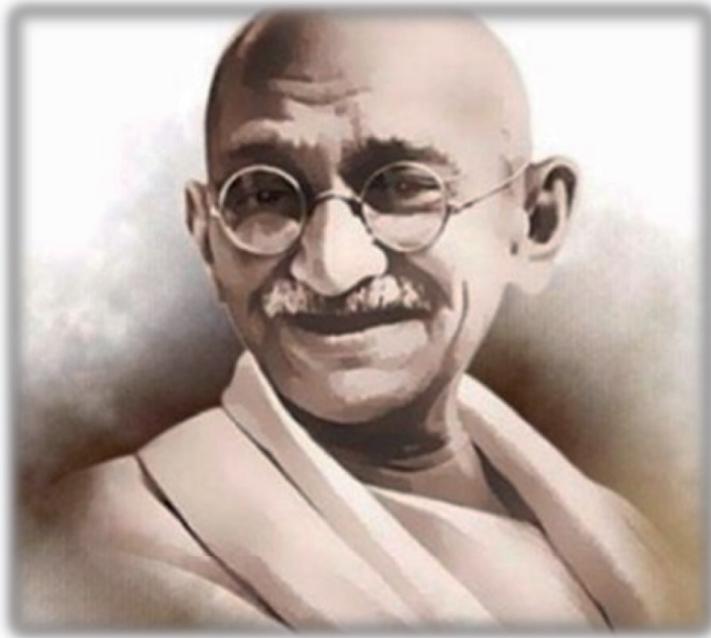
As I read the closing statement in my dissertation, thinking I am finally done, I sense something more is warranted to complete this monograph. Unexpectedly, spirit captures my attention by broadcasting a vital message, “Be the change you want to see in the world!” Instantaneously, I experience a change is underway on a cellular, emotional, and spiritual level, as I assimilate the intensity of this message. These words of wisdom contain a kernel of knowledge that is indisputably the ending to this project, which also reflect my life mission. The very essence explains my entire human existence and why I have taken up this journey. The genius I carry within me is ready to be heard at this time that will make a profound contribution to the many, who are ready to pursue their call.

After deeply reconnecting with my mission, I begin to search the web for this quotation, “*Be the change you want to see*” that will note the proper attribution; however, what I discover not only surprises me, it leads me further down the rabbit hole to where I experience a journey within myself. I am guided to an article that captures my interest titled, “Gandhi didn’t actually ever say, ‘Be the change you want to see in the world.’” It was written by Joseph Ranseth (2015), who is a speaker, author, and transformationalist. He works with entrepreneurs like me, who are determined to deliver their messages to the world by igniting a movement as Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. had done. In this article, Ranseth told a narrative of why he believed Gandhi’s words were condensed. As I continue reading, I also hear the chorus of Michael Jackson’s song that is running through my mind, titled, “The Man in the Mirror” which says, “I am starting with the man in the mirror; I’m asking him to change his ways, and no message could have been any clearer...if you *wanna* make the world a better place, take a look at yourself and then make a change.”

It is so clear to me that Jackson's song—written about his desire to change what he was seeing was a world full of hungry children, the pain of homelessness, and poverty, which expresses his need to change himself to change the world—is a contemporary spin on Gandhi's original quotation. Jackson's song and George Lucas's movies, *Star Wars* that Lucas extrapolated from Joseph Campbell's story *The Hero's Journey*, all successfully portray factual stories of a journey within.

