Developing critical self-reflection through pedagogy:
A personal journey.

By

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CANDIDATE'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby declare that the work herein, now submitted as a thesis for the degree of Professional Doctorate of the Charles Darwin University, is the result of my own investigations, and all references to ideas and the work of other researchers have been specifically acknowledged. I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being submitted in candidature for any other degree.

Signature: Date:

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ABSTRACT

The success of many community-based social programmes often depends upon the willingness of volunteers. This thesis documents the development of reflective practice amongst a group of Christian volunteers undertaking an internship in a faith-based organisation. As the director of the programme, this provided me with the opportunity to examine my own effectiveness in promoting critical reflection and assess my own success in promoting transformative pedagogy using hermeneutic phenomenology. The analysis of the intern volunteers' reflections was modelled on the research of Kember (1999) which distinguishes between content, process, and premise reflections. Research conducted by Kember is underpinned by the theory of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1998).

Running parallel to the reflective journeys of the volunteers is an account of my own journey from a non reflective to a reflective educator validated by audits conducted by two academic colleagues and two intern graduates. In the process I was forced to address a crisis of faith and confront aspects of my own changing identity as the personal and the private intruded upon and affected the public and the professional.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is Friday afternoon and I am attempting to formulate my thoughts for my thesis. Why am I putting myself through this when other women my age are retiring, enjoying grandchildren, going on excursions, and so on? Why am I still teaching and studying? When I was a Lecturer in Education at a Queensland regional university, I was required to complete doctoral studies. My passion and motivation to be an effective teacher, is the sole driving force to complete my Doctor of Teaching. My motivation is still as strong; even though having a doctorate is viewed favourably by my employers. It is not a requirement for my present senior lecturer position at an Aotearoa New Zealand Institute of Technology. In fact my thesis is a journey of self, involving emotion and identity: my professional learning. I believe that this journey has the potential to assist me to develop a deeper understanding and commitment to my teaching. Grenfell (2007a, p. 10) states "Pedagogical change involves a commitment to personal change." Additionally I envisage the transforming of self (professionally and personally) as an integral aspect enhancing the effectiveness of my pedagogy. This in turn, has the potential to develop critical reflective practices in the students – intern volunteers – participating in this research project.

As I commence mapping the territory of my knowledge and lived school experiences I am taken with the concept of relocating the personal (Kamler, 2001). Instead of just constructing my history and its influences on my pedagogy, I want to interact with my history and pedagogy from two simultaneous perspectives. The first perspective will spatialise my conventional schooling narrative which, according to Kamler (2001, p. 29), "is socially produced, and like society itself, exists in both substantial forms (concrete spatialities) and as a set of relations between individuals and groups." The

second concurrent perspective will locate my multiple realities of self in the social and cultural environment – often through the eyes of the self, the "I" which represents various periods of my life in relation to my passion for teaching.

My narrative commences with flashbacks to my earliest experiences at primary school in Aotearoa New Zealand. My primary schooling took place during the 1950s when pedagogy was very traditional and formal. The most vivid of my flashbacks are located in the middle schooling years. As a 9-year-old pupil I was placed in a mixed class of children, most of whom, similar to me, came from working class backgrounds. My memories present the teacher as an elderly European bachelor. All pupils feared HIM. I observe myself as a tall skinny girl who was constantly trying to be invisible so HE could not see me. My desire to be a teacher was not kindled by these childhood schooling experiences. Schooling experiences for me as a tall skinny girl were associated with the emotion of fear and blind obedience. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986, p. 28) state that "women see blind obedience to authorities as being of utmost importance for keeping out of trouble and insuring their own survival."

In this era of formal and fearful pedagogy, most pupils sat in double wooden desks that had seats and desks jointly constructed. Both the seats and desk lids lifted up. In many ways these desks resembled co-joint twins: firmly agglutinated yet struggling to be separate. Similar to a panopticon, the teacher's desk was situated on a platform at the front of the room, which allowed the teacher to survey pupils in his/her kingdom. Power emanated from within the classroom, at a classroom level. Foucault would argue that power at this level "reaches into every grain of individuals, touches their bodies and

inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives" (Gore, 1998, p.223).

The pupils' desks were arranged in straight single rows down the classroom. HE surveyed HIS class from HIS platform. Everyone was petrified of him. His concept of good teaching was to use negative emotional teaching techniques which gave him power and enhanced his status as teacher. Zembylas (2003) points out that issues of power and politics are inseparable because they influence teachers' understandings and behaviours of what good teaching is. Instead of using emotions with his pupils as tools of freedom this teacher used emotions as tools of oppression. Forty years later, as a Lecturer of Education, I have observed classrooms in Queensland schools organised similarly to my childhood classrooms – desks in straight rows with the teacher's desk up the front or to the side. Would the skinny tall girl still be trying to make herself invisible if she were in one of these 21st century classrooms?

Image 1. The tall skinny girl sat in an awkward bodily position and gazed at a near replica of her 1950s ink-welled stark wooden desk.

Sighting near replicas of these desks in Australia during a holiday in 2003 evoked many fearful schooling flashbacks and I felt the tall skinny girl of the

50s becoming a living being again. In reality the desks had nothing to do with me. The desks were "a prop, a prompt, a pre-text; and set the scene for recollection" (Kuhn, 2003, p. 85). Prompted by the desks I recall my most vivid and painful schooling flashback. This was "fingernail inspection". All of the pupils, including the tall skinny girl, had to spread their hands (palms down) on their desks. No one was allowed to talk. HE would inspect for dirty nails or pupils who bit their nails. Upon finding some petrified pupil HE would make sarcastic comments like 'How did your nails taste? What did you do with your nail after you bit it off?' By the end of that year the tall skinny girl's nails were chewed to the quick. In many ways HIS sarcasm was worse than being strapped. His behaviours bordered on sadism. Freire (1996, p. 41) describes this as the "tendency of the oppressor consciousness to ín-animate everything and everyone it encounters, in its eagerness to possess, unquestionably corresponds with a tendency to sadism."

 Memories evoked from these experiences cause me to shift between the past, as a tall skinny girl, and the present as a perceived successful tertiary lecturer. I stop typing and immediately start fiddling with my fingernails. By making memory of the fingernail inspection experience, I have set up a tension between my personal moment of memory and the social moment of making the memory (Kuhn, 2003). How successful am I? Do my schooling experiences as the tall skinny girl influence my pedagogy as a successful tertiary lecturer, I ask myself?

Meyers (2004) argues that the western culture codes mind and reason as masculine, and body and emotion are coded feminine. Mind and reason belonged to HIM; that male teacher. When I reflect on my initial teaching philosophy,

many of my educational experiences during childhood played a prominent role in influencing my subsequent pedagogy. Was I viewing my feminine self as deficient? Was I only mimicking and approximating the masculine ideal of teacher of the 1950s?

As a beginning teacher in the early 60s I believed that I held all of the power in the classroom. Had I, as argued by Freire (1996) internalised the image of my childhood oppressor, the male teacher, and adopted his pedagogy. Was I fearful of sharing power with the students? Over time, study, maturity, and experience have brought about a transformation in my pedagogy. Thankfully, in 2008, pedagogy based on surveillance, fear, and sarcasm, is not the norm. As a Lecturer in Education, I adhere to modelling pedagogy to my pre-service teachers, which empowers them to believe in themselves and their abilities to be 'great' teachers. Surveillance, sarcasm and fear are not evident in my pedagogy. Acceptable teacher behaviours in the 1950s are not acceptable (yet still present) in 2008.

Furthermore, I must be vigilant that my journey of critical reflection does not conflict with the learning needs of the early childhood students I teach. Convery (1999) argues teachers need to be cognizant of the fact that authentic life experiences which are planned by the teacher are meeting the students' learning needs and not just meeting the teacher's own needs. To ensure I create a secure nurturing learning environment for students where they feel able to risk sharing themselves,   I must make a determined effort to abdicate the role of authority figure or expert (Grenfell, 2007b). This required me to reject these pedagogical images and replace them with authentic autonomy and responsibility for the students (Freire, 1996).

1.1. Genesis of the project

As the author I ask - what are your impressions

Image 2. Lindy Austin: the author

Being exploited by the state. How much reimbursement do the meals-on-wheels volunteers get for their services? Why do people do this?

Amateurish, lack training and skills.

They make a valuable contribution to our society.

Do-gooders! Self-congratulatory!

Wish they would mind their own business.

I like my employees to participate in voluntary work. It demonstrates attributes like flexibility, altruism,

Many Christians believe volunteering is part of their Christian duties.

Where would our voluntary organisations be without volunteers? The state does not provide enough funds for community based social services these days.

It provides people with opportunities to contribute to society – to give something back.

Illustration 1. Impressions of volunteers: views of friends and colleagues

Posing the question 'what are your impressions of volunteers?' to a variety of my friends and colleagues highlighted some interesting perspectives. When many of these perspectives are analysed they could apply to me as a volunteer. In fact volunteering has played a dominant role in my life since I was 14 years old – the age I became a Christian and commenced as a volunteer Sunday school teacher (as addressed in Chapter 2). Did this voluntary act change me into a do-gooder and provide opportunities for self-congratulations? Was I being exploited due to my young age and lack of skills and training which resulted in amateurish religious teaching sessions? On one hand my volunteer Sunday school teaching could be viewed from these perspectives, whereas on the other hand, I could have been developing attributes such as flexibility, altruism, and so on, which are skills valued by employers. Additionally I believed I was doing my Heavenly Father's will. Volunteering was and still is very prominent in my life.

Juxtaposed with the sphere of volunteering in my life, two other spheres exist, that of teaching and my faith. Any one, or all, of these spheres are identifiable in any section of my narrative. Consequently, when I was presented with the opportunity of teaching, as a volunteer teacher, in the alternate setting of a Christian vocational institution, I could not resist. Was this another project my God had created for me or was I being exploited by an organisation which was attempting to provide religious training for minimal expense? Was I living out a fantasy? Because of my faith I believed that this was a project which God had ordained for me.

Similar to the process of metamorphosis, this teaching opportunity as a volunteer teacher, in an alternate setting of a Christian vocational institution, became the research project for my Doctor of Teaching. The genesis of this research project was twofold. Apart from forming the basis of my doctorate, a group of people from a regional Queensland Baptist church had a desire to complete some Christian training; a training programme of which volunteering was an integral aspect. Yes, what a challenge!!! Here was an opportunity for me (even though it was somewhat like a drop in the ocean) to address a major concern I have about untrained Christian volunteers who some describe as amateurs or do-gooders, working in some specialised areas such as counselling. Over the years I have observed many Christian volunteers who perform duties without critically reflecting upon the impact of their beliefs, values, and prejudices, on their behaviours towards people they work with. Additionally,

being presented with this volunteer teaching challenge indicated that the church management had finally recognised that I had some academics skills which could be utilised. For the last 10 years, since we joined the church, my husband and I had been on the toilet roster. We cleaned 40 toilets once a month for 10 years!!! Was this an example of God's sense of humour? It could be argued that this was an example of power exercised by the management of a religious organisation to keep the congregational members in their place.

1.2. Organisation of the thesis

This introductory chapter addresses volunteerism and provides historical information about the Diploma of Christian Ministry, purpose of the research, looks at outcomes of the research, and outlines hermeneutic phenomenology, the method adopted. Chapters 2 'Volunteering', 3 'Communities of Practice', and 4 'Transformative Learning', comprise literature reviews. Additionally these chapters refer to theorists such as Dingle, Mezirow, Wenger, and O'Sullivan. Chapter 5 'Method' explains how hermeneutic phenomenology is based on the discerning of themes (phenomenology) and interpretation (hermeneutics) (Evans, 2002; Grenfell, 2007b; van Manen, 1990; Walsh, 2002; Wilcke, 2002; Yu, 2000; Zembylas, 2003). The focus phenomenon for this research project was the effectiveness of my teaching in developing critical reflection in the practice of the intern volunteers. I encouraged the interns to interpret their experiences and enabled them to deconstruct and reconstruct their own realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This assisted me to analyse the effectiveness of my teaching. Chapter 6 comprises my findings. Chapter 7 draws all of the chapters together by identifying some essential practices for reflective practitioners, discussing the limitations of the research, making suggestions for future research, and completing the thesis with an intertwined conclusion.

The structure of each chapter follows a similar format. Each chapter commences with a narrated personal experience of mine. These experiences and their influence on the effectiveness of my pedagogy, have clear links to the specific themes addressed in each chapter. According to Convery (1999) the process of studying teachers' lives through their narratives, should broaden their knowledge base for studying teaching and teacher development. Zembylas (2003, p. 214) states "Through the construction of personal

philosophies, images and narratives, narrative method offers an interpretive reconstruction of parts of a person's life."

1.3. Volunteers in today's society

What is a volunteer? What is volunteering? What is voluntarism? Allen (2000) describes volunteering as working for the benefit of others to our mutual intent. The Collins Shorter English dictionary (1993, p.1331) describes this form of mutual assistance (volunteering) as "the principle of supporting churches, schools and various other institutions by voluntary contributions rather than with state funds." Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth (1996) present a framework, which incorporates the Collins Shorter English dictionary definition of volunteering. In their framework, Cnaan et al., (1996) state four key dimensions of volunteering: the ability to choose whether to participate, level of remuneration, structure of the organisation in which the activity takes place, and the intended beneficiary.

Within their global village, volunteers work in most sectors of the community. These sectors include health and welfare, emergency services, art and culture, heritage, environment and conservation, sport and recreation, education, religious, animal welfare, human rights, and youth development both in the developed and developing countries (Volunteering Australia Inc, 2001). Regardless of one's location, three major changes challenge the practice of volunteering in today's society. These challenges which will be looked at in more detail are:

1. The call for volunteers to work collaboratively with other organisations,
2. The need to investigate alternate approaches to work with volunteers, and
3. Changing the stereotypical image of volunteers.

1.3.1. Volunteering and collaboration.
The first major change is that of volunteering and collaboration. Internationally there is now a growing call for governments, corporate and local communities to work collaboratively, and form partnerships, which focus on the capacity of the community (Creyton, 2000; Volunteering Australia Inc, 2003). The rationale, which underpins this call, is that working collaboratively is regarded as the most effective approach to deal with challenges, utilization of resources, and provide for sustainability and accountability. At a global level organisations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and

Development work collaboratively to form partnerships. These partnerships better enable developing countries to reform their economies and reduce poverty (OECD, 2003, June). These international organisations, especially the OECD, have significant power in the distribution of resources to specific issues in developing countries. After some time the voluntary approaches to effective management of the OECD funded projects are being challenged.

Volunteering England (2008) advocates corporate volunteering and provides training symposiums where both businesses and voluntary organisations gain more benefits by establishing long term relationships. This is a model which is being replicated in Australia. Throughout Australia there are examples of collaboration and partnerships at both national and local levels (Volunteering Australia, 2003, May). Collaboration and partnership are illustrated in the following two Australian examples. The first example illustrates corporate volunteering where private and government companies encourage their staff to participate in community fund raising or promotion events. A recent ABC television programme illustrated how Myers Ltd., one of the largest Australian retail corporations, encourages its staff to volunteer. The directors (mainly family members) of the company lead by example which is similar to examples identified by Browning and Critchley (2003). The second example of collaborative volunteering is the 'Meals-on-wheels' service. The Federal Government funds the preparation and provisions of this meal service while volunteers from the local community use their own cars, to deliver meals to elderly people (J. Derrick, personal communication, January 23, 2005).

Maybe some volunteers consider the concept of service is underpinned by the concept of volunteering. What does this term 'service' mean? Is service integral to the term volunteer? Collins Shorter English dictionary (1993, p.1065) defines the term to serve as "an act of help or assistance" which aptly describes the actions of volunteers. In reality, volunteers play a very prominent role in Australian social services. With the reduction in government funding for social services, many community organisations are now attempting to bridge the gap. Subsequently, many governments are reliant upon volunteers to prop up community-based social services and this could be viewed as state or federal niggardliness and deliberate exploitation of volunteers who are willingly giving of their free time and resources. According to Leonard, Haywood-Brown, and Onyx (2002) human services in Australia are reliant upon the substantial contribution made by volunteers. Their study notes that the hours

spent in formal volunteering in social services across Australia equated to 50,000 paid employees. In 2001 it was estimated that over one third of the Australian population, over the age of 18 years, are volunteers and generate an estimated dollar value of $42 billion per annum to the Gross National Product (Volunteering Australia, 2003, December). I wonder whether the Federal Government of Australia would provide that amount of funding if volunteers decided to withhold their services.

1.3.2. Finding alternate approaches. The second major change is the need to find alternate approaches to working with volunteers. People decide to volunteer for a myriad of reasons such as family, friends, interest groups, or by being asked to participate in government programmes. Additionally, the motivation to do volunteering differs from person to person. Motivation to volunteer varies from simply one person helping another, or contributing some services for the benefit of the community. Some volunteers are motivated by their religious beliefs. Take for example a young telephone counsellor who stated "I like helping people. It's also like working for God. I'm here because I want to be, not because I am getting paid" (Yu, 1999, ¶. 2). Park and Smith (2000) contend that religiosity has the potential to influence volunteering in a local community. Participating in religious environments assists the development of skills and attitudes reflective of helping others. Moreover, serving others is a Biblical principle as stated by Solomon's proverb "If you oppress poor people, you insult the God who made them; but kindness shown to the poor is an act of worship" (Good News Bible, 1976, p.708).

The type of volunteering where the motivation of the volunteer is to simply assist another person, on an informal basis requires no specific training (Allen, 2000). The other extreme to informal volunteering, is volunteering in a structured setting such as phone counselling in Lifeline. In such structured bureaucracies potential volunteers are recruited and assessed as to their suitability for the positions, and then receive formal training over several weeks. Furthermore, trained volunteers are scheduled for specific times of the day and week. From my observations some volunteers are expected to carry out duties for which they receive little training and there is a lack of regulated training. This lack of training is evident in the following two examples. It was very distressing for the playgroup supervisor to observe a volunteer at playgroup, take the building blocks off two little boys aged 3 years, and inform them they had to share the blocks. With some basic training in child development he would have understood children of that age are still very egocentric and are not cognitively

developed to understand the concept of sharing. While discussing this lack of training for volunteers with my lecturing colleague he described how some overzealous religious volunteers cause problems with palliative care patients when trying to 'counsel' them on matters of dying. The volunteers were 'trying to save their souls before the patients died' (J. McMaster, personal communication, March, 19, 2004).

Some voluntary community activities are now being formally acknowledged by tertiary institutions within the framework of the recognition of prior learning. Often the skills volunteers learn 'on the job' are assessed as to their eligibility for consideration towards a qualification (National Volunteer Skills Centre, 2003; Radich, 2008). Advocating for vocation education and training is an Australian national role the National Volunteer Skills Centre and Volunteer Training Network are presently undertaking. An Australian developed International Diploma of Volunteer Management was recently delivered to students representing grassroots community organisations in Bangladesh. The training was customized to meet their unique needs (National Volunteer Skills Centre, 2003). Consequently, accommodating these very different groups of people requires a range of approaches within different settings and contexts.

1.3.3. Changing the volunteer stereotypical image. The need to change the stereotypical image of the volunteer as the white, middle class, middle-aged female (Creyton, 2000), in Western countries, is the last major change influencing volunteering. Another label given to this stereotypical image is 'the blue rinse brigade' which was a World War II phenomenon. The research conducted by Davis Smith and Oppenheimer (2005), describes how in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the volunteer section was the only sphere which allowed women to take a leading role in the community. Women were subject to an external authority which bound and directed their lives (Belenky, et al., 1986). In the 20th century, this enduring stereotype could represent the 'volunteers' of the time due to the written history of volunteering. More credence was given to formal volunteering such as gala fund raising events which were predominately organised by white, middle class, middle aged females, while small neighbourhood/community voluntary projects were dismissed. Creyton (2000) argues that the reality is very different from this now. Vast and diverse groups of people, worldwide, volunteer. It was with interest that I observed the difficulty a woman from the Middle East, a trained accountant and theologian, encountered when attempting to find an area within which she could volunteer to work in the church community. Eventually she

became involved with the delivery of the Diploma of Christian Ministry programme. It could be argued that within the church structure, power and authority was conferred on some but denied to others. Schaafsma (1998, p.256), uses Foucault's writings in analysing the discursive practices of disciplines and argues "Discourse operates in particular sites, within certain rules of inclusion/exclusion, providing boundaries invested with institutional support and correlated with a variety of social, political and administrative practices."

Furthermore, research conducted by Davis Smith (2007) reports that a majority of people involved in volunteering in key areas of social policy, believe that their contributions are barely recognised by the British government. Merrill Associates (2000, ¶. 2) state:

> Sometimes a "we" versus "them" attitude is created inadvertently through distinctions such as nametags, uniforms, badges, or other items that create class-like differences between staff and volunteers. Volunteers may be excluded from staff meetings or staff events because no one thought to invite them or because they work outside the "normal" work hours or work location.

Once again I would argue that this situation illustrates the cultural prejudices and biases which are evident in many Christian volunteers, and how these prejudices and biases impact on their behaviours and/or practices. As previously stated, teaching on the Diploma of Christian Ministry programme provided me with an opportunity to develop critical reflective skills in a small group of Christian volunteers – with the objective of preventing situations similar to those identified in Davis Smith's (2007) study.

1.4. Why the need for the Diploma of Christian Ministry programme

Since its inception in 1935 the vision of this Baptist church has been twofold. The first was to provide a worship centre for likeminded Christians and the second was the provision of outreach programmes to the local community, underpinned with a Christian based philosophy.

Over the years a diverse range of programmes has been provided for all age groups from a playgroup for young children and parents, to fishing groups for men, to crafts for elderly people and so on. The success of these programmes depended upon the willingness and skills

of Christian volunteers. This vision of volunteering is still very evident in the church (Senior Pastor, personal communication, 25 November 2004). The willingness and sincerity of the volunteers has never been an issue, however the lack of depth in their Biblical knowledge base has been a concern for some outreach programme conveners. A combination of the lack of Biblical knowledge and insensitivity to people (due to volunteers' past experiences, assumptions, prejudices, and so on) often resulted in the provision of inappropriate services.

Furthermore, for a myriad of reasons, many people who expressed an interest in the Diploma of Christian Ministry programme could not relocate to the metropolitan areas to complete training courses. These reasons included family situations such as the ability to work and study part-time, and the enjoyment of living in smaller centres. Alternate training options to cater for these people were investigated. These included:

a. the church registering as a private training provider,

b. approaching the local TAFE to facilitate the training, or

c. become a regional campus of a Brisbane Baptist Church.

Finally, it was decided to establish a regional campus at this Baptist church, which would come under the auspices of a Baptist Church Ministry Training Centre in Brisbane. I was asked to facilitate the development of this project because of my many years of experience in educational administration. Additionally, I had been a recent employee of TAFE Queensland which provided me with an understanding and knowledge of vocational training centres. .

At the beginning of 2002, the regional Baptist Church Ministry Training Centre (MTC) commenced with four fulltime students and three part time students, all enrolled in the Diploma of Christian Ministry. This Diploma consisted of 18 units of study, half of which were dedicated to theological topics while the other half was dedicated to a variety of community service topics. Because Centrelink approved this course, students were eligible to receive Austudy and Abstudy (student study subsidies) for the duration of their study. Furthermore, this Diploma course was registered with the Australian National Training Authority. To ensure that the Brisbane Baptist Church Ministry Training Centre did not lose its registration, I was vigilant in ensuring that all of our volunteer teachers met the required standards of Australian Qualification Training Framework. Some pursued further study to meet the required standards.

The first year of operation was completed with most students gaining competence in their units of study. In 2003, Year 2 of the diploma course commenced with four new fulltime students and three part-time students. Several mature-aged students resigned from permanent employment to complete the training. Furthermore, all students expressed an interest in the voluntary internship, which the regional Baptist Church instigated for 2003. Operating within a contractual arrangement, the internship required intern volunteers (a new term of reference for the students) to carry out approximately 15 hours per week voluntary duties within an area of specialisation at the church. Additionally, intern volunteers were encouraged to study fulltime to develop a strong academic and theoretical base upon which they could develop strategies for their areas of specialisation. Benson (2002, p.11) states:

> The Intern will train at the Diploma level only, but in addition, will be carefully mentored, supervised and directed by the nominated person in charge of the selected ministry specialization area. The intern is regarded as "staff in training" and is given partial exemption from fees in return for assuming ministry responsibilities. The intern will be expected to study for at least the equivalent of two days per week/fulltime and give at least one day to their ministry specialization within the church.

The sponsoring body for the intern volunteer research project was the regional Baptist Church, Queensland, Australia. The church governance required permission to be sought from the church eldership of which the Senior Pastor was a member. This was a requirement prior to implementation of any services/programmes offered by church people. Furthermore, the senior pastor had the casting vote or final say in all church programmes. Due to the hierarchical church structure all other committees such as the management, were ultimately responsible to the Eldership and senior pastor. Management decisions could be overturned by the Eldership and/or the Senior Pastor.

Descriptions of each intern volunteer are as follows. This information has been compiled from a variety of sources such as conversations with me, descriptions provided by the volunteers themselves, my professional observations and reflective journal entries. All names used are pseudonyms.

> **Nellie (50+)** is a married woman and has 4 adult children. She believes her calling in life is to be a mother first and foremost. Additionally she believes a wife must be

submissive to her husband – the husband is the head of the home. This belief is Biblically based and Nellie would not question or challenge this. Her faith is very, very strong. Her area of specialisation was administration and Nellie volunteered up to 40 hours per week. All of her life Nellie had had a desire to complete some Christian training. Because of her limited secondary education Nellie had doubts whether she was capable of completing the Diploma programme. Her store of academic and cultural capital was limited. Nellie does not have good health and this created some challenges for her during her 2 years of study. Being in paid employment was not a priority for Nellie because she believed supporting her husband and family was paramount.

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Nellie is a quiet determined person who was a very conscientious student throughout the duration of the course. Nellie worked very studiously to achieve her goal. Even though she has not had paid employment since her marriage (about 40 years ago) Nellie assisted her husband with the financial side of his businesses over many years. At times Nellie undervalued these skills and did not appreciate how capable and competent she was. This was evident in how successfully she managed the church finances. Being able to manage all of her different roles was sometimes a challenge. She wrote:

> Bill {husband} is sick most of the week so it meant he had 2 trips most days which means I stay here {church office} later and I become tired this week. The wear and tear on the car to keep my ministry going. Difference between various staff members with unpleasantness made me feel low. This affects my ministry only in the respect that I am in contact with the goings on but thankfully not part of it.

Harry (45+) is a European New Zealander who migrated to Australia in his early 20s. He is married with 2 adult children. His Australian wife is very creative. One child is a lawyer and the other a teacher. His faith is very important to him. His area of specialisation was family ministry and Harry completed 15 hours per week. Driving the church buses for Friday night Youth Club and taking Religious Instruction classes were the foci for his ministry. Because of previous experiences Harry was quietly confident he could manage the study. Initially, Harry trained as a registered nurse. He has changed his job several times and settled to being a cabinet maker prior to

enrolling into the Diploma course. He possessed a large store of academic and cultural capital. On graduation from the course Harry was offered a position as a counsellor for a local funeral parlour. He is still in that position.

Harry considered it a privilege to be able to study fulltime as a mature-aged student. He enjoys life and has a very cheery and positive disposition. One of his greatest strengths was his ability to assess a situation and reduce tension by making a witty, light hearted comment. His sense of humour was appreciated by all members of the group.

Bob (30+) is a European Australian and is married to a New Zealander. His wife is a trained nurse. The family seems to travel between the two countries following family and employment. Bob has six young children, three of whom are home-schooled. Christianity is central to Bob and his family's life. Prior to enrolling in the Diploma course Bob was the service manager at a car dealership in New Zealand. He had completed some modules of another Christian training programme elsewhere, so Bob possessed a large store of academic and cultural capital. He did not receive any credit for these when he commenced this Diploma course. This was at his request. He considered he needed to revise his basic Biblical knowledge which illustrated his level of reflection. Bob gave 15 hours per week in leadership management in the church for his ministry specialisation. His main focus was small group ministry. On graduation from the course Bob received a call to become associate pastor with a small community church in Hamilton, New Zealand. This was a paid position. They relocated themselves and all of their possessions to Hamilton. Furthermore Bob has completed a Bachelor of Applied Theology and is now a Baptist assistant pastor in a regional New Zealand town.

Bob is a stoic solid reliable man and a studious and conscientious student. He struggled at being methodical and structured in his approach to his study. Additionally Bob is a very wise man especially in Christian pastoral care. This wisdom was demonstrated often during classes when he would listen to the discussion and then make a final contribution. His final comment to a group discussion on lack of confidentiality was:

> My Christian belief has influenced my course of action – I have a commitment to the teachings of Christ for speaking the truth and love and to be self controlled and not to become angry by venting that to the group and reconciliation. God is able to do this and commit it to prayer and restoration.

Tom (30+) is married and has three young children. His wife, who selected domesticity by choice, was very supportive of his study. Tom had a challenging childhood due to an aggressive father. Tom had limited secondary education. He had not studied for many years and found returning to fulltime study very difficult. A combination of early experiences and his limited secondary schooling meant that Tom's cultural and academic capital was limited. Tom acknowledged this challenge and conquered this due to abundance of spiritual capital. Tom believed that completing this course was God's will.

Family ministry for 15 hours per week was Tom's choice of ministry specialisation. This took several forms; Religious Instruction, bus monitor and assisting at a variety of church-based children's clubs. Tom has a passion for children. Tom's faith is very strong and enrolling in this course was a financial challenge for the family. On graduation from this Diploma course, Tom enrolled as a fulltime, external student at a Baptist Training College in Brisbane. For financial reasons Tom has nearly completed an interior decorator apprenticeship. His wife is now completing a Diploma of Christian Ministry.

Vernon (30+) is an Aboriginal man married to a European Australian woman. They have three young children. As a Christian he does not adhere to any of his culture's traditions and beliefs such as the aboriginal Dreamtime... For Vernon these 2 value systems are mutually exclusive. His understanding of the bible is very literal e.g., the world was created in 7 days and is only 7000 years old. This rejection did not appear to create any problems for Vernon as his Christian faith means more to him than his cultural traditions and beliefs. Prior to enrolling in the Diploma course, he had no formal qualifications and limited secondary education. He therefore has limited academic experience. Even though he had attempted some vocational courses, these were not successful. Vernon gave 15 hours per week to Family Ministries as his area

of specialisation. On graduation from the course Vernon was offered and accepted a position as a youth pastor at his old church in another Australian state.

Molly (50+) is physically a very small lady and is very timid and quiet. Due to her lack of self confidence Molly was constantly anxious and having panic attacks in case she made mistakes or offended people. She is divorced and has several grown children and grandchildren. Several years ago she relocated from New Zealand to Australia. Even though her faith is very simple it is very sincere and strong. Her area of specialisation was pastoral care. Molly commenced the course with a very limited store of academic and cultural capital.

In a covert way, political pressure was being placed on Molly to seek employment. She was being encouraged to study. Centrelink required her to complete some form of training in order to obtain employment. Due to her poor health and low stamina level, finding employment was a challenge for Molly. On completion of this one module of the Diploma course, Molly was still on a benefit even though she tried to start her own cleaning business. This was not successful due to her lack of private transport.

Carol (50+) was born in England and still has older relatives who reside there. Carol has struggled with her faith due to a very nasty marriage break-up. She has several adult children. Family relationships were very tenuous at times. Similar to Molly, Centrelink required Carol to complete some training to enhance her chances to find employment. Carol was involved with Molly, in pastoral care for her area of ministry specialisation. On completion of this module Carol remained on the benefit. She supplemented this with some house cleaning. Carol had very little academic and cultural capital prior to commencing the course.

During Semester 1 of 2003, I taught one of the 18 units of the Diploma of Christian Ministry called Ministry Practicum. As described in the unit outline (Benson & Austin, 2003, p. 4), the purpose of this elective training unit is:

> To apply the skills and abilities learned in the compulsory practical ministry units to an assigned or selected project of ministry specialisation, for which you are responsible. Special emphasis will be placed on:
>
> a. operating within a community development framework,

b. meeting duty of care responsibilities,

c. provision of non-discriminatory services, and

d. working to address individual issues.

Whilst the skills learned in this training unit can apply, and are relevant, to any specific community, in the context of a Diploma of Christian Ministry, the term 'community' used to refer to either a whole church or part of a church, or in fact, a segment of the local community the church is trying to impact.

Therefore, as the teacher for the Ministry Practicum, taking responsibility for the students as intern volunteers seemed a logical progression. The interns' areas of specialisation were similar to their ministry practicum specialisations and provided services with no expectation of any financial remuneration. The definition of a volunteer to perform, give, or communicate freely, to volunteer help aptly described the services the intern volunteers offered. This required them to work with many types of people from both the church community and the local community. Furthermore this was the Baptist Church's vision. Consequently, providing services for community people had the potential to create a dilemma for the intern volunteers. The potential dilemma they faced was the emergence of multiple faiths in the interns' clients. On one hand, at a personal level and in line with the Baptist philosophy, the intern volunteers could argue that their priority was to be evangelists and bear 'witness' to their clients, but on the other hand, it was vital that they respect a person's right to religious freedom as proclaimed by Pope Paul VI (Vatican Council, 1965). This challenge faced by the many protestant churches, was also a challenge for the Catholic Church in the early 60s. The Vatican Council (1965, ¶. 1) declares:

> This freedom (religious) means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individual or of social groups and of any human power, in such ways that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others within due limits.

As the teacher, it was my responsibility to ensure that the personal beliefs, values, assumptions, and so on of the interns did not influence adversely service provision for their clients.

1.5. Reasons for choosing this project

Why am I challenged by this project and why am I pursuing it? In many ways, the research topic chose me. Primarily this research project provided me with the opportunity to examine how effectively I could teach a group of intern volunteers to critically reflect upon their own church based work. This primary reason was underpinned by several divergent perspectives which are as follows.

