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Emotions in the classroom

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the classroom emotional experience of five teachers. It is based on the assumptions that teaching is an emotional enterprise; that teaching necessarily involves "emotional labor," or the work of emotion management; that attending to and working through emotions (a form of emotion management) can influence how teachers teach; and that doing this emotional labor in a group setting can be useful to teachers. An additional assumption is that psychoanalytic concepts can help frame teachers' emotional experiences. The study looks specifically at how teachers' awareness and understanding of emotions affect their experience of teaching and what it is like for teachers to develop this awareness and understanding in a group setting.

The study's participants were five self-selected teachers ranging in professional experience from pre-service to 20 years, from the elementary through high school levels, who voluntarily joined a teacher support group. The support group's express purpose was to explore the emotions involved in teaching. The support group met for 1.25 hours weekly for three months. Each participant answered a pre-group questionnaire and a post-group evaluation and underwent four semi-structured interviews: three to collect stories of critical emotional incidents in their teaching and one to ask the research questions after the teacher support group had ended. In addition, the teachers kept an Emotion Diary in which they listed emotions they felt during the week, ranked the intensity of each emotion, and told the story of one or more of the emotional incidents.

The findings demonstrated what emotions the five teachers expressed and how their stories changed (or not) over time, corroborating the teachers' claims about their experience of teaching and of being in the teacher support group. The findings also indicated that, beyond feeling emotions, the teachers enacted their emotions in ways that suggested countertransference (and transference) played central roles in their teaching experience. The study looks specifically at how the two psychoanalytic concepts of the Third and the use of self help to explain some classroom phenomena.

EMOTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Although teachers and teaching have been studied for decades, teacher emotion
has been notably neglected (Hargreaves, 1998, 2001; Meyer & Turner, 2002; Nias, 1996;
Noddings, 1996; Sutton, 2004, 2005; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Strands of educational
research have certainly attended to aspects of teaching that involve emotions – aspects
such as care (Noddings, 1984, 1992), personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1989;
Elbaz, 1983), passion (Fried, 1995), autobiographical storytelling (Connelly & Clandinin,
1990; Noddings, 1996), flow (Coleman, 1994), and embodied cognition (Lave, 1988;
Lave & Wenger, 1991; Oliver, 1989, 1990) – but teacher emotions and the impact they
have on teacher action have received little direct attention in the field of education.

Researchers in other fields were well ahead of educators in this respect. Having
acknowledged in the 1970s the existence of the "parallel process" in the field supervisor-
student practitioner relationship – that is, the tendency of student practitioners to enact
their relationships with clients in the relationships with their field supervisors (Fox, 1998)
– social work researchers have begun exploring the role supervisors play in such
emotion-infused enactments (Bogo, 1993; Dore, 1993; Fox, 1998; Ganzer & Ornstein,
1999). In the medical field, researchers have recognized the existence of
countertransference feelings in nursing instructors (Paterson & Groening, 1996) as well
as in physicians themselves as they interact with their patients (Balint, 1957).

Starting in the mid-1990s, with the publication of a special edition of the *Cambridge Journal of Education* (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003) that was devoted to the notion that "affectivity is of fundamental importance in teaching and to teachers" (Nias, 1996, p. 293), educators and educational researchers began to take note of teacher emotion. From calls for attention to emotions in mentoring (Holliday, 2005) and student teaching (Bullough & Young, 2002; Hawkey, 2006; Noddings, 1996; Sutton, 2004, 2005) to the acknowledgment of the influence emotions have on motivation (Meyer & Turner, 2002, 2006) to the claim that relationship is at the center of teaching and learning (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004; Burris, 2005b, 2005c; Pianta, 1999; Raider-Roth, 2005; Stuhlman & Pianta, 2001; Tom, 1997) to investigations of teachers' emotional responses to educational reform (Hargreaves, 2000; Kelchtermans, 2005; McNess, Broadfoot & Osborn, 2003; Van Veen & Sleegers, 2006) to specific studies of emotions in teachers' classroom experiences (Burris, 1998; Chuah & Jakubowicz, 1999; Cohler & Galatzer-Levy, 2006; Goldstein, 1998; Hargreaves, 1998, 2000, 2001; Lasky, 2000; Sutton, 2004), emotion has become an acceptable, if still not necessarily mainstream, topic in educational research.

This study furthers this nascent research agenda, exploring a conclusion that can be drawn from prior work but that has not yet been proposed or explored. Specifically, the study is based on the following assumptions, each of which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter:

- Teaching is an emotional enterprise.
- Teaching, therefore, necessarily involves "emotional labor," or the work of emotion management.

- Attending to and working through emotions (a form of emotional labor) can influence how teachers teach.

- Attending to and working through emotions in a group setting can be useful for teachers.

The conclusion this study investigates is that teachers' experience of their teaching can be influenced for the better by participation in teacher support groups in which teachers together work through the emotions that arise in the course of their work.

Logical as these assumptions and the resultant conclusion may seem, they have only intermittently been put together in a fashion that summons the psychoanalytic tradition to inform educators about the experience of teaching. Based on his belief that "education should help children and adults to know themselves and to develop healthy attitudes of self-acceptance" (Jersild, 1955, p. 2), Jersild (1955) documents some emotions teachers routinely experience – anxiety, loneliness, despair, hostility, and compassion – and encourages teachers to "face themselves" in order to help students do the same. Cohler & Galatzer-Levy (2006) apply psychoanalytic theory to their understanding of love and desire in the classroom. Britzman (1998), drawing on the work of Sigmund Freud and Anna Freud, examines the notion of education as "interference" in such realms as anti-racist pedagogy, queer pedagogy, and sex education. Dirkx (2006), invoking Jung, looks for the "unconscious emotional dynamics" of adult learners. Pines (2002) examines teacher burnout from a psychodynamic existential perspective – that is, as the result of a gradual loss of meaning and potential for self-actualization. And Salzberger-Wittenberg, Henry & Osborne (1983) as well as Chuah & Jakubowicz (1999) point out the existence in teachers of countertransference feelings, the latter insisting that

"the foremost principle in our work as analysts, group leaders, and teachers is not only to be aware of our feelings and to accept them, but to understand their origin and use them constructively, instead of acting on them or trying to control them" (Chuah & Jakubowicz, 1999, p. 212). Despite the promise of these works, the more common approach to emotions in education is traditionally psychological – that is, deconstructing emotional experience into components or operations that can be measured and manipulated (Sutton, 2004, 2005; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Sztejnberg, Hurek & Astleitner, 2006) – or sociological – categorizing emotional experience according to general interactional patterns (Hargreaves, 1998, 2000, 2001; Lasky, 2000).

In addition to the virtual absence of the psychoanalytic perspective from mainstream discussions of teaching, few if any of the studies conducted so far on teachers' emotions have explored explicit means by which teachers might conduct the emotional labor of working through the feelings that arise during teaching. Rather, most studies have relied on interviews that activate teachers' memories of emotional incidents, thereby making the case either that teaching is in fact "*irretrievably* emotional" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 2; emphasis his) or that teachers, indeed, have emotional labor to do – masking feelings (Sutton, 2004, 2005), living with difficult feelings (Lasky, 2000), or regulating the emotions that do come up (Sutton, 2004, 2005). Given the bias against emotions that characterizes traditional Western thought (Noddings, 1996), the emphatic laying of the emotional foundation of teaching has been essential. But the question inevitably arises: What's next?

This study, taking the above assumptions as its foundation, brings the work establishing the centrality of emotions in classrooms to a more concrete,

phenomenological level by asking the research questions "What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?" and "What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?" The particular psychoanalytic angle I take suggests that certain concepts – the "Third" (Newman, 2008; Muller, 2007) and the "use of self" (Winnicott, 1971), for example – might be relevant in an environment where emotions and transference-countertransference enactments routinely arise. Taking as its subjects teachers who have chosen to participate in a weekly teacher support group whose purpose is to facilitate exploration of teacher emotions in teaching, the study investigates what teacher talk and reported teacher action reveal about the emotional lives of teachers in the classroom and about what emotional labor looks like for teachers. The answers to these research questions could have a significant impact on the field of education by, first, endorsing the applicability of psychoanalytic theory to the classroom (and potentially illuminating areas for future research); second, suggesting an approach to aiding teachers in the emotional labor enterprise; and, third, documenting the growth and learning that lead to behavioral changes in teachers that, in turn, influence the teachers' experience of their classrooms.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I expand on the assumptions upon which my study rests, offering

justification from work that has already been done in a variety of fields. I discuss some

relevant psychoanalytic concepts and present the conceptual and methodological

frameworks of the study, frameworks that are related to each other and that inform the

study design in terms of data collection and underlying philosophy.

Assumptions

Teaching is an emotional enterprise

As Andy Hargreaves (2000) points out, teachers can "worry, hope, enthuse,

become bored, doubt, envy, brood, love, feel proud, get anxious, [be] despondent,

become frustrated, and so on" (p. 2). Jersild (1955) found that the teachers he surveyed

shared two basic concerns: one was the search for meaning in life and the other was the

near-chronic experience of anxiety in the classroom. "[T]eachers of all age groups,"

claim Salzberger-Wittenberg et al. (1983), "find themselves puzzled, concerned, or

worried about their pupils" (p. x). According to Sutton (2005), teachers regularly feel

both positive and negative emotions. The positive emotions make teachers feel more

effective while the negative emotions can make them feel less effective. As Chuah &

Jakubowicz (1999) point out, "Teaching is a complex task, not only because of the

complexity of the subject matter but because of the emotions aroused by the learning

situation itself and the emotional impact on the teacher of individual students and of the

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class as a group" (p. 212). Basically, Hargreaves (1998) tells us, "[e]motions are at the heart of teaching….[They] are dynamic parts of ourselves, and whether they are positive or negative, all organizations, including schools, are full of them" (p. 835).

Salzberger-Wittenberg et al. (1983) expand on the dynamics of teachers' emotional lives. They acknowledge many ways in which students can enact transference with the teacher as well as the countertransference, both induced by students' enactments and by their own histories, that teachers can experience. They give an example of how students can respond to the "mental pain" of learning by foisting their own discomfort onto their teacher, thereby risking dire consequences:

> If [the teacher] is receptive to this he becomes the one who feels inadequate, frightened, stupid, helpless, confused, and he in turn may try to escape from this in a number of ways. He may meet fear of his ignorance about the world by a dazzling display of theoretical knowledge, fear of impotence by exerting power, fear of chaos by a rigid approach to his subject and a rigid control of his pupils, fear of inadequacy and humiliation by claiming superiority and making his students feel small. A vicious circle may be set up in which the teacher reacts to the powerful emotions evoked in him by helping the student to evade inevitable stress or forcing the anxiety back into him. These *are* quick solutions to the problem of mental pain, but in as far as they avoid the inevitable anxieties connected with learning, such a teacher is in fact discouraging the development of a capacity to think. (pp. 57-58)

In other words, teachers respond to the emotions that arise from classroom expectations and interactions in recognizably psychodynamic ways: they automatically and unconsciously activate defenses that protect them and perhaps their students from feelings they might otherwise find unmanageable; they act out disavowed feelings or engage in projective identification; they base their sense of self-efficacy on the feelings they get when they teach. The exploration that psychoanalytic theory permits applies readily to teachers because, at bottom, teaching is an emotional and dynamic enterprise.

Teaching necessarily involves "emotional labor"

Sutton (2004) recognizes that teachers regularly engage in "emotional regulation," or the monitoring and managing of emotions. Such regulation is necessary, she claims, if teachers are to reach the goals that drive their work: "effectiveness goals" and the "goal of an idealized emotion teacher image," which combine into the overall goal of accomplishing curricular tasks while continuously providing a role model of appropriate classroom behavior. Although some teachers, Sutton (2004) reports, find emotional regulation problematic in that it precludes "being real," Sutton (2004) views emotional regulation as positive and adaptive in teachers. Strategies such as modifying a situation to reduce its emotional impact, deploying attention selectively (ignoring an offending student, talking to the self or others to gain perspective, etc.), changing cognitions (through reflection or self-talk), and controlling behaviors in the moment all serve teachers in reaching their effectiveness and teacher image goals (Sutton, 2004).

Hochschild (1983), on the other hand, suggests that implementing these types of strategies can have a seriously negative impact on a person. Her take on emotions is not that they impede progress toward goals but that they signal that very progress. "Emotion," Hochschild (1983) states, "is a biologically given sense, and our most important one. Like other senses – hearing, touch, or smell – it is a means by which we know about our relation to the world, and it is therefore crucial for the survival of human beings in group life" (p. 219). Disgust, for example, is an ancient way of preventing the eating of poisonous food. Anxiety indicates that danger may be lurking. To ignore these signals – indeed, to actively suppress them – can rob a person of valuable information about his or her "relation to the world." Nonetheless, people regulate their emotions all

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the time, often in response to institutional requirements, which reflect institutional goals often at odds with those of the individual workers who are achieving the goals. For Hochschild (1983), this type of emotional suppression (which she calls "surface acting" and "deep acting") constitutes "emotional labor" – it is "work" that can take a heavy toll on the actors.

I propose to use the term "emotional labor" differently. Sutton's (2004) angle, that teachers engage in emotional regulation to make their jobs easier and more fulfilling, acknowledges what teachers surely do in classrooms but fails to question the possible drawbacks to and reasons for the suppression. Hochschild's (1983) claim that such regulation, taking place as it often does in response to imposed institutional pressures, actually serves to dehumanize, "commercialize," and ultimately burn out workers points to the need to revisit the sources and purposes of emotional experience but does not address how. For me, emotional labor necessarily includes emotional regulation since, as Hochschild (1983) notes, there is a "crucial steadying effect of emotional labor" (p. 187) that can amount, for teachers, to a "labor of love" (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 840). But we must also, as Hochschild (1983) urges, recognize the indexical value of emotions, the essential signaling that emotions do, as well as the roles they play in teachers' everyday actions. An additional form of emotional labor I propose for teachers, then, involves attending to and working through the emotions they experience in the classroom. "Working through" emotions, as psychoanalytic theory suggests, involves psychodynamic awareness and exploration. This examination will not render emotional regulation in the classroom unnecessary, but it will provide teachers opportunities to decipher the crucial messages their emotions are sending.