These realizations totally spin together into a blend of spiritual and human alchemy where in this moment, I am engaging in reflective thoughts, as I witness myself mulling over narratives and messages I have chronicled in this dissertation. Stories like Elie Weisel's addressing the *determinate of indifference*, Keith Harrell's proclamation that *attitude is everything*, Steve Jobs' insistence that we *stay curious, hungry, and find what we love*, and the whole *kit-and-kaboodle* of narratives, which each storyline underscores as having an influential meaning. This causes me to wonder if there is a gap that exists in what I have written that does not explicitly address the significance of *inner work* that leads to self-change and self-transformation. I am positive the compilation of stories is, in fact, a streamlined version of Gandhi's intrinsic ideals. The one thing I am sure of, is my spiritual connection to *All There Is*, materializes this intentional meaning that ensures this specific content about the imperative to go within, and it provides closure to my masterpiece. This meaning also serves to remind everyone that we each need to do our own inner work. We are all accountable for who and what we are and what we become; for that which we become affects our lives and those lives of all world citizens, now, and for generations to come. Importantly, the genius we are carrying within ourselves needs self-expression in this particular moment in time to forward and impact humanity and our planet. This is why we have taken up our calling.

Without further ado, I deliver Gandhi's original message:



We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body.

If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change him.

This is the divine mystery supreme. A wonderful thing it is and the source of our happiness.

We need not wait to see what others do.

**Figure 77. *We Are But a Mirror.*** (Internet, 2019). Just as we are a mirror of the outer world, the outer world we experience is a mirror of ourselves. This mirror reflects back to us what we have kept hidden within, which Jacobsen (1999) described as our inner light and Pecci (2017) embraced as our diamond's authentic essence self. However, difficulties arise for us because prevailing social systems are not organized to recognize and receive our genius. This causes us to experience a split between our divinity and humanity. This conundrum prompts our ego to construct defensive patterns to keep us safe. We play out an imposter false self who complies with established social norms of conformity that perpetuate human suffering. We are but a mirror of our world. The only way out of our entrapment in this current paradigm is to journey within ourselves. Here we will reconnect to our unique acorn that has been seeded to create the change we want to see in our outer world, and so it is.

Following this inclusion of Gandhi's actual words, Ranseth (2015) explained about Gandhi's rumination, "He was revealing a profound spiritual truth that what we see in the world is no more and no less a reflection of what is unseen inside ourselves" (p. 1). And, he continued by saying, "There is no more important work one can undertake than to raise human consciousness, and to do so requires us to start within" (p. 1).

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Two Worlds, by Woods

For us there are Two Worlds of Being. The First World is the outer world we live in, a shell that encases the body, and attitude that stifles the mind and pretends that money is the measure of worth.

The First World is harsh, though comfortable, alluring though vain. It is the popular world where everyone longs to be, yet once they arrive, they dream of a new direction. In this world, everything costs something and what is free costs more.

The First World is one of wheels and destinations, membership dues and limitations. It is a sanctuary for those who desire conformity in all things.

Here duplicate people wearing duplicate clothes speak a language without meaning, and think thoughts without substance to their form.

The First World is where everyone lives; yet no one really survives. It is an acceptable address where you forfeit all that you are for what you will never become and what you are not is what you want those around you to remember. The First World has power, but no strength. It is one of mirrors, but no reflection. In this world, there is success, but not mystery and goals, but no journey. In this world, boundaries keep ideas from colliding.

The Second World is the inner world of harmony, where you can go anytime your spirit aches for company. Here you can listen to the songs of rocks and leaves and embrace the wisdom of rivers and essential things contained in raindrops or a flower's belly or the Earth's warm breath of spring. In this world, beauty is companion to mystery.

The Second World is one of joy and curiosity, a connecting thread to birds and oceans, plants and animals. The Second World is one of children's laughter, women's songs, men's stories, the essence that remains long after the experience has passed. In this world, all circles return.

The Second World is where you can travel on the wings of dreams or the tails of newborn stars. This world is revealed through a rainbow's colored eyes, or in a spider's silver road between two leaves, or even in silence, the kind that follows ecstasy.

The Second World is able to survive without the First, but The First World cannot last long with the Second.

The Second World offers meaning to existence while the First World offers Existence only.

Between these two Worlds lies reason, the seam that connects one World to another. The Second World is yours for no money. The First World is yours for no effort. Which one will you choose? (Woods, n.d., para. 13-20).