1.5.1. Pedagogically challenging. Both the intern volunteers and I were pedagogically challenged by this research project because of the requirement to work collaboratively and participate in unfamiliar experiences. The pedagogical challenges for me, as the teacher were threefold. First, throughout my teaching career, students in my classes were required to attend for a variety of reason such as legality (compulsory education), vocational requirements, and acquisition of a qualification. Their attendance was not reliant solely on my effectiveness as a teacher whereas, for the intern volunteers, attendance was by choice. The intern volunteers had two options to complete this unit of study. These were either attending classes or studying independently from an external study guide. The effectiveness of my pedagogy was crucial to the intern volunteers' attendance at class. Second, I was constantly aware of the pressure I had placed myself under by having the effectiveness of my teaching examined and evaluated throughout this doctoral process. Third, the ethical issue of orchestrating learning situations, which challenged the intern volunteers' beliefs, values, and assumptions, caused them and me some concerns. I was placing them in situations where they could feel discomfort, anxiety, or self-doubt in their ability to succeed in this project. A major risk for both the students and me was the possible outcome of rejection of one's faith due to an increased awareness and sense of liberation (Mezirow, 1998: van Manen, 1990). Was I, as the teacher and member of the host church, prepared to take on this risk and responsibility? Ethical issues could influence the effectiveness of my teaching.

1.5.2. Practical contributions/social capital. The second reason was linked to social capital. Even though the practical contributions of the intern volunteers was minimal at a global level, I believed the importance placed on volunteering generally, and the social capital value of volunteers' contributions to the local community, was the second reason I chose this project. At this stage of my research I realised that the contributions made by the intern volunteers

were wider than I anticipated. While five of them are now working in the local community, one is a pastor in New South Wales, and the other is a pastor in New Zealand.

Park and Smith (2000) assert that many churchgoing Protestants exhibit a strong sense of community identity through their local churches and focus their volunteering within this context. The intern volunteers' ministries required them to provide social services to the wider community. In today's society the practical contributions of volunteers were woven into the fabric of any community and appeared to be necessary for the provisions of community based services. Apart from assisting in the creation of a stable and cohesive society, volunteering also adds social capital value to the existing government services (Dingle, 2001).

Even though many community social services are now reliant on the contribution of volunteers, very scant research has been conducted to establish the effectiveness of social capital outcomes of these contributions. In reality it could prove very difficult to actually measure, either the effectiveness or social capital value of the services provided by the intern volunteers such as visiting church members and community people who are sick in our local hospitals.   What is Social Capital? (2002) identifies three distinct yet integrated levels of society which are influenced by social capital. These are at an individual person's level, larger firms, or organisational level, and finally a social and political level. For social capital to be effective it is essential that linking strategies are in place to ensure commonality of goals at all levels. This, in turn, contributes to the social capital of government services.

1.5.3. Community of practice. In light of the research conducted by Wilson and Ryder (1996) a growing negative connotation exists with the term 'instruction'. Traditional instruction is thought of as having clear prescribed learning objectives, teacher determined activities and teaching strategies, and defined parameters in time and space. To deliver effective teaching for the intern volunteers, I considered it vital that we organise ourselves into a functioning community with a goal to support each other in our practices. The concept of a community of practice which applied to the interns, as an alternative metaphor to traditional instruction, challenged and had the potential to support the effectiveness of my teaching.

Similar to other communities of practice within the Baptist church, the intern volunteers shared a consensual goal to support each other in learning. Examples of these communities of

practice are volunteers who were connected to the playgroup, the bookshop, the pastoral care programme, and so on. Again, similar to members of the other church communities of practice, the members of this community were Christians; an additional consensual goal could be identified. The intern volunteers' consensual goal was to grow their faith, learn to mentor others in their faith, and practice Christianity wherever they were (Wallace, 2004). The aspect of growing in faith was addressed in the theological modules of Diploma of Christian Ministry. Learning to mentor each other in faith was integrated in all modules. The aspect of practicing Christianity in the world was challenging for me as the teacher. To ensure that my teaching was effective for the intern volunteers, I structured all learning experiences so that practical outcomes were always in view.

Within Australia, communities of practice are emerging as an innovative way of promoting economic renewal, and new forms of democratic participation and social inclusion (Adult Learning Australia, 2000). This project provided an opportunity to capitalise upon this trend and create a community of practice in our church. This in turn, had the potential to impact upon the local community.

1.5.4. Partnerships. The opportunity to form partnerships locally and nationally is the 4th reason why I selected this project. According to Dingle (2001), the key to successful communities of practice is the building of effective partnerships. This concept is supported by the research carried out by Wenger (1998) and Barab and Duffy (2000). Dingle (2001, p.8) posits "Each (partnership) should be encouraged to contribute their existing relationships and expertise to the common range of learning opportunities, creating the potential for collaborative learning and development." Overall, partnerships created because of this research project were informal. According to Interpretive Development Program (2005) formal or informal partnerships can be utilised to produce a product or service or enhance an exciting product or service

While formal partnerships consist of a formal written agreement and are usually used when money or a product is exchanged, informal partnerships lack a formal written agreement. Consequently, due to the lack of any formal written agreements, the partnerships formed during this project, were informal. Examples of these informal partnerships were:

a. the involvement of staff of the university I worked for and the regional Baptist Church Ministry Training Centre;

  b. my educational doctoral supervisor at Charles Darwin University and me as the representative of the regional Baptist Church Ministry Training Centre; and

  c. the intern volunteers and me as the teacher/ phenomenographer.

1.5.5. Scarcity of research into volunteering and reflective practices. Capitalising on the opportunity to contribute to published literature was another reason for my choice. Presently there is a lack of documented studies of the provision of critical reflection training for volunteers within any setting, let alone those working within the framework of a community of practice in an Australian church context.

1.5.6. Gift of teaching. This project allowed me to utilize my God- given gift of teaching within a different context (that of the voluntary sector), to work for the betterment of the intern volunteers, their clients, and me.

1.6. Purpose of the research

Even though the focus for my research project determined the boundaries of my study, it was important for me, as the phenomenographer (researcher), to be flexible and alter these boundaries which can occur within hermeneutic phenomenology (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is possible for the initial research focus to be challenged or found to be inadequate or inappropriate. Due to the three distinct yet integrated dimensions (volunteerism, community of practice, and transformative learning) of this thesis, focusing on the effectiveness of my teaching has been 'challenged' as my thesis developed. Constantly the theme of volunteerism seemed to be emerging and reemerging as the dominant dimension and this removed the focus from the effectiveness of my teaching. To solve this dilemma I was required to repeatedly conceptualise and reconceptualise the focus of my research. Reconceptualising my focus assisted me to effectively determine the inclusion and/or exclusion criteria for the relevance of information as it came to light (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This enabled me to make informed decisions as whether to retain or discard information. Analysing the effectiveness of my teaching to assist the intern volunteer to develop critical reflective practices remained the central focus.

When I first trained as an educator, the focus of that training was on children. Throughout the last 40 years of teaching various assessments/evaluations of the effectiveness of my teaching and learning style, have been conducted. Constantly I received positive grades and feedback. Even though this enhanced my self-esteem and confidence as a teacher I was not forced to be critically reflective about my pedagogy. Because the phenomenon focused upon for this thesis was effectiveness of my teaching, I was compelled to research and establish some principles or practices of effective teaching and learning for adults. Therefore, prior to commencing any teaching sessions it was important that I was cognizant of effective teaching principles and/or practices to ensure they were encapsulated within my pedagogy. Prior to facilitating effective training for the intern volunteers, which would enable them to become critical reflective practitioners within their areas of specialisation, I needed to examine and revise my pedagogy. How effective was I as a teacher? What practices should I implement to improve the effectiveness of my teaching, especially as a 'critical reflective' teacher? This created a pedagogical challenge for me as the teacher.

All the teaching sessions with the intern volunteers, took place within the context of a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) and, in total, ran for the duration of 6 months. By using the shared training experiences of the interns, a common base of trust and support was established. This common base enabled each intern volunteer to construct meaning through critical reflection and group discussion. Many theorists call this process of critical reflection transformative learning. According to Mezirow (1998) critical reflection is more than mere reflection because the process goes deeper than linking thoughts and actions with reflection (Imel, 1992). This involves participating in a conversation with self and questioning our fundamental assumptions, values, and core beliefs. This process is not just about our understanding of a particular issue or event (Cunliffe & Jun, 2002). The meanings which the intern volunteers attached to their experiences were scrutinized critically. To challenge the interns' previously taken-for-granted interpretations of experiences or assumptions I consciously disrupted their world-view. I attempted to unsettle their fundamental assumptions about the nature of their reality (ontology) such as that our God is the only true God and knowledge (epistemology) of their experiences such as the world was created in 7 literal days (Cunliffe & Jun, 2002; Davis & Klaes, 2002).

According to Ellis, Worthington and Larkin (1994) research has identified many broad-based principles which are pertinent to current knowledge about effective teaching. Teachers are

encouraged not to interpret these principles as 'dictums' for all educators to adhere to. Instead, these effective teaching principles are guides by which educators can either confirm or disconfirm personal beliefs and values about pedagogy. Ellis et al., (1994) argue that it is the reflective teacher who makes final teaching decisions and is the link between research and practice. Consequently, what is known about learning should be reflected in all broad-based teaching principles. Both behaviourists and cognitive theorists have much to contribute in terms of effective teaching and learning. Therefore, critical to the effectiveness of my pedagogy, was my understanding of and the integration of the six common essential practices (Mezirow, 1998) of transformative learning (refer to Chapter 4). Other studies have also identified effective teaching and learning principles. Tharp (1999) established five basic effective teaching principles which are similar to those identified by Education Queensland (2002). An amalgamation of both these practices and principles was compiled and are addressed extensively in the Chapter 4 literature review.

To evaluate the effectiveness of my pedagogy with the intern volunteers, a thorough investigation and analysis of the data was conducted to identify critical reflection in the intern volunteers' practices. The data that I used for this study were gathered by using three phenomenological research procedures: phenomenological guided discussions, reflective journaling, and interviews conducted by an independent interviewer whose religious beliefs differed for theirs. He was a Buddhist. These data and analyses were designed and employed to examine the guiding research question: ***How effective is my pedagogy in developing critical reflection in the practice of the intern volunteers?***

1.7. Outcomes of the research

I envisaged the following two outcomes from my thesis.

1.7.1 . Published literature. My first outcome is to conceptualise my findings in the literature. As previously stated there is a lack of documented studies of the provision of critical reflection training for volunteers within any setting, let alone those working within the framework of a community of practice in an Australian church context. According to Mills (2000, p.105), researchers "draw connections with external authority. Most often this is accomplished through informed resources to some recognised body of theory on one's special

field, or to the recognised classics, in the tradition of the literature review." My literary contributions have the potential to add some illuminations to a presently nonexistent recognised body of theory which will, in turn, provide relevant, external connections for future teacher researchers (Arhar, Holly & Kasten, 2001; Burns, 1994; Johnson, 2002; Mills; Wiersma, 2000). In addition, it acknowledges the unique contribution this research project could contribute to our understanding of this topic.

1.7.2. List of recommendations for practice for the reflective educator. The final outcome of this research project is the compilation of several recommendations for practice for the reflective educator. This compilation of recommendations is drawn from the findings of the effectiveness of my pedagogy as a transformative teacher. Additionally these will contribute to other researchers' suggestions for practice.

1.8. Method

The research method which I selected for this project was hermeneutic phenomenology. This research methodology permitted me to investigate and explore the effectiveness of my teaching through the discerning of themes (phenomenology) and interpretation (hermeneutics) (van Manen, 1990; Walsh, 2002; Wilcke, 2002; Yu, 2000). Phenomenology is the study of 'phenomena or a phenomenon' which could be described as 'appearance of things', or 'things as they appear in our experiences', or 'the ways we experience things', and the 'meanings these things have in our experience.' The focus phenomenon (thing) for this research project was the effectiveness of my teaching practices to develop critical reflective practices in the intern volunteers. Through providing a wide variety of effective teaching sessions I planned to encourage the intern volunteers to critically reflect and interpret their experiences. These enabled the intern volunteers to construct and reconstruct their own realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Chapter 5 focuses on my research method.

CHAPTER 2
VOLUNTEERING

As far back as I can recollect I always wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. Whenever friends or family inquired as to what occupation I would move into, I never varied in my response – a teacher. Similarly, my younger sister always wanted to be a nurse. Our parents considered that both of these occupations were suitable for women and we, their daughters, absorbed their ideas. We were seldom encouraged to think this through for ourselves (Belenky, et al. 1986).

My sister's play and my childhood play alternated between playing schools and hospitals. Other unwilling participants in our play were our dolls, Rosemary, Sarah, Patsy, and Charlotte. Their roles changed from pupil to patient depending upon the theme of our games. When the play changed to school, my younger sister and the dolls would be seated in straight rows on the floor. Small squares of paper and pencils were placed neatly in front of them. No talking was permitted and often, a pupil was strapped when this rule was disobeyed. Obviously, my teaching behaviour was modeled on my role models of the day –especially the teacher who scared the nail biting tall skinny girl. Of course, I was ALWAYS the teacher. That role was not open to negotiation. Education as the "practice of domination" (Freire, 1996) was evident in my play as a child.

I try to unpack or deconstruct the meaning I (as a child) gave to my identity as the person teacher. Why was this important to me? What motivated me? Why didn't I vacillate between future career options? Why did I accept that all sources of truth came from external authorities? As much as I wanted to discover some deep hidden secret in the recesses of my consciousness as to what was driving me in the teaching direction, I could not. The only conclusion I could arrive at was that I was destined to teach. This inner desire to teach

controlled my childhood career choices. I developed from a tall skinny girl into a tall slim young woman. My deconstruction of the meaning to my identity of person teacher gave rise to three conflicting yet similar perspectives; that of the cultural, state, and religious.

First, cultural thinking of the postwar period played a prominent role in my career choice. My parents firmly believed that a woman's place was in the home. Because I was their daughter, I was expected to listen to them but not be heard. Women's first calling in life was that of homemaker (wife and mother). The true woman did not achieve self-actualization through pursuing a career where she would be on an equal intellectual, creative, political, economic and social level with men. Physical and spiritual fulfillment was through motherhood and being a help-mate to her husband (Daly, 2003).

Second, the state has contributed in shaping women's position. Successive New Zealand governments in the 20th century have shaped women's domesticity. Even though Nolan (2000) does not suggest that the state invented domesticity, its promotion in the 20th century was evident through the laws, social and political policies, and education system such as it was compulsory for all girls in secondary school to study domestic education. I still remember my fears of lighting the gas oven at domestic education classes in the early 1950s. This discourse of imposing certain institutional rules on female students perpetuated the role of domesticity for them.

Finally, religion was an integral part of my life. Around the age of 14 years I made a decision to become a Christian. As my understanding and knowledge of Christianity expanded I 'realised' that my desire to teach was God's plan for my life. This strong desire to teach was ordained by an outside Supreme Being –

God. The focus of my life was to "be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with these other things" (Good News Bible, 1976, p. 1055). I accepted this enshrined revelation blindly, and was prepared to follow in the direction that was predestined for me. This perspective was sanctioned by the Catholic Church at this time as well. Pius XII's address to Women of Catholic Action states:

> A cradle consecrates the mother of the family; and more cradles sanctify and glorify her before her husband and children, before church and homeland. The mother who complains because a new child presses against her bosom seeking nourishment at her breast is foolish, ignorant of herself, and unhappy. (Daly, 2003, ¶.9)

It was acceptable for a woman to train in a vocation as long as this did not over-ride the first calling. Teaching enabled a woman to be a homemaker and hold down a career at the same time (Irwin, 1992). Years of being 'drip fed' the acceptance of teaching subsequently cemented my desire to teach.

By the age of 14 years I actively sought out opportunities to assist in any classroom I could. As a junior bible class member, I would avail myself of every opportunity to assist in the Under 6s Sunday school class with Mrs. Jones. Of course this was part of God's plan for me and my parents blessed this volunteer work. Similar to Kamler (2001) I was raised in a culture that placed a premium on home, on cultural affiliation, on religious affiliation and parental devotion of its children. There were approximately 35 children in this Sunday school class.

Finally, I was deemed old enough at the tender age of 14 to switch roles from junior bible class member to become a 'teacher'. From my perspective, I had

achieved my goal. I was delighted, in fact overjoyed, to be 'paired teaching' with Mrs. Jones. Little did I realise that Mrs. Jones was pregnant again, and would be giving up teaching young Sunday school children in the imminent future? Additionally, no one from the congregation would take on this class and so I was approached. Within 3 months of commencing as a volunteer Sunday school teacher, I was sole teacher with this group of young children and was jubilant. My teacher identity was being formed due to personal, spiritual, social, and cultural/historical aspects of the late 1950s (Zembylas, 2003).

Image 3: Volunteer Sunday school teacher Lindy (back left) at the age of 14 years old. (Published with permission from J. Derrick)

When I reflect upon this volunteer role I found myself in, it could be argued that the church management was exploiting the willingness of a young volunteer. Exploitation of volunteers in the late 50s was not a major issue. Wasn't I doing the will of God? This situation has not radically changed in the late 20th century and early 21st century. Now in the 21st century, there is an awareness of exploitation of volunteers (Hayward-Brown, Bragg, Lennard & Onyx, 2003). Moreover, exploitation of volunteers occurs especially when no training is

provided (Taggart & Short, 2000). The lack of provision of any training for me as the volunteer Sunday school teacher would definitely be labeled as exploitation in this century. As for issues such as paying scant attention to duty of care of the young children, little or no consideration was given to the breach of trust with the parents. At this stage of my life I had achieved my God –given goal of being volunteer teacher. Being untrained and exploited was not part of my consciousness.

For the interns who participated in this study the qualifications which they sought (Diploma in Christian Ministry) implied the expectation of some volunteering. They were expected to contribute up to 15 hours per week of voluntary work in their individual area of specialisation. Couple this with general church-based voluntary expectations for all church members, family responsibilities and full time study, and exploitation of the intern volunteers became an alarming possibility (Initiative T. M. V. S., 2001). Was this expectation an example of power over members within a religions organisation? Freire argues "By means of manipulation, the dominant elites try to conform the masses to their objectives" (1996, p.128). To avoid exploitation occurring within a religious context, it was vital that I, as their teacher for the Ministry Practicum subject, ensured that relevant training and supervision was provided for the intern volunteers. Hayward-Brown et al. (2003) asserts that the contributions of formal volunteering are clearly substantial and it is important that volunteers' understanding of their work is a major issue. Lack of knowledge of how volunteers construct their work, has the potential for them to forsake volunteering.

2.1. Volunteering

As stated in Chapter One, this thesis comprises three distinct yet interacting dimensions: volunteering, the development of communities of practice, and practices of critical reflection (transformative learning). Volunteering is the first dimension which influenced my research project. According to the Collins Shorter English dictionary (1993, p. 1331) voluntarism "is the principle of supporting churches, schools and various other institutions by voluntary contributions rather than with state funds." Similar to the participants (intern volunteers) who took an active role in my research project, this principle of voluntarism underpins many volunteer activities in the community (Hayward-Brown et al., 2003; Initiative T. M. V. S., 2001). Allen's (2000, p.25) definition of volunteering is as follows:

> Sociologists and anthropologists agree that most human societies have norms, customs and traditions in which people work for the benefit of others and mutual interest. Such mutual assistance takes place in every community, society, and culture, in every nation of the world. Working for each other is part of what makes us human, part of what makes us social animals. These forms of mutual assistance are diverse; one example of this is what we call volunteering.

The Collins Shorter English dictionary (1993, p.1331) has several meanings for the word 'volunteer'. They include:

a. "A person who performs or offers to perform voluntary service;
b. A person who freely undertakes military service;
c. To offer for an undertaking by choice and without request or obligation;
d. To perform, give or communicate freely, to volunteer help."

The last definition above best accommodates the activities of the participants of this research project. All of the interns willingly performed duties within their areas of specialisation with the objective of improving their pastoral skills. This, they hoped, would facilitate their chances of obtaining fulltime employment on completion of the Diploma course. There was no social, economic, or political pressure on them to participate in the internship (Allen, 2000). A consequence of their participation in the internship programme, was that certain expectations were in place, as outlined by Austin and Stevenson (2002, p. 2). These were

1. Internships offered for a term up to the period of the course of study (up to 2 years).

2. An intern should be able to demonstrate a strong Christian commitment in his/her personal life which reflects:

    a. A genuine interest in the chosen ministry,

    b. Some proven capacity or desire to be considered in this area,

    c. Demonstrated commitment to completing tasks,

    d. Commensurate skills and personality for the chosen ministry specialisation,

    e. A willingness to learn and be challenged,

    f. Be self motivated,

    g. Have the ability to work unsupervised.

3. It is anticipated that at the end of the internship an intern will:

    a. Be moving towards her/his full potential in the chosen ministry,

    b. Be able to apply her/his skills with excellence,

    c. Be able to work unsupervised in the area of ministry specialisation,

    d. Demonstrate initiative and leadership capacities, and

    e. Relate well to others in the ministry /church teams and other workplace duties.

One of the underpinning philosophies of the internship was that there was no expectation that the intern volunteers must move into fulltime employment in a Christian organisation within the community. Equally, there was no expectation, on completion of the internship and/or training course, that the interns would remain volunteering in the Baptist Church. In light of the general shortage of volunteers in many social services provided by local communities, including this church, the senior pastor envisaged that some graduates would remain as volunteers (Senior Pastor, personal communication, 25 April, 2002). Six years later, two of the original group of interns, were still volunteering in this church.

It appears that societal trends have had a detrimental impact upon volunteering. Recently, a debate on the implications of longer work hours on family life and the community was screened on the Channel 7 Sunrise programme. One of the interviewees was Kevin Rudd, the then Shadow Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Australian Federal Opposition. He argued that in Australia, people are now expected to work longer hours. Even though overtly this

was not the case, covertly this change of attitude towards work and employment, established an expectation that people would comply with this. They would just work longer hours. This is another example of the dominant elites (employers) manipulating the ordinary people to comply with their agenda (Freire, 1996). According to Rudd, who was interviewed by Koch (2003), this expectation has unfortunate ramifications for both family life and the community, namely, there are decreased hours for which people are available for volunteering. This creates a further conflict for some people who hold beliefs and values that volunteering contributes to the betterment of the community.

A New Zealand colleague explained how she works up to 10 hours per week as a volunteer counsellor at the local Citizens' Advice Bureau. This was because the organisation was unable to get adequate volunteers to cover the weekly shifts (D. Walford, personal communication, November 11, 2005). Anecdotal notes appear to indicate that many organisations in Australia and globally are now experiencing a lack of people to provide services which have traditionally been provided by volunteers. This view was confirmed by a recent discussion with the local co-coordinator of the Neighbourhood Centre, an Australian social services organisation. The manager (J. Chorney, personal communication, 2 September, 2004) stated how difficult it was to find volunteers to provide some of their social services. In her opinion, work pressures and the cost of living had had a drastic effect on the number of their volunteers. Previously, the volunteer pool consisted of married women and younger retirees. Now many of the women were working and younger retirees were caring for elderly parents or grandchildren. On a global scale the list of volunteers with specialist skills for which aid organisations are constantly advertising for, is endless.

Another issue to consider which could impact on volunteering, is the move in European countries to raise the retirement age to 67 years or remove retirement altogether. Many European countries have concluded that their citizens could have to work longer to offset the increasing cost due to an anticipated pensions crisis as societies age, retirees live longer, and a drop in the number of working age people to pay the taxes to support state funded pension systems (Cowell, 2005).

2.2. Why do people volunteer?

What motivates a person to volunteer? Why would people want to work for no pay? Since relatively little research on volunteer motivation has been conducted with volunteers working in church contexts, I have reviewed studies in similar areas such as social sciences.   I have concluded that volunteer motivations can be divided into five distinct categories.

2.2.1. Altruism is the first category. People's motivation for volunteering changes over time. Both religious and nonreligious people, who are altruistically motivated, help other people because they want to (Creyton, 2000; Macleod, 1993; McSweeney & Alexander, 1996; Noble, 1991). Yu (1999, ¶.1) identified data from the Alberta Civil Society survey which demonstrates that "67% of weekly religious service attenders are leaders and active participants in civil-associations compared to secular Albertans. Among the non-religious, 49% participate in non-religious voluntary work." A study conducted by Lukka and Locke (2000) confirms this and establish that weekly church goers were two or three times more likely to do some form of voluntary activity. Moreover, volunteering motivated by altruism, does not automatically mean that self-sacrifice is involved. Allen (2000) states that often the derivation of altruistic motivation is based on the perception that some people are in need, or will be in need, and that action will alleviate the situation. Studies by Winniford, Carpenter, and Grider (1995), Snyer and Omoto (1992) and Omoto and Snyder (1995) illustrate that altruism was the initial motivator for pupils who participated in service organisations and AIDS programmes. New Zealand VSO volunteer, Wickham (What is volunteering? **http://www.vsa.org.nz?whatisvoluteering.html** p.3) reflects this view when she wrote

> I enjoy very much working with people, learning how they live, their problems, their aspirations, their perspectives in living and working. Also my perspectives have broadened, resulting in a better understanding of the world we live in.

More self-interested motivations, such as social motivation, emerged as being more important for continual participation in the volunteering programmes.

2.2.2. Social motivation.   Muller (2002) asserts that people who are originally altruistically motivated often continue in volunteering due to social motivation. Rewards are now achieved by contact with other people. Radich (2008) describes how the children in her early childhood centre benefitted socially from the experiences, strengths, and interests of the elderly volunteers who participated in the programme. This form of motivation is evident in

a variety of ways such as enjoying the company of others, sharing common experiences, as well as the prestige of developing social and business contacts (Creyton, 2000; Giving & Receiving, 2002; Macleod, 1993; McSweeney & Alexander, 1996; Noble, 1991). Park and Smith (2000) confirm similar findings in their study and acknowledge that many Christian families and friends were influenced by social motivation. Markham and Bonjean, (1995) describe that some organisations attracted and selected members with similar views to assist with consensus within the group. Additionally, one of the significant factors contributing to the length of time for which people volunteer, is their feelings of belonging and the enjoyment of company. Friendships or the desire to make new friends becomes more important than the continued participation in volunteering (Ryan, Kaplan, & Grese, 2001). Allen's (2000) research identifies one of the reasons some people do not volunteer is that they perceive a volunteer group more as a social group than a group helping vulnerable people. Additionally, some groups recruit new members by invitation only.

2.2.3. Goal-directed motivation. People who believe in the goals of an organisation usually believe in the organisation. This, in turn, is their motivator. Goal-directed motivation is the driving force for a person's desire to assist an organisation to achieve its goals (Allen, 2000; Creyton, 2000; Macleod, 1993; McSweeney & Alexander, 1996; Micklos, 1997; Muller, 2002; Noble, 1991). Allen (2000, p.28) contends that the appeal of a cause is often a motivator and encourager for volunteers. This is confirmed by Ryan et al. (2001) who describes that the appeal of helping the environment was a very strong motivator for volunteers. Further, these types of projects have clear goals and provide volunteers with the opportunity to see direct, tangible results from their toil and efforts. Very recent data from research conducted by Muller (2002) suggest that organisations, which experience difficulty communicating their goals, clearly may find the recruitment of volunteers who believe in its goal, more difficult.

2.2.4. Social responsibility. Some volunteers are socially motivated by an ideological belief that they must assist people in need (Allen, 2000; Creyton, 2000; Hutchison & Quarto, 2003; Macleod, 1993; McSweeney & Alexander, 1996; Noble, 1991). Many of this group of volunteers believe that it is their duty if they are able, to work for the benefit of others in more vulnerable situations (Allen, 2000). This attitude is reflected in the following statement by Burgess, a New Zealand VSO volunteer: (What is volunteering? **http://www.vsa.org.nz?whatisvoluteering.html** p.3)

> For my own personal satisfaction, I feel that if, at the end of my assignment, I can see that I have been making some small difference for the better, then I will have achieved my goal and learnt a lot along the way.

A series of studies by Ryan et al. (2001) confirms that many volunteers are motivated by social service activities. In addition studies by Lukka and Locke (2000) and Unruh and Sider (2001) establish that churchgoers are more likely to think it is their responsibility to help the poor. Altruism could also have been the original motivator, but this later transferred to social responsibility. Even though these two motivators are similar, there is one crucial difference. Social responsibility is different from altruism because it is more often the product of community and social pressures. Furthermore, these pressures are driven by the need to conform or the need to assist 'worthy causes' in one's own community (Micklos, 1997). Often, volunteering for reasons of social responsibility is more common in 'collectivist' cultures than in 'individualistic' cultures. This is due to personal gratification taking priority over communal survival (Allen, 2000; Muller, 2002). Park and Smith's (2000) study identify that social responsibility in small group participation over personal gratification is evident in some churchgoing Protestants. These churchgoing Protestants conceptualised this element as part of their church activity.

2.2.5. *Material motivation.* People, who are motivated from a material perspective, participate in volunteer activities because they seek some tangible reward or personal life goal (Creyton, 2000; Macleod, 1993; McSweeney & Alexander, 1996; Noble, 1991; Zemke & Zemke, 1988). Empirical studies by Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, (1998) were conducted across seven countries. The authors assert that young people needed opportunities to identify with individuals, groups, and institutions beyond the boundaries of families and friends. This enabled them to identify with public concerns.   Volunteers who need to achieve some personal goal such as the young people in the study conducted by Flanagan et al., learn some skills or fulfill some personal needs by participating in voluntary work to achieve or develop these (Wallis, 2001). By participating in some specific voluntary work, such as training, a person is able to embellish his/her resume or curriculum vitae by the inclusion of this activity (Giving & Receiving, 2002).

2.3. Volunteers and social capital

What is the relationship between the contributions of volunteers and social capital? What is social capital? Additionally how can the contributions of volunteers ensure effective social capital outcomes? Although there is global consciousness for people to work as volunteers locally and internationally, very little research has been conducted to measure the impact of volunteering and effective social capital outcomes. I wonder what the social capital would equate to for all of the volunteered person power and materials which were contributed to the devastation of many countries affected by the 2006 tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

Several official definitions of social capital exist (Hobbs, 2002). Smith (2007, ¶. 2) describes social capital as:

> Social capital refers to the institutions, relationships, and the norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions. Increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable. Social capital is not just the sum of the institutions which underpin a society – it is the glue that holds them together.

This definition encompasses three main strategies in the formation of social capital which are:

a. bonding strategies which build and enhance trust and cooperation among individual and within communities,

b. bridging strategies which transcend various social divides and break down barriers across groups and communities. This, in turn, enables collaborative action on shared goals (What is social capital? 2002), and

c. linking strategies that connect communities in collective action for social change as well as the development of policies and/or systems (Social Capital Formation, 2001).

A very narrow perspective would regard social capital as a set of horizontal associations between people which consist of social networks and associated norms such as honesty, keeping of commitments, and reciprocity (Fukuyama, 1999). These, in turn, have an effect on community productivity by reducing business costs and improving wellbeing (Aldridge, Helper, & Fitzpatrick, 2002). Hobbs (2002) argues that co-operation between members of a

group contributes to the formation of habits and attitudes which focus on serving the greater good. This has the potential to influence members' interactions with nonmembers. Isolated, parochial communities or groups such as drug cartels could work at cross-purposes to society's collective interest and hinder economic and social development (Fukuyama, 1999). From a broader perspective, social capital accounts for the positive and negative aspects that include horizontal and vertical associations between people. Furthermore, social capital accounts for relationship behaviours between people in larger organisations such as firms Myers Ltd (What is Social Capital? 2002). Even though horizontal associations give communities a sense of identity and common goal/purpose, to prevent the pursuit of narrow, parochial interests, bridging strategies are needed (Fukuyama, 1999). These will form ties across various social divides and actively provide access to community information and material resources.

An even broader perspective of social capital includes the social and political environment which enables norms such as honesty, keeping of commitments and reciprocity to develop. Within this context social capital is vital to the most formalised institutional relationships and structures such as the government, laws of the land, court system, as well as civil and political freedoms. It is essential that linking strategies are in place to ensure common goals can be identified and pursued between state, corporate and civil representatives. Therefore, at all levels of society, social capital contributes to social and economic development (What is Social Capital? 2002).

2.4. Volunteers: the State and faith-based nonprofit social services

Creyton (2000) posits there is now a growing trend for partnerships to be established between government, corporate, and local communities with a focus on the capacity of the local community. Partnerships, whether formal or informal, are currently regarded as the most effective approach to handle the many challenges communities around the world. This also applies to effective use of community resources. Interestingly, many corporate and state organisations are encouraging their staff to participate in volunteering both within and outside paid time.

Similar to the situation in many western countries, there has been a push to privatize government services and generally retrench the welfare state to the nonprofit sector (Hiemstra, 2002; Initiative T. M. V. S., 2001). Hiemstra, (2002, ¶.1) posits:

> In Alberta, as in many other provinces, governments have argued that churches and religious non-profit agencies should shoulder more responsibility for social and other services. In the United States, President George Bush has set off widespread debate with his support for public funding for faith-based organisations.

This trend is evident in Australia. There has been increasing pressure on churches and religious nonprofit organisations to provide more social services in their local communities. Often these social services provided by non-profit organisations, are categorized as the third or voluntary sector. The Social Work Dictionary describes these organisations as being formed to fulfill some social purpose other than providing monetary rewards for financial backers (Hiemstra). A report presented by Salamon (2005) focuses on the differences between faith-based social services and church based services. Faith based services are primarily dedicated to social services whereas, church based social services are dedicated to worship, and social services are secondary functions. The church associated with this study provides faith based social services. Many people are accessing these services, which are provided through a variety of ministries based at the church. These people are under no obligation to become active members in the church congregation. This lack of religious pressure on recipients is similar to a study of congregation based social services cited by Unruh and Sider (2001) where very few attempts were observed to infuse religious messages into the social services provided.