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Attending to and working through emotions can influence how teachers teach

Sutton (2004) demonstrates that regulating emotions influences how teachers teach. If, in response to an unruly lesson one day, a teacher chooses to have students work independently on worksheets at their seats the next day, her decision to "modify the situation," a preventative emotional regulation strategy identified by Sutton (2004), has profoundly affected her teaching – and her students' learning. If a teacher chooses to talk about her feelings with colleagues but, as so often happens, begins to focus less on herself and more on the students, an otherwise useful strategy – what Sutton (2004) calls "attention deployment" – can drive the teacher into further negativity (Sutton, 2005; Salzberger-Wittenberg et al., 1983), which can have a powerful effect on the teacher's teaching.

Others recommend direct attention to the emotions teachers suppress. Hargreaves (1998) identifies "emotional misunderstanding," or the failure to interpret others' feelings accurately, as "chronic" in "many schools and classrooms" (p. 839) and recommends that "conditions where better emotional (and cognitive) understanding can occur between teachers and their students (as well as parents and colleagues)" become "a significant educational priority" (p. 840). Recognizing that relationship, or the "interpersonal bond" (Fox, 1998, p. 59), is central to the learning that student practitioners do with their field supervisors, Fox (1998) urges instructors to attend to their own emotions as well as to the transference-countertransference enactments that can accompany them. Chuah & Jakubowicz (1999) go so far as to state that

> when a teacher fails to heed the emotional information latent in the feelings that
> arise in the process of learning and teaching, a host of negative consequences
> ensues. Teachers may resort to quick and forceful means of classroom

management that may be effective in the short run but are often detrimental to their own and their students' intellectual, social, and emotional development. They may shut themselves off from their students' suffering or become worried and despairing and overly involved; act out their feelings with students, parents, or peers; or overidentify with their students. Given the high dropout rate of both students and teachers in public education, we believe people leave rather than bear the intense feelings generated in the teaching-learning relationship. (p. 212)

Chuah & Jakubowicz (1999) insist that self-awareness and self-understanding are essential to teachers' classroom effectiveness.

If these claims are true, how might open discussion of emotions influence teaching? One way to imagine the impact of the type of emotional labor I propose is to consider an example. The following excerpt comes from Lasky's (2000) investigation of teachers' interactions with parents. In it, a teacher describes a negative experience that required emotional regulation:

Recently, meeting with a parent regarding her child, she was complaining to me about all the teachers in the past that should be fired. She was belittling my colleagues, saying that we don't understand her child. She was quite angry with the whole system and taking her six years of frustration out on me….I am trying to explain to her my professional obligation to inform her about problems that I am seeing her child is having; incomplete work, attitude, etc., etc. She proceeds to belittle all my colleagues and the system saying we weren't doing enough and we don't understand her child. That made me extremely angry. (p. 5)

In "trying to explain to her my professional obligation," this teacher undoubtedly engaged in "masking" her strong emotional response to her student's mother. Masking is, of course, a form of emotional regulation (Sutton, 2004) that, in this case, probably prevented an outright fight between the two women and, hence, proved valuable to both of them. The emotion of anger that still lingers in the teacher well after the event has passed, however, deserves attention of a psychodynamic sort.

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The parent's own emotion is quite obvious in this excerpt: She is, as the teacher astutely observes, "taking her six years of frustration out on me." Predictably, given the injustice of the parent's attack on one innocent representative of the larger institution, the teacher experiences defensive anger. As Lasky (2000) points out, "All teachers [in her study] reported feeling negative emotions when parents were viewed as uncaring or irresponsible; not supportive of teachers' efforts; or not respectful of teachers' professional judgment" (p. 5).

But the intensity and longevity of the teacher's anger suggests that her response could bear further examination to determine what it might signal. For instance, gentle probing of the anger could reveal other emotions, such as fear or self-blame, that made it difficult for the teacher to hear the parent or to reinforce personal boundaries. Exploration of the teacher's own contributions to the event could help the teacher imagine alternative actions that would have contained her own and the parent's anger and possibly even resulted in effective collaboration. Review of the emotions the teacher felt as the meeting progressed could help the teacher to identify warning signs and plan more adaptive and effective responses for the future. Examination of the teacher's projections onto the parent – seeing the parent as belittling and attacking rather than as, say, frightened and protective of herself and her child – could help humanize the parent and make her perspective and anger easier to bear. Any of this "labor" could have a significant impact both on the teacher and on the parents and students she works with. While the emotional labor itself might not be easy, the resulting self-awareness and wisdom might ultimately make the acts of teaching – including meetings with parents – more effective.

Doing emotional labor in a group setting can be useful for teachers

Teachers gather in groups a lot. The faculty lounge, where teachers eat together and talk about their work, is a prototypical example. Such gatherings can offer teachers the opportunity to exercise the most popular form of emotional regulation, according to Sutton (2004, 2005), which is talking. Often, "venting" with sympathetic listeners can be a relief; sometimes, as one teacher confessed (Sutton, 2005), it can serve to deepen one's sense of helplessness and despair. The value of a teacher gathering might depend, as it does in other types of support groups, on the presence of structures and values that make "mutual aid" (Steinberg, 2004), or the ability of a group of people to help each other, possible. Given the nature of emotional labor – that is, attending to and working through emotions for the purpose of understanding what the emotions mean psychodynamically – it seems that a support group that is structured specifically for the purpose of mutual aid (and psychoeducation) could be useful to teachers.

Indeed, as Chuah & Jakubowicz (1999) advocate, "What can enrich the experience of teaching is…having the knowledge and experience of observing behavior, deciphering feelings, and thinking about how the emotional impact others have on us can be clues to understanding the nature of classroom and group relationships" (p. 212). Jersild (1955) offers a way to do this: what he calls "group therapy," or a setting in which teachers can have the "freedom to feel," to gain insight, to "be themselves," and thus to counter the natural tendency "to see those whom he teaches through the bias and distortions of his own unrecognized needs, fears, desires, anxieties, hostile impulses, and so on" (pp. 13-14).

Groups of this sort do exist. For years, Himley & Carini (2000) and others have conducted "Descriptive Reviews" in which teachers and other interested parties have focused intensively on a student – on her artwork, her behavior, and/or the teacher's perception of her. These gatherings are carefully structured around a guiding question or word, an uninterrupted presentation by the teacher of the student and her work, and reflection by the rest of the group members. Guidelines proscribe judgment, especially of the student's family, and focus the group on enabling a deeper and broader grasp of the student on the assumption that such understanding will positively influence the teacher's ongoing work with her.

Hypothesizing that "reflection-*on*-action" influences "reflection-*in*-action," which guides actual classroom teaching, Rodgers (2002) convenes groups of teachers to engage in what she calls the "Reflective Cycle." In these groups, teachers learn and practice four "phases" of reflection: seeing, or being present; describing and differentiating experience; thinking from multiple perspectives, or analyzing; and taking intelligent action, or experimenting. Borrowing from the "Descriptive Review" approach, Rodgers (2002) places heavy emphasis on teachers' ability to describe at first without interruption or interpretation. Once the group members have asked questions and extended their sense of the anecdote being shared, interpretation can take place and experiments can be formulated. Again, the basic purpose of these groups is to cultivate a mindfulness, or "presence," that expands teachers' perceptions of and perspectives on their classrooms and, in turn, affects their teaching.

Both of these approaches to teacher groups are extremely useful. Though their emphasis is not explicitly on teacher emotions, the work teachers do in these groups –

work that cultivates awareness and understanding of classroom experiences – amounts to emotional labor. What is it about these groups that supports this difficult work?

Steinberg (2004) distinguishes between the type of work that tends to take place in faculty lounges – commiseration and advice-giving – and the type of work that characterizes mutual aid. She breaks the concept down into nine "dynamics": sharing data, which encourages networking and personal expertise; engaging in a dialectic process, or exploring different perspectives as well as personal differences that emerge in the group; discussing taboos, or permitting "real talk" about the difficult issues that brought the group members together in the first place; being in the same boat together, or acknowledging commonality and the power of pooling strengths and resources; providing mutual support, or creating a reliable community of mutually caring and empathic people; enforcing mutual demand, which is the expectation that the group will engage in thoughtful and meaningful work; engaging in individual problem solving, or recognizing the relationship between self-reflection, or the "*purposeful use of personal experience*" (Steinberg, 2004, p. 49, emphasis hers), and group purpose; rehearsing, which allows for risk-taking and practicing new behaviors; and feeling strength in numbers, or taking action together that will change conditions for the better. It is these dynamics that make group work both difficult and potentially effective, and it is such dynamics that can make emotional labor effective as well.

Another argument for doing emotional labor in a group has to do with what Dell (1982) calls "coherence." A family therapist, Dell (1982) is concerned with the dynamics of family systems, in which all members play certain roles that "fit" with, or continually reinforce, each other. Dell (1982) points out the likelihood that therapists will eventually

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themselves "fit" with the family systems they work with since people tend to act together unconsciously to achieve such coherence. Because these fits are indeed largely unconscious, therapists need help noticing them. The standard method of gaining perspective on coherence for therapists is supervision. A cheaper and potentially equally effective method of illuminating coherence for teachers is the teacher support group. Through a commitment to emotional labor and mutual aid, and with sensitive facilitation, a group of teachers can illuminate for each other their inevitable "blind spots" (Burris, 2005a) and thus support each other in personal and professional growth that can have profound effects on their classrooms.

Clearly, there is ample support for each of the assumptions underlying this study. And there are precedents for the conclusion the study aims to explore, that teachers' experience of their teaching can be influenced for the better by participation in teacher support groups in which teachers engage together in emotional labor. The specific focus on teacher emotions, however, is novel and reflects an understanding of a basic reality of teaching that is not frequently acknowledged: that, at bottom, teachers' moment-to-moment actions can be based on the only knowledge they can be sure of, which is their own experience (Burris, 1998; Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 1991). Honing that knowledge by sharpening one's awareness and understanding of the psychodynamic forces that help to shape it is a valuable, if difficult, way of enhancing one's effectiveness in the classroom.

Psychoanalytic concepts

Given the nature of teaching, which is emotional, interactive, and dedicated to the intellectual (and emotional) development of students, it seems reasonable to expect that

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certain psychoanalytic concepts might prove especially useful in framing teachers' emotional experiences of the classroom. In addition to the concepts of transference and countertransference, other relevant notions that deserve elucidation up-front are the "Third" (Newman, 2008; Muller, 2007) and the "use of self" (Winnicott, 1971).

The term "countertransference" only makes sense, of course, in relation to "transference." Defined originally by Freud as the enactment of old relationships in new situations, transference has come to be viewed as an essential means by which we "personally endow, animate, and tint, emotionally and through fantasy, the cultural, linguistic, interpersonal, cognitive, and embodied world we experience" (Chodorow, 1999, p. 14). The "inner world of psychic reality" that transference reveals is the very structure through which each of us makes sense of, or makes personal meaning about, the world (Chodorow, 1999, p. 14). This is true between psychoanalysts and analysands, and it is true in all other relationships as well. As Chodorow (1999) puts it, "[T]ransference is ubiquitous" (p. 23).

Technically, as Chodorow (1999) implies, transference is the channeling of psychic content, which has accumulated over time, into a current interaction. Countertransference is the name for the experience an analyst or teacher has during a particular episode of transference – it is, in effect, a psychic reflex comprised of the teacher's own psychic content, also acquired over time. Countertransference feelings can be objective, or "induced" in a teacher by a student's transference (Chuah & Jakubowicz, 1999; Winnicott, 1958/1975), or they can be subjective, stemming from the teacher's own history (Kirman, 1977). But, importantly, transference and countertransference are co-constructed; they do not have a linear relationship to each other but, rather, emerge as

a result of the moment-to-moment collaboration between analyst (or teacher) and analysand (or student). Ogden (1997) describes the two forces "as separable entities that arise in response to one another…[and] refer to aspects of a single intersubjective totality experienced separately (and individually) by analyst and analysand" (p. 25). As such, Chuah & Jakubowicz (1999) note, "countertransference [is] an important form of communication" (p. 220).

The concepts of the "Third" and the "use of self" are closely related to transference/countertransference and to each other. The Third arises out of interaction, and its fate is determined by the response an analyst makes to her countertransference. While most discussions of the Third have been in reference to analyst-analysand relationships, it is fair to assume that Thirds exist between teachers and students and between teachers and entire classroom systems. As Newman (2008) claims, the unconscious does play a role in classrooms, and, insofar as classes consist of a teacher, several students, and curricular material, there are ample opportunities for Thirds – between students, between students and teacher, and between these agents and the course material. In general, the notion of the Third refers to what Winnicott (1971) calls the "transitional phenomenon," or the evolution within an infant of the

> third part of the life of a human being,…an intermediate area of *experiencing*, to which inner reality and external life both contribute. It is an area that is not challenged, because no claim is made on its behalf except that it shall exist as a resting-place for the individual engaged in the perpetual human task of keeping inner and outer reality separate yet interrelated (p. 2).