### **Appendix B: The Invitation, by Oriah**

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living. I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon. I want to know if you have touched the center of your own sorrow, if you have been opened by life's betrayals or have become shriveled and closed from fear of further pain? I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own, without moving to hide it or fade it or fix it. I want to know you can be with JOY, mine or your own; if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, be realistic, or to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you're telling me is true. I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself; if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul. I want to know if you can be faithless and therefore be trustworthy. I want to know if you can see beauty even when it is not pretty every day, and if you can source your life from ITS presence. I want to know if you can live with failure, yours, and mine, and still stand on the edge of a lake and shout to the silver of the full moon. "YES!"

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up after the night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done to feed the children.

It doesn't interest me who you are, how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away. I want to know if you can be alone with yourself, and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments.  
(Oriah, 1999, pp. 1-2)

**Appendix C: To Be, Or Not To Be, That Is the Question  
(William Shakespeare Soliloquy, Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 1)**

*To be, or not to be: that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;  
No more; and by a sleep to say we end  
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;  
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause: there's the respect  
That makes calamity of so long life;  
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office and the spurns  
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn  
No traveler returns, puzzles the will  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of?  
Thus, conscience does make cowards of us all;  
And thus, the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,  
And enterprises of great pith and moment  
With this regard their currents turn awry,  
And lose the name of action. – Soft you now!  
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remember'd.*

**Appendix D: Master List of Common Admonitions  
(Pecci, 2017, pp. 72-80)**

These are the unquestioned rules of conduct that [many of which might] control your present behavior. Because they were unspoken or non-verbal, they bypassed your rational intellect and became givens in your subconscious mind. We may review them now as the voice of the superego that, until now, was not to be questioned. When brought to light, most of them sound either ludicrous or outright self-destructive. Even so, it has been very difficult to follow any good advice to improve your life that involved a rebellion against them. However, when brought to conscious awareness, you can now contest each one. And, over a period of time, you will feel an expansion of your mind and, with this, a sense of freedom.

Regarding Love:

- Don't ever love anyone more than me.
- Be satisfied with what you have.
- Be grateful for what you get.
- Avoid physical contact; it's bad.
- Believe that you get more love than you deserve.
- Don't see love as important.
- Realize that possessions are more important than people.
- Don't let anyone know that you want love.
- Don't trust people who say they love you; they want something.
- Don't be like your father/mother.
- Be like your father/mother so I can hate you.
- Don't expect love unless you're the best.
- Don't need anybody's love.
- Stay out of trouble or I won't love and support you.
- Don't expect to please me for long.
- Be excited by the little attention I give you.
- Do as I wish, or I will not love you.
- Do as I wish, or it means you don't love me.
- Don't be loved.
- Don't cause me problems.
- Cause problems so others will see how you suffer.
- Expect me to hate you.
- Be pleased with me or I will reject you.
- See love as a quantity; only so much to go around.
- Don't expect me to love you as much as I love others.
- Perform well to get approval.
- Settle for attention rather than love.
- If you love someone, control her/him.
- Reject your mate.
- Be rejected by your mate.
- Don't enjoy your husband/wife/lover.
- Withhold from those you love.

- Keep away from close, vulnerable contact with people.
- Don't love other people.
- Don't trust yourself.
- Believe that love has to be earned.

Regarding Coping With the World:

- Hold on tightly to what you have.
- Don't compete; you'll lose.
- Always put on a good front.
- Take the blame for my bad moods.
- Wait to be told what to do.
- Avoid success.
- Always obey authority.
- Don't make mistakes.
- Don't admit your mistakes.
- Don't surpass me.
- Blame others for your mistakes.
- Make lots of money.
- Don't compete unless you're sure of winning.
- Be disorganized and scattered.
- Don't take chances.
- Don't ask for help; be independent.
- Don't get sick.
- Get sick; that's the only time I'll care for you.
- Get married so we don't have to be responsible for you.
- Try hard but don't succeed.
- Always follow directions.
- Know how to do it without any directions.
- Prove you're superior to others.
- Give me credit for your success.
- Only do the "right" thing.
- Be a failure.
- Control all potential situations.
- See the world as a dangerous place.
- Anticipate all possibilities.
- Do what men (women) want you to do.
- Be a man (woman).
- Be a lady (gentleman).
- Don't make a move without asking me.
- Never know what to do.
- Be dutiful.
- Give up; be a victim.
- Make a scene to get what you want.
- Do the things I could never do.
- Don't try anything new.