The church in this study receives no funding from the State. It is therefore able to provide social services, which reflect its religious ethos. The interns participated within these social service structures. These were family ministries, leadership management that includes small group support, pastoral care, and administration. This meant that all intern volunteers worked closely with church people, as well as community people who were not active church participants. Therefore, it was essential that the intern volunteers demonstrated considerable tolerance towards people with other religious beliefs. Any practices, on the part of the interns, which reflected Christian exclusivism, were not acceptable similar to Leffel's (2003) findings.

2.5 Religious pluralism and faith-based social services

Members of many churches, synagogues, and other faith communities offer faith-based social services which rely on volunteers (Riis, 1999). Lukka and Locke (2000) contend that as a result of religious pluralism communities are diverse and vibrant and alive. Communities are real places. What is religious pluralism? Fazel (2003, ¶. 1) postulates that "philosophically, religious pluralism is the theory that the great world religions constitute varying conceptions of, and responses to, the one ultimate divine reality." Religious pluralism opposes any form of monism such as a monopoly or a total society (Riis, 1999). The great world religions are complementary, each of which stress a different aspect of the same, many-sided, and ultimate reality. In this Baptist church, Christian exclusivism is present because the position of the church adheres to the philosophy of Leffel (2003) which states that the bible is the final word on matters of ultimate truth. Additionally, the faith-based social services provided by this church reflect this religious vision and shape its services and practices (Hiemstra, 2002). On one hand, much tolerance and acceptance is demonstrated to people with other religious beliefs and this philosophy underpins the intern volunteers' service provisions for their clients. On the other hand, a report released by the Federal Government in December, 2004, entitled *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia* has concerned many Australian Baptists. Members of Australian Baptist churches were urged to write to the then Prime Minister Hon John Howard and Senator Amanda Vanstone (Minister for Education) to express disapproval of the report's recommendations that funding should be available for ministers of other religions to be employed in schools. This was as well as Chaplains aligned to the Christian faith (Robertson, 2005). This intolerance of other religious faiths could impact upon the impartial social services provided by Australian Baptist churches.

A comparative study conducted by Hiemstra (2002) examined faith-based social services which explicitly indicated their faith in the Alberta area (Canada). These social services were associated with a wide variety of religious philosophies and included ones connected to aboriginal spirituality, Islam, Judaism, Hindu, Sikh, Latter Day Saints, the Catholic church as well as evangelical and mainstream Protestant churches. Social services provided by these religious agencies included addictions, counseling, adoption, child welfare, day care, extended care facilities, food banks, homeless shelters, and a variety of emergency shelters. Generally, the type of religion the organisation was connected with was irrelevant to the social services provided. Additionally these services were heavily reliant on volunteers.

Some of these faith-based social services have been around for over 100 years. Furthermore, the findings of The Manitoba Voluntary Sector Initiative (Initiative, T. M. V. S., 2001) and the study conducted by Unruh and Sider (2001) confirm these findings by Hiemstra (2002).

Some of the findings of this comparative study are:

a. Most of the religious agencies had a statement of faith or statement of religious principles for their organisations,

b. Over three quarters of the religious organisations employed staff that had similar religious orientations.

c. Over 80% of the religious organisations reported that their religious orientation influenced the character of their social services.

d. Nearly 100% of all the religious organisations identified a generalized spirit of love/service and empathy amongst their staff.

e. Very few of the faith based social services were limited to the religious organisation's clientele. This indicated that religious nonprofits are clearly not self-interest organisations that exclusively serve their own communities; rather, they serve the general public.

f. Just over half of the religious organizations maintained a strong link with their initiating religious community and this was in the form of board members or volunteers. (Hiemstra, 2002, p.32)

It can be concluded from this study that no obvious difference in the services provided could be highlighted among the faith-based social services. Even though the religious ethos of the faith-based social services influenced the vision of these organisations, there appears to be more similarities than differences in the social services provided. All religious organisations seek a just society (Teselle, 2002). These similarities in the faith-based social services demonstrate that altruism and egoism is not exclusive to church going Protestants. Consequently, a pluralistic approach to studying human behaviour is required (Lukka & Locke, 2000). Studying and analysing human behaviours of their clients occurred for the intern volunteers within a community of practice.

CHAPTER 3
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

According to Wenger (1998, p. 263),

> Identity formation is a lifelong process whose phases and rhythms change as the world changes. From this perspective, we need to think about education not merely in the terms of an initial period of socialization into culture, but more fundamentally in terms of rhythms by which communities and individuals continually renew themselves.

Twelve years of learning the same content as my classmates, saw the end of my younger identity and the emergence of others of which volunteer teacher was one. I observe myself as a tall skinny teenager who is completing her final year at the single sex secondary school and embarking on what Wenger (1998) describes as the next phase of my life. Yes, my identity was changing after 12 years of immersion in the delivery of codified knowledge in simulated situations, where the focus was on an instructional environment and pedagogical authority and which allowed for very little negotiation (Wenger, 1998). In contrast to my mother's generation for whom domestic work was the dominant expectation I had more control over my transition into my post-school life. This may well have been due to the influence of liberal feminists such as Betty Friedan, had on society in western countries. This influence was very evident especially during the first half of the 20th century (Storkey, 1993).

During this period, pressure from women's groups brought about enormous change in the political, legal, and educational status of women. These were achieved by working through societal structures already in place. By acquiring these rights through rational argument, supported by radical and passionate action especially in the political sphere, women could pursue their potential, as well as accepting personal responsibility if they failed (Storkey, 1993; Whelehan, 1995).

Image 4. Lindy as a senior school student

I glance at these photos of me in school uniform in the early 1960s. I, along with numerous other girls, aligned and conformed to this school culture (Davies, Dormer, Gannon, Laws, Rocco, Taguchi, et al., 2001).   Prompted by these photos I recall:

a. the colour of regulation shoes and stockings changed from black to brown;

b. the great pride I took in cleaning my shoes every day I went to school;

c. the regulations where all students had to wear navy 'brushed' pants under our school uniforms

d.   the 6th form teacher we had who told us constantly we would not pass the final year's exams;

e. the straight rows we sat in and would only speak when spoken to by the teacher; and

f.   the limited engagement with the teachers and other students .

These snippets of information illustrate some pedagogical practices of the late 1940s and 1950s.

Throughout these years, I can see that my identity changed to conform to my career aspirations. I imagined myself as a teacher, no longer a volunteer

teacher. In fact, I was continually creating images of my classrooms. One day I would be the person up at the front of class – any class – and imagination is an important source of identification as described by Wenger (1998). I was moving from passivity to action. I was responding to a protesting, challenging inner voice (Belenky et al., 1986). The time for overt changes of identity had arrived. I saw myself making career decisions. This student and volunteer Sunday school teacher - this me – was making decisions which would be the catalyst for change of one identity, from that of volunteer teacher, to that of teacher.

Now, when I reflect upon those 12 years of being locked into a system, there are some very important considerations of which I need to be cognizant. These include the effectiveness of my teaching, the intern volunteers, and our community of practice or 'home of identity' (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). Similar to my identification by alignment to my secondary school, alignment to the Baptist Church Ministry Training Centre occurred upon the intern volunteers' enrolment regardless of their learning environments and teachers. Lack of engagement with my teachers and the content stunted the potential growth of my identity for many years. To avoid this occurring in my classes of interns I endeavoured to model the importance of us all working on our relationships with each other and with the world. This had the potential of developing a 'lived' sense of who we were, are, and could be. Additionally, to enhance this process, my pedagogy provided many opportunities for engagement in practice and imagination for the students in their areas of specialisation. Wenger (1998) defines this process as experiencing the effects we have on the world as well as discovering how the world treats the likes of us in a community of practice. This is the second dimension. This second dimension builds on the first dimension of volunteerism which was addressed in Chapter 2.

3.1. Communities of practice

Moore and Brooks (2000) assert that it is human nature for individual people to interact, communicate, share information or meaning, and learn from one another. Groups of people have been around since time immemorial because they realised they could benefit from sharing their knowledge, insights, and experiences with others with similar interest or goals (Nicklos, 2000). Traditionally, survival skills have been practised and passed from one generation to the next by trial and error (Smith, 2005; Wenger, 1998, June). This has been the means by which such groups of people have survived in hostile environments. The Maori people of Aotearoa New Zealand are a prime example of this. Their survival was dependent upon their being capable of protecting their families and communities from hostile tribes. As a result, they have preserved their cultural heritage, which is very evident in the Aotearoa New Zealand culture today. Thus, the Maori people have been their own source of learning and the role they contribute in the world today.

Many people such as risk-takers, explorers and others have dared to be different from the perceived norm and challenged both the known and unknown. Some of these people became known for the knowledge they gained and were able to share with others – especially those who want to explore new frontiers (Moore & Brooks, 2000). This generational learning was a natural phenomenon and has been implemented to ensure the art of survival and the means of improving situations and conditions in communities. In the 1950s, a little known New Zealand mountaineer named Edmund Hillary and a Nepalese mountaineer, Sherpa Tenzing Noray, conquered Mt Everest. In the years following this feat, Hillary carried out extensive social services for the Nepalese and inspired many people to provide social services in Nepal. Groups of volunteers have since traveled to Nepal to engage in projects such as the building of schools and hospitals, bound together by similar goals and dreams.

Similarly, the group of intern volunteers in this study was bound together as a community to legitimize and challenge and extend their individual practices and dreams (Barab & Duffy, 2000; McDermott, 2000; Smith, 2005; Wenger, 1998). The members of this community of practice are bound together informally by what they do together and their common beliefs. According to Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002, p. 4) "communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an on-going basis."

Wenger (2006) endorses this perspective on communities of practice. Barab and Duffy (2000) define a community of practice as a collection of individuals who share mutually defined practices, beliefs, and understandings, which would continue over an extended time frame, in the pursuit of a common endeavour. In concurring with this view Smith (2005) identifies the difference between a community of practice and a community of interest or a historical community, as involving shared practice.

3.2. What then is a community of practice?

According to Wenger (1998) communities of practice are an integral part of our daily lives. Research conducted by Smith (2005) concurs with Wenger et al., (2002, p.32) who argue that

> A community of practice is a unique combination of three fundamental elements: A domain of knowledge which defines a set of issues; a community of people who care about this domain; and the shared practice that they are developing to be effective in their domain.
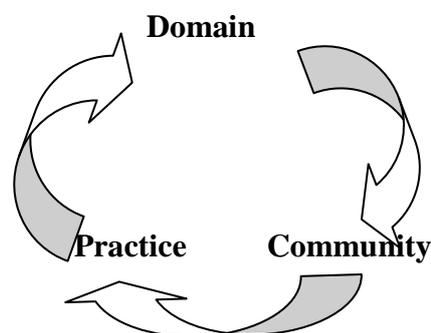
Illustration 2. The essential characteristics of any community of practice

More recent research conducted by Wenger (2006) confirms his earlier findings that despite the many forms a community of practice may take, there are still three commonalities in the basic structure: domain, community, and practice.

3.2.1. Domain. Initially, common ground and a sense of common identity create the *domain*. When the domain is well defined, it legitimizes the community because the members, as well as other stakeholders affirm the purpose and values. This motivates the members to contribute and share their knowledge, which, in turn, guides their learning and provides

meanings to their actions. The potential for implementing unwise plans of action are reduced (Barab & Duffy, 2000; Smith, 2005; Wenger, 2006; Wenger et al., 2002). The domain for the intern volunteers was their common belief that God had called them to deepen their knowledge and skills within the church community.

3.2.2. Community. The second commonality involves both the heart and head as integral aspects of learning. A *community* provides an environment where members experience comradeship that enhances the intellectual processes. In fact, a community creates the social fabric of learning (Wenger et al., 2002) and an environment where members are encouraged to share ideas and challenges, expose one's ignorance, ask difficult questions, and listen very carefully (Barab & Duffy, 2000; Smith, 2005; Wenger, 1998, 2006). Similar to many communities of practice, the community in this study was of multi-abilities, and this assisted with the facilitation of informal mentoring and critical reflection. More capable and competent interns supported and mentored less capable members. As they became more competent in their practices, they faced challenges that were more complex. Nevertheless, their primary knowledge source will still be the community of practice (Allee, 2000).

Instead of developing a 'kind of theory-in-knowing' based on on-going similar experiences, the interns were challenged to develop higher-order judgments. These higher-order judgments are the product of reflection. For example, one of the interns accompanied the Church Pastor into a school where he was conducting religious education. This provided opportunities for the intern to observe, learn from, and reflect on, the Pastor's established competent practices.

3.2.3. Practice. Finally, the *practice* that is shared by all community members relates to a common set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information styles, language stories, and documents (Wenger et al., 2002; Wenger, 1998, 2006). Once a community has been established, the members are expected to understand and master the body of shared knowledge to enable the community to operate efficiently (Barab & Duffy, 2000; Smith, 2005). All intern volunteers understood that Christian principles adhered to by this Baptist church underpinned all services provided within their areas of specialisation. Furthermore, the common Christian cultural and historical heritage of the Baptist Church contributed to the cohesion of the community.

3.3. A community of practice with dimensions of educational design

As the coordinator of the community of practice in this study, it was essential that I appreciated and understood the dimensions of educational design required in such a group Wenger (1998, p. 263) assumes

> Neither that education takes places in schools as we know them nor that education is for children. In fact, once education is understood in terms of identity, it may no longer seem such a good idea to 'front-load education' at the beginning of life.

Formation of our identity is a lifelong process in which stages are influenced and modified as our world changes. In turn, communities and individuals are continually renewing themselves because of these stages and rhythms (Wenger, 1998). For individuals and communities to renew themselves, it is important to understand that education becomes a mutual developmental process between them. In fact, it is an investment for their future (Smith, 2005). Histories of learning can be taken forward because of the formation of new identities, not as a reproduction of the past through cultural transmission. To ensure that the intern volunteers within this particular community of practice were able to renew themselves, it was essential that I considered the following four dimensions of educational design in all aspects of their areas of specialisation (Wenger, 1998).

3.3.1. Participation and reification. According to Wenger (1998) the participation of people, is a complex process that involves doing, talking, thinking, feeling, and belonging. This process involves the whole person, including their bodies, minds, emotions, and social relations. Canny (2005) argues that by participating in the negotiation process people are able to construct meaning. Participation inevitably leads to reification where abstract ideas and behaviours become concrete in some way, such as physical artifacts, or processes, or recognised roles. Furthermore, Canny (2005) argues that this occurs when abstract ideas and behaviours become concrete in some manner such as recognised roles or established processes. Reification activities require people to proceed through a process of giving form to their experiences by writing reflective journals or group discussions that congeal these experiences into fixed forms and are given the status of objects as reflections of practices (Smith, 2005: Wenger, 1998). The challenge for me was to ensure that there was a balance between the production of appropriate materials and the participative experiences that provide entry into a practice/skill (Wenger, 2006). This practice/skill was not an imposed prescribed curriculum, but a curriculum in its own right because it stemmed from the interns'

areas of specialisation. As recommended by Wenger for members of communities of practice, the community members must access the world around them as a learning resource, as well as contributing to the world by being a learning resource.

3.3.2. Designed and the emergent: Teaching and learning. It is important to acknowledge that teaching does not automatically cause learning (Smith, 2005). In fact, what ends up being learned may or may not be what the instructor intended or planned. Wenger (1998, p.267) argues that "learning is an emergent, on-going process, which may use teaching as one of its many structuring resources. In this regard, teachers and instructional materials become resources for learning in much more complex ways than through their pedagogical intentions". In other words, as the training facilitator, I considered the importance between the interaction of planned experiences and emergent ones: the ability of my teaching and the intern volunteers' learning to interact as complementary and integrated resources for each other (Wenger, 2006). To ensure this occurred, educational imagination underpinned designed and emergent experiences, such as being interviewed by an interviewer who had Buddhist beliefs. Therefore, the interns were provided with opportunities to orient themselves within the world, reflect upon themselves and their situations, and experiment and explore new possibilities (Smith, 2005., Wenger, 1998). The interns were moved out of their comfort zones and were required to interact with someone who had a differing religious perspective to theirs.

3.3.3. The local and the global. Learning which takes place within a self-contained educational setting does not guarantee a wider scope of relevance for what is learnt. It could be argued that it is just learning for the sake of learning. The ability to apply learning flexibly to experiences is dependent upon deepening the negotiation of meaning – engaging in a dialogue and questioning ourselves about our core beliefs, not just our understanding of the complexities of lived experiences (Cunliffe & Jun, 2002). It is a question of and questioning of identity, which is the means by which we carry our experiences from context to context (Wenger, 1998). Studies conducted by Baumgartner (2001) and Grimmett (1989) confirm that deep transformative experiences which are underpinned by the psychological/cognitive and contextual/socio-cultural approaches to learning, are more likely to be more widely significant and effective long term than extensive coverage of a broad curriculum.

For the reasons mentioned, it was important that I planned deep transformative experiences such as role plays where people of other faiths challenged the legitimacy of the interns' services. These role plays enabled the intern volunteers to be liberated from internal/external cultural and contextual influences. This enabled them to understand who they were, were not, could be, and where they had come from and could go. Consequently, their understanding of themselves as learners could change and enhance "their ability to move among practices and learn whatever they need to learn where they are" (Wenger, 1998, p.240) within the local and global communities. Instead of attempting to bring about change by verbalism or activism, reflection and action was directed at the beliefs, assumptions and values to be transformed (Freire, 1996).

3.3.4. Identification and negotiability: Identities of participation. Within any educational setting, issues of identification and negotiability are at several levels such as in the classroom setting or in the cafeteria/playground. Because traditional pedagogy often is disconnected from the local community and too standardized to support meaningful forms of identification the cafeteria/playground becomes the centerpiece of school life and school learning (Wenger, 1998). McDermott (2000) concurs that learning occurs at different levels within an environment. To enable the intern volunteers to seek and develop their own identities my pedagogy, especially the reified content, could not be sequestered but immersed in their areas of specialisation practice. This would assist the process of manifesting an identity of participation. To facilitate this, opportunities of engagement, such as group discussions after role plays, were offered to assist the interns to realise and comprehend their own location within their areas of specialisation and its relationship to the church and local community (Smith, 2005). This, in turn, assisted the interns to engage in their own identities "on a meaningful trajectory and affords some ownership of meaning" (Wenger, 1998, p. 270).

Drawing together the ideas, experiences and techniques in the studies of Allee (2000), Barab and Duffy, (2000), Moore and Brooks (2000), Nickols (2000), Wenger et al. (2002) and Wenger (1998), there are four common dimensions to communities of practice that offer their members the strengths which are not usually present in other types of working groups. These dimensions are

   a. the 'participation and reification of group members',
   b. consideration of the 'designed' and 'the emergent: teaching and learning',
   c. the 'local and global considerations', and

      d. the aspects of 'identification and negotiability: identities of participation'**.** Within the community of practice there are opportunities for members to progress along a trajectory while working alongside more competent members- to move from a peripheral member to a core member (Wenger, 1998). However, to progress along this trajectory and become more competent members, it was very important for the interns to develop critical reflective practices.

According to Creyton (2000) there is a strong educative component in many joint activities in which people work together for social change. Creyton (2000) identifies several typologies for volunteer learning, but proposes that Mezirow's (1998) three learning domains of instructional, communicative, and emancipatory, are the most appropriate. Of these three learning styles, emancipatory learning underpinned my pedagogy with the intern volunteers. Constantly I challenged them, which, in turn, provided them with opportunities for critical reflection. This process enabled them to identify and challenge the assumptions which underpinned their beliefs and explore alternative to these assumptions. This, in turn, provided a basis for changing their beliefs, attitudes, and actions (Creyton, 2000). My goal was, based on the work of Freire (1996), to encourage authentic reflection which considered people in their relations with the world.

CHAPTER 4

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

The years which followed my graduation as a teacher could be written as a juxtaposition of religious, cultural, social, and emotional contradictions. My experiences foreground me as a failed primary school teacher who believed falling pregnant was a way to be released from her teaching bond; as a newly married wife; as a mother to three children; as a daughter and daughter-in-law; and finally as an early childhood trainee in the New Zealand Playcentre Organisation. Within my status of woman I had a multitude of roles which were only contributing to my confusion. Even though I appeared to be juggling all of these balls successfully, my emotional turmoil was mounting and creating many hours of anguish. Mezirow (1998) would describe my situation as experiencing a disorienting dilemma.
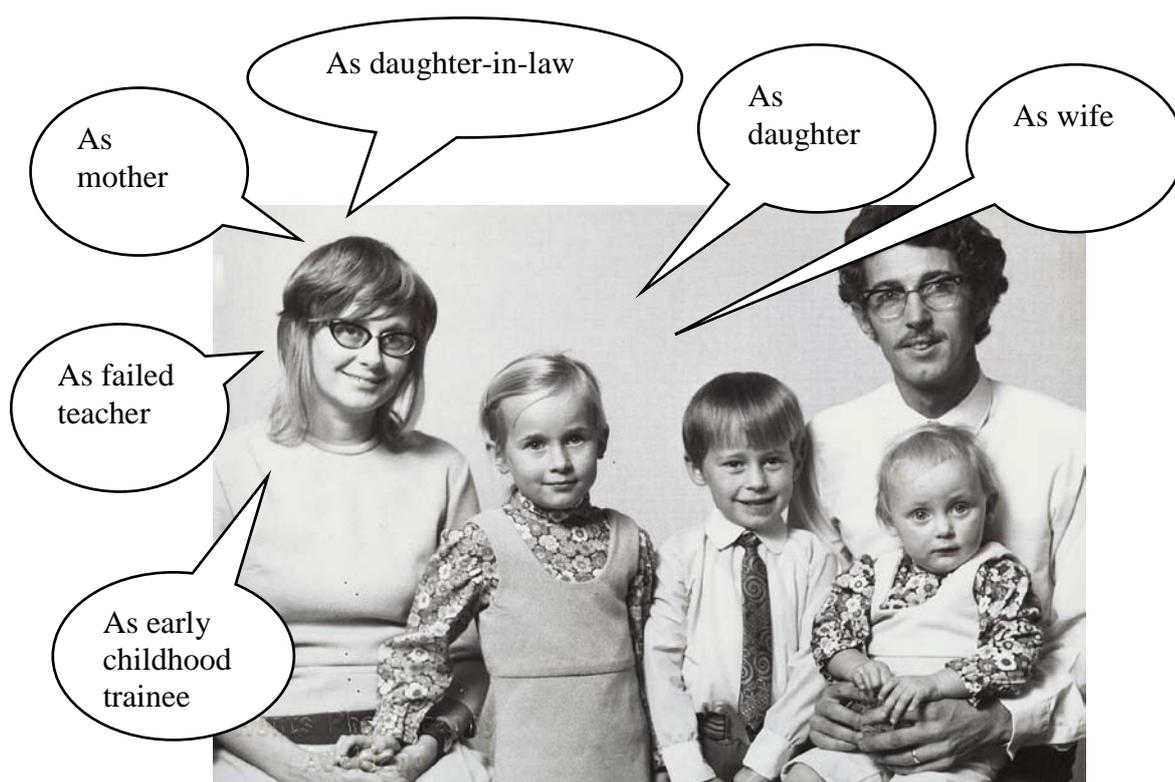
Image 5. A multiplicity of roles within the role of woman

During my many hours of anguish I constantly examined issues which pertained to my situation. A major issue was that of my identity as a failed teacher. By the age of 19 I had achieved my God directed goal of qualifying as a primary

school teacher. Both God and my parents would have been so proud of me. As Goodson and Walker (1991, p. 136) describe I had found my "centre of gravity" – teaching, but this did not last very long. Within 6 months of starting teaching I realised that I was experiencing extreme difficulties and was not coping with 30 young children from very low socio-economic backgrounds. Another issue was my rationale for falling pregnant. Even though this provided me with an escape from teaching young children, it created another issue: that of being a Christian and believing teaching was my calling in life. It did not help that my parents informed me that they were too young to be grandparents. Why did I desperately want to be released from my childhood dream of being a teacher? Why had God allowed me to have such soul destroying experiences? If this experience was so devastating, why did I want to commence my early childhood training? My protesting inner voice was struggling to be heard (Belenky et al., 1986).

Dissatisfaction with the status quo was evident. I seemed to be constantly confronted by contradictions in my everyday life. Similar to many other women of that period, the assumptions, beliefs, social and cultural conventions of 1960s had silenced the person, Lindy. My protesting inner voice was being listened to. I began to question the assumptions, values, beliefs, social and cultural conventions of the 1960s which underpinned the relevance of my present situation, and their impact upon me. After several months of critically reflecting about the underpinnings of my problem, I began to explore my future options. Finally, I decided to return to teaching. I was listening to my protesting inner voice and began to respond to my life situation. My disorienting dilemma was the catalyst for the commencement of my journey of transformative learning but I did not realise this at the time.

1975 saw my return to the classroom as a fulltime permanent teacher. Initially my pedagogy was very traditional – similar to my childhood experiences – minus the fear factor. My pedagogy as described by Sutton (2005) and Hussein (2006) was subject-oriented and had limited value for students. My primary goal for the students was the acquisition of knowledge. A goal which characterised my belief was that I was the holder of all the knowledge and power.

The school curricula was literally my bible and new content taught was built on previous knowledge (Baumgartner, 2001). For a short period of time I was satisfied with my pedagogy. Gradually I was beginning to have doubts about traditional ways of teaching. I started to consider issues such as providing a programme that catered for the learning needs of all students regardless of ability or disability, class, race, or gender. Humphries and Martin (2000) assert that assumptions such as homogeneity and 'a level playing field' for all, which includes class, race and gender issues, are not addressed in subject- oriented pedagogy. This was definitely the case in my classroom.

As Lindy the teacher, I began to critically reflect upon my pedagogy. My protesting inner voice was having an impact on many areas of my life. This necessitated my taking on the role of external observer to critically examine my own teaching practices – my own experiences. I examined my noninclusive practices, such as not providing suitable learning experiences for children who could not read at all. I did not cater for individual students' learning needs. Why was I not providing for the learning needs of the students when I was conscious of the underpinning inclusive pedagogical theories? What was influencing my theory in practice? Was I, as described by Imel (1992, ¶. 2), "espousing to one theory but using another in practice"? Why did these

contradictions and doubts exist? Was this another disorienting dilemma to bring about more change as identified by Mezirow (1998)?

I realised that many of the negative influences from my childhood schooling experiences as the tall skinny girl were impinging upon my pedagogy. The all-to-powerful teacher of yesteryear was still controlling my behaviours. The acknowledgement of this was painful as I believed I had shaken off these childhood images. I could identity many social, cultural, and contextual aspects of my classroom of that time which resembled many social, cultural, and contextual aspects of my childhood classroom. Why did I allow limited interaction between the children? Why were most areas of the curriculum delivered in whole-class methodology? Many internal and external influences were suffocating me and controlling my pedagogy. As described by Hussein (2006) I was moving through a process of transformation and reconstruction of my personal, cognitive, and professional traits.

Henderson (2001) argues that a person is being empowered when he/she is developing the ability and confidence to change in one's life, and alter the environment. Pedagogical baggage of yesteryear had to go. I forced myself to reflect critically upon my pedagogy while constructing knowledge from the sociohistorical context in which it occurred (Baumgartner, 2001; Grimmett, 1989; Sutton, 2005). Slowly but surely the jigsaw started to fall into place. To change my style of pedagogy it was necessary for me to examine my childhood school experiences, maybe re-examine them, acknowledge how they were controlling me, and then reject them. I had confidence in my ability to change my pedagogy (Henderson, 2001; Willis, 2007). I had discovered a process which empowered me to conceptualise my pedagogy within a broader educational

context. Consequently I was able to make the crucial connections between my conceptual understandings, children's learning, and curriculum documents.

My journey of transformative learning was continuing and is still evident in my pedagogy as a tertiary lecturer 30 years later. My teaching was changing and developing. This was due to several factors such as understanding the assumptions which underpinned my teaching, developing critical practices, and engaging in pedagogical discussions with my colleagues (Mezirow, 1998). This journey enabled me to decide which pedagogical attributes were to underpin the provision of an effective learning environment for the interns in this study.

My aim was to enable the interns to understand themselves and why they behaved in certain ways, and to provide a non-judgmental and culturally sensitive service within their areas of specialisation. They needed to understand and critically reflect on the interrelationship between their experiences, their beliefs, values, and biases, and their present behaviours. To achieve this I endeavoured to incorporate six practices of Mezirow (1998) to underpin all of my pedagogy.   Other theorists such as Sutton (2005) and Grimmet (1989) have contributed to these practices.

At first most of my pedagogy occurred within a 'group setting' in which all of the interns were encouraged to be 'active learners' (Sutton, 2005). To enable them to critically reflect upon and challenge their beliefs, assumptions, values, and prejudices (Grimmett, 1989) 'the learning environment had to be supportive and trusting' with deliberate 'acknowledgement of all players' emotions and feelings' (Sutton, 2005). Investigations conducted by Barlas (2001, ¶. 3) confirm that "intense emotional content of learning experiences served powerfully to trigger reflective learning."   I was also cognizant that

transformative learning could be 'time consuming, and that some of the interns required more time to work through any 'change processes' of the reconstruction or rejection of reconstructed experiences (Sutton, 2005; Taylor, 2000). Instead of "merely adapting to changing circumstances by more diligently applying old ways of knowing . . ." the interns could "discover a need to acquire new perspectives in order to gain a more complete understanding of changing events and a higher degree of control over lives" (Mezirow, 1998, p.3).

4.1. Becoming a critical reflective practitioner

The literature reviews of Chapter 2 (Volunteerism) and Chapter 3 (Communities of Learners)' link to recent literature on these themes. This third review focuses on the development of critical reflective practices through the process of transformative learning. Once again links are be made to the interns' experiences in this study, and the effectiveness of my pedagogy.

Creyton (2000) describes critical reflection as a process that identifies and challenges the assumptions which underlie people's beliefs, attitudes, and actions. In turn this provides opportunities for reflection about life processes and our choices within them (Willis, 2007). Additionally, Imel (1992, ¶.1) describes reflective practice as:

> . . . a mode that integrates or links thought and action with reflection. It involves thinking about and critically analyzing one's actions with the goal of improving one's professional practice. Engaging in reflective practice requires individuals to assume the perspective of an external observer in order to identify the assumptions and feelings underlying their practice and then to speculate about how these assumptions and feelings affect practice.

Schön (1983) confirms both of these perspectives when he implies that the reflective process is a method implemented by professionals. They implement this process to examine the requirements of a situation and connect their theoretical ideas with the environmental conditions, or the theoretical designs of a professional with a client. Furthermore, Cunliffe and Jun (2002, ¶. 5) describe this cyclic pattern as "reflecting-in-action" which integrates a

process of logical exploration, with ongoing testing and retesting of a hypothesis. This process enables professionals to develop strategies which align with situational and client conditions of a community organisation. Within this environment, knowledge and skills are constructed, practised, reconstructed, and repractised in deliberate continuous circles. This cyclic pattern advances the collective knowledge/skills base in such a manner that the growth of members in the community is supported.

Imel (1992) and Preece (2003) argue that reflection does not address personal issues such as values and beliefs, and has the potential of resulting in superficial and short-lived changes to practices. An internal process known as reflexivity, or critical reflection, addresses this aspect. Even though there are two types of reflexivity - that of personal reflexivity and epistemological reflexivity, personal reflexivity is the focus of this research. Personal reflexivity is an internal process wherein we examine and question ourselves, our values, experiences, interest, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims for life, and social identities, in the process of exercising critical consciousness. This enables us not only to question our understanding of a specific event, but also to challenge our core beliefs (Cunliffe & Jun, 2002). Willis (2007, p.7) supports this and states "It is through these [self stories or personal myths] that a person works to define and enrich an authentic 'inner self', often not without struggle through choices made, rejecting as far as possible, alternative less acceptable ideals and options." An outcome of critiquing beliefs and ideals and making changes indicates an openness to change. Therefore, critical reflection demonstrates a willingness of people to exist as transforming selves and bringing about change within relationships, organisations and public discourse.

In order to provide socially, culturally, and spiritually appropriate services for their clients, I encouraged the intern volunteers to practise reflexivity. This was embedded in their experiences and acknowledged that they constructed their social and spiritual worlds (O'Sullivan, 1999) as they interacted with their clients (Cunliffe & Jun, 2002). Maxwell (2002) would argue that transformative education provides a means by which participants have the opportunity to position their understandings within themselves, with other members of the community of learners, and within the community and world. This meant that my pedagogy had the potential to liberate the interns from internal/external cultural, spiritual, and contextual influences that created barriers to their options and controlled their lives (Imel, 1998; Willis. 2007). I deliberately designed my pedagogy to challenge the interns to

transcend mere reflective practices by using a transformative learning approach (addressed later in this chapter) instead of mechanistic or consumer-orientated models. Mere reflection on one's professional practices has the potential for the examination only of the values, assumptions, and strategies, which support theories about practices. From my perspective it was essential for the interns to become more aware of their theories–in-use and more conscious of the contradictions between what they did and what they aspired to do (Imel, 1998; O'Sullivan, 1999; Schön, 1989; Willis, 2007).

To enhance the development of reflexivity with adult learners I have examined briefly different methods of adult learning to demonstrate which one allows for this to occur.

4.2. Different models of adult learning

The literature on adult education supports the view that teaching adults should differ to teaching children and adolescents. To be reflexive teachers of adult learners it is essential to understand theories of education as they apply, to adult learners and not simply accept the theory of andragogy. The widely espoused theory of andragogy suggests that adult learners expect learner-centred settings in which they can establish their own goals, and centre their own learning on their present life needs (Mezirow, 1998).   Knowles (1980) argues that andragogy which is derived from Greek words meaning 'man-leading' should be distinguished from pedagogy. Pedagogy is derived from a Greek word which means 'child-leading'. One method to establish whether teaching adults differs from teaching children and adolescents is to examine three types of learning in which adults engage. Marks (2002, ¶. 3) notes how Knowles premises andragogy on "at least four crucial assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners that are different from the assumptions about child learners on which traditional pedagogy is premised. A fifth was added later." These crucial assumptions are self-concept, experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn.