Interestingly, Winnicott (1971) relates the ability to play to the existence of this "intermediate area," or "potential space," which is "outside the individual [and] not the external world" (p. 51). "It is in playing and only in playing," he states (Winnicott, 1971),

"that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self" (p. 54). In the therapeutic situation, if the therapist and/or patient cannot play, then "something needs to be done" to make play, and hence creativity, possible.

Muller (2007) applies the notion of the Third to "treatment resistance," or the refusal of a patient to engage productively (perhaps to play?) in therapy. His description of treatment resistance in therapy could just as easily describe oppositional behavior in the classroom:

> Patients designated as treatment-refractory or even "treatment-resistant" report the common experience of not being recognized, not feeling understood. When this experience is repeated with those providing health care to them, the iatrogenic consequences are clear: such patients wear their diagnostic labels like armor, hiding behind them and defying the next practitioner to look beyond the paraded diagnoses, thereby participating in the misrecognition process which goes on. (p. 221)

Patients' responses to these failures of their caregivers include rage and power struggles "in which the patient wins by losing" (p. 222) – by disengaging from the therapeutic relationship, for example, or by getting a demerit or detention or being suspended from school. Muller (2007) interprets such treatment resistance as "the therapist's failure to understand the patient in context – that is, the patient as related to what is beyond the dyad" (p. 222). "What is beyond the dyad" is what Muller (2007) calls the structural Third (as opposed to Winnicott's "potential space," which is more developmental, and the relational Third of the intersubjectivists) and takes into consideration the meaningful parameters – the rules, roles, cultural and rhetorical expectations and patterns – within which dyads function. The structural Third, in other words, "is not a determinate subject

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or object but rather a logical structure, structuring our thinking and our relationship to each other and to the world" (p. 234).

To recast treatment resistance (or uncooperative behavior in the classroom) in theoretical terms, then, Muller (2007) writes,

> [I]n these moments the patient is implicitly (sometimes explicitly) appealing to the Third as witness to the truth, witness to reasonableness and to history….What provokes the patient's rage is the way the therapist eclipses this place of the Third as witness and claims its authority for himself or herself, as if the therapist were the only valid witness. It is not quite precise to say of this moment that the patient feels hurt because he or she isn't being recognized: the patient, rather, is enraged, disappointed, disillusioned, and hurt because his or her *relation* to the Third, the Third as witness to the true and the reasonable, is not being recognized, and, in this failure to recognize, the therapist does not appreciate his or her *own relation* to this place of the Third. By the eclipse of the Third the therapeutic relation has collapsed into a dyadic struggle. (p. 224).

Gentile (2001) calls the "dyadic struggle" "a trapped, perverse state of 'twoness'" in which "fusion-based dynamics, power relations, and brute force yield a relatedness that looks like, but actually precludes, psychological intimacy" (p. 624). (It is appealing to suspect that psychological intimacy is a condition that is required for teaching and learning to take place.) Gentile (2001) goes on to claim that, "in the absence of thirdness a perversion of agency results" – and agency is, presumably, an absolutely necessary ingredient to lasting learning. "Here," Gentile (2001) continues, "the patient's agency remains in a 'potential' state, finding expression only in a closed, circular path" (p. 624) that prevents the patient from "becom[ing] an active participant in her experience" (p. 626).

As a space in which play, creativity, and mutual understanding can take place, the Third clearly arises in classrooms. Oppositional behavior, power struggles, angry outbursts, refusal to play, and withdrawal are all potential signs that the Third has been

squashed and the teacher-student relationship has "collapsed into a dyadic struggle" (Muller, 2007, p. 224).

The use of self is another idea whose relevance to teachers and teaching is striking. In order to explore how this concept might apply in the classroom, I begin with Winnicott's notion of the "good-enough mother" and move on to the concept of the "good-enough teacher" (Lyon McDaniel, 2004), both roles that ideally require the ability to be used.

For Winnicott (1965), mothers who can provide their children with an appropriately "facilitating environment" – that is, circumstances that optimize the development of the True Self, minimize the need for False Self accommodation, allow for consolidation of the ego through opportunities to be "alone in the presence of another," make room in the child's awareness for others who are separate from him – conditions, in other words, that enable the arising of the Third – are ideal, or "good-enough." In general, such mothers move from the short phase of Primary Maternal Preoccupation – when they "become preoccupied with their own infant to the exclusion of other interests" and are able to "adapt delicately and sensitively to the infant's needs at the very beginning" (Winnicott, 1958/1975, p. 302) – into the more extended phase of individuation, when they frustrate their children with the fact of their separate subjectivities. In this latter phase, children ideally learn that neither they nor their parents are omnipotent, despite their infantile phantasies to the contrary, and that "good-enough parents" will survive their wrath at discovering that truth. The value of this difficult time in a child's (and parent's) development is the cultivation of the True Self (as opposed to the False, or compliant, Self), which can form symbols, play, imagine, and act

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spontaneously in the presence of another but as a separate entity. What is required for this important development is a mother/parent who presents herself as both responsive to and separate from her child, who will neither give in willy-nilly to the child's demands nor negate them with her own "gesture" of omnipotence, and who is ultimately able to "hold" the child's experience through her own well-organized ego and, importantly, through her "devotion" (Winnicott, 1965).

One of the many positive outcomes of "good-enough" parenting is the child's ability to relate to objects not as subjective phenomena – as the child's own "magical" creations – but as objects "that [are] objectively perceived and…allowed a separate existence" (Winnicott, 1965, p. 224). For Winnicott (1971), children move from object-relating to object usage by "destroying" the object – by raging at it – and experiencing its survival. ("Survival" in this context means refusal to "retaliate.") In this way, "the object is placed outside the area of omnipotent control"(Winnicott, 1971, p. 90) and, by being discernibly separate from the child, can now be "used." Rather than act as a "bundle of projections" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 88) for the child, which leads to solipsistic (or narcissistic) self-absorption on the child's part, the object now becomes part of "a world of shared reality…which the [child] can use and which can feed back other-than-me substance into the [child]" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 94). Such objects, in other words, should they allow themselves to be used in this way, are capable of teaching.

Lyon McDaniel (2004) applies the concept of good-enough parenting to the classroom. For a good-enough mother to function, Lyon McDaniel (2004) states, she must, first, recognize the needs of her child but be willing to assert her own needs and interests, even when they oppose the child's; and, second, both mother and child must

stay connected. These fundamental tasks are complicated, Lyon McDaniel (2004) asserts,

by gender and racial roles. In a patriarchal society, women often have difficulty breaking

out of the cultural expectations of feminine "passivity" and "self-denial" (p. 96);

imposing their interests on others can feel unnatural. Relations between Blacks and

whites also contain pernicious cultural and psychological forces that can obstruct the

essential "differentiat[ion] between their fantasy of the other and the reality of the other

as a separate center of subjectivity" (Lyon McDaniel, 2004, pp. 96-97). "I want to

suggest," Lyon McDaniel (2004) writes,

> that in the classroom, as well as in the family, individuals have a difficult time seeing and acknowledging the separate and distinct reality of other people. We fall rather easily into responding to the other merely as a means to confirm our own sense of self. If the other does not confirm our sense of self, we experience the other as a threat and withdraw from the relationship. We have a difficult time becoming aware that in responding in this way, we are treating the other as a means to our own end, rather than an end for herself. We typically walk toward those who affirm us, and we walk away from those who seem to threaten us. The psychoanalytic lens helps us to bring our use of the other into our awareness, and the concept of the good-enough relationship suggests that we might do otherwise: We might do better in our relationships with one another. (p. 99)

Given that learning is a form of development and that development is a dynamic

and sometimes regressive process that involves transference-countertransference,

omnipotence, holding, and frustration, it follows that remaining perpetually accessible to

students' use – never "walk[ing] away" – is virtually impossible for teachers. It also

follows that teachers might feel occasional discomfort with the role they are playing in

their students' development, especially if they are not aware of the dynamics and

importance of this role or if they feel inadequate to perform the role with all or some

students. As with any good-enough parent, good-enough teachers are bound to "retaliate"

when the strain of being used becomes too great. At the same time, it is fair to expect

teachers to notice these strains and their own punitive urges and to work through them in order to make themselves more effective in the classroom. The concept of "use of self" helps to normalize this difficult dynamic but also suggests that emotional support for teachers as they manage the inevitable strains of teaching is essential.

Conceptual framework

Clarification of the epistemology and, consequently, the methodology underlying this study is in order. The explicitly phenomenological approach to data collection, while butting up against standard beliefs about knowledge as purveyed by cognitive science, is nonetheless most appropriate for a study that applies psychoanalytic theory, which seeks to understand the internal psychic mechanisms of individual actors and, through relational theory, the mutually constituting, dynamic influences of people and contexts on each other – knowledge that is known best by the actors individually and together, in interaction. The following section will lay out the frameworks that support and constitute a phenomenological, psychodynamic approach to knowing. Specifically, two developing theoretical frameworks, enactivism and neurophenomenology, form the conceptual bedrock of this study.

Enactivism

In a drastic departure from the more mainstream field of cognitive science, enactivism, whose parent field is actually biology, rejects the notions that "reality" is absolute, just waiting to be perceived, and that cognition is indirect, relying on computer-like operations on internal mental representations of external reality. Enactivism proposes, instead, that "reality" is "co-constructed" and that cognition is action (Varela et al., 1991).

Reality, from the enactivist point of view, arises through interaction. That is, to know the world – to recognize a book on a shelf – is to act in it – to actually "bring forth" the book, to interact within a context in such a way that a book exists. Cognition, in other words, "consists in perceptually guided action" (Varela et al., 1991, p. 173) that, if repeated often enough, allows for "structural coupling" (Maturana & Varela, 1980) or mutual adaptation, what Dell (1982) calls "coherence." I learn, then, through repeated interactions, both physical and linguistic, that the object over there is called a "book" and that I can do certain things with it. These things that I can do are determined by my particular biological structure. That is, the matter that is my hand "couples" with the matter that constitutes the book in such a way that one can grasp the other. Given a vastly different structure, I would perceive the "book" only as open space and, possibly, would be able to fly right through it. Bound as I am in this particular body, I use the object called a "book" for reading but, given the right circumstances, I can use it as a fly swatter or as a booster seat as well. I can also completely miss the book – that is, the book won't be a reality for me – if I'm looking instead at the painting hanging on the wall above it. Reality arises through our interactions within a context, interactions that are bound, actually determined, by our physical structures (Maturana & Varela, 1987; Varela et al., 1991). Cognition is entailed by the perceptions and actions that "bring forth" that reality.

Reality is also determined by our interpretations. Interpretations, of course, can be unconscious, as when we feel vaguely threatened but cannot say exactly why, or conscious, as when we deliberately puzzle out the meaning of a bit of language. According to Maturana (1975), we interact with language similarly to how we interact

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with other objects, or "distinctions," such as books: we unconsciously and consciously

achieve coherence, a sense of fit, with the ideas captured in language, a fit that both

defines the world for us and potentially changes how we think, feel, and act. But our

experience of "languaging," while it can feel like "reality" to us, does not constitute

absolute reality; rather, Maturana (1975, 1978, 1988) insists, our interpretations are

merely stories, projections made by an "observer" (each of us) that are "valid only for

him" (Maturana, 1975, p. 330).

Psychoanalytic theory helps to flesh out this biologically based explanation of

interpretation (Burris, 2005b). Object relations theorists such as Klein and Winnicott

trace out developmental trajectories for infants and children that are supremely

interactional; Klein's mechanisms of projection and introjection qualify, from an

enactivist standpoint, as crucial instances of early cognition. Stern (1985) gives ample

examples of the interpersonal ways in which infants develop knowledge of the world and

themselves, ways that are fundamentally embodied and interactive and focused on

connection, or "fit." As attachment theorists point out, the nature of this early

interactional development can have a profound impact on future relationships,

crystallizing into interactional patterns, or Internal Working Models (IWMs) (Bowlby,

1979), that constrain how individuals think, feel, and behave. When individuals function

through IWMs, they enact psychic structures that, like biological structures, do not just

influence thought, feeling, and action but, arguably, *determine* them. Just as we cannot

perceive books as open space, we cannot interpret the world in any way other than how

our psychic structures allow us to in the moment (Burris, 2005b). Transferential

enactments offer everyday evidence this determinism, as Chodorow (1999) suggests in her definition of transference:

> Transference is the hypothesis and demonstration that our inner world of psychic reality helps to create, shape, and give meaning to the intersubjective, social, and cultural worlds we inhabit. It is the original psychoanalytic vehicle documenting for us the power of feelings. Psychoanalytic investigation suggests that people are motivated or driven, in order to gain a sense of a meaningful life and manage threatening conscious and unconscious affects and beliefs, to create or interpret external experiences in ways that resonate with internal experiences, preoccupations, fantasies, and senses of self-other relationships. In transference, we personally endow, animate, and tint, emotionally and through fantasy, the cultural, linguistic, interpersonal, cognitive, and embodied world we experience. (p. 14)

Fortunately, these psychic structures (and our biological structures) are plastic: through adaptation to ongoing experience, they change (Palombo, 1999) – a premise upon which the whole of psychoanalytic theory rests. Experiences of transference can both entrench us in a more or less static IWM or offer opportunities for different enactments, different interpretations, "corrective emotional experiences." As Chodorow (1999) and many others recognize, "transference-countertransference is contingent and continually emergent" (p. 19) – that is, interactions between people are always contextualized and co-created. And, while our interactions and interpretations are determined by our structures of the moment, our experiences are by no means predictable.