- Let others be the first to experiment.
- Don't follow your intuition.
- Don't ever really complete a task.
- Check it over again and again to be sure.
- Get bored at your job.
- Never be satisfied with your work.
- Be afraid of your boss.

Regarding Feelings:

- Don't show emotions openly.
- Always be a little depressed.
- See feelings as unimportant.
- Be anxious about your responsibilities.
- Smile; look happy all the time.
- Don't expose your feelings.
- Suffer; it's good for you.
- Be resentful, but don't let it show.
- Be jealous of those who have more.
- Feel overwhelmed by any task.
- Feel guilty so I won't have to feel guilty.
- Always feel a little guilty; it makes you humble.
- Feel guilty for having needs.
- Feel guilty for relaxing.
- Feel guilty for being happy.
- Feel guilty for criticizing me.
- Feel guilty for doing or buying things for yourself.
- Feel guilty for being born.
- Feel guilty for causing me pain.
- Feel guilty for being inadequate.
- Feel guilty for not being more appreciative.
- Feel guilty for my suffering.
- Feel guilty for not respecting me.
- Feel responsible for my happiness.
- Act well adjusted.
- Don't ever stop worrying about me.
- Don't ever act unhappy around me.
- Don't feel appreciated.
- Always say you feel fine.
- Don't show anger—it's bad.
- Appreciate my hard work to support you.
- Be grateful.
- Control yourself.
- Don't feel good.
- Realize that happiness is impossible.
- See yourself as hateful.

- Feel undeserving.
- Cry if you must, but don't be angry.
- Show you care by being anxious.
- Don't expect anyone to care about your feelings.
- Hate yourself.
- Expect catastrophe.
- Be passive and indolent so you deaden your feelings.
- Don't touch others with feeling.
- Pretend things are all right.
- Always feel disappointed in others.
- Be extremely sentimental, but don't let real feelings show.
- Be phony; show only "good" feelings.
- Don't expect to be happy.
- Laugh at yourself so others won't.

#### Regarding Thinking:

- Be smart to impress people.
- Act stupid so I'll look smart.
- Believe you have no rights.
- Don't think for yourself.
- Expect others to invalidate your thinking.
- Let other people think it through for you.
- Think of me with respect.
- Don't see anything as my fault.
- Think only "good" and "right" thoughts.
- Realize that life is difficult.
- Think hard so you can't feel.
- Be a little mixed up all the time.
- Think of yourself as no good.
- Always be dissatisfied.
- Struggle for control of the situation.
- Study hard and learn a lot or you will be a nothing.
- Don't see the truth.
- Don't even think about your body or you're evil.
- Don't be an independent thinker.
- Never think you know what to do.
- Worry --- that's how to handle a problem.
- Be unaware of what's going on.
- Expect punishment.
- Learn from books; not from experience.
- Get others to make your decisions.
- Pretend to be satisfied with what you get.
- Always act as if you alone know the truth.
- Don't take your feelings into account.
- Keep all discussions on a logical, rational basis.

- Think it over very slowly and carefully before doing anything.
- Be prejudiced about \_\_\_\_\_.
- Think about it, but don't do anything.
- See everything in extremes.
- Don't think your time is important.
- Think in circular patterns.
- Never change an idea.
- Don't allow yourself to think creatively.
- Don't think you have any rights.
- Think about others, not about yourself.
- Think of yourself as better than others.
- See yourself as boring to others.
- Find ways to attack those who think differently.
- Envy the way other people can think.
- Always take a negative point of view.
- Always take positive point of view.