4.2.1. Subject-oriented or mechanistic approach. The primary goal of this first model of adult learning is the acquisition of content. The teacher is regarded as the holder of the knowledge and students view themselves as the gainer of the knowledge and skills. Additionally, curriculum methods emphasise drill and repetition (O'Sullivan, 1999). In the

western world, subject-oriented learning is acknowledged by many teachers as the method of learning in which most youth engage. Ziegler, Paulus, and Woodside (2006) argue that this model of pedagogy has the potential to restrict the students' opportunities for meaning making dialogue.

Within this model of adult education, the holder of all knowledge, the teacher, has the power. New content taught builds on previous knowledge and this addition of knowledge is accomplished by the implementation of various types of reinforcement (Baumgartner, 2001). Humphries and Martin (2000) assert that assumptions such as homogeneity and 'a level playing field' for all, which includes class, race, and gender, are not addressed. Moreover, authoritarian and hierarchical assessment structures underpin this model (Humphries & Martin, 2000). Creyton (2000) notes that it is this model of adult education which is widely used for the development of work skills.

4.2.2. Consumer-oriented adult learning. This type of learning is influenced by the mechanistic, psychological/cognitive, and contextual/socio-cultural approaches to teaching. Fulfilling the expressed needs of learners is the goal of consumer-oriented learning. Within this approach, learners are empowered by taking control of their learning. They set their own learning goals, identify the objectives, and select the resources, which are relevant to them within their own cultural environment. Learning within a consumer-oriented approach may be a valid choice (Baumgartner, 2001) in some situations. Teachers are viewed as facilitators and do not challenge or question the decisions relating to learning made by the learners. Critical investigations by Zemke and Zemke (1988) support the view that teachers are the facilitators for learners who seek out their own learning opportunities.

Collaborative and co-operative learning, and other types of experiential learning, are prevalent in consumer-oriented learning. This type of learning is not exclusive to adult learning. Within a constructivist framework, both Piaget and Vygotsky argue that children are constructors of their own intellectual structures through interaction and dialogues with peers, teachers, parents, and others (Martin, 1997). Creyton (2000) argues that this model of adult education does allow for social and communication skills but does not guarantee the development of reflexivity in learners. O'Sullivan (1999, p.51) is very critical of this model of adult education and states strongly that "this model works knowingly or unknowingly on behalf of the power of institutions".

4.2.3. Transformative learning. This is similar to the consumer- oriented approach and is underpinned by the psychological/cognitive and contextual/socio-cultural, approaches to learning. Within this type of learning environment, adult learners are strongly encouraged to critically reflect while constructing knowledge from the sociohistorical context in which it occurs (Baumgartner, 2001; Grimmett, 1989). This combined approach enables learners to be liberated from internal/external cultural and contextual influences that limit their options and control their lives (Imel, 1998, Willis, 2007). Over an extended period, these influences have been taken for granted or viewed as beyond the control of the learner.

Mezirow (1998) states that transformative learning emphasises learner transformation, and can therefore only take place in adulthood. He further argues that to enable transformation to take place, a person must be able to recognise that he/she is captured within his/her own history and is reliving it. In models of transformative learning critical reflection, is the central pivot for learning (Daley, 1997) and leads adults to achieve personal autonomy and continual self-development (Reybold, 2001). Mezirow (1998, p. 3) also states that

> In adulthood rather than merely adapting to changing circumstances by more diligently applying old ways of knowing . . . individuals discover a need to acquire new perspectives in order to gain a more complete understanding of changing events and a higher degree of control over lives. The formative learning of childhood becomes transformative learning in adulthood.

Creyton (2000) endorses Mezirow's perspective and argues that for volunteers to have opportunities for critical reflection they need to move out from their comfort zones to serve in unfamiliar cultural settings.

4.3. *What is transformative learning?*

Mezirow (1998, p. 5) posits that transformative learning "offers a theory of learning that is uniquely adult, abstract, idealized and grounded in the nature of human communication". Mezirow would argue that this theory is both a developmental process and a process in which learning is understood by using a prior interpretation of one's experiences and constructing a new or revised interpretation of that experience in order to determine future behaviours. Empirical research conducted by Grimmett (1989) and Preece (2003) support Mezirow's

(1998) theory and state that within the framework of transformative learning, learners' assumptions, values, and beliefs are challenged as to why people hold on to these. Consequently, our cultural assumptions and presuppositions have a direct bearing on the meanings derived from these personal experiences. The process of revising the meaning structures of our experiences is known as perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1998). Perspective transformation documents the processes adults move through to revise their meaning structures. The following diagram illustrates the process of perspective transformation.

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │  Meaning structures consist of: │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
                                   │
                                   ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │      1. meaning schemes         │
                    │     which are made up of        │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
   ┌───────────┐   ┌───────────┐      ┌───────────┐   ┌───────────┐
   │ specific  │   │ beliefs,  │      │  value    │   │ feelings. │
   │ knowledge │   │           │      │ judgments,│   │           │
   │           │   │           │      │   and     │   │           │
   └───────────┘   └───────────┘      └───────────┘   └───────────┘
                                   │
                                   ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │ 2. A meaning perspective which  │
                    │ is a general frame of reference,│
   ┌───────────┐   │ world view or personal          │   ┌───────────┐
   │higher-order│   │ paradigm which involves         │   │ life goals│
   │ schemata  │   │ meaning schemes consisting of:  │   │           │
   └───────────┘   └─────────────────────────────────┘   └───────────┘
   ┌───────────┐   ┌───────────┐      ┌───────────┐   ┌───────────┐
   │evaluations│   │ theories  │      │propositions│  │ prototypes│
   └───────────┘   └───────────┘      └───────────┘   └───────────┘
                                   │
                                   ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │     New meaning structures      │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
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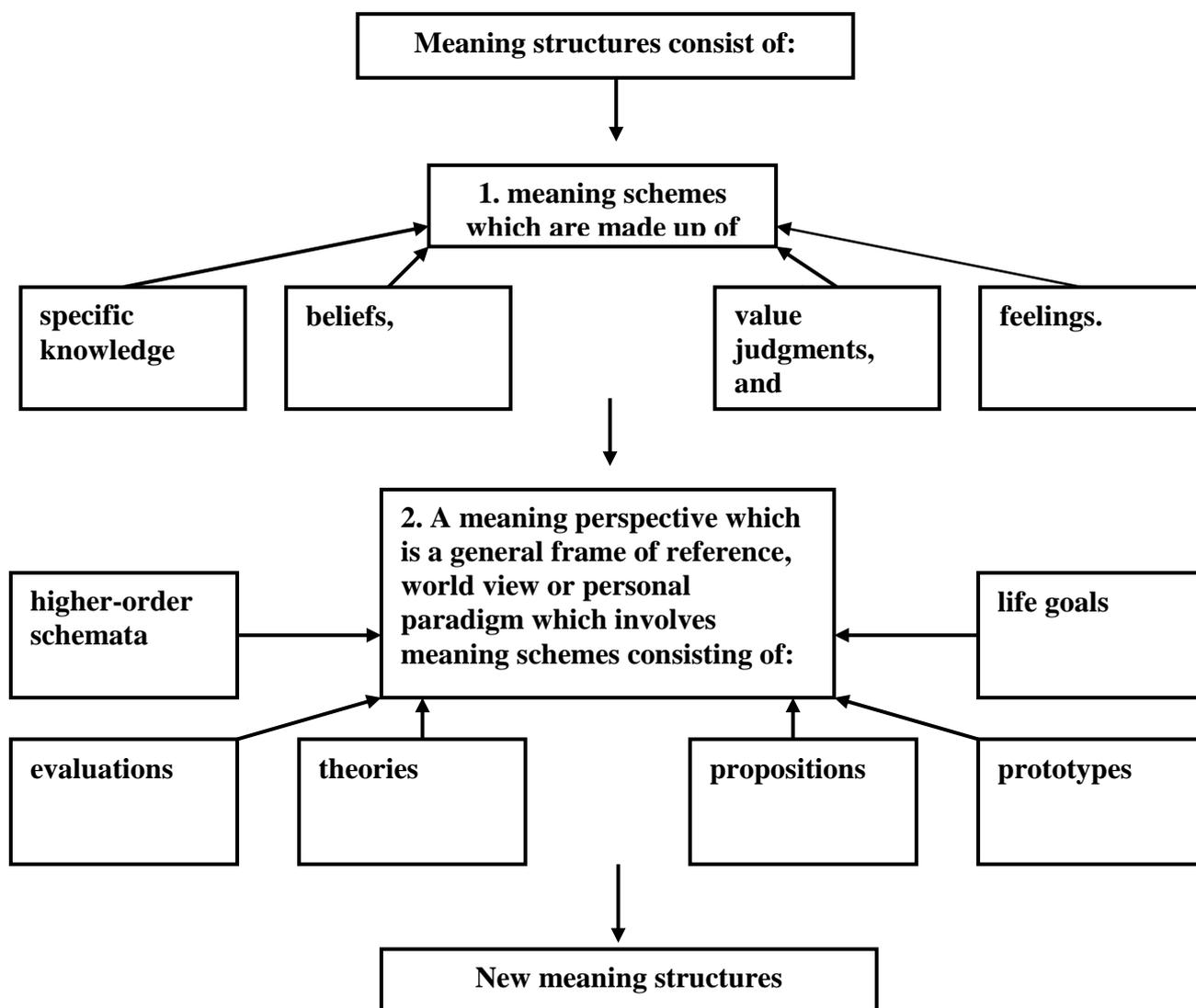
Illustration 3. The process of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1998)