The upshot of all of this is that knowing – how we perceive, act on, and interpret the world – is fundamentally experiential. Cognition happens in our bodies – throughout our bodies in a coordinated way – not just in our brains, and is both demonstrated and created in action – in "perceptually guided action." Evidence of our knowing appears in our thoughts, utterances, emotions, actions, dreams, and enactments, and our knowing

ranges between fully conscious and utterly unconscious. The knower herself is only partially aware of all that she knows (Haraway, 1991; Depraz, Varela & Vermersch, 2003), and, in keeping with her biological and psychic complexity, can embody contradictory knowledge – beliefs that are at total odds with her actions – at the same moment (see, for example, Pajares, 1992). But her knowledge of herself and her experience is more accurate than anyone else's knowledge of her, as she is the perceiver and enactor of the stories by which she lives her life. Subjective experience, then, is the closest we can get to embodied and enacted cognition (Varela et al., 1991), and the stories we tell of that experience, the words we use to describe it, are perhaps the richest form of data we can collect, given how masterfully stories reveal, through denotation, connotation, symbolism, and even absence, what we know we know as well as what we don't know we know. This is where neurophenomenology comes in.

Neurophenomenology

Neurophenomenology is a very young research program (based on the much older program of phenomenology) whose goal is to begin to chip away at the "hard problem" of consciousness (Chalmers, 1995), which is the simple (but currently impenetrable) question "What is the relationship between consciousness and biology?" Given the confluence in this question of the biological and the experiential, it should not be difficult to believe that neurophenomenology has emerged as a methodological branch of enactivism.

In brief, neurophenomenology takes as its goals, first, the elaboration of a first-person method of data collection; second, the incorporation of first-person data into analyses of brain activity; and third, the recursive folding-back-in of findings from brain-

based research to first-person experience in hopes of helping to expand the first person's

range of perception (Lutz & Thompson, 2003). As might be expected, given the

controversy that has raged around the value of introspection as an empirical method

(Vermersch, 1999) and the nature of consciousness itself (Varela & Shear, 1999),

progress on the first goal is relatively slow. But actual approaches to formalizing methods

that both honor the inescapability and irreducibility of subjective experience and submit it

to standards of validity have evolved (see, for example, Depraz et al., 2003; Ginsburg,

2005; and, from the psychoanalytic tradition, Luborsky & Crits-Christoph, 1990).

First-person data collection methods range from basic introspection, or "becoming

aware" psychologically (Depraz et al., 2003), to the "phenomenological reduction," or

the disciplined "gesture" that turns one's attention to experience, constituting "a specific

mode of conscious apprehension, by means of which, quite simply, I learn to see the

world and objects differently" (Depraz, 1999, p. 98), to meditation (Varela & Shear,

1999). The basic characteristics of a first-person methodology are, according to Varela &

Shear (1999), (1) the "basic attitude," or the "epoche" (Depraz et al., 2003), in which

attention is directed from the external to the internal; (2) the "phenomenal filling-in," or

the expansion of the basic attitude into a fuller, more inclusive account, often aided by a

"second-person"; and (3) "expression and intersubjective validation," or the opportunity

for the first person to talk about his experience and for other people to offer feedback on

it.

Neurophenomenologists emphasize that training is desirable when enacting the

"epoche," or the suspension of "the 'natural attitude'" (Depraz et al., 2003, p. 25) that is

required to turn awareness to inner experience. That training, it seems, can come from

repeated experience, from a discipline such as meditation, and from interactions with a "second-person," a "mediator," who supports the first person in self-expression and who helps to validate the first-person's experience through both empathy and questioning. As Varela & Shear (1999) put it,

> Here, in the second-person position, one gives up explicitly his/her detachments to become identified with the kind of understanding and internal coherence of his source. In fact, that is how he sees his role: as an empathic resonator with experiences that are familiar to him and which find in himself a resonant chord. This empathic position is still partly heterophenomenological [that is, involving both observation and interpretation], since a modicum of critical distance and of critical evaluation is necessary, but the intention is entirely other: to meet on the same ground, as members of the same kind. (p. 10)

In seeking this "common experiential ground," the second-person himself can become an "experiencer," striving for validation of his own self-expression through the supportive interactions of which he is a part. While this type of "intersubjective validation" is not necessary for data collection to work, Varela & Shear (1999) claim, "there is no possibility of first-person methodology in our sense of the term without at some point assuming the position of direct experience that seeks validation. Otherwise the process then becomes purely private or even solipsistic" (p. 11). The first-person method, in other words, must embed itself in social interaction.

Taken together, enactivism and neurophenomenology address a question that cognitive science has neglected: What role does our subjective experience play in cognition? (Varela et al., 1991). By highlighting this question, they enter new territory that has been dismissed by their theoretical predecessors as irrelevant at worst and inaccessible at best (Varela et al., 1991; Varela & Shear, 1999). Because the theoretical framework of enactivism and the methodology proposed by neurophenomenology do not

just acknowledge the personal and social nature of subjective experience but insist that rigorous exploration of such experience is central to our understanding of ourselves, they form an appropriate foundation for a study that is also in some ways entering new territory within the field of education. Both the focus of this study and the frameworks that inform it, then, are a bit unusual, but the potential for discovery is exciting.

Group and Study Design

Clearly, the first-person method dovetails neatly with psychoanalytic method as well as with the goals of and approaches to mutual-aid groupwork and is, therefore, directly relevant to my study of teachers' emotions. First-person method honors subjective experience (of emotions), insists on the involvement of second-persons (group participants) for validation, and allows for the recursive exploration of the experience of talking about experience (spearheaded by the facilitator), all with the goal of increasing the individual's and the field's understanding of cognition. Although my study does not focus on the support group itself or the actual process the teachers go through to cultivate their awareness and understanding of their emotions in the classroom, it does aim at documenting the results of the emotional labor the support group facilitates. It tests my fundamental hypothesis that emotional labor – self-awareness and self-understanding achieved through the first-person method – will influence teachers' experience in the classroom.

The support group has been designed to maximize the chances that teachers will actually gain in self-awareness and self-understanding; the principles that guide mutual-aid group work, the recognition of parallel process, and the recommendations of advocates of first-person methodology have all contributed to this design. The basic

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activities of the support group will be telling stories and examining group process (with an eye to how this group functions similarly to or differently from a classroom group). From the first-person methodology point of view, the storytelling cultivates the step of "phenomenological reduction," or cultivation of the "basic attitude," by asking teachers to focus on their experience. This focus occurs in the group, but it also must happen in the classroom if the teachers are to remember their experiences in sufficient detail to report them. "Phenomenal filling-in" takes place when the teachers express what they experienced to the group in their own terms. The group plays an important role in this step by, first, providing an environment in which mutual aid is expected, and, second, by providing each storyteller with an attentive and thoughtful audience, or "second-person." Unlike the approach to storytelling employed in the Descriptive Review (Himley & Carini, 2000) and the Reflective Cycle (Rodgers, 2002) processes, where teachers describe their experiences uninterrupted, the "second-persons" in the support group aid the storyteller in "phenomenal filling-in" with questions that help her to flesh out the story.

"Expression and intersubjective validation," the third step in the first-person methodology, also takes place during the meetings. In a teacher support group, all of the second-persons (including the facilitator) are steeped in the same teacher skills and dilemmas as the others, so the empathy and informed questioning that constitute validity in the first-person method flow. Unlike the Descriptive Review process (Himley & Carini, 2000), in which teachers follow a set protocol and are guided by several suggested questions, and the Reflective Cycle process (Rodgers, 2002), in which teachers are encouraged to practice their descriptive skills and build from there, the teacher support

group relies more on the teachers' instincts about what matters to them each week (as indicated by the salience of their emotions) and on the constraining and elaborative interactions of the group members as they resonate with and validate the experiences being examined.

An added dimension of the teacher support group, which is not mentioned in descriptions of the Descriptive Review or the Reflective Cycle but is intrinsic to a mutual aid approach, is the recursive nature of the group discussions. That is, a major responsibility of the group facilitator will be to notice the dynamics at work within the teacher support group and to bring them to the participants' attention. In so doing, teachers can become more alert to the kinds of dynamics that govern their own classrooms and can develop a "double vision" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) that captures at once the perspective of the student and of the teacher, since, within the teacher support group, each participant embodies both perspectives simultaneously. Because it invites each teacher to be both an "experiencer," or storyteller, and a "validator," or empathic second-person, this double vision can be considered a form of intersubjective validation for teachers as they work with students. The double vision teachers cultivate within the group can also help teachers decode enactments in the classroom from a psychoanalytic perspective, calling up understanding of transference-countertransference as they unpack the dynamics of significant classroom interactions.

As has been mentioned, the teacher support group itself – the content the teachers present, the process the individuals and group undergo, etc. – is not the focus of this study. But the outcomes of the support group are. I have looked for the desired outcomes – evidence of increased self-awareness and self-understanding and the effects those

increases have on the teachers as well as evidence, from the teachers' perspectives, of how the support group fostered the increases – in the data I collected from each teacher. First, teachers in the support group kept Emotion Diaries for every week of the study. In their diary entries, teachers listed the salient emotions they experienced that week and wrote the story of at least one emotion-laden experience. They also described how the emotion affected their teaching. Supplementing these weekly reflections were interviews in which the teachers recounted more stories of emotional experiences in teaching, prompted as necessary by the interviewer (me). Teachers underwent three such interviews.

Clearly, the data collected for the study both reinforced and reflected the emotional labor that took place in the support group. The hope was that the effects of this emotional labor would manifest in the language teachers used to tell their stories in the Emotion Diaries and interviews and in the answers teachers gave to direct questions about the value of self-awareness and self-understanding and of the teacher support group experience. Specifically, I expected that the teachers' storytelling would contain increasingly sophisticated references to classroom psychodynamics. These references would, I predicted, appear in language that tied personal emotions to student emotions and that described classroom experiences in interactional, co-constructive terms. I also expected that the teachers would begin to report resolutions to classroom difficulties in terms that credited the conversations they had in the teacher support group. I hoped to see increasingly developed discussions of personal emotions in the data as the support group went on, discussions that demonstrated greater access to and use of emotions in the classroom – how the emotions felt, where they came from, what they meant to the

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teacher, and what the teacher could do with them. This was a tall order for a teacher support group that met for just three months, but the progress the teachers did make is telling and suggests avenues for future research and process development.

To sum up, this study hypothesizes that the work a teacher support group requires – emotional labor that is supported in a way that fosters a validated phenomenological perspective on embodied, enacted cognition – will influence how teachers experience their classrooms. The support group's design follows the recommendations of advocates of first-person methodology, and the hypothesis driving my study rests on the assumptions of both enactivism and neurophenomenology (and, at least in part, psychoanalysis) – namely, that cognition is action (which includes introspection), that self-awareness and self-understanding will influence one's experience of the classroom, and that knowing is an irreducibly subjective experience that can nonetheless be altered by interaction with empathic, informed others.

In psychoanalytic terms, I predicted that the emotional labor facilitated by the support group and captured in the data collected for the study would help to alter the teachers' psychic structures, or Internal Working Models, which would in turn influence their thoughts, feelings, and actions in future teaching moments. The experience of being in a group and working through emotional experiences would be one source of personal change: I fully expected to witness enactments within the teacher support group that, if pointed out and processed, would shed light on parallel classroom interactions. The focused discussions the group members had would be a second source of change. As the second-persons supported the experiencer in turning inward and in making sense of what she knew, all the group participants would benefit from the understanding that emerged.

New ways of thinking about one person's experience could be applied to another's, experiments could be tried in the classroom, experiences could take on different, unexpected qualities – and psychic structures could begin to shift.

Conclusion

Despite the growing acceptance of teacher emotions in the field of education, a study that utilizes teacher emotions to help change teacher cognition is a fairly radical one. Fortunately, work in several fields – education, sociology, social work, family therapy, psychoanalysis, biology, cognitive science, philosophy, and neurophenomenology – point to the validity of such a project. Although the research questions driving this particular study are modest -- "What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?" and "What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?" – the implications of the study and of the work the teachers and facilitator had to do within it are extremely rich.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative inquiry into teachers' experience of emotions in the classroom. The questions driving this study are "What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?" and "What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?" Given the phenomenological bent of these questions, the study demands of its participants reports of their experiences both in the classroom and in the formal group setting of the teacher support group. This chapter will describe the teacher support group, the study participants, the data collection methods, the researcher's dual roles, and the approach to data analysis.

The Teacher Support Group

The project revolved around a facilitated teacher support group whose express purpose was to contain discussions of participants' experiences of emotions while teaching. Similar to the approach taken by the Balint Group, in which group facilitators provide a "flight simulator-like environment" for medical residents to present and discuss "an emotionally vexing patient-physician relationship in which the mutual understanding has gone astray" (Nease, 2007, p. 511), this group had numerous opportunities to "unpack the facts, emotions, and possibilities" (Nease, 2007, p. 511) of critical educational incidents to help the participants better understand their experiences and to open up options for future classroom behaviors, actions – and emotions.

The teacher support group met once a week for 1.25 hours (excluding one week of school vacation in mid-February), beginning on January 10, 2008, and ending on April 10, 2008, for a total of 13 sessions. For the first six weeks, the group sessions began with a brief check-in, when each teacher shared a menu of pressing concerns (if any) that he or she wanted to discuss with the group. At the end of check-in, the facilitator summarized the issues each participant brought up and the group decided what to focus on for the remainder of the meeting. The teachers whose issues came up for discussion presented their experiences in greater detail; the group members asked clarifying questions and shared relevant experiences and insights. Thus, the group served to offer mutual aid (Steinberg, 2004), to disrupt the "coherence," or invisible "fit" (Dell, 1982), the teacher might have effected with the student or class, and to provide psychoeducation on the dynamics of the classroom system and particular relationships within it (Pianta, 1999). Starting with the seventh week of group (due in part to the difficulty the teachers had in keeping check-in short and due in part to the recommendation of my group supervisor), I stopped enforcing check-ins and allowed the teachers to chart a more organic path through their discussions. This new structure allowed for more direct focus on the group dynamics as they unfolded.