#### Regarding the Handling of Your Energy:

- Avoid intensity.
- Do your duty before having fun.
- Worry about the past (and future).
- Overdo everything.
- Be a coward.
- Don't trust yourself.
- Be careful.
- Avoid happiness.
- Blame yourself.
- Be polite.
- Feel sorry for yourself.
- Don't have fun.
- Wait your turn.
- Let other people take care of you.
- Stay out of trouble and danger.
- Be alienated from others.
- Be cultured, a "better" person.
- Be still; be quiet; be dead.
- Don't be happier than I am.
- Be tense – Don't relax.
- Don't expect to be in a good space.
- Keep busy all the time.
- Look serious.
- Take on more than you can handle.
- Don't take chances.
- Act helpless so I'll look competent.
- Don't act silly.

- Don't be strong.
- Act invisible because nobody sees you.
- Put on a good front.
- Don't laugh so loudly.
- Worry about bothering other people.
- Be lethargic, passive, so I can handle you.
- Be timid.
- Always work hard.
- Don't permit yourself to rest and relax.
- It's not okay to feel okay.

#### Regarding Attitudes Toward Sex and Self:

- Feel guilty about sexual thoughts.
- Be ashamed of your body and its needs.
- Be embarrassed about your body.
- Be dissatisfied with yourself.
- Flirt but nothing more.
- See sex as dirty.
- See sex as taboo.
- See sex as disappointing.
- See sex as a duty, a chore.
- See sex as a nuisance.
- If you must have sex, don't enjoy it.
- Don't be an exhibitionist.
- Try to be a boy/girl (the opposite sex).
- Always compare yourself to others and find yourself wanting.
- Realize that you can never be enough.
- Don't grow up.
- Be perfect, cute, sweet, and clean.
- Don't expect attention.
- Put yourself down.
- Realize you are nothing----and resent it.
- Don't touch me.
- Pretend sex doesn't exist.
- Look sexy but don't put out.
- Don't expect to get recognition.
- Don't have sex unless married.
- Don't be sexual.
- Don't have desires.
- Don't satisfy your own needs.
- Marry the kind of person I think you should.
- Sublimate pleasure.
- Don't have orgasms.
- Don't play with yourself.
- Be passive.

- See life as empty without a mate.
- Don't marry; you're too good for it.
- Kissing will make you pregnant.
- Give yourself a hard time.
- Hide your genitals; they are dirty.
- Avoid ecstasy.
- Don't have children.
- Have children so you will see how hard it is for me.

Regarding Relating:

- Demand a return for all you give.
- Don't expect me to have time for you.
- See me as unworthy.
- Be afraid of me.
- Don't expect to be noticed.
- Stay out of my way.
- Make me feel secure.
- Give me credit for everything.
- Help me but don't expect any help yourself.
- Criticize me.
- Never criticize me.
- Appreciate me.
- Expect rejection.
- Be popular.
- Let me run your life.
- Do things for people so they will like you.
- Don't trust people.
- Don't trust anyone outside of the family.
- Reject other people.
- Watch out for strangers.
- Feel sorry for me.
- Be suspicious of other's motives.
- Need me but don't make any demands.
- Don't make a move without considering my feelings.
- Give me an excuse to call you a brat.
- Don't ever leave me.
- Stay my little girl/boy.
- Avoid commitment.
- Be like your friends/siblings.
- Don't relate to others more than I relate to your mother/father.
- Depend on me.
- See me as capable.
- See me as incapable.
- Don't expect me to stand up for you.
- Be like me.

- Be very picky about the kind of people in your life.
- Don't expect to have any friends.
- Keep away from people different from you.
- Don't be interested in others.
- Make fun of anyone who is different.