To further explain this process I will explain my own perspective transformation, moving from Lindy the mother, wife, and so on, to that of Lindy the re-emerged teacher.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│   My meaning structure of       │
│   Lindy the mother, wife,       │
│   daughter, daughter-in-law.    │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
      ┌─────────────────────┐
      │ This was influenced │
      │ by meaning schemes  │
      │ that were made up of│
      └─────────────────────┘
```

my specific knowledge, *knowing I am a trained teacher;*

my beliefs, *believing that, as a Christian teaching was my God-given calling in life;*

value judgments of the 1960s, *social, state and cultural conventions were those of wifehood*

and my feelings, *coping with my emotional turmoil of trying to locate Lindy the teacher.*

My meaning perspective **which was a general frame of reference, world view or personal paradigm that involved meaning schemes consisting of:**

my higher-order schemata, being *a full-time mother did not challenge me intellectually*

my life goals, *I had always planned/dreamed of being a teacher;*

evaluations (judgments) of the 1960s, *women should not go to work;*

cultural, religious & social theories of the 1960s, *good women are nurturers, their priority was caring for children & their homes, God's role for women is procreation;*

my propositions, *how could I return to teaching?*

my prototype, *could I be a female role model and return to*

My meaning structure *of Lindy the re-emerged teacher.*

Illustration 4. The author's process of perspective transformation

According to Mezirow (1998) three common themes are pivotal to the process of perspective transformation experience, critical reflection, and rational discourse.

4.3.1. Experience. Our experiences, the first common theme, are acquired through socialization and acculturation with parents, teachers, and others and influence our meaning perspectives. In fact Mezirow (1998, p.7) contends "Meaning perspectives operate as perceptual filters that organise the meaning of our perspectives." The starting point and content matter for transformative learning is the learner's experience. Sometimes traumatic experiences such as a death or divorce are the catalyst for the process of perspective transformation to commence. O'Sullivan (1999), Preece (2003), and Willis (2007) endorse this perspective and argue that both harmony and disharmony play critical roles in the transformation process.

4.3.2. Critical reflection is often an outcome of traumatic experiences for adults. Empirical research conducted by Mezirow (1998) identifies the role dilemma orientation or disorientating dilemma takes in the critical reflection. Critical reflection enables the adult learner to examine and reframe one's experiences by questioning the integrity of beliefs, values, and assumptions held based on prior experiences. This is essential for the transforming of our meaning structures which is perspective transformation. Studies by Ziegahn (2001) support Mezirow's (1998) theory that reflection of personal experience is empowering for learners because they confront the contradictions of everyday life. Furthermore, Cunliffe and Jun (2002) postulate that this process is known as 'research-in-action' and assists professionals' understanding of a situation by engaging in reflective dialogue and by considering cumulative personal and organisational knowledge. This also provides a platform from which professional practice may be viewed from an active and contextualized perspective. In turn, this forms a basis for more effective problem solving and provides an avenue to solve some of life's contradictions.

Willis (2007) goes as far to articulate that embarking on this process, either consciously or unconsciously, enables one to view contradictions from an alternative perspective and somehow resolution is achieved. Even though O'Sullivan (1999) does not refer directly to critical reflection, he comments that the development of a sense of personal integrity, centredness, and ability, has the potential to use this process within the developmental sequence. One study conducted by Taylor (2001) on the learning process of intercultural

competency, demonstrates how procedural learning occurs and its role in perspective transformation.

4.3.3. Rational discourse is essential for the promotion and development of transformation. Rational discourse is more than everyday discussions and involves questioning and challenges to the "comprehensibility, truth, appropriateness (in relation to norms), or authenticity (in relation to feelings) of what is being asserted or to question the credibility of the person making the statement" (Mezirow, 1998, p.10). An outcome of rational discourse is the transformation of meaning schemes and meaning structures because it enables critical reflection to be actioned and experiences, assumptions, values, and beliefs to be questioned.

Although O'Sullivan (1999) is very conscious of rational discourse, he takes a wider spiritual perspective. He argues that our fixation on cultural values and material self-interest has led to deep cynicism and searching for deeper meaning for the purpose of life. Furthermore, Wane (2002) asserts when the spirituality of students is valued, it demonstrates that uniqueness of individuals, regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability is valued as well. As all of the interns in this study were Christians, it was essential that I, as the trainer, demonstrated that I valued their spirituality in my pedagogy. Of interest, Preece (2003) criticizes Mezirow because he does not place much credence on the unconscious and spirituality, but focuses on the interconnectedness of all aspects of an individual for the process of transformation to occur.

Volunteering has the potential to provide a relatively safe and supportive environment for people to begin the process of transformation; for rational discourse to occur. They can examine, question, challenge, and revise their perspectives of the world (Creyton, 2000). This process aligns with participation in transformative learning. Subsequently, critical reflection was the process I envisaged the intern volunteers participating in as an outcome of my transformative pedagogy.

4.4. Practices which foster transformative pedagogy

Mezirow (1998, p.47) states that "the practice of fostering transformative learning in an educational setting is based on a plethora of literature that outlines in detail the ideal

conditions for rational discourse, the teachers' and students' role and the related instructional approaches." After an exhaustive search of the literature on the practice of transformative pedagogy Mezirow concludes that the six common essential practices, which were identified by him, provide an accurate understanding of effective pedagogy for adult learning. The six common essential practices are:
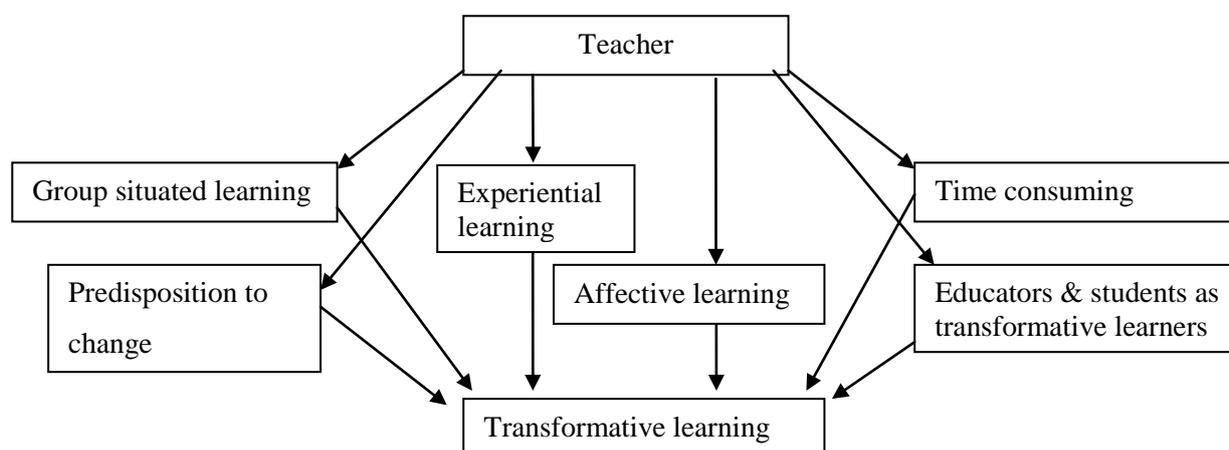

Illustration 5. Six common essential practices to foster transformative learning

These practices, essential for effective pedagogy, align with other literature findings describing effective teaching and learning principles. A comprehensive study conducted by Ellis et al. (1994) reviews and attempts to consolidate empirically-supported effective teaching principles. These are from diverse theories such as behavioural, cognitive, and social learning, to name a few. The ten effective teaching principles as described by Ellis et al. (1994, ¶. 3-31) are:

1. Engagement time,
2. Levels of Success/Success Rate,
3. Content Coverage/Opportunity to Learn,
4. Grouping for Instruction,
5. Scaffolded Instruction,
6. Addressing Forms of Knowledge,
7. Organising and Activating Knowledge,
8. Teaching Strategically,
9. Making Instruction Explicit, and
10. Teaching Sameness.

Other studies conducted by Tharp (1999, ¶. 3) establishes five standards for effective pedagogy which are:

1. Standard 1: Joint Productive Activity: Teachers and Students Producing Together,
2. Standard 11: Language Development: Developing Language and Literacy across the Curriculum,
3. Standard III: Contextualization: making meaning by Connecting School to Students' Lives,
4. Standard IV: Challenging Activities: teaching Complex Teaching, and
5. Standard V: Instructional Conversation: teaching Through Conversation.

In addition, Education Queensland (2002, ¶. 2- 5) identifies five effective teaching principles known as 'Productive Pedagogies' similar to those in Tharp's (1999) study. These are:

1. Effective learning and teaching is founded on an understanding of the learner,
2. Effective learning and teaching required active construction of meaning,
3. Effective learning and teaching enhances and is enhanced by a supportive and challenging environment,
4. Effective learning and teaching is enhanced through worthwhile learning partnerships, and
5. Effective learning and teaching shapes and responds to social and cultural contexts.

In fact, many of the other effective teaching principles are encapsulated into Education Queensland's effective teaching principles. Education Queensland's principles acknowledge the complex and dynamic nature of the learning-teaching process (2002). Additionally, these effective teaching principles acknowledge the impact of factors such as attitudes, perceptions, abilities, expectations; gender, maturity, and socio-cultural background, students bring to every learning experience. Many similarities exist between Mezirow's (1998) six essential practices and Education Queensland's effective teaching principles which are identified in the following sections.

4.4.1. Essential practice 1: Group situated learning. Mezirow (1998) argues that for transformative learning to take place, teaching and learning should occur in group situations. The findings of studies conducted by Saavedra (1995, as cited in Mezirow, 1998) and Taylor (2000) identify that adult learners require opportunities to share and critically reflect upon

their own social, political, and cultural history with others. This process enhances transformation. Findings of Laiken's (1997) study substantiate the group situation of other studies and emphasise the importance of interconnectedness between learning becoming transformative and several different reflective processes for the learner.

Apart from learners reflecting on their own processes as individuals, they need to reflect 'as a learning team' as well as an evolving learning organisation. Similarly the 4th principle identified by Education Queensland (2002), and other studies, extols the value of worthwhile partnerships and their contribution to effective learning and teaching (Ellis et al., 1994; Tharp, 1999).

Because all of my teaching occurred in group situations, the opportunities for transformative learning were enhanced for the interns. My role was to facilitate the group working collaboratively so that change was a group effort (Preece, 2003). Furthermore, O'Sullivan (1999) stresses that belonging to a community is an ethical imperative because this provides an avenue for most relationships, even difficult ones, to proceed creatively. All of us require the skills to relate to others in times of agreement and disagreement. Some of the group discussions, the interns and I had, had the potential to be threatening but the community of learning environment in which we functioned, allowed us to work through difficult issues honestly and openly. This was evident when the group was role-playing and analysing case studies involving individuals who were unemployed, new arrivals to Australia.

4.4.2. Essential practice 2: Experiential learning. Apart from understanding an experience through dialogue and discussion, Gallagher (1997, as cited in Mezirow, 1998) demonstrates in his study that creating experiences facilitates understanding. Being an active learner within a learning context and having hands-on experience promotes transformative learning by provoking critical reflection and "allowing learners to experience learning more directly and holistically, beyond a logical and rational approach" (Taylor, 2001, p. 5). Burns (2002) argues that experiential learning is similar to a living textbook of adult learners.

This principle of effective learning and teaching requires active construction of meaning (Education Queensland, 2002). Studies by Ellis et al., (1994) and Tharp (1999) support the effectiveness of this practice. I endeavoured to organise situations where the interns participated in experiential learning both in the classroom and the church (in their areas of

specialisation). This ensured that they had opportunities to actively construct meaning, because I planned learning experiences which challenged their own knowledge and understanding. Within a supportive learning environment, I organised a variety of formal and informal social and cultural interactions. Throughout these interactions, they were encouraged to explore and develop openness to the diversity of knowledge, understanding, values, and beliefs. This, in turn, enabled them to take risks and learn from their mistakes because they were encouraged to be critically reflective on their own and others' beliefs, values, and behaviours. In fact they participated in up to 15 hours per week of experiential learning, working closely with either their ministry mentor or me. During this time they participated in ongoing effective discussions on their practices.

Experiential learning was sometimes very challenging for one male intern. Family ministry was his area of specialisation. One of his delegated responsibilities was driving the church bus to collect young people from the local area, for the Friday night youth programme. Many of these young people did not come from church families and were not familiar with behavioural expectations within a church environment. Often the language used by these young people, while on the bus, was not acceptable. The 'f' word was used constantly by children. Both the intern and his co-supervisor were concerned about this especially due to the diversity of the age of other passengers. The intern's first reaction was to stop the bus and drop the offenders off and leave them. Obviously this was not an option.

 During our weekly discussions in class, all of the interns were encouraged to share their experiences and reflect upon their responses to the challenges they encountered. Other interns listened and challenged the speaker as to why he/she reacted in such a manner. The above incident created some robust interchanges between the driver and the other interns. At first the discussions focused on aspects such as duty of care, nonjudgmental attitudes, acceptance, love, and so on but soon shifted to the driver's beliefs, values, and behaviours. After some time the driver said that his response was triggered by adults' responses to this type of behaviour when he was a child. The 'f' word was not accepted and 'rough justice' was handed out. The process of critical reflection was difficult for this intern as he reluctantly admitted that 'rough justice' was his preferred way of dealing with issues even though he understood this was not appropriate.

4.4.3. Essential practice 3: Time consuming. While using transformative pedagogy within a group, the setting demanded a large amount of time, which was sometimes very challenging, especially as I was employed fulltime. I allocated time for the interns because of my belief in the process of transformative learning and their practices. It was essential for the interns to be given time to work through the transformative process. Lack of time reduces the opportunities for all voices of participants in a group to be heard and inhibits consensus around various group decisions (Taylor, 2000).

Mezirow (1998) notes that time is not always possible in adult education due to demands on the students' time within the professional and personal spheres of their lives. Due to other commitments in their lives, finding sufficient time was a challenge for the interns and I was aware of this in all of my classes. Each class commenced with an overview of the lesson plan with an appropriate timeline. Additionally, as a group, we had previously agreed to allow all participants to share in the discussions.

4.4.4. Essential practice 4: Predisposition to change. Studies conducted by Bailey (1996), Neuman (1996), and Pierce (1986, as cited in Mezirow, 1998) and Barlas (2001) established that some adult learners have a greater predisposition towards change within a supportive learning environment. Similarly, effective learning and teaching enhances and is enhanced by a supportive and challenging environment (Education Queensland, 2002; Ellis et al.1994; Tharp, 1999). Even though some of the interns were willing to challenge their own beliefs, values and so on, or have these challenged by others in the group, I was conscious that some felt threatened by this process. Grimmett (1989) argues that critical reflection results in reconstruction of experiences, which lead to new understandings of situations. This was particularly prevalent in some of the interns who had recent critical incidences in their lives. Two of them had new babies and this created tension as to where priorities lay. Another had a marriage breakup.

Pierce (1986, as cited in Mezirow, 1998, pp. 296-297) states:

> The disturbing events in the participants' lives, therefore, create a fertile ground for perspective transformation. Ready to question the very assumptions upon which their lives are based, these participants find themselves involved in an educational experience which encourages a search for meaning, an exploration of oneself and fulfillment of human purpose.

One of the major gaps in recent literature is the lack of studies in advice or directions for adult learners who are not ready for transformative learning. Mezirow (1998) questions whether it is ethical for teachers to encourage adult learners to attempt to practise transformative learning because he considers that teachers need to be aware of the potential ramifications. I was very conscious of possible ramifications of transformative learning for the adult learners in my study, and put several appropriate strategies in place (refer to pp.91-92).

4.4.5. Essential practice 5: Affective learning. Until recently, there has been little research which has investigated the relationship between emotions and transformative learning in adults. Bar-On (2006, ¶. 20) argues that other ways of knowing would encompass emotional-social intelligence which:

> is a multi-factorial array of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that influence one's ability to recognise, understand and manage emotions, to relate with others, to adapt to change and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature, and to efficiently cope with daily demands, challenges and pressures.

The affective learning domain addresses a learner's emotions towards learning experiences. It was important that I considered how the interns would react emotionally to any learning experiences I organised and implemented with them. Their responses in the form of affective behaviours, to these learning experiences demonstrated their attitudes, interest, attention, awareness, and values. Martin (2001, ¶. 1) explains how these emotional behaviours are organised "in a hierarchical format also, starting from simplest and building to most complex, are as follows:

> a. Internalizing values: behaviour which is controlled by a value system,
>
> b. Organiszation: organizing values into order of priority,
>
> c. Valuing: the value a person attaches to something,
>
> d. Responding to phenomena: taking an active part in learning; participating,
>
> e. Receiving phenomena: an awareness; willingness to listen."

Martin (2001) goes on to argue that these 5 categories could be thought of in a scaffolding manner. Learners must move through these in a sequential order and the first category must be learned in order to move onto the next category.

An extensive literature search by Mezirow (1998) confirms that the characteristic of affective learning emerged as vital for transformative learning. Studies conducted by Brooks (1990) confirm that critical reflection is not only rationally based but encompassed intuition, empathy and other ways of knowing. Sometimes, during classes when several of the interns found some discussions rather emotional, it was essential for me, as the teacher to be conscious of and monitor their emotions and support them through the situations.

Bagshaw (2000) would argue that the interns were being moved out of their comfort zone and were therefore experiencing insecurity. For them the classes could have felt frightening and out of control. They were moved out of their comfort zones and were required to draw on inner resources to help them move forward. Moreover, to assist them during the critical and deep reflection process, it was necessary for other interns and me to acknowledge our emotions and feelings (Zeigahn, 2001). In times of emotional turmoil, the interns were required to acknowledge and understand how they or other interns were feeling, and face the disorienting dilemma which could result in further change (Mezirow, 1998). Investigations conducted by Barlas (2001) confirm how powerful intense emotional content of learning experiences may be, often triggering reflective learning. Furthermore, Miller (2002, p.100) asserts that within a spiritual context compassion enables people to authentically experience or connect with the world.

4.4.6. Essential practice 6: Educators and students as transformative learners. Mezirow (1998) and Cranston (1994) posit that crucial to transformative learning are the roles taken by the teacher and students. Therefore, as the educator, it was my responsibility to provide a learning environment which was conducive to transformative learning for the interns. Educators are required to address pedagogical characteristics such as promoting educator awareness, handling social, cultural, and ethical issues, handling conflicts, supporting action, and dealing with individual adult learner needs. Similarly, the final principle states that a supportive learning environment is shaped and is responsive to social and cultural contexts (Education Queensland, 2002; Ellis et al., 1994.; Tharp, 1999).

Additionally, Mezirow (1998) and Cranston (1994) postulate that educators be transformative learners themselves because they continually strive to update and upgrade their qualifications and maintain an active professional development plan. Miller (2002, p.100) states:

> In the presence of a compassionate teacher, the student feels psychologically safe and thus is able to take risks and learn. The student feels accepted at a deeper level and thus, can go beyond learning that is merely performance that tries to impress the teacher. Through the presence of a compassionate teacher, the natural compassion of the student is also supported. The student does not see himself or herself as a separate ego competing with other students but as someone connected to others.

A study conducted by Neuman (1996, as cited in Mezirow, 1998) focuses on the role of the facilitator in transformative learning. Neuman's findings confirm both Miller and Cranston's views, and identify similar pedagogical characteristics for educators that promote reflection in transformative learning. In contrast, studies conducted by Carlos (2001) and Saavedra (1995, 1996, as cited in Mezirow) critically examines the role and responsibilities of adult learners in the transformative process. To be active members a community of practice which facilitates transformative learning, adult learners need to contribute to and participate in the learning process. The inclusion of the interns into my practice enabled them to learn and relate their learning experience to the world outside the classroom.

4.5. And the intern volunteers?

Due to my belief in practising critical reflection in all aspects of my life, it was vital that I, as the trainer of the interns, embraced Mezirow's six essential practices for transformative learning in my teaching. I agreed with Baumgartner (2001) and Grimmett (1989) and strived to create a learning environment in which the interns were encouraged to critically reflect on their taken-for-granted social practices in their areas of specialisation, and evaluate and then construct practices for future implementation. To enable this to occur it was necessary for all the class, and me as the trainer, to build safe and trusting relationships which allowed the interns to remain engaged in learning even though they could experience anxiety during discussions of diverse perspectives (Barlas, 2001).

 Within each teaching session I encouraged all interns to challenge their own (and others') assumptions, values, and beliefs, and then consider why they held them (Creyton, 2000; Cunliffe & Jun, 2002; O'Sullivan, 1999). This necessitated the interns, initially, to understand that their own (and others') assumptions, values, and beliefs were embedded in experiences. Moreover, they needed to recognise their social, cultural, and religious worlds were constructed as they interacted with those around them.   This approach to learning provided opportunities for the interns to be liberated from internal/external cultural and contextual influences, such as imposed fundamentalist religious values that limited their options and controlled their lives (Imel, 1998).

Over an extended period, these influences could have been taken for granted or viewed as beyond their control. Consequently these influences could have molded how the interns developed as people and how they viewed themselves. As the trainer I was very conscious of the possibility that as a result of this personal critical reflection, one or some interns could reject their faith or, on the other hand, develop a deeper relationship with their personal God (Miller, 2002). Little did I realise at this stage of my doctorate that, as a result of personal critical reflection, it would be the trainer who could experience the crisis of faith.

CHAPTER 5
METHOD

5.0 Narratives intertwined

The three literature reviews (Chaps 1-3) focused on volunteering, communities of learners, and developing critical reflective practices through the process of transformative learning. As in the previous chapters, this chapter has connections to recent literature, the effectiveness of my teaching as a critical reflective teacher, and the intern volunteers who were participants in the education programme. To avoid directing or restricting the analysis of these experiences I used hermeneutic phenomenology to analyse the data. Compared to a quantitative research paradigm, qualitative data and narrative interpretation is more appropriate and adaptable to deal with multiple realities. Moreover, this approach to research is more sensitive to common influences and value patterns that might be encountered (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Chapter 5 provides an explanation of hermeneutic phenomenology as a means of analysing the data and includes sections on hermeneutic phenomenology as a research tool in pedagogy, reflective process, narrative methodology, and data analysis and interpretation. The issues of reliability and validity of the research outcomes is also considered. Prior to the commencement of the research with the intern volunteers, I sought ethical approval from the Ethics Committee at Charles Darwin University in 2003. Approval was given.

5.1 Hermeneutic phenomenology as a research tool in pedagogy

I decided to use hermeneutic phenomenology and qualitative data in addressing my research question because it allowed me to engage in reflection on how I 'lived' with the interns and their reflections. Instead of attempting to explicate meanings of my experiences to specific categories such as ethnography, sociology, religious, and so on, phenomenology permitted me to illuminate meanings as they were lived in everyday life (van Manen, 1990).

Orienting oneself to the phenomena is the first step required in hermeneutic phenomenology and finding one's way or getting one's bearings (Wilcke, 2002). Van Manen (1990) argues that phenomenology does not offer us theory, but insights that bring us in more direct contact with the world. Wilcke (2002) describes hermeneutic phenomenology as a stance, not a research method. It is a way of being in the world, being prepared to undergo a process which enables 'what is' to emerge and potentially reveal a less obvious meaning.

The quest to investigate the effectiveness of me as teacher, led me to explore the interns' experiences in order to establish whether or not they had developed critical reflective practices. To do this we constantly examined and reexamined our experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Evidence of the presence or absence of critical reflective practices was regarded as an indicator of the effectiveness of my teaching. Throughout this research, the leader of the research shifted from the interns to me and back again. As the researcher I was the leader of the dance because I wanted to collect data from their reflective journals. The interns were also leaders of the dance because they chose what to record in their reflective journals.

Van Manen's (1990) hermeneutic-phenomenological approach to human science draws on the works of Husserl (1913) and Heidegger (1927). Husserl (1913) developed the philosophy of phenomenology as a rational inquiry into the world as it appears to one's consciousness or understanding (Wilcke, 2002). This approach combines a phenomenological concern for describing our experiences with a hermeneutic concern for interpreting the social-symbolic world. In order to understand the core structure of any experience Husserl (1913) recommended that the researcher take nothing for granted, be aware of any assumptions or preconceived ideas of the phenomena, and investigate it free of any extraneous details. Heidegger (1927) introduced hermeneutics into the study of phenomena because he believed that the pure description only had a limiting effect on a phenomenon revealing its meaning. The underlying meanings or interpretations of the phenomenon could be identified and understood.

Van Manen (1990) argues that the only connections human beings have to the world is through their consciousness. Reflection on an experience is only possible when it is in the past. Searching for the possible meanings in the early years of my career and marriage were of little consequence to me at that time. Roles for many women were 'pre-ordained' culturally and spiritually (Imel, 1998), and I did not question this at all. With the advent of developing critical reflective practices I searched for a fuller meaning to my life as a woman in the various roles I was in.

Van Manen (1990) combined these two approaches - hermeneutics and phenomenology - in a dialectical relationship, wanting to 'let things speak for themselves' while recognising that

social phenomena need to be interpreted through language, in order to be communicated to others. This methodology is semiotic or language-oriented. Säljö (1997) refers to language as not an entity on its own but is inextricably entangled with culture and human experience Even though there is an emphasis on exploring experiences in phenomenology; this exploration embraces a perspective where participants' linguistic contributions are inextricably intertwined with experiences. Säljö (1997, p.188) states:

> Such a move would make people's utterances part of concrete discursive practices in social life, and by paying due attention in analytical work to the complex of motives, skills, and preferences that occasion people to talk the way they do, we would be able to connect cognition to social practice and these shed light on the mutual constitution of human experience and discursive practices.

To gain a deeper understanding of the nature of my pedagogy I attempted to systematically identify and explain the structures and the underpinning meanings (van Manen, 1990). To achieve this, it was essential that my pedagogy was sensitive and empathetic to the experiences of the intern volunteers and their reflective comments. To ensure sensitivity in my pedagogy, I was guided by Mezirow's (1991) essential practices as referred to in Chapter 4.

As with most phenomenographers, I brought a number of beliefs and values to this research project. A protestant Christian philosophy underpinned my beliefs. My pedagogic beliefs included a keen interest in critical reflective practices within a working environment, and a belief that students could create powerful understandings when working alongside more experienced colleagues within a community of practice framework.

 Bracketing, as described by Husserl (1913), allows the phenomenographer to identify his/her beliefs in order to lay them aside while studying essential structures of the world (Bennett, 1998; Wilcke, 2002). Being aware of this I was interviewed by an academic colleague before I commenced my group discussions with the interns. This assisted me to understand more clearly which of my belief structures had the potential to interfere with my understanding of the interns' experiences as suggested by Bennett (1998) and Wilcke (2002). This process identified two beliefs which had the potential to influence my research. The first belief was linked to power within a classroom. Even though I wanted to empower the interns by sharing

the power in the classroom, I still wanted to hold supreme power as teacher. The second belief was Australians were not inclusive in their practices towards minority groups.

The duality of my roles as teacher and phenomenographer was a cause for concern in my relationship with the interns. We had discussions in class about my multiple roles as curriculum developer, teacher, and phenomenographer and addressed this potential cause for concern. Those interns who indicated their willingness to participate in the study did not express concern about my multiple roles.

Phenomenological hermeneutics required me to develop a writing or linguistic approach toward the orientation and interpretation of my teaching in relation to the experiences of the interns (van Manen.1990). Wilcke (2002) stresses the importance of language and its impact on melding experiences and interpretations. This connection is achieved by systematically researching, examining, visiting and revisiting, questioning, reflecting, focusing and intuiting the structures of meaning of my teaching experiences. This took the form of a reflective journal.

The interns' experiences were also researched, examined, visited and revisited, and recorded in their reflective journals, transcripts of discussions, and video scripts. As participants in a community of practice, we discovered their perspectives both as individuals and as a collectivity. Inevitably research and writing were intertwined aspects of one process where the interns and my experiences were intricately integrated in co-joint pedagogical activities. Throughout the practical stages of this research project much language was generated in conversations, inquiry questioning, and writing.

My personal and professional lives were beginning to change. They were coming under scrutiny. Grenfell (2007b, p.1) states this as seeing "the world as made up of multiple realities which are constructed according to the perspective or standpoint we occupy, that is, the historical, temporal and spatial context in which we find ourselves." I was taking control of my life and my identities were changing and continued to do so. My understanding of my teacher identity was inextricably intertwined with my emotion. My research was generating more

information than I anticipated as the search for understanding of my teacher identity encompassed multiple realities and multiple emotions. Walker (1991, p. 110) observes:

> Only rarely can the design for an evaluation or piece of research fully contain the range and quantity of the information generated by the process of investigation. Very often the story the investigator wants to tell remains untold, or is told only within a small professional circle.

5.2. *Methods of the reflective process*

Overviews of four different models of the reflective process are described followed by an outline of a fifth model which I used to analyse the intern's data. The final model describes the reflective process which evolved for me over a period of years.

Farra (1998) refers to Dewey's (1933) three levels of reflection. Level 1 involves pragmatic choices of what works and relates to routine action in a structured manner. Level 2 is based on an assumption that educational decisions incorporates value commitments such as fairness, gender equity, accommodation of different learning styles, inclusivity, and so on. Level 3 moves beyond the classroom and focuses on equity issues, such as emancipation, political, and economic factors in society.

Other theorists have attempted to refine the notion of reflection which emanated from Dewey's writing. For example, Le Cornu and Peters (2005) proposes three discrete levels of reflectivity. The first is technical reflection which refers to reflections about actions. The second is practical/theoretical reflection which is directed toward reasons for action. The third reflective mode is ethical or critical reflection which focuses on assumptions, values, and the compatibility of actions. Some educationalists such as Tertell (1998) do not to think in terms of levels of reflective practice because of the potential for placing limitations on the cognitive and affective factors when analysing what is happening in programs. Instead, these educationalists view reflectivity as a set of continually changing perspectives. This view is accommodated within a model of changing identity which, in turn, comes close to processes involved in transformational learning.

Schön (1989) also proposes a model for understanding the concept of reflective thought. Central to his conceptualisation of reflective thinking is a distinction between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action requires the individual to make decisions about actions involved in everyday life and is underpinned by an assumption of relevant tacit knowledge. Decisions about actions are regarded as being 'made on the run.' In contrast, reflection-on-action occurs after the event, when challenges, issues, and problems are examined over a period of time. Schön argues that both forms of reflection are necessary for enhanced teacher learning.

The theorist connected to the fourth model of reflection is Grimmet (1989). His conception of reflection is based on three perspectives. The first, instrumental reflection is thoughtful mediated action which provides for the application of propositional knowledge obtained through research. The second, events in context, views reflection as deliberating between different points of view which takes into account the learning context. This perspective treats teachers' knowledge as deliberative, relevant, and eclectic. The third perspective includes reflection as reconstructing experience which leads to new understandings of behaviour. This involves attending to features of a situation required for problem solving, reframing, and resolution.

Finally, for the analysis of the interns' data on their experiences I decided to adopt a reflective process created by Kember (1999). Kember maintains that many programmes in professional education aim at developing reflective practice, but have no established method of assessing whether students actually practice reflection at any stage during their training. This model of reflective process is underpinned with Mezirow's theory of transformative learning. Kember (p. 20) states

> The fact that Mezirow has written so extensively and in such detail makes his work well suited to the formation of a coding scheme. To use any classification consistently, even an individual classifier needs a clear well-defined definition of each category which provides sufficient detail to encompass the range of material to be classified. Where there are multiple judges or assessors, the need for adequate definition becomes even more important. Individual coders can supplement the form category definitions with their own working guidelines. Multiple coders, however,

inevitably derive a variety of interpretations and idiosyncratic operational definitions when the provided category definitions lack precision and detail.

There are three types of reflection and these are:

a. Content reflection refers to 'what' one believes, experiences, or acts upon. Mezirow (1991, p. 107) defines content reflection as "reflection on what we perceive, think, feel or act upon." This includes all entries where students reflect on 'what' they know or believe.

b. Process reflection is reflection on 'how' one comes to their beliefs, experiences, or actions, the method or manner in which we think. Mezirow (1991, pp. 107- 108) defines process reflection as "Examination of how one performs the function of perceiving, thinking, feeling, or acting and an assessment of efficacy in performing them." This includes all entries in which students reflect on the 'source' of their beliefs.

c. Premise reflection is reflection on 'why' one has specific beliefs, experiences, or action. It is a higher level of thinking which opens the possibility of perspective transformation (Kember, 1999) and involves delving and probing to arrive at a conclusion on which specific beliefs or actions, a premise could be based. Mezirow (1991, p. 108) defines premise reflection as "Premise reflection involves us becoming aware of why we perceive, think, feel or act as we do."

At that stage of my career (in the late 70s) I was not able to give this transformative or reflective process a name but there was ample evidence that the process of critical reflection was occurring. I felt empowered and believed I had (and still have) the ability to alter the learning context for the betterment of students. This knowing-in-action as described by Schön (1987) was occurring spontaneously and at times I was not aware of it. My cultural, religious, social, and school environments enabled me to construct and reconstruct who and what I might be as teacher.

O'Connor and Diggins (2002, p. 16) state "Critical reflection can be seen as deconstructing an event, or examining what factors led to a particular event." Since commencing this study I had unintentionally formalised a process of critical reflection which occurred, and still occurs, automatically in my teaching sessions. It was also of interest that the practice soon became an integral process in other aspects of my life. Huitt (1998) describes 'ways of knowing' as having the ability to think critically and logically about a personal experience to gain a unique, personal, and deeper understanding of that experience. Zembylas (2003, p. 214) points out "This move towards an understanding of teacher self through an exploration of emotions opens possibilities for the care and self-knowledge of teacher and provides spaces for his/her transformation."

My transformation from Lindy as the 'failed' teacher to becoming a critical reflective practitioner followed a series of four identifiable phases. These phases are based on the work of Belenky et al., (1986).

a. Previously I was 'silence', and gave little thought to my real life experiences. My silence was similar to the 'deaf and dumb' metaphor (Belenky et al.). I felt deaf because I could not learn from others and dumb because I seemed to be voiceless. Additionally, I gave little acknowledgement to the emotions in my professional life. I relied on others to provide reason and meaning to my behaviours. I accepted blindly that a subject-oriented or mechanistic approach to teaching was acceptable for my students. Teaching was a technical enterprise.

b. My social relationships and systems of values and beliefs were constructed by my family, culture, religious, and school situations as referred to by Zembylas (2003). All of these were ordained by various authoritative educational, religious, societal, and cultural sources. This 'received knowing from authorities' was not challenged personally at this

stage of my life.   My behaviour was a form of unquestioned submission to the commands of authorities. In fact, this situation suited my needs at the time.

c.   Why was I submitting to external authorities? Why would I want to consider other people's perspectives? Why would I want to challenge my fundamental pedagogical beliefs, values, and assumptions? Why was I subject to these authorities? This was the beginning of listening to my inner protesting voice regarding my pedagogy. I was beginning to question whether others' pedagogy was right for me. This 'subjective knowledge' had provided a reason for me to start reconsidering my traditional method of teaching.

d. Over time I realised that there were other perspectives to knowledge, and to pedagogy, and commenced the procedure of critically analysing my traditional method of teaching. In other words, I began to challenge the validity of my fundamental pedagogic beliefs, values, and assumptions. Critical reflection on my pedagogy from the socio-historical context, in which it occurred, enabled me to construct new knowledge. Belenky et al. (1986) describe the development of this process as 'procedural knowledge'.

e. As a result I constructed knowledge, which involved an integration of all four of the above ways of knowing. I examined my pedagogy from my perspective and integrated this with other perspectives, and analysed how they contributed to a coherent whole. Because I invested so much of self into my teaching, I sensed a merging of my personal and professional identity.

Gradually my identity changed from a teacher who used a subject-oriented or mechanistic approach, to one who practised and modelled transformative or

critical reflection in both my personal and professional life. I was beginning to hear, and listen to my own inner voice and then act upon this knowledge to bring about change. My identity as a teacher was changing from the keeper of the information to that of facilitator. Students were encouraged to become active learners and take control of their learning.

Evans (2002) argues that, as a result of reflective processes, teachers move from a restricted position to one of extended professional. Their pedagogy reflects a deeper understanding of what education involves, and they come to appreciate and value underpinning relevant theory. Evans believes that reflective teachers adopt an intellectual and balanced approach to teaching where dialogue flows between teacher and student, and student and student.

My practice had also become more innovative. Research, coupled with frequent dialogue with my students, including the interns, contributed to my teacher identity. Even though all of the multiple identities contributed to the person Lindy, now I was more in control of my life and fulfilling my childhood dreams for authentic reasons – not reasons ordained by other authorities.

As evident in my narrative, my emotional experiences were inextricably intertwined in both my personal and professional lives. I was able to use my experiences, anxieties, insecurities, and passions in empowering ways. Constantly I placed the interns in situations where they reflected on their experiences internally or externally in discussion with other members of the group. As described by Grenfell (2007b, p. 8), I encouraged "metaphoric and analogous thinking (i.e., the use of metaphors and analogies to explain phenomena), as well as risk taking which can create perturbation and disturbance for the individual." Sometimes, as an outcome of this perturbation, hidden or forgotten emotions emerged. To address any emotional needs which could have arisen as a consequence of risk taking situations, I implemented several strategies such as:

a. Providing a positive and enabling community of learners where the professional learning of the intern volunteers was shared and problematised;

b. Developing support relationships amongst the intern volunteers;

    c. Establishing intern/mentor teams as forums (really it's for a, although forums for creating emotional and professional bonds e.g., those who ran religious education classes in local primary schools met regularly with the regional Religious Education Coordinator;

    d. Encouraging the interns to actively engage in critical reflection on their own practices and their emotional responses to those practices; and

    e. Arranging for more support through the senior pastor and other church pastors if it was required.

During the project the following incident occurred. Very early on in the course the interns were expected to set up meetings with the mentors in their areas of specialisation. One of the women was experiencing difficulty organising her meeting with her mentor. Every time she attempted to contact her 'would be' mentor, she felt she was being ignored. It appeared that the specialisation mentor was not keen to meet this intern and provide assistance. Feelings of frustration and disappointment were recorded in her personal reflective journal. She wrote:

> Why hasn't my mentor contacted me? I am getting worried. I am getting behind in my work. The others seem to be well under way with their specialisations. They have met with their mentors. I am so worried. Maybe I will need to pull out of this course. What will I tell Centrelink?

She discussed her concerns in class and told how she was not sleeping because of the situation. Two strategies enabled her to cope. First, she was able to share her problem with the other interns who were empathetic to her and, second, after reading this reflection I was able to discuss the situation with her. I reassured her that being a week behind would not jeopardise her position on the course or her ability to complete it. Furthermore, I reassured her that I could discuss the situation with Centrelink (an Australian government organisation which monitors pensions, benefits and so on) if this were necessary.

It was unfortunate that the power held by Centrelink staff required confirmation of a client's dilemma from another institutional staff member. From another perspective it could be argued that my discussion with this intern demonstrated power in discourse - one of an unequal encounter. Instead of recommending that the intern volunteer discuss the situation with Centrelink staff I said I would do it if necessary. My journal entry after this discussion confirmed this discourse in power

Week 3: March 2003: It is unfortunate that Carol's mentor is causing her concern. Maybe I will need to contact Centrelink and talk to them about this.

5.3. *Methodological structure*

The data generated in this study were gathered by using three phenomenological research procedures: phenomenological guided discussions, reflective journaling, and interviews conducted by an independent interviewer. This interviewer ascribed to another belief system.

5.3.1. Phenomenological guided discussions. During the course several classes commenced with a discussion based on the interns' recent experiences in their areas of specialisation. As the phenomenon under investigation was the effectiveness of my pedagogy as a reflective teacher, I implemented a guided discussion approach. This particular approach was designed to allow the interns to decide which aspects of their experiences they wished to discuss and reflect upon. From here they had the opportunities to attempt to discover meanings which may not have been obvious to them as suggested by van Manen (1990).

To ensure I did not control, but only facilitated the discussions I used the following questions as a guide. Instead of asking direct questions about the effectiveness of my teaching as a reflective teacher, I employed more of an analytical method. I envisaged that this information could be identified in the intern volunteers' responses to the following questions.

1. How did you feel generally about what has happened in your area of specialisation this week?

2. What was the most positive aspect of the work in your area of specialisation this week?

3. What issue/activity/experience has really challenged you this week?

4. How did you handle (or not) this issue/activity/experience?

5. Why did you handle (or not) it that way?

6. What influenced your decision to handle (or not) it that way?

7. How could you have handled (or not) this issue/activity/experience?

8. What could you done to achieve a different outcome?

I contributed to the discussion only if I considered that the interns were digressing. I wanted the discussions to be free flowing as their effectiveness relied on the quality of the social interaction and trust between me and the interns. I subtly redirected the discussion if it appeared to stray off the topic of interest at the time. The interns were all informed, prior to the discussion that their contributions would be recorded either by writing, and/or tape recording, and/or videotaping. Transcripts of the discussions were made and corrected by the participating interns.

5.3.2. Reflective journals. Erben (1996) describes a method called the biographical method as a studied collection of life documents such as autobiographies, diaries, letters, obituaries, life stories, personal experience narratives, oral histories, and personal histories. Reflective journals are a form of recording personal experience stories. These are concerned with the hermeneutical investigation of the narrative accounts of lives. The interns' weekly reflective recordings provided another source of data to investigate the effectiveness of my pedagogy. From the commencement of the reflective journals, the interns' entries needed to demonstrate active and reflective engagement in the issues and ideas they encountered. Consequently, through narrative analysis of their reflective journals I was able to identify some evidence of my effectiveness as a reflective teacher.