The meetings took place in a small conference room in the Student Union of a local college. Since the teachers had elected, at the group's organizational meeting in December, to provide snacks for each other every week, food and soft drinks were always available. The teachers were expected to attend every support group meeting; the only absences (two) were due to illness. The last meeting was shortened, at the teachers'

request, to allow time for a termination ceremony in which the group members brought closure to the intense experience they had shared.

The Participants

The project participants were five teachers – Bernadette Sparks, Natasha Rollins, Taylor Waldren, Marla Mead, and Anne Gilley[1] – who agreed to participate in a teacher support group. The teachers were self-selected from public schools in two different counties in central New England at the elementary through high school levels. Inclusion criteria for the study included

- interest in exploring emotions in teaching;

- commitment to the support group;

- willingness to keep weekly emotion diaries;

- willingness to engage in interviews.

Exclusion criteria included any history of psychiatric difficulty that might make the teacher support group an unwelcome trigger. This criterion did not apply to any of the teachers who participated in the study, and no one who volunteered for the study was excluded.

Recruitment for the teacher support group involved my contacting teachers and administrators I knew personally with information about the teacher support group and the study. These people shared the information with teachers they thought might be interested. Because a teacher support group both attracts and requires a certain type of

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[1] The participants' names as well as those of their colleagues have all been changed to protect their identities.

person – one who is introspective and brave enough to expose him- or herself in a group – participants in the support group and, hence, in the study were necessarily self-selected. An extremely important element in this self-selection, it appears, was the relationship each teacher had with me, the facilitator. Two of the six teachers who expressed interest in the group did not know me personally (but knew administrators who did know me); one of them decided not to participate. The other was a student teacher in a program with which I have an affiliation. The remaining four had all worked with me in one capacity or another – as a Master Teacher for a student teacher I supervised, as a teacher of one of my children, as a member of a previous teacher support group I had run, and as the recipient of some consulting I had been hired to do at her school. As with more standard therapeutic groups, whose members often share a therapist (see Ormont, 1992), this support group – and hence the study – came together around me, a fact that highlights the pre-existing relationships that played such an important role in the group and in the data collection.

Despite the fact that I knew most of the teachers who volunteered to participate in the group and in the study, I subjected all of them to a rigorous screening. We met individually well before the group began, at which time I described in great detail the way the group would work, the nature of the study, the potential costs and benefits to the participants, efforts I would make to protect confidentiality, etc. (see Appendix A). I gave each teacher two copies of an informed consent letter at this meeting (see Appendix B), one of which they signed and returned to me then or gave to me before the first interview took place. I made sure that each participant returned the letter before any data was collected for the study. I emphasized to each teacher that he or she could drop out of the

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study at any time but remain in the teacher support group. (They could also drop out of the teacher support group at any time.) I gave each teacher a list of referrals to local therapists and clinics should any of them feel the need for additional support. In short, I followed to the letter the protocol approved by the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee (see Appendix C).

During the screening, I told each teacher that participation in a support group usually involves vulnerability as well as great potential for growth and discovery. I acknowledged that the success of the group rested largely on the trust the members could feel for each other and for the facilitator and that I, as facilitator, would work hard to earn and keep that trust. I also described how each teacher's confidentiality would be maintained: through a pseudonym (that each teacher would choose for him- or herself), which I used on data sources and with my group supervisor; by separating their signed consent forms from other documents; and by insisting that anyone who saw raw data (transcribers, for example) sign a confidentiality pledge. Once each teacher was screened, the entire group met for an organizational meeting (December, 2007), at which time we introduced ourselves, shared personal goals for the group, and discussed meeting logistics.

Of the six group participants (including me), all were white. This homogeneity was not surprising, as the central New England region where the study took place is not particularly diverse along racial/ethnic lines. One of the participants was male. One of the women identified as Jewish, and the man identified as Scottish. One of the teachers had a BA; three had Master's degrees; and one was working towards her Master's degree. Two of the teachers had participated in a teacher support group with me the year before. Two

teachers worked at the elementary level and three worked at the junior and high school levels. Several of the participants came to teaching from prior careers in sales, tutoring, and corporate and governmental affairs. Only one teacher had worked in education for her entire career. Two pairs of teachers worked in the same school, and one teacher was a long-term sub for most of the span of the teacher support group. The average number of years of teaching experience for the group is 6.3, ranging from 0 (for the pre-service teacher) to 20 years. At our organizational meeting, four of the five teachers in the group discovered that they had close ties with the Master Teacher in whose classroom the pre-service teacher was student teaching. The ties were professional – as a colleague, as the parent of a former student, and as a student teacher – and personal – as the partner of a relative. It is impossible to know how these ties affected each teacher's ability to use the group over the next three months, but they certainly represent the inescapable inter-connected reality of small-town teachers.

Data Collection

Data collection was almost purely qualitative and involved multi-method assessment of the variables of interest using self-report coupled with semi-structured interviews. It both documented and facilitated changes in teachers' understanding, conscious and unconscious, constructed and involuntary, of their emotional experience in the classroom. By gathering stories of teachers' experiences over time, I captured changes in how teachers wrote and talked about their experiences and in how they managed their emotions in the classroom. The act of reflecting on these experiences and, in some cases, perceiving emotional and interactional patterns within the stories also fed back into teachers' self-understanding. Data collection also solicited teachers'

impressions of the value of working through their emotions in a formal group setting.

Methods included the following:

- emotion diaries

- Relationship Anecdotes Paradigm interviews (Luborsky & Crits-
  Christoph, 1990)

- pre-group questionnaire

- post-group evaluation

- post-group (final) interview

- personal notes

Emotion diaries (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003) are journal entries that focus on the emotions experienced in a given teaching incident. The group participants wrote emotion diaries weekly that helped focus the discussions in the teacher support group. The entries were simple and formatted (see Appendices D and E), and teachers were free to fill out as many as they wished to whatever level of detail suited them. Ideally, teachers filled out a diary entry soon after the emotional experience, thus maximizing the value of the emotion diaries as a form of experience sampling (Csikszentmihali & Larson, 1987), but this approach was not enforced. I aspired to collect 13 emotion diaries from each project participant, but the actual number the teachers turned in varied from seven (one teacher) to eight (one teacher) to 12 (two teachers) to the full 13 (one teacher).

The emotion diaries provided the only quantitative data I collected in the study. The first part of the entries asked for a list of emotions the teachers had experienced that week and a rating of each emotion (using a Likert scale) by its intensity. Unfortunately, because at least one teacher found this part of the entry irrelevant and therefore refused to

fill it out for several weeks, the data set is incomplete. Based on this teacher's objections, I revised the emotion diary entry template to allow the teachers to rate the emotions that accompanied one classroom incident (see Appendix E). This approach worked well, but it was not adopted by the group until the sixth week of meetings (mid-February), and even then the teachers were selective in using it (opting often to type their diaries on computer and to bypass the listing of emotions entirely). In addition, some teachers forgot to rank some emotions, but this happened rarely.

The interviews I conducted were all semi-structured, allowing me to probe the teachers' responses freely. In the Relationship Anecdotes Paradigm (RAP) interviews (Luborsky & Crits-Christoph, 1990), the teachers were asked to describe a few critical incidents in their current classroom and to sketch out the emotions and behaviors that accompanied them (see Appendix F). I conducted RAP interviews three times with each teacher, once before the support group began (to establish a baseline), once as close to the middle of the data collection period as possible (between the fifth and eighth sessions), and once after the support group had ended (approximately one to three weeks after the last session). I sought to elicit three to five stories of emotional school-based incidents at each interview, but this number varied by participant and by interview. The value added by the RAP interviews was, first, their power to confirm and extend the emotion diaries and, second, their potential to capture some of the teachers' interactional and emotional patterns, information that enriched the data set as well as the teachers' level of self-awareness and self-understanding. Relying on teacher stories made sense, since the narrative mode most naturally captures the feel of experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), thus making participation by the teachers more likely (Pianta, 1999), and it invites

the expression of emotions in a way that other, more rational, formats tend to discourage (Noddings, 1996).

The emotion diaries and the RAP interviews addressed the research question "What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?" The pre-group questionnaire (Appendix G) and the post-group evaluation (Appendix H) together addressed the second research question, "What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?" The questions were presented in a written evaluative format to ease the feedback process for teachers and to hold, in some small way, the support group (and its facilitator) accountable.

I ended the study with a brief semi-structured interview with each teacher in which I asked the research questions more or less point-blank (Appendix I). The answers to these interview questions filled in the details that the written post-group evaluation necessarily left out. And, though the answers were general and, importantly, delivered to me, the group facilitator and researcher with whom each teacher had a personal relationship, they nonetheless offered perspective that proved extremely valuable.

All of the RAP interviews were transcribed in full so I could pore over them *in toto*, not knowing in advance what parts might be significant and what parts not. The final post-group interviews were also transcribed in full. I did most of the transcribing myself but got help with the third RAP interviews and the final interviews. The transcriber signed a pledge of confidentiality before beginning transcription.

Participant Research

In effect, this study is an ethnography of teacher emotions in classrooms using a phenomenological method. It asks teachers to focus on the emotions they feel as they

teach and to talk about what teaching is like under the influence of those emotions. But the study is more than that, as it is based on an assumption that amounts to a wager: it bets that emotional labor undertaken in a supportive group setting will affect the ways teachers experience and talk about the emotions they report. As facilitator of that supportive group and collector of the data that would confirm or disconfirm my hypothesis, I played a complex participant observer role over the course of this study.

Spradley (1980) distinguishes between five different types, or levels, of participant observation. At the "lowest," or most detached, level is "nonparticipation," in which the researcher studies a social situation, such as soap operas, through observation alone. The highest level of participation is that of "complete participation," where the researcher studies an activity in which he or she engages as an "ordinary '[non-researching] participant." No matter what level one occupies as a participant observer, certain skills must be exercised: the researcher must embrace the "dual purpose" of immersing herself in the activity being studied and of pulling back to observe what that immersion is like; the researcher must use "explicit awareness," attuning to details of the activity she might normally tune out, and a "wide-angle lens" that captures a context that is broader than might normally be considered relevant; the researcher must switch between the insider ("emic") and the outsider ("etic") perspectives, seeking validity through accurate representation of the experience of "natives" to the activity as well as understanding of that experience from "the external, social scientific perspective on reality" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 32); the researcher must engage in introspection to get a sense for what participation feels like; the researcher must keep records; and, as

Fetterman (1989) emphasizes, the researcher must be careful not to be judgmental of the activity or the participants in it.

In this study, I worked at the "complete participation" level as well as at the next level down, "active participation." In the group, which was not a direct focus of the study but which provided the ground on which the study rested, I was a complete participant. As a long-time teacher and teacher educator, I was in my element talking about classrooms with fellow professionals. My immersion in the field of education made me an effective "second-person" for the teachers who were telling their stories in group.

But I also played an "active participant" role. According to Spradley (1980), "The active participant seeks to *do* what other people are doing, not merely to gain acceptance, but to more fully learn the cultural rules for behavior" (p. 60). At the same time that I was helping to shape the culture of this particular teacher support group, I was watching how the group members behaved together, how the group coalesced, what the dynamics of this collection of people were, what I and others could or could not do together. To further complicate my role, I was learning as I went what I actually mean by "teacher support groups," what the overall culture of support, emotional labor, and emotional activism that I envision for the teaching profession might look and feel like. Fortunately, this somewhat confusing role forced me to sharpen the skills that Spradley (1980) and Fetterman (1989) recommend (skills that, not surprisingly, make a good group facilitator as well [Ormont, 1992]). I took my "dual purpose" seriously, moving constantly between the emic and etic perspectives and utilizing "explicit awareness" and a "wide-angle lens" to almost exhausting effect; I kept records (in a journal) of every group meeting and of every supervisor meeting; I paid close attention to my experience of the group and

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reflected on it afterwards in my journal and with my supervisor. In addition, I "joined with" the group participants in their stories, which were often painful and sometimes graceless; I struggled with judgmental responses to honest, if unbecoming, disclosures from teachers and to my own acts as facilitator and researcher; and I tried to accept the uncertainty that accompanies any authentic learning process, in which the temptation to grasp singular moments in a process as real or lasting – or "bumbling" or "inept" – is released.

Interestingly, a large portion of the work I did as group facilitator was to help the teachers themselves develop participant observer skills. I encouraged them to be aware of their dual purpose as teachers (as participants in the classroom and as observers), of the need for explicit awareness, a wide-angle lens, introspection, and, as far as possible, nonjudgment in teaching, and I insisted that they keep records in the form of emotion diaries. The existence of this "parallel process" – of the direct correlation between my experiences as group facilitator and their experiences as teachers – became paramount to me, and I pointed it out to the teachers as we enacted in group some of the dynamics that the teachers were trying to understand in their classrooms.

Although it might have been more appropriate for me to be a "moderate participant," or someone who achieves a more neutral balance between participation and observation, in my role as researcher, I was more of an active participant. My goal during interviews was to limit the feedback I offered to the teachers and to focus on prompting more fuller memories and discussions of the stories they told – the role a moderate participant would have played. I did not completely fail at this goal, but I did sometimes find myself wondering with the teacher about a particular story or offering an

interpretation or pushing more deeply into the meaning of the experience than the interview protocol called for. While these are lapses a more detached interviewer might have avoided, they are emblematic of my investment in the discovery process these interviews fostered as well as of the evolving relationship each teacher and I were enacting together.