Regarding Communication:

- Don't tell me your problems.
- Don't express your opinions.
- Always tell the truth.
- Don't say how you feel.
- Tell me only what I want to hear.
- Be careful what you say.
- Don't ask for help; be independent.
- Don't admit your mistakes.
- Be quiet; you have nothing important to say.
- Pretend to compliment others to get their attention.
- Don't expect me to keep my promises.
- Always try to figure out what other people are thinking.
- If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all.
- Worry about what the neighbors will think.
- Don't disagree; you'll be rejected.
- Don't ask for anything.
- Don't expect compliments.
- Don't show off.
- Don't be direct.
- Don't talk about anything meaningful.
- Don't expect to be heard.
- Don't talk so much.
- Keep this a secret from your mother (father).
- Feel responsible if I misunderstand you.
- Don't say anything that upsets anyone else.
- Don't even mention sex.
- Always be embarrassed.
- Stumble over our words.
- Don't tell others what goes on in the family.
- Don't accept compliments; point out your faults instead.
- Use bad grammar so I can correct you.
- Never say quite what you want to say.
- Complain about the past.
- Be melodramatic so no one will take you seriously.
- Don't share with others; keep it private.
- Be moralistic about others.
- Talk in a patronizing tone.
- Point out their faults to others.

- Chatter a lot, but don't really say anything.
- Mention every detail in talking.
- Mutter and complain to yourself but don't handle the problem.
- Never be specific; always generalize.

**Appendix E: This Is Me, by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul**

I am not a stranger to the dark  
 “Hide away”, they say  
 “Cause we don’t want your broken parts”  
 I’ve learned to be ashamed of all my scars  
 “Run away”, they say  
 “No one’ll love you as you are”

But I won’t let them break me down to dust  
 I know that there’s a place for us  
 For we are glorious

When the sharpest words wanna cut me down  
 I’m gonna send a flood, gonna drown them out  
 I am brave, I am bruised  
 I am who I’m meant to be, this is me  
 Look out ‘cause here I come  
 And I’m marching on to the beat I drum  
 I’m not scared to be seen  
 I make no apologies, this is me

Oh-oh-oh-oh  
 Oh-oh-oh-oh  
 Oh-oh-oh-oh  
 Oh-oh-oh-oh

Another round of bullets hits my skin  
 Well, fire away ‘cause today, I won’t let the shame sink in  
 We are bursting through the barricades  
 And reaching for the sun  
 (We are warriors)  
 Yeah, that’s what we’ve become  
 (Yeah, that’s what we’ve become)

Won’t let them break me down to dust  
 I know that there’s a place for us  
 For we are glorious

When the sharpest words wanna cut me down  
 Gonna send a flood, gonna drown them out  
 I am brave, I am bruised  
 I am who I’m meant to be, this is me  
 Look out ‘cause here I come  
 And I’m marching on to the beat I drum  
 I’m not scared to be seen

I make no apologies, this is me

Oh-oh-oh-oh  
 Oh-oh-oh-oh  
 Oh-oh-oh-oh  
 Oh-oh-oh-oh  
 Oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh

oh-oh, oh, oh  
 This is me  
 (Oh-oh-oh-oh)  
 And I know that I deserve your love  
 (Oh-oh-oh-oh)  
 There's nothing I'm not worthy of  
 Oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh, oh

When the sharpest words wanna cut me down  
 I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown them out  
 This is brave, this is bruised  
 This is who I'm meant to be, this is me

Look out 'cause here I come  
 (Look out 'cause here I come)  
 And I'm marching on to the beat I drum  
 (Marching on, marching, marching on)  
 I'm not scared to be seen  
 I make no apologies, this is me

Oh-oh-oh-oh)  
 When the sharpest words wanna break me down  
 I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown them out  
 (Oh-oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh-oh)  
 (Oh-oh-oh-oh)  
 I'm gonna send a flood, gonna drown them out  
 (Oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh, oh, oh)  
 This is me

### Appendix F: I Hope You Dance, by Lee Ann Womack

I hope you never lose your sense of wonder  
You get your fill to eat but always keep that hunger

May you never take one single breath for granted  
God forbid love ever leave you empty handed

I hope you still feel small when you stand beside the ocean  
Whenever one door closes I hope one more opens

Promise me that you'll give faith a fighting chance  
And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance

I hope you dance  
I hope you dance

I hope you never fear those mountains in the distance  
Never settle for the path of least resistance

Livin' might mean takin' chances, but they're worth takin'  
Lovin' might be a mistake, but it's worth makin'

Don't let some Hell-bent heart leave you bitter  
When you come close to sellin' out, reconsider

Give the heavens above more than just a passing glance  
And when you get the choice to sit out or dance

I hope you dance (Time is a wheel in constant motion always rolling us along)  
I hope you dance

I hope you dance (Tell me who wants to look back on their years and wonder)  
I hope you dance (Where those years have gone?)