5.3.3. Prepared video scripts: Towards the end of the 6 months of classes which were linked to the interns' specialisation practicum, formal interviews were held. An Australian interviewer was invited to conduct these. The interviews were videotaped. Prior to the interviews the interviewer and I wrote a list of questions which were directly linked to the overall course of study. These questions were designed to enable the interns to demonstrate critical reflection in their answers. The questions were:

1. Describe your area of specialisation in three sentences. Why were they limited?
2. What can you do now that you couldn't do prior to commencing your area of specialisation?
3. What do you know now that you did not know before commencing your area of specialisation?
4. What has changed your understanding about your area of specialisation?
5. What have you learnt about yourself and the world?

5.4. Narrative methodology

Within a phenomenological research framework the meaning of the 'lived experience' is the main focus and emphasis (van Manen, 1990). In order to gain an understanding of the deeper meanings or significance of my teaching I borrowed from, and delved into, the interns' reflections on my teaching. This enabled me to question the fundamental nature of the phenomenon (my teaching) as a human experience. Essentially this was the phenomenological question.

Van Manen (1990, p. 115) states "A common device in phenomenological writing is the use of an anecdote or story. 'Story' means narrative, something depicted in the narrative form." According to the Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary (2004, p. 49) an anecdote is a "short account of an entertaining or interesting incident." Van Manen (1990, p. 116) describes "Anecdotes as social products" and "a minute passage of private life." Anecdotes are valued for their power to reveal people's true characters or incidents which could be difficult to capture in another manner. The value of anecdotal narrative is often underestimated and is an effective method of dealing with some forms of knowledge. Anecdotal narrative provides a method of analysis which considers societal influences on the individuals' narratives. Many of the interns' experiences, as well as my own, have been told and retold as anecdotes and are intricately woven into this thesis.

These anecdotes were not just illustrations to enhance the text but are utilised as a methodological device to assist with the comprehension of some notions and emotions that could have eluded me. Narratives are fundamental to the practical reflection process. Not only does the reflective process present and evoke emotional responses, but the narrative form is a source of recording emotional structure (Grenfell, 2007b). One epistemologically interesting feature of anecdotes is that they allow the phenomenographer to characterise an alternate way of thinking or style or concept which is proving taxing to approach in a more direct manner. This alternate way of thinking is demonstrated in the following anecdote.

A quiet and shy Indigenous intern was sharing his networking connections in a videoed lesson. During the process he was continually and meticulously pointing to his examples of networking on a large sheet attached to the whiteboard. He kept his back facing the other interns. After some time I suggested to him that he might like to face his audience. I asked him to whom was he talking? His reply was 'I am talking to these networking contacts on the

paper'. He continued with the sharing of his information in the manner in which he had commenced.

The teacher in me initially assumed that it was my responsibility to assist him to overcome his shyness and face the audience more often. When I read his personal reflective journal on this class, I realised that it aptly characterised his way of thinking. He considered it more important to present his networking contacts correctly and receive affirmation from them (through psychological connections) than constantly face the audience and receive their affirmation. My so-called gentle interruption was an example of power in cross-cultural interactions. From my dominant cultural perspective this man should be facing his audience when he was talking to them. His linguistic and cultural background could have demanded alternative behaviours which were at odds with my perspective. My decision was borne of the role I assumed and my cultural expectations. One part of my reflective journal entry for that week confirmed this.

> Week 10 May 2003
>
> It was unfortunate that I had to interrupt Vernon this week when he was talking to the group. It interrupted the flow of his discussion.

The use of anecdotes is significant in hermeneutic phenomenology for several reasons. First, phenomenology attempts to penetrate the obvious meanings of an anecdote and identify the hidden meanings such as those in the previous anecdote. Second, anecdotes force the phenomenographer to identify the connections between living and thinking, and between situation and reflections (van Manen, 1990). It humanises and democratises connections between life and theory. Third, anecdotes may be viewed as concrete examples of "wisdom, sensitive insight and proverbial truth" (van Manen, 1990, p.120). Fourth, anecdotes of special or significant events may demonstrate exemplary character. Finally, narrative form enables the writer to explore all aspects of the emotional story to its full development (Grenfell, 2007b). Being able to explore further the student in the networking activity, I was able to understand and appreciate the psychological importance of his presenting his networking contacts correctly and receiving their affirmation.

5.5. *Data analysis and interpretation*

I analysed and developed a fuller and better pedagogic understanding of questions concerning the interns' experiences, by ensuring that my research was "both oriented and strong in a pedagogic sense" (van Manen, 1990, p.136). It was necessary that my reflections, conversations, and writings demonstrated a strong commitment to the experiences of the interns and my own pedagogy. Understanding my pedagogy challenged me to question and re-question.

To ensure a balance between my interpretations of the interns' experiences and the connections made to the effectiveness of my teaching I used themes as generative guides for writing up my research study. These formed a framework for analysing both the intern data and that relating to my teaching. I was also aware of the need to develop one theme at a time whilst ignoring information that related to other themes.

As previously explained I adopted Kember's (1999) method of interpretation and coding for the analysis of the interns' experiences (refer to p.88). I reinterpreted Kember's (1999) codes as themes for this purpose. There were two reasons for this decision:

a. It allowed me to differentiate between nonreflective action (habitual action, thoughtful action, and introspection) and reflective action. Curtis (2006) describes this process as involving the identification of thoughts and feelings while true reflection required an examination of the underlying reasons for these thoughts and feelings.

b. The names of each theme encompassed the whole range of data included. The names also articulated my understanding of these themes and complied with some of the guidelines for category construction described by Evans (2002). These were that the categories should reflect the purpose of the research, that they should be exhaustive, and finally that they are derived from a single classification principle.

Evans (2002) would argue that these categories should also be exclusive. This is very difficult to achieve in hermeneutic phenomenology as categories almost always overlap and reinforce one another. Moreover, my interpretation of an entry could quite easily be different from that of another interpreter.

5.6. Reliability and validity

The American Evaluation Society has set standards and criteria for judging the quality of research studies and their outcomes (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Morse, Barret, Mayan, Olson, and Spiers (2002) describe how it is imperative to be rigorous in the conduct of research for the outcomes to be valid. The conventional criteria of internal validity, external validity, and reliability, were, and still are, used for judging the rigor with which any research process has been conducted. These criteria apply as much to qualitative research in naturalistic settings, such as the current study, as to more traditional experimental or quantitative studies in clinical or highly controlled setting, for the following reasons:

a. In much, but not all, naturalistic research, the researcher is an active participant in the investigative process and it is often difficult to fully account for influences that are introduced as a result

b. Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue that rigid cause-effect relationships which are integral to experimental studies, often blind researchers and participants' abilities to conceptualize their realities and why these realities exist. This could have silenced the interns' narratives/anecdotes- rather than enabling them to resonate in a multitude of ways (Burns-McCoy, 1998).

c. Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue that all research is value-bound. It was important that the interns' values (and beliefs etc), be sensitively accounted for in the data collected and this could not have happened in a positivistic study. .

The benefits and limitations associated with hermeneutic phenomenology are similar to those in other qualitative paradigms. Establishing the reliability and validity of the phenomenological data gathered in this study needed to be addressed. Instead of ignoring these criteria, Denzin and Lincoln (2002) recommend that they should be reconfigured to meet the needs of naturalistic researchers. Are the findings dependable and transferrable to other situations? Do the findings relate to the way others construct social worlds? Will the social services of religious organisations be influenced by or have some reliable information from the findings of this research?

In assessing the validity and reliability of the data and in establishing evidence for validity, it is important not to dilute the power of narratives/anecdotes by too rigorous demands for extreme standards. To avoid reducing the richness and depth of the interns' voices I decided

to use authenticity criteria, which have their source in constructivism's own basic assumptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner (2004, p. 9) argue that authentic criteria should be connected with "the development of relevant professional competencies" and be "based upon criteria used in real life situations." Moreover, they argue that some criteria should be "related to a realistic outcome." Another important aspect of authentic criteria is that they should be "explicit and transparent to the learners beforehand."

The authentic criteria used for this research were rhetoric, resonance and empowerment as described by Guba and Lincoln (1989). The fourth criterion, applicability, will be addressed by future readers of this thesis, as to its effectiveness and usefulness. Often this is referred to as reader generalisability. Prior to commencing my teaching with the interns I was aware of the four criteria by which my performance would be judged. The criteria were explicit and transparent. All criteria were based on a real life situation; my teaching. The findings had the potential to develop and enhance the effectiveness of my teaching as a reflective teacher; therefore a realistic outcome was achievable which would be the development of my professional competencies as a reflective teacher.

To demonstrate reliability I requested two academic colleagues and two intern graduates to examine the data and offer suggestions for change. Each pair of assessors provided independent statements and the degree of agreement was an indication of reliability of the data and provided guidelines for interpreting that data. The higher the level of agreement is an indication of a higher level of the reliability.

Establishing validity is not a statistical procedure but a logical one involving qualitative methods. The validation process involved the implementation of an audit and a questionnaire. Kazdin (2003) lists some dimensions for validation which I have adapted to analyse the data. I endeavoured to identify dimensions such as:

   a. Descriptive validity: How accurately described was my account of all events and people?

   b. Interpretative validity: How accurate was my description of the meaning of these events and people? Is there evidence of understanding of the phenomena and experiences?

   c. Theoretical validity: Do my explanations of the phenomena explain why and how these have occurred and fit the data?

d. Internal validity: Do my analyses accommodate for a variety of influences that could have produced the outcomes described?

e. External validity: Is there evidence that the findings could be generalised across a variety of contexts which include people, times, cultures, and situations?

I was of the belief that this set of authentic criteria was integral to the overall method and relevant to judging the quality of this research project. The criteria proved to be responsive, sensitive, and adaptable to the changing circumstances of my thesis.

5.7. *The rhetoric criterion*

Two academic colleagues (auditors), who were actively involved throughout my research project, conducted audits on the effectiveness of my teaching. One was a senior lecturer at an Australian university and the other a senior pastor of a regional Baptist church. Both of these colleagues have doctorates and well qualified for the task. No payment was received for completing this auditing task. I had known both of these colleagues for a several years and during this time they had acted as my mentors in different areas. The university lecturer had been my research mentor since 2000 and was a volunteer consultant during the research project. The senior pastor had been my spiritual mentor and was director of the training centre. I trusted them both implicitly, and knew that they would provide honest statements about my teaching ability. I knew when I analysed their audit results that they would be a true and accurate reflection of my teaching as they saw it.

Originally I planned to create a short video with clips of my teaching using the misplaced videos. To address this situation I adapted a power point presentation titled 'How transformative pedagogy has the potential for change.' The audit was based on Mezirow's (1998) six essential practices and Education Queensland's (2002) five effective teaching principles (italics). In addition, they both conducted systematic observations of my teaching. Both auditors had sufficient knowledge and understanding of educational research. They addressed this criterion.

a. Rhetoric criterion: The teaching product should display unity, simplicity, creativeness, clarity, is well organised, openness, and contains some central ideas easily discernible to the reader (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This criterion allows and encourages alternate conceptualisations of presentation.

The audit questions were as follows:

Audit questions	
Part A. Composition of my classes and/or the power point presentation. This section consists of 5 questions.	
1.	Did my classes and/or power point presentation display unity, simplicity, clarity, sound organisation, and some central ideas easily discernible to the reader/observer? Please justify.
2.	Did the categorical themes of the 6 common essential practices in the power point presentation hold, or appear thin and muddled, or influence the outcome? Please justify.
3.	Did new ideas which emerged from data in the form of discussions and/or individual sharing of knowledge and experiences reconfirm previous ideas discussed in classes? Please justify.
4.	Did my teaching and/or the power point presentation demonstrate underpinning knowledge of the transformative learning theory? Please justify
Part B: Evidence of transformative pedagogy	
	Common essential practice 1 Group situated learning. **Effective learning and teaching is enhanced through worthwhile learning partnerships.**
5.	Was there evidence in either my classes or power point presentation where the interns had opportunities to share and critically reflect upon their own and others' social, political, and cultural history? Please cite the evidence and discuss.
6.	Did my role as facilitator enable the group to work collaboratively so that change was a group effort? Please justify.
7.	Some of our discussions had the potential to be threatening but the community of learning environment in which we functioned, allowed us to work through difficult issues honestly and openly. What evidence was there of this in this sequence of slides? Please cite the evidence and discuss.
	Common essential practice 2: Experiential learning **Effective learning and teaching requires active construction of meaning.**
8.	Apart from understanding an experience through dialogue and discussion, Gallagher (1997, as cited in Mezirow, 1998) demonstrated in his study that creating experiences

	facilitates understanding. Was understanding through experiential learning evident in this sequence of slides? Cite the evidence and discuss.
9.	Did the teaching experiences I organised encourage the intern volunteers to be active learners within learning contexts? Please explain.
10.	Did I enhance the opportunities for *hands-on experience to promote transformative learning* by provoking critical reflection? Please justify.
	Common essential practice 3: Time consuming **(No Education Queensland equivalent)**
11.	Did I allow enough time in classes for the voices of all participants in the classes? Please justify.
12.	Did the intern volunteers appear hassled or hurried in group situations? Please justify.
	Common essential practice 4: Predisposition to change **Effective learning and teaching enhances and is enhanced by a supportive and challenging environment.**
13.	Did I create a supportive learning environment where some adult learners who had a greater predisposition towards change, could do so? Please justify.
14.	Did I provide opportunities for the intern volunteers to reconstruct experiences, which could lead to new understandings of situations as a result of critical reflection? Please justify.
	Common essential practice 5: Affective learning **Effective learning and teaching is founded on an understanding of the learner.**

15.	Was there evidence of the following in my teaching such as ability:
	    a. to recognise, understand and manage emotions,
	    b. to relate to others,
	    c. to adapt to change and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature, and
	    d. to efficiently cope with daily demands, challenges and pressures?
	Please justify.

16.	Authentic collaboration can only be happen after teachers have spent considerable time earning the students' trust by acting democratically and respectfully towards them (Brookfield, 1995). Was authentic collaboration evident in the class exercise?

	Please cite the evidence and discuss.
	Common essential practice 6: Educators and students as transformative learners **Effective learning and teaching shapes and responds to social and cultural contexts.**

17.	As the educator, it was my responsibility to provide a learning environment which was conducive to transformative learning for the intern volunteers. Did I address the following pedagogic characteristics such as:
	
	    a. promotion of educator awareness,
	    b. usage of sensitive handling of social, cultural and ethical issues,
	    c. usage of sensitive handling of conflicts, and
	    d. usage of supportive action and dealing with individual adult learner needs?

18.	Please justify. One of the attributes of a transformative teacher is modelling life-long learning. Was this evident in my overall practice? Please justify.
19.	Any other comments.

5.8. Resonance and empowerment criteria

Two intern graduates were asked to read my sections of my thesis. This included Chapters 1-4, and sections of Chapters 5 and 6. One of the intern graduates is still a member of the Baptist church and the other is a Baptist minister in New Zealand. Both of these men were available and willing to complete this. They were academically capable of completing this arduous task. They provided critical feedback on these two criteria.

    a. Resonance: this criterion establishes whether there is a degree of fit, overlap, or reinforcement between research report and the basic belief system of the researcher. To establish this the two interns read sections of my thesis and responded to the following :

        i. How did my thesis resonate with their experience of their involvement in the project?

        ii. Were my Christian beliefs evident in all of my behaviours during the research project?

   iii. Was I sensitive and flexible to the changing needs and circumstances of the intern volunteers throughout the project?

 b. Empowerment criterion: The interns were asked to consider how the following three dimensions were incorporated into this research project and comment to what extent it provided for empowerment for the interns.

   i. Fairness which demonstrated the extent to which I, as the teacher and phenomenographer honoured the different constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the interns,

   ii. Educative authenticity which demonstrated the degree to which my teaching enhanced the interns' understanding and appreciation that reflective processes could have on their practices with their clients in their areas of specialisation, and

   iii. Tactical authenticity which demonstrated how, as an outcome of my teaching, that the interns were empowered to act in their practices.

The following list of questions was provided to guide but not determine the interns' responses.

No.	Dimension	Questions
1.	**Fairness** which demonstrated the extent to which I, as the teacher/phenomenographer honoured the different constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the interns**.**	How did I, as the teacher/phenomenographer, honour or dishonour the constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the interns?
		What elements of my pedagogy demonstrated or did not demonstrate my respect of the constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the interns?
2.	**Educative authenticity** which demonstrated the degree to which my teaching enhanced the interns' understanding and	How evident were Mezirow's six essential practices (predisposition to change, time consuming, group situated learning, experiential learning, affective learning, and educators and learner as transformative learners) in my findings?

	appreciation that reflective processes could have on their practices with their clients in their areas of specialisation.	What direct connections between my teaching and the intern volunteers' understanding and appreciation that reflective processes could have on their practices, are evident in my findings?
3.	**Tactical authenticity** which demonstrated how, as an outcome of my teaching, the interns were empowered by using reflective practices, in their practices.	Did my findings demonstrate how the interns developed an understanding of how reflective practices could enhance their practice?
		Did my findings clearly identify the reflective processes such as content reflection, process reflection and premise reflection when analysing the intern volunteers' data?

5.9. The fourth criterion

The applicability criterion which is known as reader generalisability enables the reader to draw inferences from the research report, as to what may be applicable to her/his own situation. Because of some personal experiences, the reader may be able to identify similarities in the research findings. This could allow him/her to re-examine their own constructions in relation to the phenomena of my teaching in a faith-based social service environment. Due to the small number of participants in the research project my findings are more likely to provide some, but not extensive, illuminations on applicability.

CHAPTER 6
FINDINGS

Reybold (2001) argues that transformative learning enables adults to develop a crucial sense of agency over themselves and their lives. This personal autonomy is directed towards their own growth and development. As I observe myself, I see a Lindy who has emerged from a teacher with a failed dream, to the teacher who is prepared to challenge and change her pedagogy. This is due to developing critical reflective practices. According to a description forwarded by Cranston (1994, p. 28) Lindy has advanced herself-as-knower "toward more inclusive, differentiated, open, and integrated meaning perspectives". As a result of reconstructing my own personal philosophy I reconstructed my professional philosophy and emerged as a teacher who has a better understanding of the person, me.

My pedagogical baggage of yesteryear had gone, dissipated, vanished. I banished it from my consciousness. As observed in Chapter 4, I forced myself to reflect critically upon my pedagogy while constructing knowledge from the sociohistorical context in which it occurred (Baumgartner, 2001; Grimmett, 1989). To change my style of pedagogy it was necessary for me to examine my childhood school experiences, maybe re-examine them, then again, acknowledge how they were controlling me, and then reject them. Only then could my pedagogy change and it did change.

Why then am I struggling with this section of my narrative? Why am I not getting clues/guidance/ inspirations for my texts? My previous narratives build up sequentially to this section. According to Lindy the author, I had been liberated from my childhood school experiences and was now ready to change from a restrictive traditional pedagogy to an inclusive one. Why the hesitation to write? Why am I getting anxious? Was I still locating myself as a teacher of young children in one paradigm only? Is that the place I really wanted to stay?

Was it safer there? Maybe I am apprehensive that reconstructing my pedagogy will not result in the pedagogical richness I thought I had discovered. The transformation of my pedagogy, at this stage of my career, was and still is, one of my professional highlights. I firmly believe that these philosophical changes in my pedagogy were the catalysts for me to develop a comprehensive understanding of what constitutes effective teaching. Am I apprehensive that the process of relocating me and exposing the constructedness of this section of my narrative could challenge my then understandings of pedagogical theories (Jones, 1988)? Again why the hesitation? Are there other reasons for this reluctance to write?

I stop working. I stop reflecting. I am not sure what is creating these barriers for me. I go to the beach and attempt to ameliorate this situation. I sit and reflect. I feel as if my subconsciousness is in overdrive trying to dredge details from an earlier period of my life. Mason (2002, p. 104) states:

> You can use an incident to try to locate other experiences at around the same time or in the same place. You don't even need an incident: you can choose a place or person, and try to recall as much detail as you can. For example, you can recall a particular room, or institution, or age, or person, and either consciously seek detail, or actively wait for the detail to come to mind. . . . People find that having recalled one incident from their past . . .affords them access to other incidents in the same room, with the same teacher, or in the same school. Any one of these can set off a trigger of associations to other incidents at other times and places.

My body shivers as if 'someone had walked over my grave'. A name flashes in front of me – setting off a trigger of associations as identified by Mason (2002). I laugh. Suddenly I understand why I am experiencing such barriers to

writing up this section. During this very exciting and challenging period of my educational career I was in serious personal turmoil. What a dichotomy I was in – balancing a very successful professional life with a chaotic personal life. I was coping with personal trauma. I was reconnecting with my own emotions about the incident. From Zembylas' (2003, p. 214) perspective my move was towards "an understanding of teacher self through an exploration of emotion opens possibilities for the care and the self-knowledge of the teacher and provides spaces for his/her transformation."

I remember. I am grateful for what did not eventuate. I go home. I phone my husband (who is working away from home) and share my dilemma over writing this section of my doctorate with him. He laughs when I alluded to THAT situation which occurred many years earlier. I laugh. My husband was so supportive during this tumultuous period. Now I am ready to write to reveal what Jones (1988, p. 26) identifies as my "own partiality, self-consciously exposing the particular theoretical/cultural spectacles" which determine my perspective and influence my narrative.

As Lindy the teacher, I found that promoting a learning and teaching environment which enabled me to hold most of the power, was creating immense frustration for me. The assumption was that as teacher, I was the holder of all the knowledge. I questioned this assumption. Why was I experiencing this immense level of frustration with my pedagogy? Did not my belief and value systems validate this form of pedagogy? Had not many children in the past learned successfully through this type of pedagogy? What would I need to do to change from traditional pedagogy? How could I change my style of pedagogy? Why would I want to change? It was during this period of my career that I came to the realisation that knowledge belongs to the learner. My role

was one of facilitating learning experiences for the students and observing how they handled them. I realised that through dialectic dialogue, the students tell me as the teacher, how they view the experiences and not as me, the teacher telling them. I spent many hours at night discussing my teaching frustrations with my husband.

After months of critical reflection I decided to make radical changes in my approach to pedagogy. I wanted to acknowledge the experiences and knowledge the students brought with them to the classroom. Brooks (1990) identified two opposing traditions in education. At that time, my pedagogy could have been classified as *mimetic* (one tradition) as I expected the students in my class to acquire knowledge and facts from drill and practice exercises. Belenky et al., (1986) describe this method of teaching as the teacher holding all of the power and the students' voices only echoing that of the teacher. I envisaged 'transformative' pedagogy (the other tradition) which "seeks to influence the attitudes and interests of the learners, evoking changes in perspectives" (Brooks, p. 68) and not hearing echoes of my voice.

I enabled and accepted the young school-age students' autonomy, initiation, and leadership by encouraging them to construct their own curriculum. They did this by interpreting their experiences within the phenomenon of my effectiveness as their teacher. We co-constructed which, in turn, resulted in the students constructing their own learning realities. This co-construction of individual curriculums occurred within the framework of individual weekly contracts which were designed, managed, and then evaluated jointly. Instead of whole class lessons students were grouped according to their ability. At this stage of my career I was attempting to acknowledge and cater for the diverse learning

needs of the students (age 8-9 years) in my class as highlighted by Claxton (1996, p.13) who states:

> Learners differ not just in the dominant dispositions they bring with them to learning in general. They possess different repertoires of learning strategies: different both in nature and the range of strategies that are potentially available. They differ in the extent to which they are locked into one style, as opposed to selecting a strategy to meet the perceived needs of a particular situation. They differ in the ways they interpret and give weight to perceived rewards and risks of engagement.

Prior to implementing pedagogical change in my classroom, I provided a variety of approaches which enabled significant other opportunities for discussion. These included meetings, interviews, observations (Bennett, 1998), and the provision of pertinent classroom documents. Generally, the parents were very supportive. Their overall primary concern was the wellbeing of their children. The parents were not aware of the turmoil in my personal life. My main focus as the teacher was the provision of a learning and teaching environment that allowed for investigation, exploration, and interpretation of the students' knowledge and experiences. Van Manen (1990), Walsh (2002), Wilcke (2002) and Yu (2000) identify this approach as hermeneutic phenomenology. It enables investigation, exploration, and interpretation to occur through the discerning of themes (phenomenology) and interpretation (hermeneutics).

The class was running well. The children were settled and keen to attend school. The children enjoyed being empowered to have some control over their learning. Parents were positive about the overall change of attitudes to learning that their children demonstrated. Their children had a very conscientious, hard

working teacher. In reality, I was working even harder to block out the emotional turmoil.

Changing my pedagogy was both challenging and stimulating. Co-construction of the children's curriculum was occurring. The Department of Education syllabus documents underpinned our classroom programme. Initially, there were minor issues to work through with the students but these settled down, and the students were very willing "to undergo a process so that 'what is' may emerge and show itself" (Wilcke, 2002, ¶. 3). The students in my class experienced what Brooks (1990) describes as disequilibrium, and subsequently self-regulation. This, in turn, enabled me as the teacher, to understand the students' individual lives within their unique socio-cultural contexts (Bennett, 1998; Wilcke, 2002). The students were settled. They were keen to attend school. I could not send them home. Parents were delighted with the progress their children were making. Students were making progress holistically. They were more confident in themselves and were eager to learn. They were enjoying school.

I firmly believe that the development of critical reflection through reflective journalling was the catalyst for the gradual and steady improvement in the effectiveness of my teaching. Anecdotal incidents such as parents' comments, children's willingness to attend school, and empowered children, who were making academic decisions for themselves, supported this.

It came as a shock to me when I met a student in this class 30 years later and he recalled the following incident. He said

> I remember you asked us to make something. I can't remember what but
> I was so proud of my creation. I showed you and you replied. "That is not

how I wanted you to make that. I wanted you to do it this way." I felt so deflated.

What an impact my behaviours as a teacher had on him. He recalled his feelings so vividly long after the event. I thought I was empowering the children at this stage of my career. This was not occurring. Even though I considered the students were entitled to this independence in class, I still wanted their success to be dependent upon me as the teacher. Was I looking at my transformation as a teacher through rose-tinted spectacles at this stage of my career? Am I still doing this?

The 3rd and last term of the school year was commencing. Due to my perceived social and emotional wellbeing coming under threat, I requested a transfer out of the school to another location. It was very difficult even though my husband supported me through this very challenging period of my life. The decision to transfer to another school in a different area was mine. I was transferred to a special school and given a class of three profoundly deaf, teenage, male students. Implementing a pedagogical model in which these three older students took control of their learning was challenging but possible.

6.1. The pedagogical challenge of transformative learning

Throughout this research project my roles as teacher and phenomenographer created a major issue for me. The ethical issue of implementing pedagogy underpinned by the theory of transformative learning created a moral dilemma for me. What right did I have to challenge the worldview of this group of adult students? I was placing them in positions where their Christian faith could come under threat. Was I prepared to take this risk? This meant challenging their "mental set, perspective, paradigm or state of consciousness" (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 337). Mezirow (1998) describes this as challenging people's values, belief systems, assumptions, and prejudices. An integral aspect of these attributes is one's

spirituality; more specifically the status of Christian which all the intern volunteers professed to be.

As a Christian myself I was not sure how ethical it was for me to place the interns in situations in which they were required to examine their own Christian beliefs. There was a possibility that they could reject their faith. Having a deep appreciation of the Christian belief of life after death and eternal condemnation for unbelievers, I was not sure whether I was prepared to accept this responsibility. After much soul searching I proceeded with the classes which had the potential to challenge the interns' "long-held, socially constructed assumptions, beliefs and values about the experience or problem" (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 328). To address any major emotional situations which could occur, I ensured that support was available for my students. As outlined in Chapter 5.2 (pp. 91-92) several strategies were implemented.

In retrospect the only person who required this spiritual assistance was me, the teacher and phenomenographer. My faith was being seriously challenged for several years. My inner struggles continued.

6.2. The process

As alluded to in Chapter 5, I utilised three sources of data to ascertain the effectiveness of my teaching. The central variable in which I expected change was the development of critical reflection in the interns' practice. The first source of data emerged from an audit of my teaching conducted by two academic colleagues. The second was provided by two intern graduates who read a draft copy of some sections of this thesis (refer p.103). The third source of data was my reflective journal entries.

During the 6 months of teaching the interns' course I used transformative pedagogy underpinned by the six essential practices which Mezirow (1998) identified should be present in the learning environment. As I outlined in Chapter 4 these are:

a. Group setting,
b. Active learners,
c. The learning environment had to be supportive and trusting,

d. Acknowledgement of all players' emotions and feelings,

e. Time consuming, and

f. The change process.

Consciously attempting to underpin my pedagogy with these six essential practices enabled the interns to develop a desire to gain new perspectives. This, in turn, could provide them with a higher degree of control over their lives due to having a more complex understanding of personal changing events (Mezirow, 1998). This higher degree of control is evident in Bob's comment.

> I've learnt through reflective journalling that the experiences and things that I have been taught in my past have more influence on my life than I realised. I need to really discipline myself to achieve tasks in a given time frame as I am not a disciplined person due to a lack of discipline training in childhood.

My transformative pedagogy provided the intern volunteers with options to purposefully question their own assumptions, beliefs, feelings, and perspectives which enabled them to grow or mature personally and intellectually (Tsao, Takahashi, Olusesi, & Jain, 2007).

6.2.1. Individual scenarios. One series of classes consisted of individual scenarios which I designed and compiled for the interns. The focus of each scenario was connected to their individual ministries. The key role was played by the person for whom the scenario was written. Even though each intern had an overview of the theme of the scenario, they were not sure how it would develop. Individual written reflections were recorded on the completion of the scenarios. Group feedback was given at the end of each scenario. The feedback is recorded in the grammar used by the interns. The scenarios were as follows.

Nellie	**Scenario:** As the financial administrator of the church you are responsible for managing the church ministries' budget. Even though you have stressed that it is important that each individual ministry work within their allocated financial amount, the TELEPHONE MINISTRY will not cooperate. The leader of this ministry will not hand in accounts and is always asking you for a larger budget. After a few discussions the leader gets very angry with you and accuses you of being mean, not understanding the ministry, and with holding money. The leader argues that your behaviour is unchristian.
	Personal reflection to share with the group: *I explained the budget for his ministry which could not be overspent and until such a time he brings in his accounts, no more funds would be available. Telling me that I was not a Christian would have no bearing on the matter. I would not*

	argue or refute his claims. *I told him that being Christian means good stewardship as well. My Christian beliefs would be the only factor operating here. Good stewardship and accountability. Providing a good report and having a procedure in place where temptation to overspend is minimal.* *Past experience has shown me how important it is to have this procedure in place* **Response to group feedback:** *Realizing that this person could become very argumentative, I would seek further guidance such as the senior pastor as to whether this leader is suitable for the ministry.*
Bob	**Scenario:** While sitting in church last week someone whom you hardly know from the congregation came to you and started sympathizing with you about the personal problem you shared with your home-group. This person does not go to your home. This made you realise that someone from the home-group has broken the rule of confidentiality. **Personal reflection to share with the group:** *I thanked the person lovingly but told them that it was a confidential matter that was intended for our home-group only. I did not discuss this any further. I committed this issue to God in prayer about my pending discussion with the home-group members.* *I talked to the home-group about confidentiality. There must be an absolute commitment to this for our home-group members to feel they can share openly and frankly. My Christian belief would influence my course of action. We must be committed to the teachings of Christ and speak in love but be self controlled and not being angry. Also be committed to the process of restoration and speak to the person privately.* *I have witnessed both experiences. I have a commitment to seeking positive reconciliation as being the best choice. Also only God can work in the hearts of people to bring restoration to the individual and group.* **Response to group feedback:** *Call the group together if this happens over a holiday period when the group isn't meeting, possible within 1 week of issue occurring.*
Harry	**Scenario:** As a result of the young people throwing stones at the bus last week, and you are having words with them, one of the parents comes to see you. You are accused of threatening the lad and a complaint has been made to the police about your threatening behaviour. **Personal reflection to share with the group:** *I made a written report and dated it. I briefed my senior pastor and ministry leaders on my version of events. I gave my account of events to the parent, calmly and hoped they would see things my way.* *To recruit support for my account, the written account was written to make sure that the events were written as they occurred. I think it is better to settle things amicably between two people rather than a court appearance.* *To avoid legal disputes by coming to agreement outside the legal system is scriptural advice. I would be open and honest in giving my account. It is better to settle disputes quickly.* **Response to group feedback:** *I would consider an apology if that would make the matter go away.*
Vernon	**Scenario:** Just as you are commencing your weekly lesson at Religious Instruction, an irate father

	rushes into the classroom. He accuses you of trying to convert his Muslim daughter who is in your class. **Personal reflection to share with the group:** *I would try and calm him down. I would try and get him to come outside because I would not want the children to see this great outburst. I will include the teacher in my discussions with him. Even though I would go along with the school rules about children being able to be withdrawn from RE, I would feel sad.* *Apart from the fact he had got into the classroom and blown up in front of the children and disrupted my lesson about the Lord, he was denying his daughter a chance to serve the true God.* **Response to group feedback:** *The group thought they would use the same strategies as me.*
Molly	**Scenario:** It is your turn to lead the women's study group. The opening prayers and songs have just finished. Just as you are going to commence the Bible study one of the women starts to cry and shares her youngest child has been diagnosed with cancer. **Personal reflection to share with the group:** *I went to her and asked if we could pray for her, her child and the rest of the family, the doctor and nurses. We comforted her (and would probably cry with her). I inquired whether there was any way we could help with the children.* *The Lord asks us to bring all of our care and anxious thoughts to Him in prayer, to comfort those who are mourning, with thankfulness that we have a loving Father who cares for us.* *When we have prayed in the past, in all situations God has answered our prayers because we pray in faith and believe his word that ALL things work together for good of those who love and trust Him. I get stressed when I try and manage on my own.* **Response to group feedback:** *The group thought I handled this situation in the correct manner.*
Tom	**Scenario:** It is your turn to supervise the children on the bus run prior to Children's Club. The young guy who wants to go fishing is on the bus. When he sees you he accuses you of not keeping your word. You promised to take him fishing and he has rung you several times and still fishing has not occurred. He says you are a hopeless leader and not a good Christian because you break a promise. **Personal reflection shared with the group:** *I apologised for my ill feelings and explained why we hadn't gone fishing. I explained I meant what I said and my word is still good and his opinion is not a reflection of my leadership and Christian capabilities.* *I know my desire to build relationships with children I would not break a promise because God doesn't and that is who we aspire to be like.* *In the past I have been hurt and been hurt by broken promises. For the past few years I have worked extremely hard at not impacting in people's lives this way and not letting it affect me by striving to be more like Jesus.* **Response to group feedback:** *I need to consider time restraints upon my family as it is a real issue facing my family. Maybe he could come fishing with my family.*
Carol	**Scenario:** It is your weekly visit to Smithville Rest Home. Just as you commence massaging one of the clients, another rushes in and accuses you of hurting her last week when you massaged her. She says you have no rights to be there and should not be doing this. **Personal reflection to share with the group:** *Initially I apologised to the lady and then checked*

	with the sister-in-charge of the women to see if a doctor had checked the lady. I declined to do her weekly massage and suggested someone else do this. *Patients have to be always treated with respect. I always treat patients with the upmost of care. Sometimes dementia affects some of the ladies.* *I know this accusation would not be true but I always treat the women love and respect.* *I know in my heart that I do the best and give the greatest of care.* **Response to group feedback:** *I would have handed in a written report.*

There is evidence that I underpinned my teaching with Mezirow's (1998) six essential practices. Each scenario was acted out in a 'group setting' in which all of interns were encouraged to be 'active learners' (Sutton, 2005). These two essential practices were evident from the various roles the interns took in each scenario. Roles varied from key actor to support actors to observers.

At the completion of each scenario the students were encouraged to provide verbal feedback to the key actor. My rationale for the feedback was to enable the interns to critically reflect upon their practices in the scenarios. I envisaged the feedback could challenge their beliefs, assumptions, values, and maybe prejudices (Grimmett, 1989). 'The learning environment in which the scenarios took place had to be supportive and trusting'. The interns had to feel comfortable with each other and me, as the teacher, to honestly and openly share their responses to the situations created in the scenarios. Tom's response:

> In the past I have been hurt and been hurt by broken promises. For the past few years I have worked extremely hard at not impacting in people's lives this way and not letting it affect me by striving to be more like Jesus.

Tom's response demonstrated how he felt comfortable sharing some very personal information with others.

For the students' self esteem to be unharmed by participation in the exercises, all members of the group **'**deliberately considered and acknowledged all players' emotions and feelings' (Sutton, 2005). Molly's responses to the lady with the child with cancer had the potential to generate some interesting discussion which demonstrated how her emotions were considered by the other interns. Her response was:

> When we have prayed in the past, in all situations God has answered our prayers because we pray in faith and believe his word that ALL things work together for good of those who love and trust Him I get stressed when I try and manage on my own.

Molly's response implied that she would expect God to heal the child. Instead of challenging this belief, the other interns considered her fragile disposition. By stating they supported her response to the scenario, the other intern volunteers considered and acknowledged Molly's feelings.

I knew that transformative learning could be very 'time consuming' and indeed, this series of exercises consumed a large amount of time. I had to ensure that the scenarios complemented the interns' ministry, and, more importantly, the scenarios had to allow for the abilities of each individual student. The actual presentations and feedback group discussions also consumed a large amount of time. Each scenario took up to an hour and a half from planning to completion.

Some of the interns required considerable time to work through the 'change process' involved in the scenarios and then record the reconstruction or rejection of feedback from the other group members (Sutton, 2005; Taylor, 2000; Ziegler, et al., 2006). To enable this process to occur I allowed a full week for them to share their reflective journals with the group and me. The following example demonstrated the change process in Tom's entry where he shared his reflections, reflected upon their feedback, reconstructed it, and then recorded it. The feedback from the other group members recommended that Tom should consider his family needs alongside those of the lad who wanted Tom to take him fishing. Tom's response indicates how he worked through the change process and recorded:

> I need to consider time restraints upon my family as it is a real issue facing my family.
> Maybe he could come fishing with my family.

6.2.2. Interviewer with Buddhist views. Because transformative learning does not happen by itself, I planned activities in which the interns were placed in situations where they interacted with fundamentally different and contrasting religious people (Tsao, et al., 2007). Being videotaped while an interviewer with Buddhist views interviewed them about their personal beliefs and their individual ministry specialisations, was a radically different and incongruent experience for all of the interns. A person with Buddhist views could be perceived to be in conflict with the interns' Christian beliefs, value judgments, attitude and perspectives. Prior to the actual interviewing/videoing I discussed the course of action the videoing would take and reiterated that the internal volunteers need not participate if they chose not to. The

interns had had very limited experience of being interviewed and these were being conducted by a Buddhist interviewer. They agreed to participate as they believed the interview and videoing was integral to their course of study. Once again, involvement in this activity could be viewed as a discourse of power where the interviewer held all of the control and authority. Tom, however, had a different view: he regarded the interviewer as a 'lost soul' and he would pray for him.

The interns could either reject outright the views of the Buddhist interviewer, or the new experience of listening to the perspective of another religion, could be transformed and assimilated. One of the last statements in his reflective journey demonstrated how one intern's thinking was challenged and then transformed, as a result of this experience. Tom wrote:

> I was apprehensive when I heard what was happening. As a Christian I am not sure about Buddhists. Where was his soul going after death? He was actually quite a nice guy. He did challenge my beliefs. Maybe he's got something. I don't know. I still believe in my personal God and I will continue to pray for him.

The above statement showed that Tom was able to free himself from "restrictions and actively questioned" his own assumptions about Buddhism (Tsao et al., 2007, ¶. 5). He reflected upon both the challenges and comments made by the Buddhist interviewer and his own personal beliefs as a Christian. This process of reflection validated his beliefs. According to Cranston (1994), Curtis (2006), Mezirow (1991), and Tsao et al., (2007), this level of reflection is known as premise reflection. Along with content reflection and process reflection, premise reflection is one of the three methods of interpretation I adopted to analyse the interns' journal entries. These forms of reflection were proposed by Kember (1999) (refer to pp. 87-88).

Reading and then rereading the seven intern volunteers' guided discussions transcripts, reflective journals and video prepared scripts; their reflective statements indicated some degree of reflection. This might not necessarily have led to transformation but it did suggest that long-held, socially constructed assumptions (or formed of their own volition), beliefs, and values were not taken for granted. There was some evidence that the students had been challenged.

6.3. Two examples of the intern volunteers' reflective journeys

The majority of the intern volunteers demonstrated all levels of reflections in their reflective journals. The following two interns' reflective journals demonstrated their use, and frequency of use, of different types of reflection. These intern volunteers provided feedback for my doctorate. The information at the beginning of each biography is documented in the intern volunteers' [1]biographies in Chapter 1.

6.3.1. Bob (30+) is a European Australian and is married to a New Zealander. Refer to pp. 18-19 for Bob's background information.

Table 1

An analysis of Bob's types of reflections

Week number	Content reflections	Process reflections	Premise reflections
1.	1		1
2.			1
3.			1
4.		1	
5.		1	
6.			1
7.			1
8.			1
9.		1	
10.			1
11.		1	
12.			2
13.			2
Total	1	4	11

Content reflection. There was only one content reflection I could identify in all of Bob's entries. Bob was very keen to commence all requirements of this course which was demonstrated in the first part of this entry. Bob endeavoured to be a structured purposeful student and was very frustrated when he discovered that he could not access information required for his assignment. He could not understand why there was a lack of organisational processes and structures in the church because this impacted on his small group

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[1] Analyses of the other interns' reflective journeys are available from the author.

specialisation. It was as if he was questioning the effectiveness and competence of the church management – What was going on here?

Guided discussion (Week 1)

I had enjoyed my first class and then the wheels fell off. I struggled that there was no church mission statement and structures in place.

Process reflection. This process reflection demonstrated Bob's attempt to have structural and organised philosophy in his studies. He was very distressed and annoyed with himself because of his lack of preparation for the small group meeting. He questioned how he could have allowed this to occur. His final comment identified some of the reasons how this situation eventuated. Bob was aware of the cause of stress such as having a very young family, had in his life. Even though in the final paragraph of his reflection Bob was highly strategic, he did not consider any strategies to address his family situation.

Journal entry (Week 4)

A challenging thing in my practicum this week was my poor preparation for our small group meeting. I lacked discipline to prepare early in the week and before I knew it Thursday had come and also the day passed very fast. I didn't have a set plan to follow and hadn't thought through the discussion questions to follow the video we were to watch.

I had a busy week with study and family activities but I had neglected to spend time preparing because I had given little priority to our small group. I had thought about our meeting earlier in the week and felt unsure exactly what we'd, as it was the 2nd week since the small group had started, and we're in the forming stage, we might need to change the programme if new people came. We had decided to watch a video series, which I had viewed. It turned out that new people came and the night went OK.

I should have given an amount of time early in the week to plan and think we would do and achieve. Also, I could've had an alternate plan to suit any new people joining the group. I must set aside time on Monday or Tuesday to plan and prepare for our group meeting. Also I need to pray more for our group through the week.

Premise reflection. The following entry demonstrated how Bob engaged in two forms of premise reflection: that of examining why his ministry could not be settled and why his faith was being tested. Initially, Bob's commitment to his study and his frustration due to his perceived lack of time from his mentor was evident in this entry. This, in turn, was impeding on his ability to commence working on his assignment. Bob was seriously examining the legitimacy of the practices of the church management. He questioned why this was occurring and the church structures were not in place. He realised the implications of lack of time and experiences, would have on his ability to complete course work within the allocated timeframe.

Second Bob was mindful of the tension between his desire to rely on his own abilities 'instead of seeking God first and patiently waiting for His answer.' He was examining the validity of his own beliefs which was resolved by Biblical underpinnings. Again this entry reflected Bob's need to be in control of situations because of his structured philosophy to life.

> Journal entry (Week 1)
>
> I felt frustrated, as I couldn't meet with my mentor, Keith, in the first week of the course. After our meeting and then class discussion, I was concerned that the area we'd decided on for the practicum (ministry: my word) cluster group leader and practical need co-coordinator wasn't going to give me the required time and experiences to meet the performance criteria for this unit. I had become anxious and worried that I wouldn't have a practical ministry area settled for some time and that would seriously hinder my assignment and other course requirements.
>
> As I really struggled with trying to think of the best solution I was reminded of my need to constantly depend on God for what He wanted me to be doing. It wasn't until I spent some time reading God's word and asking Him to show me what he wanted to do that it was clear what I should do.
>
> I think I felt this way because I'm a structured person and not wanting to do things in God's time and way. I had relied on my own abilities and wisdom instead of seeking God first and patiently waiting for His answer. It reminded me of 2 verses in the bible. Prov. 3:5-6"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths."Jer.

29:12, 13 "Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

Mezirow (1991, p.108) argues "Premise reflection involves us becoming aware of why we perceive, think, feel or act as we do." In this entry Bob was scrutinizing in depth why he was so undisciplined in his life. Having the ability to cognitively understand the connections between childhood experiences (lack of discipline) and his adult behaviours appeared to provide an explanation of the difficulties being structured and organised, had on his studies. This is the only reference Bob made to his lack of disciplined training as a child and, from his perception; this was the reason why he lacked discipline in his adult life. Similar to Grenfell's (2007) findings in his studies of emotion and identity, Bob's concern for presenting as an organised and structured student ran throughout many of his entries and was a distinguishing feature of his personal identity.

Video prepared script (Week 13)

Interviewer: What have you learnt about yourself and the world?

Bob: I've learnt through reflective journalling that the experiences and things that I have been taught in my past have more influence on my life than I realised. I need to really discipline myself to achieve tasks in a given time frame as I am not a disciplined person due to a lack of discipline training in childhood.

Bob's reflections identified two key themes throughout the course. These were his struggle of applying more discipline in his personal life and his perception that the lack of some church of structure, was affecting his academic study. Due to his previous experiences of managerial positions and studentship in another Christian training organistion, Bob possessed sufficient academic, cultural and spiritual capital to persist with his studies.

6.3.2. Tom (30+) is married and has three young children. Refer to p.19 for Tom's background information.

Table 2

An analysis of Tom's types of reflections

Week number	Content reflections	Process reflections	Premise reflections
1.			1
2.		1	
3.			1
4.	1		
5.	1		
6.			
7.			1
8.		1	
9.			1
10.			2
11.			1
12.	1		
13.			1
Total	3	3	8

Content reflection. Tom's first entry was very short, direct, and abrupt. This was the tenure of many of his entries and reflected that Tom was a 'man of few words'. This is evident in the following journal entry.   Tom decided upon a course of action and followed this through. The offender who had playing up on the bus was relocated and isolated to the front of the bus.

> Journal entry (Week 4)
>
> Made one of boys that was playing up on the bus sit up the front by himself – was hitting other kids.

Process reflection. The first week of study and ministry activities was a very stimulating experience for Tom and this is reflected in this entry. Identifying an opportunity which enabled Tom to share Jesus with children was a priority for him. . Tom believed because these children were attending more church activities than just Kids Club, this indicated that they were searching for meaning in their lives. The question of how to evangelise was answered. Observing non-Christian children going to a variety of church activities provided an avenue for sharing Biblical truths.

> Journal entry (Week 1)
>
> A positive thing for me this week was to see all the children that go to Kids Club come to SSS (similar to Sunday school) because these children are non-Christian but continue to come to activities. I feel like they are looking for someone. Hopefully we can share Jesus with them.

Premise reflection. Early on in the course Tom constructed some connections between his present practices and his early childhood experiences and their impact on his emotional labour. From this entry it appeared as if Tom had difficulty managing his temper and was prone to losing control emotionally. Tom attributed this to the role model provided by his own father. He understood the connections between his aggressive father childhood experiences and his own adult behaviours.

Tom was unsure of which strategies to implement to manage the situation with the boys. Instead of blaming the boys for his reactions, Tom was examining his own practices and focused on issues at the heart of his emotional reactions. Tom was actively redefining his emotional problem of lack of control and seeking solutions to address them. (Kember, 1999, p. 23) describes this process as "It must involve a hiatus in which a problem becomes redefined so that action may be redirected."

> Journal entry discussion (Week 3) and consequent discussion.
>
> Tom: At SSS I took the small boys' group for discussion time. Expected the boys to have more self control than they had. Was at a bit of a loss of what to do. Handled it wobbly.
>
> Lindy: What do you mean?
>
> Tom: I didn't handle it internally, not in control internally, externally was OK. I should have remained focused and stay in control of my emotions. Open the group up to discussion and listen through their babble.

> Lindy: Why do you think you reacted like this?
>
> Tom: My old man was very aggressive. Love from my wife to support me to where I am today.
>
> Lindy. How could you address this?
>
> Tom: Do anger management courses, get help from God.

This final entry of Tom's demonstrated the empathy and compassion he had for children. Again he sought validation for his practice.   Not only did Tom communicate with this specific child, but he made time to interact with other children on the bus. Tom validated his own practice by comparing his behaviour with that of Jesus'.

> Journal entry (Week 7)
>
> A boy from Sunshine Club rang me and wanted a lift to church [on the bus: my words]. I feel God is opening my eyes and heart to children who need love and encouragement. I want to be like Jesus. I took him to Kids Club and he helped out. He has a good heart – nice kid. I took time to sit with the kids on the bus and shared time with them all. I have always been able to show love to the 'different' kids and people.

6.4. Questioning as a form of justification

The intern volunteers' reflective journeys demonstrated all three types of reflection as demonstrated in the analysis of their individual journals.   Of interest are the sub-categories which emerged within each code of reflection.

6.4.1. Questioning what they know: Content reflection. Instances of content reflection were evident in all of the intern volunteers' entries. The occurrence of these varied from only 1 entry (for 2 intern volunteers) up 16 entries in another's entries. Within the code of content reflection four sub-categories emerged and these were shaping of thinking, influencing thinking, emotional reactions and lack of understanding.

Shaping of thinking. In this example Vernon detailed how the classes and his ministry had shaped his thinking and confirmed what it was he had come to believe. He acknowledged where his reflections had taken him and reconciled old and new perspectives. It would have

caused some emotional upheaval if Vernon had to reframe his cherished belief. This was evident in his response to a hypothetic Religious Education scenario which occurred in Vernon's third week Religious Education teaching at state primary schools. He was still lacking confidence. A Muslim parent rushes into the classroom and accuses him of trying to convert his daughter to Christianity. Vernon was asked to outline how he would handle this and why he would take this line of action. Vernon's response was:

> I would try and calm him down. I would try and get him to come outside because I would not want the children to see this great outburst. I will include the teacher in my discussions with him. Even though I would go along with the school rules about children being able to be withdrawn from RE, I would feel sad. Apart from the fact he had got into the classroom and blown up in front of the children and disrupted my lesson about the Lord, he was denying his daughter a chance to serve the true God.

Influencing thinking. Other interns wrote about the impact that the classes and their ministries had on their thinking. Implied within this entry was the way other intern volunteers' contributions in class discussions had influenced Molly's thinking. In this entry, she made specific reference to her ability to perform her parts in the role play and how this would impact on her course of study. Molly was beginning to transform her perceptions of being capable of success, of achieving her goal.

> Molly: Journal entry (Week 8)
>
> I am pleased I was able to perform my part in the role play to the best of my ability without getting too nervous. I am feeling very relaxed in the course and hopefully will be able to complete it without too much stress.

Emotional reactions. In these examples of content reflection the intern volunteers discussed their emotional reactions to the commencement of the course, ministries, and the conclusions they had arrived at. These entries illuminated fears and pleasure which were derived from enrolling in this course.

> Nellie: Journal Entry (Week 1)
>
> This caused me to reflect on a conversation that I had with a fellow student from last year's training. We both had a hesitant feeling on restarting another year of studying and recommitting to another new year of focus and work.

Molly Journal entry (Week 4)

Feel much better I have finally finished my first assignment. How well I have could be another question but I feel I have done my best.

Lack of understanding. As a result of attending classes the intern volunteers reflected on what they did not understand or know about aspects of their ministries. In Carol's example she framed her content reflection in terms of the limits of her knowledge and the ramifications this could have on her ministry.

Carol: Journal entry (Week 1)

This Monday is the second Ministry Practicum with Lindy, I still have no mentor. Consequently I have been unable to make an appointment to talk over my ministry or commence my vision statement, and be able to generally make an effort to grasp the way the thinking about this subject requires. I find that I am a little lost and uneasy about the situation.

6.4.2. Questioning how they know: Process reflection. Instances of process reflection were evident in all of the interns' entries. The occurrence of these varied from only 1 entry up to 8 entries in another. Similar to content reflection, two sub-categories emerged and these were specific experiences: shaping views and beliefs and solutions to problems

Specific experiences- shaping views/beliefs. The following two examples demonstrated how the interns recounted specific experiences and how their views/beliefs on the topic were shaped by these. An outcome of reflecting upon these ministry experiences was that they were able to analyse and reframe their personal beliefs.

Molly: Journal entry (Week 2)

Thursday night attending the First Careforce Facilitator training meeting. Why positive? Knowing I am on my way to seeing my vision realised.

Harry: Journal entry (Week 3)

Remained fixed on Christ as in doing all things for Him and knowing that whatever I suffer in this life is but a shadow compared to what He went through. Driving the bus is nothing compared to that.

Solution to Problems. These two examples demonstrated how the interns found solutions to their problems. These interns reflected on their past week's experiences and reinterpreted present realities through a different lens.

Bob: Journal entry (Week 3)

There was a family friend staying with the Smith's where we have home-group. She was, I felt, controlling the conversation, or at least very strong in her opinions, in our preliminary conversation. She was soft spoken, measured but slow in delivery of her words and this frustrated me. This was the very first night when we would discuss what we would do and what aims we'd have. I felt threatened by her dominance and wondered how I was going to lead and control the discussion, and not allow her to influence our discussion as she was only visiting.

I tried to ignore her once we were discussing home group structure and planning. She didn't try to control the conversation and hardly spoke for the rest of the night.

I should not have let myself worry about this lady until there was an issue. I should have waited until our discussions on home group structure were happening to see if she was dominating the discussion before forming an opinion or taking action. I also feel that I had discriminated against her for the ways she talks. I realise that I need to respect and understand individual differences.

Harry: Journal entry (week 3)

Quite satisfied how RE was this week. Perhaps a little concerned about the discipline. I felt the children really accepted me and that somehow RE is not so uncool after all. Being who I am and allowing the kids to be themselves whilst maintaining order and discipline was a challenge.

I allowed the children to express themselves a little in front of others because I felt the material for this week was irrelevant and knew I could not maintain the interest or attention.

 After reviewing the material for this week's lesson I was at a loss as to how I could make it work. I could have just persevered with the prescribed format and bored them

silly. I could have tried to reconstruct the same lesson in a more contemporary and stimulating fashion.

6.4.3. Questioning why they know: Premise reflection. According to Curtis (2006) premise reflection which is qualitatively deeper than content or process reflections, is generally the rarest form of reflection. Within the interns there was not an abundance of examples where they critically reflected upon their practices and past experiences, or challenged their Christian beliefs and personal values. Overall Christian principles appeared to be accepted blindly and in a non-negotiable way. There was little evidence of them taking risks and integrating critical reflection into their ministry practices and personhood (Ziegahn, 2001, ¶. 4).

Instances of premise reflection were identified in all of the interns' entries but generally they did not seriously consider any challenges which targeted their own practices. The occurrence of premise reflection varied from 4 entries (in two of the interns) up to11 entries in another intern's entries. The interns appeared to be seeking validation of differing aspects of their practices. Five sub-categories emerged within the code of premise reflection and these were validation of: a practice itself; practices in ones' own professional lives; own beliefs and assumptions; assumptions that have been made in ones' own practices; and wider issues.

Validation of a practice itself. In both of these examples the interns were focusing on the legitimacy of the practices themselves. Vernon was seeking Biblical validation of his practice: that of teaching Religious Education. Bob was seeking validation for his impatience to his ministry not being settled.

> Vernon: A previous Journal Entry (Week 1)
> Relating week 1 to the bible I found in the gospels Matt 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 17:15-17. Very relevant to my first week of teaching RE that Jesus said "not to stop the little children from coming to Him because they belong to the Kingdom of God." Jesus blessed the children as we have been given a position the same.

> Bob: Journal Entry (Week 1)
> I have become anxious and worried about that I wouldn't have a practical ministry area settled for some time and that would seriously hinder my assignment and other course requirements.

As I really struggled with trying to think of the best solution I was reminded of my need to constantly depend on God for what He wanted me to be doing. It wasn't until I spent some time reading God's word and asking Him to show what he wanted me to do that it was clear what I should do.

I felt this way because I'm a structured person and not wanting to do things in God's time and way. I had relied on my own abilities and wisdom instead of seeking God first and patiently waiting for His answer. It reminded me of two verses in the bible.

Proverbs 3, 5-6: "Trust in Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths."
.
Jeremiah 29, 12-13: Then you will call upon me and pray to me and I will listen to you. You will seek and find me when you seek me with all of your heart.

Validation of practices in ones' own professional lives. These 3 examples demonstrated how the intern volunteers were questioning the validity of the practices they used in their own ministries. These practices were guided by the assumptions or beliefs that had been made in their own professional practices and by not challenging these beliefs. Both Vernon and Nellie believed that if they modelled their behaviours on Christ's, their practices would have successful outcomes.

Vernon: Journal Entry (Week 10)
This is our first week back after the Easter holidays and things are a little unsettled, although this did not slow the lesson or stop the lessons impact [at RE: my words]. It was a tough topic "The Holy Spirit" and was quite difficult to present to the children of ages 8-9 and help them to understand the importance of the Holy Spirit in relation to being a follower of Christ

As a positive in the week I would have to say that God really lead me in my lessons and helped to present them to the children so that they did understand who the Holy Spirit is and the role that He has to play in the lives of a Christian. I felt very satisfied on leaving the school because of the way things were presented through the leading of God.

In the underpinning the lesson with a passage of scriptures it would come from Act 2 where at the day of Pentecost when the followers of Christ were filled with the Holy Spirit, Christ was proclaimed in a bold and powerful way.

Nellie: Journal Entry (Week 8)

There had been some misunderstandings with the Kitchen Ministry team. As this venture needs the use of the kitchen and staff it is necessary to sort out the differences in a congenial manner. I believe Jesus' teaching to go and speak with the person with whom you have contentions is the only way to solve problems without hurt and bitterness (Mt.5: 22-23; Heb 12:14-15).

Harry's entry demonstrated some logical analysis of the situation he found himself in. He reflected on his response and identified his humanity and his weaknesses such as the manner in which he reacted. This, in turn, embroiled him in emotional turmoil. He was not seeking validation of his human response to the situation. In this example Harry was seeking validation of his beliefs which determined that he would accept the youth as people – for who they were. This did not mean he sanctioned their rude behaviour.

Harry: Journal entry (Week 10)

I feel depressed, annoyed at myself and disappointed with myself and the young people. I am continuing to build and maintain positive relationships with the younger group. Trying to manage and cope with the complete lack of respect that is shown by the older youth group. I totally blew up, lost it/ twisted off and to the point of swearing at them. Ironic because bad language is the main issue. I lost my temper. I did not consciously decide to do things this way I merely reacted. I could have ignored what was going on and concentrated on driving which is my job. I could have let the bus monitor handle the situation and not reacted so personally to what I perceived as an attack on his good nature.

Validation of own beliefs and assumption. Even though in this example Nellie was questioning her own beliefs, she used Biblical underpinnings to validate these. She was not able to challenge Biblical norms and take risks to integrate critical types of reflection into her ministry.

Nellie: Journal Entry (Week 13)

My ministry is important and it requires honesty, accountability, integrity, confidentiality, accuracy, and accountancy knowledge... The greater realization of the importance of the ministry has brought my focus on my Christianity. I must keep my eyes on Jesus, rely and stay in His strength to maintain the energy for my service to continue on. Ph. 4.13.

Validation of wider issues. Again I cite two examples which have been referred to previously, however they are being analysed from a different perspective.   Even though these two examples were linked directly to the intern volunteers and could be validated by Biblical underpinnings, they also discussed how changing patterns within our cultures were impacting upon them. They were both questioning the ways in which their own assumptions and experiences shaped their perceptions. In Harry's case, he questioned the provision of mature men returning to study while Nellie was questioning the changing role of women in today's society. In these examples critical sources of cognitive growth were the instances in which Harry and Nellie questioned and challenged cultural and Christian practices, and beliefs. They displayed a willingness to examine personal preconceptions and prejudices and biases.

Mature aged students

Harry: Guided discussion (Week 2)

L.A Just what are you getting out of being a student. How are you feeling being a student?

Harry: It's a privilege. It's awesome Its – I mean I'm 47 and able to sit down and study the things I want to study is great and um I've learnt much more than I thought I would. I didn't realise I have learnt so much until I start to talk to other people about things and it just starts coming out. You realise that you really have soaked up some information and if I had taken one thing out of everything that I've learnt about God. The history of man's dealings with God is a need for us to be holy because 'I am holy' says the Lord …

Gender roles:

Guided discussion excerpt. (Week 6)

L.A. How about you Nellie? What are you thinking?

Nellie: Well I come from a different kind of thinking altogether. I am able to do something for myself so therefore it is important I've had four children and most of my life I have spent doing for other people I feel. That may not be true but I feel that.

> This is something [Diploma] that I am doing for myself to get to know God intimately.

6.5. *The effectiveness of my transformative pedagogy: Addressing the criteria*

As outlined in Chapter 5 I requested four colleagues (two academic colleagues and two intern graduates) to confirm my discussions as to the effectiveness of my teaching by "scrutinizing and evaluating and offering useful suggestions for revisions" (Evans, 2002, p. 91) . Three authentic criteria were utilised for validation purposes and these were rhetorical, resonance, and empowerment (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The 4th criterion, applicability, will be addressed by future readers of this thesis, as to its effectiveness and usefulness.

6.5.1. Rhetoric Criterion: Auditors' feedback. This criterion was used to examine my pedagogy for aspects such as unity, simplicity, clarity, organisation, an easily discernible theme, and so on. Evidence of these aspects was based upon the auditors' detailed knowledge of my pedagogy and from the power point presentation on transformative pedagogy.

Prior to the audit I formulated four questions based on the work of Evans (2002). I believed that the inclusion of these questions would add rigor to the evaluation of my teaching and of the presentation on transformative pedagogy. Mezirow's six practices and the corresponding Education Queensland principles of effective teaching (typed in bold italic) prior to the cluster of questions. The auditors' responses were recorded after each question or cluster of questions. Their comments which are presented in italics are integrated in my analysis of the data. A summary of the effectiveness of my teaching concluded the analysis of the questionnaire.

General questions

1.	Did my classes and/or power point presentation display unity, simplicity, clarity, sound organisation, and contain some central ideas easily discernible to the reader? Please justify.
Analysis: Both auditors believed that the above characteristics were present in my presentation on transformative pedagogy and classes. Both auditors considered my classes and presentation displayed unity, simplicity, clarity, were well organised, and contained some central ideas which were easily discernible.	
a. *Teaching was always extremely well organised. Lindy's presentations, including verbal skills, clearly*	

	demonstrated the content in a discernible way. Well confirmed by the students.
b.	*Yes this was a difficult theory to present in a way that the reader could understand. Central idea is apparent through the explanation of terms used the logical necessary to make the links.*
2.	Did the categorical themes of the 6 common essential practices in the presentation hold or appear thin and muddled or influence the outcome? Please justify?

Analysis: Comments provided by the auditors confirmed that the colour coding system in the presentation for each of the 6 common essential practices assisted them to better understand transformative learning theory.

a.   *Categorical themes were extremely clear! Each one was well evidenced. Both individually and by their combined harmony it would be possible that they had a strong influence on the students' outcomes. The results of this can be clearly seen in the student that I mentored who uses these principles in his own teaching of others.*

b.   *The six themes are highly evident. Small problem with emotions and feelings.*

3.	Did new ideas which emerged from data in the form of discussions and/or individual sharing of knowledge and experiences reconfirm previous ideas discussed? Please justify.

Analysis: The auditors were asked to justify whether new ideas which emerged from data in the form of discussions and/or individual sharing of knowledge and experiences reconfirmed previous ideas discussed. The auditors' comments identified this 'reconfirmation of ideas' in examples of the interns

    a.   *Speaking with the students there was an obvious clear presentation that confirmed previous ideas and subject matter.*

    b.   *Yes apparent in classes – the partnership, group work, and self*

4.	Did my teaching and/or the power point presentation demonstrate underpinning knowledge of the transformative learning theory? Please justify

Analysis: Feedback from the auditors referred to my sound knowledge and understanding, as well my experiences of transformative learning theory that have contributed to my transformative pedagogy.

    a.   *I think this is one of Lindy's strong points in teaching. As she herself is a creative thinker there is also the passing on of this attribute which enables the students to gain through the above process. This is not done at the expensive of clearly imparting that which is clearly factual.*

    b.   *Yes explained well and repeated to ensure understanding.*

Group situated learning: *Effective learning and teaching is enhanced through worthwhile learning partnership*

Questions
5.   Was there evidence in either my classes or power point presentation where the intern volunteers had opportunities to share and critically reflect upon their own and others' social, political, and cultural history? Please cite the evidence and discuss.

Analysis: The following auditor's comment states that I organised all classes in groups which enabled the interns to share their own and others' social, political, and cultural history.

    a.   *As viewed in the video and my involvement in classes, there was opportunity for group evaluation work*

	b. *Effective use of questioning techniques allowed this to happen. I also recall exchanges with the students' interviews where we discussed their own experiences and values.*
6.	Did my role as facilitator enable the group to work collaboratively so that change was a group effort? Please justify.

Analysis: Both auditors could not confirm that the video clips demonstrated that I facilitated the group to work collaboratively so that change was a group effort. One auditor had observed this in my classes.
 	
      a. *Lindy's style of questioning is somewhat probing in that she makes sure that participants understand exactly what they are discussing without influencing the outcome.*
 	
      b. *Yes, encouraged participation by all.*	

7.	Some of our discussions had the potential to be threatening but the community of learning environment in which we functioned allowed us to work through difficult issues honestly and openly. What evidence was there of this in this sequence of slides? Please cite the evidence and discuss.

Analysis: Both of these discussions had the potential to be threatening, but because of the level of trust that existed within the group we were able to function and work through difficult issues honestly and openly. During classes I constantly attempted to role model open and honest feedback to the interns.
 	
      a. *The classes were always conducted in an atmosphere of utmost respect. Difference of opinion did not result in a personal attack. I have observed this both in the students' approach to issues, completion of studies and in Lindy's own life personally.*
 	
      b. *Students questioned openly and gave honest feedback*	

Experiential learning: *Effective teaching and learning requires active construction of meaning*

	Questions
	Questions
8.	Apart from understanding an experience through dialogue and discussion, Gallagher (1997, as cited in Mezirow, 1998) demonstrated in his study that creating experiences facilitates understanding. Was understanding through experiential learning evident in this sequence of slides? Cite the evidence and discuss.
9.	Did the teaching experiences I organised encourage the intern volunteers to be active learners within learning contexts? Please explain.
10.	Did I enhance the opportunities for *hands-on experience to promote transformative learning* by provoking critical reflection? Please justify.
Analysis: From my pedagogical perspective experiential learning places the student as the central person in the process of personal meaning making. To promote critical reflection of the experiential learning from the intern volunteers' individual ministries I challenged them to reflect on their practices, and to interpret and generalize these experiences which in turn could lead to new understandings and knowledge. During the guided discussions I encouraged the interns to question and challenge each others' contributions to assist with the refinement, deepening or re-evaluation of fundamental premises. Confirmation of experiential learning within my pedagogy is evident in both of the auditors' comments.	

> a. *All students were given opportunities to take part in practical learning situations that reflected their interests. This gave a practical outworking of class teaching.*
>
> b. *Each ministry was real life and demonstrated understanding through reflection and discussion.*

The auditors confirmed that I organised teaching experiences to enable the students to be active learners and stated:

> a. *My contact with the students usually took place during their ministries. They were responsible for managing their own ministries with mentor support*
>
> b. *Yes the teaching experiences encouraged them because of the reflective exercises and the group discussions* (question 9).

For question 10 neither auditor was able to confirm that I enhanced the opportunities for hands-on experience to promote transformative learning by provoking critical reflection from the presentation but noted that it was present in my classes.

> a. *This was difficult to identify in the power point presentation. Lindy's approach emphases that aspect that learning must be transferrable into the marketplace. The intervening time since the interns have completed their studies has confirmed students have benefitted from this approach. Those who are still local exhibit a strong desire to continue to learn in this way.*
>
> b. *Even though there was no hard evidence of actual critical reflection in the slides, the class discussions and the reflective journals provided avenues for this as an outcome of the students' hands-on experience*s.

Time consuming (no Education Queensland equivalent)

Questions

11.	Did I allow enough time in classes for the voices of all participants to be heard?
12.	Did the intern volunteers appear hassled or hurried in group situation?

Analysis: Because the process of reflection has the potential to take large amounts of time, allowance was made for this within my teaching sessions. I endeavoured to provide time which enabled the interns to critically reflect on their experiences, more often than not, which were connected to their ministries. Sometimes periods of silence occurred in the discussion sessions or some interns chose not to participate. Comments made by both the auditors confirm that I incorporated flexible time in teaching sessions. They also noted that the interns never appeared to be hassled or hurried and how I was cognizant of their contributions and stated:

> a. *This is a strong point of Lindy's teaching style. I observed that she was very diligent in ensuring that all of the students participated. In fact I would say this strength is in direct contrast to the teacher/student style of imparting knowledge without participation. The group contained people with different personalities however all were able to contribute at their own pace.*
>
> b. *Seemed to be plenty of time to participate in class. No-one appeared to be too rushed – very flexible time. Quite the opposite. All members were prepared to take time and think issues*

	through.'

Predisposition to change: *Effective teaching and learning enhances and is enhanced by a suggestive and challenging environment*

	Questions
13.	Did I create a supportive learning environment where some adult learners who had a greater predisposition towards change, could do so? Please justify.
14.	Did I provide opportunities for the intern volunteers to reconstruct experiences, which could lead to new understandings of situations as a result of critical reflection? Please justify.

Analysis: Providing an environment in which the interns, who had a disposition for change, could do so, was a major consideration in my teaching. I modelled behaviours that encouraged the students to see themselves as part of a team, making contributions to each others' learning as well as their own. The specific behaviours I modelled were the skills of speaking clearly, listening, questioning, responding, seeking clarity, negotiating, and cooperating. I attempted to stress the importance of one's own listening and responding skills. Because I was very conscious of this I endeavoured to give clear, consistent messages to support the development of critical reflection. To support the notion of risk taking I often gave feedback on reflective comments rather than the perceived right answer. When Harry was so distressed about his unruly youth on the bus and was discussing this, instead of making a suggestion as to how I thought he should have handled this situation, I listened. From here I asked Harry why he thought he had reacted in the manner in which he did.

The comments made by the auditors to both questions 14 and 15 confirmed I provided a supportive learning environment where the interns could critically reflect and develop new understanding.

    a. *This group of students contained ones who were very fixed in their ideas and others who had more open dispositions. Through the group process and one-on-one discussions students were able to grapple with issues conflicting with their own life and learning. These discussions also extended beyond the classroom so students were encouraged to adopt this attitude as part of their life learning.*

    b. *Yes through providing a supportive learning environment this allowed the students to openly reflect on their actions and provided opportunities for change.*

Affective learning: *Effective learning and teaching is founded on an understanding of the learner*

	Questions

15.	Was there evidence of the following in my teaching? Ability to:
	    a. recognise, understand, and manage emotions,
	    b. relate with others,
	    c. adapt to change and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature, and

	d. efficiently cope with daily demands, challenges and pressures? Please justify.
16.	Authentic collaboration can only happen after teachers have spent considerable time earning the students' trust by acting democratically and respectfully towards them (Brookfield, 1995). Was authentic collaboration evident in the class exercise? Please cite the evidence and discuss

Analysis: Based on the auditors' comments my attempts to create a safe space for reflection within a community of practice appear to have been achieved. It was vital that the interns experienced this safe space because triggering reflective learning often involves a sense of discomfort. This safe space enabled them to establish very close emotional links with me and with each other because we were a group of people who shared "a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an on-going basis." (Wenger et al. 2002, p. 4). I was continually recognising, understanding, and supporting the interns' emotions and this is reflected in this auditor's comment.
 	
    a.   *Personality wise the group was diverse and included self-assured people as well as those grappling with loss of self-esteem. Lindy's style and approach well encompasses all. She teaches with a sense of excellence and authority yet she herself demonstrated a heart for anyone who needed to be 'coaxed' to come out of their shell and grow in confidence. This aspect also became very much part of the group.'*
 	
To earn the interns trust I shared personal aspects of my life with them and focused on the emotional aspects of these issues. Over time as the level of trust increased, they shared matters of personal intimacy with the group. Barlas (2001, ¶. 3) affirms that "intense emotional content of learning experiences served powerfully to trigger reflective learning." For some interns it was risky expressing themselves and sharing how they felt when reflecting about their own practices within their ministries. At first Harry's comments about his bus ministry were content reflections in which he reflected on *what* he experienced with the challenging youth on the bus. As he felt more comfortable with the group, his reflections could be categorized as "premise reflections" where he questioned *why* he took a negative course of action with the youth several weeks later. This level of trust was observed by one of the auditors who stated:
 	
    b.   *The students trusted Lindy implicitly, and shared very intimate aspects of their lives. In the power point presentation it is difficult to pull out emotion – but these are difficult to capture. The student displayed the ability to address the group and was somewhat trusty of the environment.*

Educators and students as transformative learners: *Effective learning and teaching shapes and responds to social and cultural contexts*

Questions	
17.	As the educator, it was my responsibility to provide a learning environment which was conducive to transformative learning for the intern volunteers. Did I address the following pedagogical characteristics such as a. promotion of educator awareness,

	b. usage of sensitive handling of social, cultural, and ethical issues, c. usage of sensitive handling of conflicts, and d. usage of supportive action and dealing with individual adult learner needs? Please justify.
18.	One of the attributes of a transformative teacher is modeling life-long learning. Was this evident in my overall practice? Please justify.
19.	Any other comments?
	Analysis: In relation to the pedagogical characteristics in this bracket of questions the auditors wrote: a. *There were a number of instances of positive learning partnerships in the overall power point presentation. The video example captured a situation that has been avoided through humour and trust and collaboration.* b. *Both in the classroom and outside I observed Lindy as one who combined the excellence of teaching and maintain a high standard as an educator, with the care and awareness of each student within their own environment.* My whole life has been a journey of lifelong learning and I shared this with the interns regularly during the course of study. "Where are you up to with your thesis Lindy?" was a question I was constantly asked since completing the classes. As well as being interested in the progress of my studies, the interns were keen to share how the Diploma of Christian Ministry has been beneficial to them in their professions. One auditor commented on this and stated: a. *Lindy was totally consistent in and outside the classroom. Students could approach her at any time and her dedication and commitment as an educator is evident. By her own teaching and example she has role modeled lifelong learning, being always open to new ideas, and continually growing to develop her individual potential.*

Overall the feedback I received from the auditors about the effectiveness of my transformative pedagogy was very positive. Both were able to identify how Mezirow's six essential practices and the five Education Queensland effective learning and teaching principles, underpinned my pedagogy. As documented in my narrative sections of this thesis I changed from a traditional teacher to a transformative teacher around the mid 70s. Until commencing this project I was unable to describe the processes I had moved through. The changes in my pedagogy, which are now long established, were purely intuitive. At the time they seemed to be the correct pedagogic changes to implement. The impact of these changes for the betterment of students has been confirmed through informal comments from parents and students over the years and by formal evaluation procedures in three different tertiary institutions where I have. However, it came as shock when my past pupil described his feelings of deflation to my comment of not constructing his work in the manner I required.

This was a daunting experience for me. I was crestfallen at the difference between how I believed I was teaching, and what was really happening. My self-congratulatory pedagogic memories received immediate, corrective feedback.

6.5.2. Resonance criterion: Intern graduates' feedback. I sought this evidence in the empowerment criterion feedback instead of providing direct questions for the interns. Using the questions below, I wanted to establish whether there is a degree of fit, overlap, or reinforcement among research report my Christian belief system and those beliefs of the interns'. I was seeking feedback which confirmed (or did not) agreement between my Christian beliefs and those of the interns'.

No.	Question	Evidence of resonance criterion
1.	How does my thesis resonate with their lived experiences through their involvement with the project?	*As I said in the notes, it was like I was walking through part of this. It was awesome to see your journey both professionally and personally over the years* *Lindy, I am forever grateful to you for teaching me critical reflection which I have used in my personal life and ministry practice since. Your practice of Mezirow's six essential practices was so effective, and I found the guide/template for our weekly reflective journals so effective that I used both these myself in my educative role with intern volunteers following my completion of study at Baptist church Ministry Training Centre.*
Analysis: Comments such as *it was like I was walking through part of this. It was awesome to see your journey both professionally and personally over the years* and *I am forever grateful to you for teaching me critical reflection which I have used in my personal life and ministry practice since* substantiate the presence of an intrinsic connectedness between the experiences of the interns and my beliefs.		
2.	Were my Christian beliefs evident in my behaviours during the research project?	*The Lord has given you so much to give. I hope that you continue enjoying giving both directly and indirectly into peoples' lives.* *I believe that Lindy honoured and respected the groups' Christian beliefs and heritage by seeking to understand and respect our individual backgrounds as well as melding the group.*
Analysis: Honouring the *groups' Christian beliefs and heritage* within a variety of contexts demonstrate how Christian principles influenced my behaviours and practices.		
3.	Was I sensitive and flexible to the	*The way Lindy facilitated our group discussions [among the*

	changing needs and circumstances of the intern volunteers throughout the project?	*interns], especially when individuals shared from their lived experiences or spiritual convictions, showed enormous sensitivity. She never made judgmental comments or criticised what someone said, rather she acknowledged the emotions or convictions and always ensured the critical reflection offered from her or the group were for the benefit and enabling of those sharing.* *The key to this was how Lindy encouraged us as a group, yet allowed us to keep our individual beliefs and tailored our training to be personal.*
Analysis: Giving priority to the holistic learning needs of the interns, especially in group situated learning seems to authenticate the attributes of sensitivity and flexibility in my practices.		

Based on the feedback from the two interns, a degree of fit, overlap, and resonance existed between my pedagogy (the basis of my thesis), my Christian beliefs, and those beliefs of the interns'. Continual use of Mezirow's (1998) six essential practices and the template for our weekly reflective journals by one of the interns bore out the effectiveness of these in my pedagogy. Bob stated:

> Your practice of Mezirow's six essential practices was so effective, and I found the guide/template for our weekly reflective journals so effective that I used both these myself in my educative role with intern volunteers following my completion of study at BCMTC.

6.5.3. Empowerment criterion: Intern graduates' feedback. The two graduates were asked to formally consider how applicable the following three dimensions of the empowerment criterion were to this research project.

  i.   Fairness: the extent to which I, as the teacher and phenomenographer honoured the different constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the interns,

 ii.   Educative authenticity: the degree to which my teaching enhanced the interns' understanding and appreciation that reflective processes could have on their practices with clients in their areas of specialisation, and

iii.   Tactical authenticity: the extent to which, as an outcome of my teaching, the interns were empowered to act in their practices.

The following questions were to guide, but not determine, their responses.

No.	Dimension	Questions