The confluence in me of the facilitator and researcher roles, in all their separate complexity, further complicated the study. At the same time that I was trying to trust the group process and myself as fledgling facilitator, I was understandably hoping for interesting study results – a hope that undoubtedly played into any inappropriately helpful comments I made during interviews. In a more traditional ethnography, the researcher eschews hypothesis, freeing herself to absorb whatever the activity under study reveals. I did not function in such a traditional sense. I did gain from my various roles, however, in ways that far exceed the scope of this study and that will greatly influence the teacher support groups I organize and run in the future.

Data Analysis

The data for this study fall into four categories: emotions and their intensity, stories of emotional incidents (from the emotion diaries and from the RAP interviews), answers to pre- and post-group questions (written and spoken), and notes I took in a journal on each support group meeting. These data points were used differently to answer the two research questions.

"What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?"

In order to answer this research question, I first answered the question "What emotions did each teacher feel?" I compiled a grand list of all the emotions each teacher

listed in his or her emotion diary entries and indicated the number of appearances of each emotion as well as the mean and mode intensities reported for each emotion. The lists served to sketch out a picture of the emotional world each teacher co-created with his or her class of students over the data collection period.

To answer the research question itself, I used content analysis. Loosely following Luborsky & Crits-Christoph (1990), I divided each emotion diary entry and RAP interview into "relationship episodes," or discrete and complete narrative elements that involve a main character (including the self) and a beginning, middle, and end. I numbered and labeled each narrative and highlighted emotion words within them, those referring to the teachers' feelings in a different color from those referring to students' feelings. I also labeled talk in the interviews that did not qualify as "relationship episodes" but did qualify as contextual information, explanation, or reflection. I highlighted the questions I asked about emotions and the answers, direct or indirect, immediate or delayed, that each teacher provided. Along the way, I noted points of interest – places where certain responses or themes reappeared, for example – and jotted down ideas that occurred to me as I read through the data. As patterns emerged for each teacher, I went back and re-scored previous interviews to capture such characteristics as "suggestive emotion words" or "dialogue." When the RAP interviews and the emotion diaries were all scored, I entered the sequence of labels and the accompanying emotion words in a "RAP chart," which helped me to both perceive and keep track of patterns in the ways the teachers talked about or handled their emotions in the classroom and in the interviews themselves. I tracked the patterns across the three RAPs and the emotion diary entries, looking for evidence of changes in the ways the teachers talked about their

experiences and responded to me in the interviews. I used the journal notes I took on the support group meetings to flesh out the teachers' words as needed. I compared the results of this process with the answers each teacher gave to the post-group interview questions, looking for confirmation of my findings as well as of the teachers' claims about their experiences.

It is important to note that, because each teacher's way of talking about their emotions differed dramatically, the patterns I found in their data also varied. Because I wanted to keep my analysis firmly grounded in the data, I followed these patterns and presented them in my findings as unique portraits of the individuals I worked with. What this means is that, although I followed the exact same procedure for discerning patterns in the teachers' data, the findings based on those patterns look different for each teacher. *"What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?"*

To answer this question, I once again did content analysis. As with the first research question, there was an implicit pre-question: "*Did* the teachers develop greater awareness and understanding in the formal group setting?" The cross-RAP analysis, described above, certainly provided the beginning of an answer to this question, but the teachers' self-reports, as presented in the post-group evaluation and the final interview, were crucial. To answer the actual research question, I referred to the teachers' final interviews and to the answers they wrote on the post-group questionnaires. Sometimes it was useful to compare the teachers' opinions about the group after-the-fact to the expectations they brought to the group, but this was not always necessary. The notes I took on the actual support group meetings were also occasionally helpful and not always

necessary. To get a more concrete sense of the influence the teacher support group had on the teachers' emotional experiences, I compiled a record of how many times each teacher referred, in their emotion diaries and RAP interviews, to conversations that took place in the support group meetings. Given the phenomenological nature of the study and of the research question, the teachers' self-reports were the most reliable indicators overall.

My final act of data analysis was to share the findings I wrote up on each teacher with that teacher. I invited feedback and incorporated it into the thesis as appropriate. This part of the analysis was important for the study, but I believe it was important for the teachers as well. By sharing my own thinking about their data and their participation in the teacher support group, I was able to give back to the teachers deeply-considered perspectives that I suspect they joined the group, in part, to obtain.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

This chapter answers the two research questions for each teacher support group participant. While the approach to data analysis was the same for all teachers, the stories they told and the manners in which they told them naturally varied from teacher to teacher. The answers I report in this chapter, therefore, while results of the same analytic process, look different depending on each teacher's particular personality and discourse style. The focus for Bernadette, for example, is on the growth she reports in her ability to label and use her emotions. The focus for Natasha is on her reflections and the impact they have on her ability to envision alternative behaviors. Taylor's section emphasizes his use of dialogue in expressing and implying his emotions. Because Marla was a student teacher and demonstrated a natural grasp of classroom dynamics, these are themes that appear in her section. And Anne's stories and metaphors indicate that numerous beliefs and expectations, which I attempt to reveal, influence her teaching. The fact is that these findings are stories I am telling based on stories the teachers in the study have told. The stories' accuracy and usefulness are determined by the resonance they set up within the teachers themselves and, I can only hope, in other teachers who can empathize with and relate to the experiences these brave colleagues have shared.

Bernadette is a veteran tutor who joined the teacher support group in the middle of her first year of classroom teaching. She teaches math to middle and high school students. This is the first time she has ever participated in a support group.

"What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?"

The short answer to the first part of this question – *What is it like to teach with greater awareness of one's emotions?* – is that, according to Bernadette, she has not developed greater awareness of her emotions. Rather, she says, "[T]hey're a lot more important to me than they were at the beginning [of the teacher support group]." Having "attach[ed] a lot more significance to them," "[i]t adds another layer of complexity to [teaching] right now." For Bernadette, attending to and acting on emotions means "being a complete human being," and, though bringing that completeness into the classroom is "another piece of what I'm trying to juggle and learn how to do well" – hence the added "complexity" – she is convinced that "it will make [the students'] time with me a lot more valuable."

Bernadette has experienced "greater understanding" of her emotions in a number of ways:

- She can now "label" emotions more easily. "Giv[ing] something a label instead of just having a visceral feeling of it," she says, is helpful.
- She is better able to "see an outcome that I want from [a] situation." Labeling emotions helps Bernadette "to be a lot more proactive about some situations because being able to label it, being able to have that verb, it's been a lot easier for me to set a reasonable goal."

- She feels more able to consider the students' perspectives, which allows her "to understand what reality they're living in and what experience they're having so that I can respond in a way that's going to be more helpful."

The data from the study give an idea of what awareness and understanding of emotions look like for Bernadette both before the teacher group began and after it ended. Somewhat contrary to what Bernadette claims about labeling her emotions, she lists and ranks a variety of feelings in her Emotion Diary, as Table 1 demonstrates. The precision or variety of labels does not change markedly over the course of the diary; in fact, Table 1 suggests that Bernadette's emotional vocabulary is broad from the start. "Sadness" and "tired/depressed" are related terms, as are "anxiety," "worried/worry," "desperate," and "pressured"; "anger" and "aggravated"; and "confidence" and "satisfaction" – terms that appear in the diary randomly. The assumption is that the variety of terms reflects subtle differences in experience of which Bernadette is aware, just as she claims. It also appears that Bernadette is better able to access and label emotions when given time to ruminate than when she is put on the spot (as in the classroom or in an interview). Her reported growth in the ability to label and understand her emotions becomes more apparent in the interviews in a number of ways.

An indicator of this growth is the number of emotion words Bernadette applies to herself compared to those she applies to her students. In her first interview, Bernadette refers most frequently to others' feelings – a total of 27 references to emotions in her students or others. In contrast, Bernadette refers to her own feelings 16 times, or almost half as many times, in the same interview. This ratio is dramatically reversed in her

Table 1			
Emotions and Their Rankings in Bernadette's Emotion Diary			
Emotion	No. of instances	Mean score	Modal score
Anger	4	4	4
Relief	3	3.5	4
Anxiety	2	5	5
Joy	2	4	4
Worried/worry	2	4.5	N/A
Pressured	1	5	5
Cheerful/happy	1	5	5
Determined	1	5	5
Satisfaction	1	5	5
Fear	1	4	4
Confidence	1	4	4
Tired/depressed	1	4	4
Desperate	1	4	4
Aggravated	1	4	4
Warm connection	1	4	4
Sadness	1	3	3
Confusion	1	3	3

second interview, where she refers to others' emotions 13 times and to her own 24 times. In the third interview, the number of references to others' emotions remains static at 13 while the number of references to her own emotions rises to 32. It appears that, whatever the actual labels are, Bernadette becomes more willing and able to access her emotions on the spot over time.

The labels she uses in her interviews are also revealing. Some of the terms, while referring to emotions, nonetheless create a certain distance from the feelings themselves. There's a difference, for example, between "surprising" and "really surprised" in the following snippet from her first interview, in which Bernadette describes how an extremely difficult student, Lois[2], succeeds consistently in disrupting math class:

> …I did say to her [Lois] that the class was much more productive when she wasn't there. And I said it in hopes to challenge her to find a way to be a more productive leader in the class. But she took it really personally. Which is **surprising** because she says whatever comes to her mind so it's very easy to get into the very quick back-and-forth with her. And so I was **really surprised** when she took it very personally.

Even if the referenced emotion is the same, the meanings shift subtly between these two usages. In the first instance, the adjective "surprising" describes the *fact* that Lois took Bernadette's comment personally. It does not directly describe Bernadette. In fact, it could be viewed as commenting more on Lois than on Bernadette – Lois is surprising; Bernadette is merely observing Lois's unexpected reaction. "Surprised" does describe Bernadette, and its usage brings the experience closer to home. Whatever Lois did, Bernadette has a feeling, and that feeling, when acknowledged, can be reckoned with.

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[2] All teachers' and students' names have been changed to protect their identities.

This phenomenon of apparent distancing from actual emotional experience occurs often in Bernadette's interviews. Three of the emotion words she uses in the first interview describe what it was like to watch one of her students "explode" out of "frustration" (which was generated by Lois): "[I]t was really **scary** and **frustrating** and **sad** to watch this happen to this kid." Again, the difference is subtle, but using "scary," "frustrating," and "sad" to describe what it was like to *watch* a student lose control creates a buffer. It somehow circumscribes the emotional experience and attaches the feelings to the watching rather than to the one experiencing.

Another example from the first interview is interesting to consider for what is *not* acknowledged. The bulk of the first and second interviews addresses what it is like for Bernadette to teach Lois's math class. Because of Lois's rudeness, charisma, and apparent fear of "the dreaded math," as Bernadette puts it, this class is extremely difficult for Bernadette to control – unless Lois is absent or sent out of the room on an errand or for a detention, when students who are otherwise distracted by Lois and "loyal" to her can be productive. In the first interview, Bernadette talks about her desire "to protect the learning environment for the other students" from Lois. While "protect" in and of itself is not an emotion word, I draw attention to it because of the highly emotional context in which Bernadette used it. The previous stories set up Bernadette's undeniably negative feelings about Lois; the story that immediately preceded her use of the word "protect" was a disturbing story of how Zach, a classmate of Lois's, had been expelled from school because (as Bernadette told the story) Lois was "insensitive" and caused him to "explode."

And my feeling was that Zach really needed us in a way and he was going to make the most of what we had to offer but that we really couldn't provide him a safe learning environment as long as there was that sort of insensitivity to his frustration level. I think he's capable of learning how to manage that frustration, but as long as there were students who were going to push his buttons without even thinking about it, it wasn't going to be a good place for him.

The story connotes the intense feelings of antipathy Bernadette has for Lois and the deep sympathy and hope she had for Zach. When Bernadette goes on to describe her desire to "protect the learning environment" from Lois – and the countervailing desire of the "loyal" students to "protect" Lois – Bernadette compacts into a verb a lot of adjectives that might be extremely unsettling to delineate. "Protect," that is, implies "protective," a word whose synonyms include, according to *Roget's Thesaurus*, such warlike and survival-oriented terms as "defensive," "guarding," "shielding," and "self-preservative."

"Preservative love," or protectiveness, is a quality of maternal thinking identified by feminist philosopher Sara Ruddick (1989) that counts as one of "the metaphysical attitudes, cognitive capacities, and conceptions of virtue that arise from mothering" (p. 61). In the second interview, Bernadette actually associates her instinct to protect her class from Lois with "maternal feelings." "I hadn't thought about this before," she says,

but I do think that I have these really maternal feelings when I'm working with kids about wanting to help them to grow not just in terms of being able to do twenty different math problems but also being able to learn how to learn themselves and to become really capable people….[W]hen that happens, it is just the most joyous thing for me. So I do get a lot of satisfaction, and working with kids that are overcoming such huge issues is just incredible to me when I see them make a huge leap.

"Fostering growth" is another virtue of maternal thinking (Ruddick, 1989).

Unfortunately, Lois is not receptive to Bernadette's maternal efforts, and while "I guess my first reaction to Lois normally is maternal…I've also had to really struggle this year with my responsibility to the other students in the class. And that's been hard for me to do." Importantly, according to Ruddick (1989), "to identify a virtue is not to possess it but to identify a struggle" (p. 101) – in this case, a struggle with Bernadette's desire to help Lois, her intense frustration at being thwarted, and her felt need to somehow neutralize Lois's influence so the rest of the class can get some growing done.