I hope you still feel small when you stand beside the ocean  
Whenever one door closes I hope one more opens

Promise me that you'll give faith a fighting chance  
And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance

Dance

I hope you dance  
I hope you dance (Time is a wheel in constant motion always rolling us along)  
I hope you dance (Tell me who wants to look back on their years and wonder?)

**Appendix G:  
Everyday Geniuses' Characteristics  
(Jacobsen, 1999)**

- Capacity for keen observation
  - Exceptional ability to predict and foresee problems and trends
  - Special problem-solving resources; extraordinary tolerance for ambiguity; fascination with dichotomous puzzles
  - Excitability, enthusiasm, expressiveness, and renewable energy
  - Heightened sensitivity, intense emotion, and compassion
  - Playful attitude and childlike sense of wonder throughout life
  - Extra perceptivity, powerful intuition, persistent curiosity, potential for deep insight, early spiritual experiences
  - Ability to learn rapidly, concentrate for long periods of time, comprehend readily, and retain what is learned; development of more than one area of expertise
  - Exceptional verbal ability; love of subtleties of written and spoken words, new information, theory, and discussion
  - Tendency to set own standards and evaluate own efforts
  - Unusual sense of humor, not always understood by others
  - Experience of feeling inherently different or odd
  - History of being misunderstood and under-supported
  - Deep concerns about universal issues and nature, and reverence for the interconnectedness of all things
  - Powerful sense of justice and intolerance for unfairness
  - Strong sense of independence and willingness to challenge authority
  - Awareness of an inner force that “pulls” for meaning, fulfillment, and excellence
  - Feelings of urgency about personal destiny and a yearning at a spiritual level for answers to existential puzzles
- (pp. 27-28)

**Appendix H: A Million Dreams, by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul**

I close my eyes and I can see  
The world that's waiting up for me  
That I call my own  
Through the dark, through the door  
Through where no one's been before  
But it feels like home

They can say, they can say it all sounds crazy  
They can say, they can say I've lost my mind  
I don't care, I don't care, so call me crazy  
We can live in a world that we design

'Cause every night I lie in bed  
The brightest colors fill my head  
A million dreams are keeping me awake  
I think of what the world could be  
A vision of the one I see  
A million dreams is all it's gonna take  
A million dreams for the world we're gonna make

There's a house we can build  
Every room inside is filled  
With things from far away  
The special things I compile  
Each one there to make you smile  
On a rainy day

They can say, they can say it all sounds crazy  
They can say, they can say we've lost our minds  
I don't care, I don't care if they call us crazy

Runaway to a world that we design

Every night I lie in bed  
The brightest colors fill my head  
A million dreams are keeping me awake  
I think of what the world could be  
A vision of the one I see  
A million dreams is all it's gonna take  
A million dreams for the world we're gonna make

However big, however small  
Let me be part of it all  
Share your dreams with me  
You may be right, you may be wrong  
But say that you'll bring me along  
To the world you see  
To the world I close my eyes to see  
I close my eyes to see

Every night I lie in bed  
The brightest colors fill my head  
A million dreams are keeping me awake  
A million dreams, a million dreams  
I think of what the world could be  
A vision of the one I see  
A million dreams is all it's gonna take  
A million dreams for the world we're gonna make  
For the world we're gonna make

**Appendix I: Invictus**  
**(William Ernest Henley)**

Out of the night that covers me,  
    Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
    For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
    I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
    My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
    Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
    Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
    How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
    I am the captain of my soul.