1.	**Fairness** which demonstrated the extent to which I, as the teacher/phenomenographer honoured the different constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the intern volunteers**.**	How did I as the teacher/phenomenographer honour or dishonour the constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the intern volunteers? Intern 1: *The way Lindy facilitated our group discussions [among the interns], especially when individuals shared from their experiences or spiritual convictions, showed enormous sensitivity. She never made judgmental comments or criticised what someone said, rather she acknowledged the emotions or convictions and always ensured the critical reflection offered from her or the group were for the benefit and enabling of those sharing.* *I remember a specific class discussion where Lindy intentionally challenged the Christian beliefs of the interns. She proposed a question about whether we thought someone living in a remote tribe who'd never heard about God or his provision of salvation in Jesus before they died would go to heaven. I remember the question and ensuring discussion made me feel agitated because some shared beliefs were opposing to what I held at the time. Lindy shared her belief near the end, and although it was contrary to mine at the time I never felt dishonoured. In fact, the whole exercise made me realise that I had assumed my belief on this issue from others convictions and not my own.* Intern 2: *I believe that Lindy honoured and respected the groups' Christian beliefs and heritage by seeking to understand and respect our individual backgrounds as well as melding the group. The key to this was how Lindy encouraged us as a group, yet allowed us to keep our individual beliefs and tailored our training to be personal.* What elements of my pedagogy demonstrate or do not demonstrate my respect of the constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the intern volunteers? Intern 1: *One of the biggest things for me was the amount of class time Lindy provided for the interns to share and reflect. She showed fairness in providing impartial opportunity for people to participate and also demonstrated enormous patience in allowing others to be active learners by letting them reflect on what someone had just shared. Lindy would often ask questions of the person sharing or the group, where necessary, to help people move from content to process and premise reflecting.* Intern 2: *The proof of this to me is evident in the fact that Lindy, a*

		Christian herself for many years is aware of the desire of most Christians to serve God by serving others, not out of duty but from a desire of wanting to show the love of God. This was truly evident where Lindy and her husband cleaned the toilets for ten years. Due to this understanding and Lindy's constant reflection over the years it has become second nature to Lindy. *Lindy encouraged us to participate in group discussions, share our feelings, emotions and thoughts about many things and write and share from our reflective journals. Lindy challenged our beliefs, worldviews and the way others perceived us to make sure we would learn critical reflection as well as opening our minds and hearts so that we didn't close off from the world around us, She took us to a deeper level of thinking by questioning and talking about our core beliefs and how they affected our lives. Lindy encouraged us to critically reflect especially in our areas of ministry specialisations in order for us to see how we interact with those around us and learn to refine our practices.*
2.	**Educative authenticity** which demonstrated the degree to which my teaching enhanced the intern volunteers' understanding and appreciation that reflective processes could have on their practices with their clients in their areas of specialisation.	How evident were Mezirow's six essential practices (predisposition to change, time consuming, group situated learning, experiential learning, affective learning, and educators and learner as transformative learners) in my findings? Intern 1: *I felt the research findings clearly demonstrated how Lindy clearly demonstrate how Lindy had successfully provided and implemented Mezirow's six essential practices into the learning environment. I particularly think the interns, reflective journeys section (6.4) strongly demonstrates that the interns did progress in their understanding and application of reflective processes into their practice.* *One that stands out for me, from the research and from memory was Harry's experience driving the church bus for youth group on Friday nights and his increase of premise level of reflections as the course developed.* Intern 2: *I believe that Mezirow's six essential practices were very evident in Lindy's findings as she wrote about the many ways which taught, challenged, supported and interacted with us. Lindy fostered open and supportive discussion group which was a comfortable and safe to share. Group situated learning took place often but I particularly remember the experience with a Buddhist interviewer. Lindy was constantly questioning and probing our thoughts, feelings and actions, in order to get us to think and reflect. We were asked to do our own*

		reflective journals to view our own journey of emotional change.
		Lindy was always checking with our ministry leaders to see how we were going in our areas of specialisation.
		What direct connections between my teaching and the intern volunteers' understanding and appreciation that reflective processes could have on their practices, are evident in my findings?
		Intern 1: *I felt the research findings clearly demonstrate how Lindy had successfully provided and implemented Mezirow's six essential practices into the learning environment. I particularly think the interns' reflective journeys section (6.4) strongly demonstrates that the interns did progress in their understanding and application of reflective processes into their practice. One that stands out for me, from the research and from memory, was Harry's experience with driving the church bus for youth group on Friday nights and his increase of premise level reflections as the course developed.*
		For me, during the course we were given specific role plays relating to our area of ministry and having an understanding of the reflective process helped me to decide how I should respond to the given situation and why I might have responded differently.
		Intern 2: *Lindy used a wide range of information that was collected to see if the intern volunteers understood and had a chance to learn from the reflective process. This was evident in the charts in Chapter 6 which was collated from the intern volunteers' reflective journals*
3.	**Tactical authenticity** which demonstrated how, as an outcome of my teaching, the intern volunteers were empowered by using reflective practices, to act in their practices	Did my findings demonstrate how the intern volunteers developed an understanding of how reflective practices could enhance their practice? Intern 1: *Yes, I felt this is strongly presented in the examination of the intern's reflective journey, on every occasion. Vernon's reflective journey clearly shows empowerment of his practice in Family ministries, particularly in teaching children. The journey entry of week 10 is a powerful example that shows a growth in Vernon's understanding and practice of the reflective process due to the outcome of Lindys teaching.*
		Intern 2: *Yes Lindy has openly and clearly documented how and why the volunteer interns have grown through this process. When I read Lindy's doctorate and she spoke of her life walk of critical reflection, I felt like I was walking with her and now reflecting over the last three years I am*

| | | *constantly reflecting and have even taught my wife and children to do it. I keep in touch with a couple of people from college and I can say confidently that there is evidence in their lives that they are still implementing these practices to this very day.* |
| | | Did my findings clearly identify the reflective processes such as content reflection, process reflection and premise reflection when analysing the intern volunteers' data?
 Intern 1*: I thought this was particularly strong –very thoroughly presented with clear examples and explanations to demonstrate content, process and premise reflections.*
 Intern 2*: Yes this was effectively covered in Chapter 6 where Lindy really dissected and analysed our reflective journals. This was the major part of Lindy's findings which enabled her to clearly demonstrate the reflective process of content, process and premise reflection. Lindy also brought out how specific experiences shape our beliefs and world view and what the solutions are to these problems. Lindy's findings for premise reflection was evident in all of the interns 'journals but not all have shown how that this impacted on their own practices. Those few were seeking validation in their own ministry areas as well as in their own lives.* |

Taken as a whole, the feedback from the interns agreed on how the empowerment criterion applied to my pedagogy. This feedback demonstrated the fairness dimension in which I, as the teacher and phenomenographer honoured the different constructions and underlying Christian beliefs of the interns, in educational environment: One intern wrote:

> I remember a specific class discussion where Lindy intentionally challenged the Christian beliefs of the interns. She proposed a question about whether we thought someone living in a remote tribe who'd never heard about God or his provision of salvation in Jesus before they died would go to heaven. I remember the question and ensuring discussion made me feel agitated because some shared beliefs were opposing to what I held at the time. Lindy shared her belief near the end, and although it was contrary to mine at the time I never felt dishonoured. In fact, the whole exercise made me realise that I had assumed my belief on this issue from others convictions and not my own.

I would also contend that the following comments from the interns encapsulate the other two dimensions of educative and tactical authenticity: I felt the research findings clearly demonstrate how Lindy had successfully provided and implemented Mezirow's six essential practices into the learning environment. I particularly think the interns' reflective journeys section (6.4) strongly demonstrates that the interns did progress in their understanding and application of reflective processes into their practice.

This section of the comment demonstrated the degree to which my teaching enhanced the interns' understanding and appreciation that reflective processes could have on their practices. This comment demonstrated how, as an outcome of my teaching, Harry's use of premise reflection increased and was, for him, empowering.

One that stands out for me, from the research and from memory, was Harry's experience with driving the church bus for youth group on Friday nights and his increase of premise level reflections as the course developed. This also provided direction for his future practices in the bus ministry

6.6. Summary

Many examples of content and process reflections were evident in the interns' reflective journeys. Of particular interest were the very few examples of premise reflection evident in the interns' data. I revisited their data several times, reread the analysis of the auditors, and intern graduates' feedback. Three contributing factors have transpired as to why this lack of premise reflections could have occurred.

Initially, the lack of premise reflection in my own pedagogy could have contributed to this situation. Even though the auditors' feedback identified Mezirow's (1998) six practices in my pedagogy, the original plan for the audit was to focus on examples of content, process, and premise reflection in my teaching, but this was not possible due to the loss of crucial videotapes and no opportunity to repeat the observations. This prevented direct analysis of my teaching. Therefore it was impossible to generate evidence for the implementation, or not, of two integral teaching techniques in my pedagogy.

The first technique was that of modeling appropriate behaviours. Did I regularly model premise reflective behaviours with the interns during classes? Why was the process of premise reflection such a challenge for intern volunteers? How often did I prioritise premise reflective behaviours to focus on the interns and not on me?

The second teaching technique was that of questioning. How effective were my questioning techniques? What teaching strategies did I use to encourage the interns to move past content and process reflection and reflect more critically about their experiences, beliefs, value systems, and assumptions - with clear connections to their practices? Similar to the findings of Ziegler et al., (2006) the interns did not ask critical questions of one another. Neither did they challenge each other's assumptions. This had the potential to truncate their learning prematurely.

Not so for Bob. This final statement demonstrated how Bob's Christian identity had evolved over the years since gaining his Diploma of Christian Ministry. He attributed this to developing the skills of critical reflection and states:

> You might recall we moved back to Hamilton, New Zealand for my pastoral role as director of internship at City Bible Church. I taught my interns to develop critical reflection and to practice it in their roles of ministry. I too attempted to underpin my teaching with those six essential practices and observed transformative learning take place.

In 2008 Bob invited me to attend his graduation from a New Zealand Baptist College where he graduated with a degree in applied theology.

The second contributing factor which could have contributed to an apparent lack of premise reflection was a wider church environment which encouraged and tolerated solipsistic aspects of reflection. I witnessed and/or identified examples of solipsism in both the written reflections and reflective discussions of the interns. According to the Collins Shorter English dictionary (1993, p. 1114) solipsism means "the extreme form of skepticism which denies the possibility of any knowledge other than one's own existence." The following examples align with solipsism. Vernon, the indigenous intern refuted any other creation story beyond that of the Biblical version described in Chapter 1 of Genesis in the Bible. He openly rejected any Dreamtime myths of his own Australian indigenous culture. Vernon's faith was literal and could be described as extreme. Regardless of my attempts to encourage Vernon to consider

alternate perspectives to his literal beliefs, he would not. He was adamant regarding his literal interpretation of the Bible. This literal interpretation of the Bible was also evident in group discussions.

Within the planning and organisation of my classes I endeavoured to counteract these types of situations by gently challenging the interns. As previously stated, Bob referred to this in his feedback when responding to the question of how one qualifies for eternal life. More often than not the interns' arguments returned to the generic response of 'The bible says . . . 'and that was the final word as far as they were concerned. Even the discussions with the Buddhist interviewer did not influence their perspectives at all.

One discussion which was central to eternal life is imprinted on my mind. The central theme focused on the process by which "people qualified for eternal life with Christ after death". All of the interns believed that eternal life was achieved by being born again and making a personal commitment to Christ. This means being "birthed into a new life of love, acceptance and grace by meeting Jesus as a real, living Savior and friend" (Litton, http://www.ptm.org/05PT/SepOct/cultControl.pdf, ¶. 1). To extend the discussion and encourage critical thinking, I challenged their literal Christian beliefs by posing questions such as the following. Why is this the only way for people to gain eternal life with Christ? What happens to the millions of people who never hear the "being born again" message? Why young children who die during infancy, or are very disabled are doomed to eternal condemnation? Regardless of which strategies I used to challenge these beliefs none of the interns would consider alternative perspectives because they were not Biblically based. As previously discussed, in the entire premise reflections I only identified two examples where Harry and Nellie actually questioned and challenged their own cultural and Christian practices and beliefs.

The third contributing factor which could have an immense influence on the interns and their lack of premise reflections is inexplicably linked to the previous paragraph in a fortuitous sense – the blind faith phenomenon. Jamieson's (2000) research identifies this unquestioning obedience to church leadership and ideology as major barriers to many churchgoers, especially in the evangelical/charismatic/Pentecostal churches, in the 21st century. In many respects this blind-faith phenomenon has some similarities to cult culture mentality. It could be argued that the ethos and some practices of some evangelical/charismatic/Pentecostal

churches compared with the Watters' article titled 'Eight Marks of a Mind-Control Cult' which are "milieu control, mystic manipulation, demand for purity, the cult of confession, the "Sacred science", loading the language, doctrine over person, and dispensing of existence" (1990, ¶. 1-2).

Having worked closely with the interns in an academic forum for 15 weeks and being a member of evangelical /charismatic/Pentecostal churches for over 40 years, I have observed and experienced some practices which I would now argue as being similar to practices in some cults. The interns' perspectives discussed in the previous paragraphs could be viewed through Watter's (1990, ¶. 1) definition of "Demand for purity". This definition states:

> The world is black and white, with little room for making personal decisions based on a trained mind. One's conduct is modeled after the ideology of the group, as taught in its literature. People and organizations are pictured as either good or evil, depending on their relationship with the cult.

This was evident in this statement of Harry's as well.

> I've learnt about God. the history of man's dealings with God is a need for us to be holy because 'I am holy' says the Lord and to be separated from the world and to be very careful where Christianity and paganism is coming together and how areas are now getting all intertwined and personally for me in my own life is to bring the separation apart and to be different.

Another example of cult like practices is the language which is used. Watter (1990, ¶. 2) explains this as the use of "thought-terminating clichés". The bible was the final authority. This form of validation was evident in Vernon's reflection where he accepted the authority of the Bible regarding the role of the Holy Spirit.

> God really led me in my lessons and helped to present them to the children so that they did understand who the Holy Spirit is and the role that He has to play in the lives of a Christian.

Towards the completion of this study, I held some discussions regarding my findings with the senior pastor of the church where I had worked. Our discussions focused on the lack of premise reflections of the interns and how the findings seemed to indicate a blind-faith phenomenon in them. The senior pastor stated emphatically that his desire for people was to have a faith which was personal to them and not by default.

CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION

The completion of my narrative was interconnected with the ongoing inner struggles with my faith. After the soul searching and consternation of several years, over whether I should ethically challenge the interns' beliefs, values, and assumptions (van Manen, 1990), the unexpected happened. The major concern I had for the interns was that they might reject their faith. In fact, this did not happen. In each case their faith is still very real. Surprisingly, it was my own faith that came under threat, and is still being challenged. I wonder now whether the blind-faith I argued about as being evident in some of the interns, was in fact happening to me. My disorienting inner conflict has now continued for several years. When I reflect back on these forty years of my life, I believe that the spiritual aspect of my identity was stunted. Growth and change was not happening.

I am now in the final stages of my project. In this chapter I have drawn together many of the interwoven themes which emerged from investigating the effectiveness of my pedagogy. Analysis and synthesis of my pedagogic experiences and those of the interns, is now complete. My goal to gain a doctorate is also nearly there. The end is in sight. My journey of 6 years is near its completion and I am between feelings of elation from nearly achieving my goal, and frustration because of my spiritual uncertainty.

The interns have all moved on. Sometimes I meet them and they ask me, "How is your doctorate progress? When will it be finished?" My standard stock response is "Well I hope to finish next year". Next year has arrived. It is now 2008 and I believe the time has arrived to wrestle with my inner struggles. I need to address these issues more constructively and objectively. What are my faith issues? Will my transformative journey end with spiritual fulfilment? Life, of course, is seldom that simple.

Why now am I earnestly evaluating, exploring, and examining my beliefs and values? Why am I studying and testing my faith? Why am I condemning my patient husband and adult children to all of this spiritual torture? Why am I questioning the basic underpinnings of my faith? Maybe there are some clues in the latest collection of books I selected from the library. These are titled:

    a. "Stop the church I need to get off" by John McGoram (2006);

    b. "Finding faith" by Brian McLaren (1999); and

    c. "A Churchless faith" by Alan Jamieson (2002).

Why am I revisiting the book titled "The Pagan Christ: Is blind faith killing Christianity?" by Tom Harpur (2005). I purchased this book several years ago when these inner struggles were more than just passing doubts in the night.

Maybe it is time to stop the church and get off, get out, and look at alternatives. My beliefs and values which I have had since the early teens need to be challenged. Even though I am not sure what sort of faith I am seeking, I am aware that I feel uneasy about 'this personal relationship with Christ' aspect of Christianity. The challenge is to establish what sort of relationship I am looking for. Stepping out in faith and accepting Biblical verses literally is an issue for me. For years I have prayed believing, only to be disappointed. When this occurred I was told that my faith was not strong enough, or it is not in God's time, or His plan for my life. One of the findings of my research was that the interns were blindly accepting their beliefs, as shown in their lack of premise reflection to validate their own practices and beliefs. This was the path I chose as well. Maybe this could be the safer, less threatening, and easier path on which I should continue.

Perhaps it is the word *Christian* which is causing me some disquiet. Similar to McGoram (2006, p. 17) who quotes headlines such as "Christians are blowing up other Christians in Northern Ireland", "Christians slaughter Muslim women and children in Bosnia", "Christians flock to be healed by Madonna's tears", I experience concern. Being associated with a group using the label 'Christian' in this way, makes me feel uneasy. Like McGoram (2006), I don't want to be associated with those so-called Christian behaviours described in the headlines. I agree with McGoram (2006) who asseverates that many people perceive the word as merely signifying another choice of religion. Additionally, many people who identify as Christians do so because of their birthplace, family background, race, nationhood, or due to the fact that they attend a Christian place of worship.

Being "genuinely born again" is McGoram's (2006) definition of a Christian. This stance creates difficulties for me. Being "genuinely born again" implies a personal transformative relationship with an historical Christ which, for me, is questionable. The difficulty I have with this is whether or not there was an historical Christ. Now I wonder about the concept of a mythical Christ. Are the Jesus stories a collection of myths meaning that the myth itself is fictional, but the timeless truth expressed by the myth is not (Harpur, 2005)? I question many of the basic philosophies which underpin evangelical and Pentecostal churches. Jamieson (2000, p.69) describes these types of concerns as meta-grumbles and states:

> Meta-grumbles question deep rooted foundations of the faith itself. The people described here [in his book] are reflecting on and questioning the basis of the Christian faith received from the EPC [i.e. evangelical, Pentecostal and charismatic] church community. For these people it is the core of their faith which is being shaken in this process.

For many years the message which was constantly being covertly enforced, was that I had failed some way in my faith. The problem was mine. The process of critical reflection of the core beliefs, values, and expected behaviours that many evangelical/charismatic/Pentecostal churches have, led me to conclude that there could be some anomalies in their faith philosophies. This conclusion occurred some years ago. That could be the source of the problem. I am beginning to examine pivotal issues in my faith, beliefs, and the practices of the different churches we have attended. Why does being baptized by full immersion only, qualify one as a "born again" Christian? Why, when the Muslim faith and Christian faith worship the same God, are Muslims said to be condemned to hell?

I am now beginning to trust my own perceptions and take responsibility for my own beliefs, actions, and decisions, just as I do in other areas of my life. Jamieson (2000) asserts that during their Christian journey, many people take on this responsibility themselves, and not follow the group or crowd. People consider it increasingly important to have the freedom to make their own religious decisions.

It is time to re-examine and reconstruct my spiritual identity. I am not seeking to reject my faith, only taking the liberty to create one with which I am comfortable with and have responsibility for. Even though my transformed faith could be in a continuation in the protestant domain, my connections to the evangelical/charismatic/Pentecostal faith are broken.

One option is to investigate Celtic Christianity as described by Dunn (http://www.reality.org.nz/articles/34/34-dunn.php, ¶.1) who writes:

The interest today in Celtic spirituality is huge. Whether it is in the art, music, saleable handcrafts or books about it, or in the growth of modern Celtic communities and retreats, this ancient way of describing how to be Christian, and how to relate to God, God's creation, God's word and God's people, is attracting attention.

Celtic Christianity has been around since the 2nd century and was unique to the British Isles. This form of Christianity holds a balanced view of the Biblical doctrines of free-will and predestination. Small group worship and a liturgy which is an expression of personal faith, is favoured by Celtic Christianity. Of interest, the Celtic theological perspective on the original sin (supposedly Eve tempted Adam to have sexual intercourse) came about as a result of Adam's failure to be an adequate head of the human race. This is contrast to mainstream Christianity where Adam's wife Eve has, over the centuries, been blamed for the downfall of mankind. Celtic Christianity teaches that the Godhead contains both feminine and male attributes. A love of nature is strong within this form of Christianity and envisages God as part of the creation.

Another option might be to investigate a cosmic faith as advocated by Tom Harpur (2005) in his text "The Pagan Christ: Is blind faith killing Christianity?" In the foreword it says:

> For centuries the church has taught us that the Bible is a literal representation of actual events and people from millennia ago. But is it possible that the events of the gospels never occurred – that all of the people never existed?
>
> Sure to rattle the pews of even the most liberal of churches, ex-Anglican priest, Tom Harpur, contends that Christianity is built on a history that

didn't happen, upon a series of miracles that were never performed and on allegories scavenged from the teachings and myths of ancient cultures.

Long before the advent of Christ, the Egyptians and other ancient societies believed in the coming of a messiah, in a Madonna and her child, a virgin birth and the incarnation of the spirit made flesh. Civilisations as diverse as the Persians, and the Aztecs shared the same religious doctrine as Christian churches today, long before the testaments purportedly recorded as 'history'. According to Harpur the early Christian church adopted these ancient truths as the very tenets of Christianity and set about covering up all attempts to reveal any element of the Bible as a myth.

As he reconsiders a lifetime of worship and study, Harpur (2005) eloquently reveals a cosmic faith built on universal truths. His message is clear. Our blind faith in literalism is killing Christianity and dividing religions. Harpur (2005) asserts that only a return to an inclusive belief system, where Christ lives within each of us, will save it.

Biblical Christian feminism is another option. There are a few key concepts which I could adhere to in Biblical Christian feminism. The first key concept is that of equality of men and women in early Biblical times. According to Storkey (1993, 1995) Christian feminism is able to trace it beginnings back to central doctrines of the Reformation. These central doctrines included the denial of papal authority, limiting authority of the bishops, and the mediation of Christ alone. Each person, including women, are responsible before God themselves and not through another mediating person. Both men and women are part of God's plan for salvation. Slowinski (2007) argues that this equality between men and

women has been present in the world from the beginning of Biblical times and uses scripture to support this perspective. This equality is clearly articulated in the creation story in Genesis where it states "God created them male and female, in God's image (Genesis 1:27)." Men were not given divine power to rule over women. This perspective illuminates how both men and women have been given the responsibility to care for the earth together. Hampson (1996) argues against this Biblical concept of equality. The issue is not that Christ was male, but the fact that He was considered unique and symbolic of God, God Himself. It is this male symbolism which appears to be biased against women. Of interest, many Christians, both male and female, argue against equality based on Biblical reasons.

A reconstruction of early Christian history and theology from a feminist perspective is the second key concept. Within this reconstruction there would be a heightening instead of minimising of women's roles, in early Biblical times. According to Slowinski (2007) people need to be cognizant of the fact that Biblical authors functioned in different times. Taking the Bible literally is fraught with many dangers. The Bible was written by people, not God, unless proved otherwise. Because male dominance and influence was prevalent when the Bible was written, women's roles were undervalued and regarded as basically inferior. In her writings to reconstruct early Christian history in a feminist perspective, Fiorenza (1995, p.31) attempted to "write women back into early Christian history" and restore early Christianity to women. Fiorenza (1995) posits that many male Biblical scholars do not perceive the role of women in the bible as a serious historical problem, and does not warrant the reconstruction of early Christian history or theology. Women's issues were, and are often trivialised or marginalised. Hampson (1996) challenges Fiorenza (1995) and

argues that it is impossible to compare women's struggles of today with first century women.

The third key concept is the acceptance or rejection of Christian feminists' writings. Unfortunately many 20th and 21st century secular feminists vehemently object to Christian feminists' writings. Instead of viewing these writings which include both men and women, as reclamation of women's history and solidarity with our Biblical foresisters, they are viewed as an attempt to save the Bible from its feminist critics (Fiorenza, 1995). Hampson (1996) argues that Fiorenza's (1995) reference to women of the early church is based solely on the rationale that she is a Christian. Much criticism originates from the radical feminists. Radical feminists have strong anti-male attitudes and argue that men hate them (Storkey, 1993). When I reflect upon my life I cannot identify any male who has actually hated me. My husband has been my greatest supporter in both my personal and professional lives.

Finally, the last key concept is that of the Biblical Christian feminism framework which provides a framework to interpret my own experiences. It provides some clue to my identity. What is this experience of me? What is a self? Who am I? Am I daughter, mother, wife, teacher, academic, feminist, Christian, or a Biblical Christian feminist? Storkey (1995) describes the concept of the principle of dependency – a framework of interpretation which leads me back to Scriptures, not away from them. As identified by Storkey (1995, p.15) this principle of dependency is not based on a few isolated scriptural texts but uses "the full Biblical disclosures of who we are and what our purpose is for living." This is a discourse which acknowledges I am the creation of a personal, loving God. This has the potential to assist me to make

sense of my spiritual experiences and shows me where I may be able to find my true identity.

My doctoral journey has led me into spiritual mountains and valleys. It appears my journey of holistic transformation is entering another phase which could be deeper, richer, more exciting, more challenging – maybe more troubling and isolating. This has the possibility of resulting in a more balanced identity of myself, which mirrors Jamieson's (2000, p. 135) description of the formation of people's spiritual identity as being "the physical, mental, emotional, relational, and sexual aspects of themselves in a way deeply connected with their faith." A more balanced identity will, in turn, impact upon the overall effectiveness of my pedagogy. I look forward to continuing my faith journey and not necessarily accepting a predetermined, fundamental belief system which has been externally imposed.

7.1. Four key essentials for the reflective educator

As the teacher of a group of interns I was clearly involved in parallel processes of reflection (personal and professional) even though my journey of reflection commenced many years earlier. While the interns were encouraged to reflect on their own practices within their ministries, I was overtly, constantly reflecting on my own pedagogy. This was to ensure it was underpinned by the six essential practices of transformative pedagogy identified by Mezirow (1998). Validation of my use of transformative pedagogy was provided by two independent methods. These were the written responses of the two auditors to the audit questionnaire, and the written feedback to the authenticity of my thesis provided by two intern graduates. As a result of investigating the effectiveness of my teaching, I have identified four key elements that are vital in developing critical reflective practices.

The first and most important element is that of the teacher being a critical reflective practitioner. This is in congruence with Mezirow's (1998) essential practice 6: Educators and

students as transformative learners. I would argue that in order to provide a teaching and learning environment where students have opportunities to develop reflective skills, teachers need to have this stance for themselves. The teacher is one who is capable of engaging and modeling critical reflective practices. I endeavoured to engage and model reflective processes whenever the interns' experiences were avenues for transformation.

Humphries and Martin (2000, p. 282) argue that being concerned about life situations does not automatically challenge one's values or transform practice. It was in a transformative learning environment where the interns were encouraged to use the same reflective understandings as me. An example of this was seeking validation for practices. From my perspective, in this type of learning environment, I empowered the interns by strongly encouraging them to critically reflect while constructing and reconstructing knowledge from the sociohistorical context in which it occurs (Baumgartner, 2001; Grimmett, 1989). This had the potential for leading to new understandings as a result of critical reflection.

All the interns who participated in this research project demonstrated critical reflection at some stage during the 6 months course. Unlike the study conducted by Curtis (2006), process reflection was not typically the first and most common type of reflection that the interns demonstrated during guided discussions, and in their personal reflective journals. Content reflection was seen in all types of reflective statements by the interns. More often than not, content reflections appeared in group discussions or in other interns' comments as they shared their changed ideas or impressions. Of interest, the majority of the interns reflected at a content level.

Similar to content reflections, process reflections were demonstrated during class discussions. These discussions demonstrated how the interns' personal experiences had shaped their thinking and the ways in which other interns input, had generated new understandings.

Even though premise reflections were demonstrated by all the interns, it was rarely seen to challenge or validate their own practices, Christian beliefs, or personal values. Christian principles appeared to be accepted blindly and were not negotiable, which is similar to Jamieson's (2000) findings. Jamieson's studies identified how many Pentecostal Christians just accepted their churches' doctrines. Overall, the interns were least likely to engage in premise reflection by explicitly questioning their own underlying beliefs, assumptions, and

values. There were just three examples which challenged Christian beliefs and personal values. Generally the interns used premise reflection to seek validation of differing aspects of their colleagues or their own practices.

The second element shown by this research was that the reflective teacher monitors, not only tasks the students have participated in or completed, but how they have done this. A reflective teacher must be critically conscious of both the cultural dynamics and patterns of classroom discourses. This enables them to read the emotional responses of the students and establish interconnectedness between the teacher, the students, and their learning. Interconnectedness is evident in Mezirow's (1998) common essential practices 5: Affective learning and 6: Educators and students as transformative learners. My response and/or intervention to any given situation which arose, was contingent upon my awareness and attunement to the interactions between the interns and me. These responses and/or interventions required me to be aware of the use of language, cultural patterns, and the emotional climate of the learning environment.

The third element was that a teacher needs to manage multiple processes of reflection. This includes their personal reflections as well as the individual reflective processes of the students. Again, this is underpinned by Mezirow's (1998) essential practices 3: Time consuming; 4: Predisposition to change; 5: Affective learning; and 6: Educators and students as transformative learners. Constantly, I was aware of juggling my own emotional responses to new ways of understanding as well as those of the interns. Due to the interplay of emotions between all members of the discussion group (the intern volunteers and me as the teacher), we were all required to comprehend and then challenge our ways of interacting with each other. This required us to learn new ways of responding to our colleagues. Our relationships between each other were more interactive, emotionally charged, complex, and unpredictable.

The final element which was revealed in this research project was the interconnectedness of our learning. As the classes progressed through the semester I encouraged the interns to share their journals in guided class discussions. Consequently a learning partnership emerged. This was similar to the definition of Wenger et al. (2002, p. 4) of a community of practice which he said "were groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by

interacting on an on-going basis." The common faith-based systems to which the entire group of interns adhered, was another strong connector of their community of practice but, ironically, it had the potential to be a barrier to transformative learning. These are underpinned by Mezirow's (1998) essential practices 1: Group situated learning, and 2: Experiential learning. I would argue that because of interconnectedness among all members of a community, the role of managing the multiple processes of reflection is achievable. This is due to shared roles and responsibilities of co-constructing and sustaining the community of practice. One could also argue that having a common faith-based belief system would further contribute to the interconnectedness of a community of practice.

7.2. Recommendations for practice for the reflective educator

Along with other researchers' suggestions for reflective practice, I have contributed several recommendations. These recommendations are as follows.

a. *Educators should be strongly encouraged to include critical reflection within all discussions and training programmes for adult students such as teachers, health workers, social workers, and volunteers.* To enhance critical reflection in adults, specific and sequenced steps can be developed to support and enhance the reflective process. Requesting the students to reflect upon their experiences, beliefs, assumptions, and values is the first step. This practice has long been a recommendation by those concerned about bias and prejudice. Additionally, reflection has been used to increase cultural competency amongst practitioners working in education and health.

b. *Educators should model and encourage content and process reflection and the attachment of multiple meanings and identities to experiences.* At the commencement of a new course, educators should encourage, by modeling, the use of content and process reflection. They should then encourage participants to understand the interconnectedness between their personal experiences, their new understandings of these experiences, and the content matter.

c. *Educators should challenge students who, in turn, should challenge each other to reflect on the origin of their own beliefs, assumptions, and values.* By working through the cognitive and/or experiential processes, participants are able to ascertain why they hold a specific belief, value, and assumption. Challenging the participants

with perplexing questions requires them to make sense of the paradoxes between their values, assumptions, beliefs, and experiences. To examine the origin of their beliefs is very pertinent to faith-based participants who may be inclined to blindly accept the dogma of their religion. Some participants may find identifying and questioning others' assumptions as off-putting. Some cultures may find this type of challenging too confrontational (Ziegler et al., 2006).

d. *Educators should ensure that they allow time, place and space for critical reflection to occur within their classes.* Time and space is crucial to the development of critical reflective skills. Participants require time to rethink, reconstruct, reexamine, and then reframe an issue. This is regardless of the mode of discussion. According to Curtis (2006, p. 10) "The space between the experience of a problem and the search for a solution that Mezirow insisted was necessary for critical reflection, is an intrinsic feature of online conversation."

e. *Educators should encourage participants to contribute in dialogue and discourse, and to offer critical contributions.* Educators should manage these by creating opportunities for all participants to make meaningful contributions –especially the how and when aspects of reflection. Mezirow (1998, p.53) states:
"Discourse involves an effort to set aside bias, prejudice, and personal concerns and to do our best to be open and objective in presenting and assessing reasons and reviewing the evidence and arguments for and against the problematic assertion to arrive at a consensus."

f. *Educators should model premise reflection especially about contentious and difficult issues, but ensure that the focus of the premise reflection is on the participants.* As previously noted most of the interns used premise reflection as a method to examine the broader issues of general practices rather than use it as a tool to question or examine their own underlying beliefs or assumptions. It is not sufficient to examine only the broader issues of practices. Any participants, whether they operate within a faith-based service or secular, need to be encouraged to critically reflect about their own orientation to key issues and examine their own underpinning values, beliefs, and assumptions.

g. *Educators should ensure that extra support people are in place for participants if required.* The process of transformation is often set in motion by a disorienting dilemma in the form as a particular life event or experience such as a marriage breakup, job change, or death of a partner. According to Merriam and Caffarella,

(1999) these crises are often the catalyst for transformation and create emotional turmoil while working through the transformative process. It may be necessary for educators to ensure a variety of extra counseling services are available to meet the diversity of needs of the participants. These could take the form of individual mentors, psychologists, counsellors and pastors. On several occasions these services were accessed by the intern volunteers.

7.3. Limitations

The first and most obvious limitation of this research project is the small number of participants in the study. There were a total of seven intern volunteers who completed the 6-month course and their associated individual ministries. Even though I analysed their reflective journals, phenomenological guided discussions and prepared video scripts for examples of critical reflection, it was difficult to draw definitive conclusions. These definitive conclusions were in regards to the appropriateness, relevance and usefulness of these three phenomenological research procedures to investigate the overall effectiveness of my pedagogy to develop critical reflection in a group of adult students. However, reader generalisability is possible, where a reader may be able to apply my findings to their context.

Another limitation is the ability to generalise the findings of the effectiveness of my transformative pedagogy for two reasons. Initially, the loss of the video disks of my teaching when I relocated from Australia to Aotearoa New Zealand meant that material available for the two independent auditors was limited. Originally, it was planned for the two auditors to audit multiple examples of my pedagogy to ascertain whether I encouraged content, process, and premise reflection within my classes. Consequently, the auditors had limited examples of my pedagogy. The only videotaped examples which they had to investigate the effectiveness of my pedagogy were inserted into the presentation titled "Transformative Pedagogy has the Potential for Change". The auditors noted this lack of information for some aspects of the audit questionnaire. In some cases the auditors were able to answer the questions adequately because of their very regular and close participation in my classes, during the 6 month period of this course in the Diploma programme. The second area is the small number of intern volunteers who participated in the research project. It was possible to analyse their data and draw some conclusions as to their development of critical reflective

practices over the period of the study. Nevertheless it was difficult to establish the impact that my teaching had on the development and continuation of critical reflection of practice in the interns. Therefore, the findings only illuminate a limited number of topics that educators need to consider when constructing a training programme to enable the development of critical reflective practices in adult participants.

Another limitation was that I could access only a limited amount of reflective data to analyse in the reflective journals, discussions, and video scripts. The limited number of premise reflections recorded could have been due to embarrassment on the part of the interns. Maybe they did not feel comfortable or confident enough to challenge or expose doubts about their own personal Christian faith.

Finally, the coding of the reflective statements made in the journals, guided discussions, and prepared video scripts, was relatively subjective. Therefore, interpretations of the reflections made by another researcher may result in different conclusions. Kember (1999, p. 26) asserts in his study that "the coding system revealed that differences arose from the coders' interpretations of the meaning and significance of what the students had written in their journals. It was a function of ambiguity or lack of precision in the coding categories or their definitions." One researcher could interpret some of the interns' statements as reflection about what that person knows to be true (content reflection), whereas I could have interpreted the same statement as being how the intern came to this particular belief (process reflection).

The intention in this research project was not to produce hard data about the quantity or extent of reflective thinking in the reflective journals, phenomenological guided discussions, and prepared video scripts. Instead, the phenomenon under investigation was to determine the effectiveness of my pedagogy in developing critical reflection in a group of interns. Second, and perhaps more significantly, the findings have provided some recommendations for educators who perceive the necessity to cultivate critical reflective practices among their own students.

7. 4. Suggestions for future research

Future research on effective transformative pedagogy that develops or enhances critical reflective practices in adult students could continue the examination of methods in which this could be facilitated by the educator. This research could focus on the four elements that were illuminated in this research project. These were viewed as being vital in the teaching and learning environment to develop critical reflective practices in a group of adult learners. The four elements were:

     a. The practice of critical reflection;

     b. The oversight of tasks the students have participated in or completed, as well as how they have managed these tasks;

     c. Management of multiple processes of reflection; and

     d. The promotion of the interconnectedness of our learning.

These key elements apply to both the reflective teacher and providers of training programmes.

Another area for future research is the long-term impact critical reflection has on both the educator and adult students' practices. Central to critical reflection theory is that a reflective examination of the validity of one's beliefs and practices is pivotal in adult education. This is particularly important for practitioners in faith-based services where beliefs and values could be accepted in "blind-faith". Habitual reflection in one's professional life, or the implementation of new beliefs or practices based upon reflection, cannot be assumed. Therefore, some follow-up research based around this phenomenon could contribute to how the learning and teaching environment is managed, to enhance the continuation of critical reflection in adult students.

Further testing of the scheme for assessing the level of reflective thinking developed by David Kember and his colleagues at Hong Kong Polytechnic University is another possibility for future research. Research could establish "how readily interpretable the category descriptors are" and how easy they could be applied in a variety of authentic contexts, as claimed by Kember (1999, p. 29). More research on the scheme for estimating the quality of reflective thinking in students' writing in reflective journals could be beneficial. This information could guide future directions to consider in the learning and teaching

environment of the reflective educator and providers of training programmes. This could have application to fields such as health workers, social workers, educators to name a few.

7.5 Conclusion

To conclude, it is important for educators to be cognizant of the reality that it is not possible for them to transform students. The recurring themes throughout this project, to facilitate the development of critical reflection in students, teachers need to acknowledge and understand three factors which are pivotal to transformative learning. Initially, the reflection of the contents of one's own experiences is the starting point of transformative learning. Second, for any level of transformation to occur, examination of experiences and the underlying beliefs, values, and assumptions in a critically reflective manner is a necessary condition. Finally, change is integrated into the entire process and this change is according to Merriam and Caffarella (1999, p. 332) "growth enhancing and developmental" as the parallel narrative of my own teaching has demonstrated.

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