The words "struggle" and "hard for me to do," like "protect," also imply emotions but, ultimately, mask them. Ruddick (1989) provides some emotion words that suggest how "struggle" and "hard" might have felt to Bernadette; these words accompany "mother-love," of which protectiveness and fostering growth are part: "hate, sorrow, impatience, resentment, and despair" as well as "love, joy, hope, and appreciation" (p. 68). Bernadette touches on some of these feelings in her data – sorrow, impatience (frustration, aggravation), desperation, love, joy, hope. The fact that all of these strong feelings can co-exist in one teacher (or mother) is neither alarming nor shameful; it is, rather, expected, given the seriousness of the task of "protecting" students and fostering their growth. "[T]hought-provoking ambivalence," Ruddick (1989) assures us, "is a hallmark of mothering" (p. 68) – and, Bernadette implies, of maternal teaching.

There are other suggestive words – words that both imply and mask emotion – in Bernadette's interviews. She often describes her experiences as "difficult," "tough," "hard," a "struggle." Experiences can also be "positive," "wonderful," "amazing," and "incredible." Students can be "disengaged," "creating havoc," and "unwilling"; they can "push buttons" and "avoid" learning as a means of "coping"; and Bernadette can have

"an awfully good time" and feel "scapegoated." The use of these words is not remarkable in and of themselves; emotionally suggestive words are used all the time in normal speech, and Ruddick's (1989) expansion on the strong, quasi-taboo emotions that can underlie these words helps to explain the reluctance to be specific. But the fairly consistent volume of these words and phrases across interviews – some 61 appearances in the first interview, 44 in the second, and 55 in the third – coupled with Bernadette's implied difficulty with labeling emotions points to the possibility that she often relies on the masking function of suggestive words to point to emotions without having to pin them down.

A final means of corroborating Bernadette's claims about her awareness and understanding of emotions is to consider the ways she talks about her emotions in her interviews. One approach to such corroboration is to attend to emotional signals, such as tears, that appear during her interviews. Another method of corroboration is to consider the ways in which direct questions about emotions are handled. Are direct answers avoided? Are emotion words conjured, or is emotion depicted in another way? When do emotion words emerge? Looking at Bernadette's interviews with these questions in mind reveals both how difficult and useful working with emotions can be for her.

All together, I asked 13 direct questions about emotions: two in the first interview, six in the second, and five in the third. Bernadette's responses to these questions seem to indicate the degree of access she has to her emotions at the moment. That is, for some questions, she defers offering any emotions while, for others, emotion words spill out immediately. My sense is that the difference depends on the work these

questions demand of her in the actual interview, work – or emotional labor – that can ease her toward the labeling, and consequent understanding, she finds so difficult.

This emotional labor can take different forms. In the first interview, which provides a baseline of sorts for Bernadette's relationship with her emotions, the work was more roundabout, relying, it seems, on more subconscious processes. Her response to my first direct question, for example, which asked about Bernadette's emotions when she told Lois that she reduced the class's productivity, was reasoned and described a purely rational process. "I think I had looked at it," she replied, "thought about the pattern, discussed it with probably colleagues, and I was thinking of it more as an observation rather than a personal attack or something like that. And what I wanted to do was to get her thinking about her role in the class and how she impacts other people." Bernadette follows up with the story about Zach, in which Lois frustrates him so mercilessly that he "explodes" and ultimately gets expelled from school. The story contains three emotion words for Bernadette – "scary," "frustrating," and "sad," all applied to watching Zach lose his temper, none describing her feelings for Lois – and six for her students.

Bernadette's answer, though fairly rational and emotionally distant, is nonetheless fraught with emotion. For instance, she implies that

- it is Lois's fault that Zach was expelled (and that two other students withdrew from school earlier in the year).
- Lois needs to take responsibility for her negative impact on people.
- Lois should be able to take the kind of emotional hits she delivers to others.

The underlying message seems to be that Bernadette is quite angry at Lois and feels she deserves to be punished. This would have been a direct answer to my direct question, but it was not the path Bernadette chose. Aside from the risk entailed in being honest about such unbecoming emotions (especially in a first interview), it is likely that the emotions of anger and aggression were simply not consciously accessible to Bernadette at the time. They came out unconsciously, infused in her story.

The second question I asked in the first interview was directly related to an emotional signal: tears. Bernadette had just told two stories of attempts by colleagues to help her with Lois. One attempt, which Bernadette says "wasn't very helpful," came from a colleague who insisted that "you can't let her walk all over you….[I]t's the relationship that's messed up." This colleague's recommendation was roundly rejected by Lois when Bernadette approached her with it. "It was really difficult to listen to this [colleague] go on for probably a half hour…telling me that the situation was bad without really having" any feasible suggestions for improving it, Bernadette says. Note the suggestive word – "really difficult" – that allowed Bernadette to avoid being specific about the irritation, even anger, she might have felt throughout this encounter. Note also the implication that Bernadette did nothing to stop or ward off this colleague despite the uselessness of her advice. The second attempt was by her vice principal, who suggested that Bernadette and Lois "keep track of the number of times she talked out and compare notes at the end" of class, another suggestion that didn't pan out because, in Bernadette's estimation, acting out in class is "helping [Lois] avoid this thing [math] she's really afraid of." It was here that I saw tears in Bernadette's eyes and asked her about them.

Bernadette's direct answer to my question "Why are you tearing up?" is rational:

she "feels badly" that her students are missing out on an opportunity to learn the math

they have been unable to master. She then goes on a little tangent, talking about the

number of disruptions and detentions that pepper a normal day at her school and how

"frustrated" she imagines the students are with that norm. She then reminds herself to

consider her emotions with "so sitting down with the Emotional Diary sheets, trying to

think, 'OK, what exactly am I feeling and how extreme is it and how much'" and begins

to share some feelings:

> [I]n class it's **frustrating**. Half the time I just don't know what to say. And [**sigh**]
> [5 second pause] [**sigh**] [4 second pause] at the same time, it's not like, the
> situation is, you know, there are parts of it that make me **sad** there are, but it's sort
> of like, the power struggle piece, I'm more **worried** than anything else. I'm
> **worried** about how this is going to work out for the other students. I'm **worried**
> about how this will impact my first year of teaching, and [5 second pause] but it's
> just so clear that the power struggle is really about avoiding things.

Bernadette then tells another story about Lois that takes her out of the emotional moment.

It is interesting that two sighs and 9 seconds of silence follow Bernadette's

confession that "[h]alf the time I just don't know what to say." This is another of those

suggestive phrases. Not knowing what to say in the middle of a class undoubtedly marks

some sort of emotion – panic, possibly, or confusion, or other feelings. But this statement

can also be taken to refer to the very moment Bernadette is living through as she says it.

She is emotional enough in the middle of this interview to shed tears, and she has

attempted to lift herself above the tears by explaining very rationally how disruptive

classes can be at her school, but she valiantly brings herself back to her feelings – and

doesn't really know what to say. She comes up with three different and fairly innocuous

emotion words – "frustrating," "sad," and "worried" – but cannot stay with them for very

long before veering into another story about Lois. In this way Bernadette enacts in the interview the response she seems to have to emotions in the classroom.

The emotional labor Bernadette does in the second interview is qualitatively different. In this interview, virtually all of the seven stories Bernadette tells revolve around a particular experience with Lois, but that emotional epicenter emerges only as a result of persistent questioning. The main characters in the central story are Omar and Lois. Lois is typically disrespectful to Bernadette at the beginning of this particular math class, hiding from her before entering the classroom, commenting on her good luck that Bernadette did not see her, and ultimately refusing to let Bernadette teach her. After the first five minutes of class, Bernadette sends Lois out of the room with a detention. In Lois's absence, Omar, who has special learning needs, is far behind in math, and learns only from one-on-one interaction, actually gains from listening to Bernadette work with another student on the Pythagorean Theorem, something he has not been able to do before.

Table 2 outlines the course of most of the second interview and shows how Bernadette works her way to an important realization at the end.

At first, Bernadette's focus is on Omar and how "thrilled" and "privileged" she feels to have participated in such an important learning moment for him. When asked what emotions this experience brought up in her, Bernadette takes an unexpected turn, immediately offering emotion words – "heartbroken," "grieved," "hope," and "sad" – that have nothing to do with the story she has just told. She backs up and contextualizes Omar's triumph by describing how it was that Lois was absent from the class that day. (Omar is productive only when Lois is absent.) When I ask about the emotions that

Table 2	
Bernadette's Second Interview	
Event	Description
Story #1	Omar does not get one-on-one attention in class
Story #2	Lois is absent one day but returns the next day and disrupts class
Story #3	Omar learns in a group
Question #1	What emotions did this experience with Omar bring up in you?
Answer #1 (immediate)	heartbroken, grieved, hope, sad
Story #4	The first five minutes of the class that Lois disrupts and in which Omar learns
Question #2	What were your emotions through these first five minutes?
Story #5a	Lois is rude to Bernadette
Story #6	Lois disrupts another of Bernadette's classes
Question #3	How did you feel about Lois's rudeness?
Answer #3a (immediate)	belittled, disrespected, frustration
Story #7	Bernadette meets Lois halfway (in another class)
Explanation	Bernadette's theory of why Lois is so difficult
Answer #3b (deferred)	doesn't feel good, hurtful
Question #4	So you feel hurt as well.
Answer #4	Not so much, because Lois is not a peer.
Question #5	Are your feelings for Lois different from your feelings for the other students?
Answer #5	maternal feelings, joyous, satisfaction
Question #6	Can you capture any more of the messy feeling in the moment of Lois's rudeness?
Answer #6	It took sitting down and talking to put a name – hurt – to the feeling.
Tangent	It's frustrating how long students can take to do things.
Realization	An alternative approach to Lois
Story #5b	What Bernadette would do if she could revisit the moment Lois hurt her

accompanied those difficult first five minutes, Bernadette does not provide any emotion words but instead tells two more stories. As it turns out, Story #5 is the emotional epicenter of the interview, but Bernadette attempts to steer away from it by sharing a story about Lois's behavior in a different class, behavior that Bernadette believes amounted to "daring me to give her what she's asking for or deserves or earning. And using that to disrupt the class." Rather than follow Bernadette down the rabbit hole of Lois's motivations, I ask Bernadette how it felt for her to hear Lois gloat over having hidden successfully from her in front of the entire class. Bernadette answers immediately – she felt "belittled," "disrespected," and "frustration." Story #7 is a quick reference to Bernadette's success at engaging Lois in an earlier class (a story she had told in the teacher support group), but it is embedded in Bernadette's thoughts about how difficult it is to work with Lois and why that might be. Finally, at the end of these ruminations, Bernadette mentions that "it doesn't feel good to have her walk in and talk to the rest of the class and specifically talk as if I'm not there, pretend that I'm not there." Bernadette calls this behavior "hurtful" and points out that this is the sort of thing students do to each other, not to teachers, a comment that indicates the degree of insubordination Bernadette feels from Lois.

Picking up on Bernadette's use of the word "hurtful," which is another example of a word that distances from the actual emotional experience (similar to "surprising," discussed above), I suggest point-blank that Bernadette might feel "hurt" by Lois. Bernadette's immediate response is to mitigate the word, saying, "It doesn't hurt as much because I'm not expecting her to be a peer" and mentions, yet again, her impulse to protect the other students in the class. In an attempt to get at the complexity of this

protective feeling, I ask if Bernadette has different feelings toward Lois – some in response to her actual behavior and others in response to the impact she has on the other students. This is where Bernadette mentions her maternal feelings, a response that perfectly captures this very complexity, as has been discussed. My final direct question asks Bernadette if she experiences this complexity in the moment or in retrospect. In answer, Bernadette admits that she has only just arrived at the word "hurt" to describe her response to Lois's behavior, a delayed acceptance of both the word and the emotion. She then recounts how she responded to Lois in class – "my response was simply to tell the students what they needed to do, including Lois" – and goes on a short tangent about how long it can take students to get their school materials out. She returns to her response to the hurt on her own (just as she did in the first interview – rational explanation followed by a quick tangent followed by a reminder to herself to focus on her feelings), wondering about the impact her ignoring Lois's hurtful behavior might have on the other students – that is, taking on the students' perspective to gain a sense of how they experience her. "I'm sure for some kids it's reassuring that I don't get all riled up," she says, "but maybe for other kids it's not reassuring maybe to not have somebody respond to that." She realizes, in other words, that there might be an alternative to letting Lois "walk all over" her, an alternative that opens up room for Bernadette's feelings in the classroom.

At the end of the interview, I ask Bernadette what, given this realization, she would do differently in the situation with Lois. She answers,

> I think it is helpful for me talking afterwards with other teachers or with you or with the teaching group to try to name some of these feelings cuz I don't automatically do that. I mean we talked about that at one of the group meetings that, it's not that I tell myself I can't have that feeling or something like that, but I don't necessarily act on it or acknowledge it in the moment to the people around

me. And I think, as I said, for some kids that could be a really reassuring thing. That I'm not going to have my feelings overrun my actions. But maybe there are also other people who find it very difficult to be around somebody who doesn't seem to react to [behavior] that's clearly meant to be hurtful.

This answer, like many others, defers the actual answer, but Bernadette addresses the request head-on when I ask again what she would do differently. "What I would love to do," she replies, "if I could go back and replay that moment and do an experiment to find out what would work best, now that I've got the word 'hurtful,' I would love to say, 'Ouch, that really hurt, Lois. I have feelings, too. Now would you please get your stuff together so we can get class started?'" – an answer whose simple directness belies the effort it must take for Bernadette to overcome her urge to bury her feelings and pretend she's fine when she is not.

In the last few minutes of the interview, Bernadette alludes to her discomfort with visualizing outcomes but demonstrates her developing ability to do so. In follow-up to her revision of the hurtful moment with Lois, I ask Bernadette what she thinks would have happened if she had said "Ouch!" to Lois. "You know, I don't know because I wasn't there," Bernadette demurs, but she continues, "But *hope*fully what would happen would be she'd start talking to me directly again and say, 'Oh I'm sorry, Mrs. Sparks.'"

Even before we had this interview, Bernadette was experimenting with acknowledging, labeling, and acting on her emotions. In an Emotion Diary entry from early February, Bernadette writes about a gentle confrontation with her partner in which she noticed a strong feeling she had, labeled it, and told him about it. It was gratifying, she wrote, "to have someone respond by changing their actions" – an experience that has been rare in her life. "It has been a long journey for me," she writes, "learning to resist

having projected blame, and learning how to set boundaries, and learning how to communicate without being drawn into a role." The teacher support group that very week helped, she claims. "At group on Thursday night, we talked for some time about different ways of thinking about feelings and what to do as a result of them. I do pay attention to my feelings, but I don't always share them if I don't know how to keep them separated from blaming or accusing someone. Marla said she just tells her kids what she is feeling and they respect that." Here we see the seed of change in Bernadette, who recognizes the difference between her familiar way of treating her emotions – keeping them to herself for fear of blaming or accusing – and a possible new way – telling how she feels with the expectation of respect – which she practiced in the safe company of her partner first and then, again, in her second interview.

Bernadette's third interview was different from the other two in that she was feeling emotional throughout, but it beautifully illustrates the emotional understanding she claims she has developed over the course of the teacher support group – the ability to label emotions, visualize outcomes and set goals, and take the students' perspective – as well as the work she has to do to gain access to that understanding.

She had an "interesting" day, she begins, another suggestive word that, given what follows, could be translated as "unnerving," "distressing," or even "horrible." The day began with the discovery that she had been "left out" of an important conversation with the 11th graders about how to "redesign" the school to serve them better and continued with ongoing angry encounters with students who were unhappy with the quarterly evaluations she had just given them. Although Bernadette technically tells seven stories in this interview, most are general and explanatory, told to exemplify

broader issues – what is wrong with the school, why students are unhappy, why the students did not learn a particular skill – rather than to explore specific emotional experiences. As the number of emotion words in this interview (46) attests, Bernadette does share a number of emotions, but, in keeping with her discouraged mood, they apply to her general dissatisfaction with her situation at her school, not to specific critical incidents.

In this interview, Bernadette resists delving into the specifics of her experience of walking into the morning meeting with the 11th graders despite my repeated attempts (three) to get her to do so. She talks a lot about the feelings this experience unleashed in her about her overall situation, though. She shares her suspicion that students conflate her with her class, which is "ridiculously hard" because of the standards her school insists she teach to students who are unprepared to learn them.

> I've been kind of frustrated feeling that my students really don't appreciate how hard I've worked, and instead they think I'm the one that's responsible for all of the difficulties they've had instead of looking at the big situation, instead of looking at their part in it too because it's very difficult for somebody to learn if they're walking in with their mind already shut.

This frustration could have been relieved, Bernadette feels, if she had been given the opportunity at the morning meeting to share what she had been thinking and talking about with the school administration for a while. It is important, Bernadette believes, for "the students [to] hear what I think needs to change and also hear some suggestions that I have for them and also for me to be able to hear what they're interested in." As it is, she feels "a little bit like a scapegoat," like "I'm in a place where there's a lot of responsibility and accountability and not much set up to make it effective."

Bernadette alternates in the interview between talking about her frustration at being squeezed between the administration, with its "ridiculously hard" curricular standards, and the students, many of whom "just kinda say, 'This is too hard, I'm gonna turn off now,'" and talking about her frustration at her students' anger over their grades. Toward the end of the interview, in the midst of another very general story about the 11th graders' anger at their grades and belief that they will be held back next year, Bernadette actually proposes a plan for herself – that is, envisions an outcome:

> So it would be easy for me to say to them, "Listen, we could redo all the standards you've done, you can show you're proficient in them, take on a few more and this last quarter will count for twice as much as any other quarter and besides they're not going to hold you back for being 10 to 15% behind in math and they also know that this math class is ridiculous, too. So nobody's going to hold you back on account of getting a 65 in my math class."

Bernadette undermines her own enthusiasm in the next sentence, though, revealing a fundamental sense of helplessness that we eventually return to: "But there's been this large conversation going on between them and four or five of them have decided, 'Well, it's just impossible for me to do anything now so I'm just going to be angry about it.'"

When I ask for a specific story depicting students' anger at her grades, she gives a very brief snapshot of one such interaction: As one student says, "'I am so angry, Miss Sparks. I would be on the honor roll except for your class and now I'm not even going to pass this year because I'm not passing your class. And, no, don't come near me.'" After a 50-second pause, during which Bernadette begins to cry, I ask Bernadette what she is experiencing; she shares that she feels "rejected" by this angry student but "hopeful" about the possible changes at her school (brought about, in part, as a result of the morning meeting she had missed that day). She then lapses into another long pause (24 seconds

long). I ask again how she is feeling, and, after a short (7-second) pause, she uses a number of expressive emotion words: "I feel **rejected** and **pushed away** by my students and I feel really both **frustrated** and **demoralized** by what I'm supposed to be able to do or what I'm supposed to be doing and trying to do it in that situation" – a tearful and very succinct answer that refers, once again, to the squeeze she feels between her students and the administration. Bernadette then considers the possibility that the students don't really mean what they say to her, as she knows "they do see me as a kind and caring person" – a moment in which she adopts the students' point of view. This leads to a concrete refinement of the plan she came up with earlier, the beginning steps toward an outcome she desires: "I do have the chance to have that sort of conversation with them between classes or when they come up and complain." But, in another telling statement, she adds, "I guess part of it is just maybe they're not thinking about how it feels to me to hear somebody say, 'No, you can't help me.'"

Bernadette's pattern here of playing with possibilities – rehearsing a speech she could give to her students, considering when she might give that speech – followed immediately by helpless resignation – alluding to the students' immutable commitment to their anger, bemoaning the students' insensitivity to her – seems to mimic the sense of helplessness she feels in the squeeze between her school's administration and the students. Her ongoing tears throughout this part of the interview attests to the strong emotions attached to her plight. Wondering about these rapid juxtapositions, I ask how it was that Bernadette "obeyed" the student's insistence that Bernadette not come near her, that Bernadette could not help her. "I didn't know what to say to that," Bernadette admits. Then, without any prompting, Bernadette generates an alternate scenario: "I guess maybe

what I should've said was, 'I know you don't feel like doing this now, [but] when you do, remember I'm still here for you.' But I didn't want to get into a power struggle with her….If she's going to say, 'Well, give me space, I can't hear you right now,' I'm not going to violate that." I suggest to Bernadette that she is "trapped" by her respect for the student and by her feeling that she is "unable to speak to the issue" at the source of the student's anger. Bernadette falls silent again and, when I ask her what is happening, she admits she is having trouble "hold[ing] the question and the feeling in my mind." She does attempt an answer to my question about "obeying" the student and, in the process, again looks at the situation from her students' point of view. Although she is committed to respecting students' wishes, she says, "maybe that's not what is needed when a student says to you, and when you're standing in the middle of your classroom, 'Stop, you can't help me.'" Struck by Bernadette's uncertainty, I blurt, "Do you have any rights?" and Bernadette answers, after blowing her nose, "I certainly should and maybe that's part of the problem is that my students are not as willing to grant me the same sort of rights I'm willing to grant them."

I point out her wording, that "*they* won't grant *me* the respect that I grant them," and suggest this situation is similar to the one we discussed at the end of the second interview about Lois. The pattern seems to be that a student hurts Bernadette and, rather than address the hurt and set limits on such behavior, Bernadette "respects" the student and lets the hurt – the disrespect – go unchecked. Underlying this pattern seems to be the expectation on Bernadette's part that the students will look out for her, that they will think about "how it feels to me" when they act out, that they will automatically treat her like a teacher rather than like a peer, that they will "grant" her the rights and respect she

deserves.[3] Here we see how a teacher's "use of self" and the Third can be intertwined. Contrary to the analyst or teacher who squelches the authority of the patient or student, thus also squelching the Third, Bernadette allows the students to override her, to "destroy" her, in Winnicott's (1971) terms. They turn her into a "bundle of projections," it seems, rather than use her as a source of "other-than-me substance" (Winnicott, 1971) that can contribute to the co-creation of a space in which problems can be solved. The experience of being "destroyed" and used in this way is, obviously, devastating to Bernadette.

The fact that this realization was basically the same as the one Bernadette came to at the end of her second interview implies that the pattern is an entrenched one that will take some time to unlearn. It appears, though, that Bernadette has developed some skills – namely, the ability to label her emotions, to visualize outcomes and set goals, to look at situations from different perspectives, and, importantly, to value the significance of her emotions – that will help her continue to do this emotional labor on her own.

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[3] It is important to note that Bernadette addressed students' dissatisfaction in class earlier in the year by listening to their complaints, voicing her own, and re-structuring her class. Why this option isn't occurring to her in this interview could be a function of her emotional state at the moment, but it could also reflect a level of discouragement and exhaustion that she didn't feel at the beginning of the year.

"What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?"

Bernadette's answer to this question addresses the parallels between the teacher support group and the skills she feels she needs to develop as a tutor-turned-teacher. As she puts it,

> I've always felt like I had a pretty good idea of what was going on with the students that I was tutoring cuz I've tutored for such a long time. But there definitely have been some times when I've felt completely unable to understand where my students are coming from in the classroom cuz it's such a large group and a lot of times it has more to do with an emotional response to something I'm doing than the actual subject matter…and I'm not reading it right. And so I'm responding in a way that's kind of blind to what they're seeing. Or feeling. That's blind to what they're feeling.

Attending the teacher support group gave her "the time and space…to be able to look at those situations and try to understand them better." She did this by "talk[ing] with other people [in the group]…and just thinking about other classroom situations and putting [herself] in the students' position on a regular basis." Bernadette also seems to be saying that the very experience of being a member of a group as a teacher – the parallel process we talked about a lot at group meetings – helped her to appreciate the value of "having that protected space to be able to talk about emotions….I mean, it's just become clear to me this year how much of my job is really managing and creating a space for students…as opposed to helping them to master a particular set of skills." This is a job for which she feels ill-equipped, she says. And, though the teacher support group represents for her the kind of "safe space" she would like to have in her classrooms, "I haven't quite figured out how to find the right balance" for students who have not volunteered for the group, as she did, but are instead "compelled to be there."

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Bernadette is consistent in her appreciation of the teacher support group in her final interview with me, but her opinion of the experience is reinforced by her references to the group in her second interview and her Emotion Diary. In her second interview, Bernadette mentions a conversation the group had at the fifth meeting in which she shared a technique for dealing with her feelings that she learned when she was rock climbing. When she notices a difficult feeling (like paralyzing fear on a rock face), she told us, she visualizes putting it into a velvet-lined box. The box is beautiful because she wants to "honor" the feeling. This visualization helps her remember the episode and the feeling so she can return to it later.

Interestingly, Bernadette asked me during the meeting if I thought her technique was hindering her ability to participate in the teacher support group, a question that implies Bernadette might have had her suspicions. I asked the group members what they thought. Natasha said that temporary compartmentalization probably isn't bad as long as Bernadette returns to the feelings and works through them. Marla said she often tells the class how she's feeling: "I'm beginning to feel a little angry and don't want to say or do anything I'll regret, so let's take a moment to write about this and then, once we've cooled down, we can talk about it together." As we have seen, this piece of advice made quite an impact on Bernadette, as she referred to it at a significant moment in her second interview and in the story she told about her partner in her Emotion Diary.

Bernadette refers to the group a few times in her Emotion Diary. She admits at the beginning of her story about her partner that it "didn't happen at school at all, but our group helped tremendously." She went into detail about another story that she "told the group about…last week." She refers later on in that story to a question that was raised the

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night before by "some of the other group members" and proceeds to answer it. In another diary entry, Bernadette sketches out a problem and mentions that "[m]aybe I'll be able to get feedback from the group tonight." While these references do not detail what it was actually like to develop greater awareness and understanding of her emotions in the teacher support group, they do attest to the group's importance to Bernadette's thinking about her teaching.

Conclusion

What Bernadette's data, taken all together, suggest is that, just as she claims in her final interview, she does indeed grow over the course of the teacher support group. From the baseline she provides in her first interview, when she appears reluctant to label emotions (the small number of emotion words applied to herself, the large number of suggestive words she uses, and the ways she avoids discussing or staying with emotions in her stories), is not keen to consider others' perspectives when they differ from her own (she welcomes visits from Lois's mother, who agrees with Bernadette's goals for the math class and abhors Lois's behavior in it, but finds her colleagues' suggestions for dealing with Lois "unhelpful"), and is uneven in her ability to visualize outcomes and set goals (she facilitates a discussion with her 11th graders about their complaints but decides to "ignore the other stuff going on [with Lois] and really define what it is she needs to do"), Bernadette dramatically changes the approach she takes to her emotions. She increases the number of emotion words she applies to herself in the last two interviews; she gives evidence of the heightened significance she attributes to emotions in the story she told in her Emotion Diary about sharing a strong feeling with her partner; she talks about the value of labeling emotions when we come up with the word "hurt" in the

second interview; she considers situations from her students' perspectives in the second and third interviews; and, in the final two interviews, she brainstorms steps she can take to achieve desired outcomes, spontaneously and without prompting in the last interview. The emotional labor she undertook to accomplish this progress relied on conscious and unconscious processes and is evident in the interviews, the Emotion Diary, and the support group itself. And, though the support group has ended, Bernadette expresses optimism that "with all the things that I am experimenting with, a lot of the things that I think of later are things that eventually manage to happen in the moment."

Natasha Rollins

Natasha is a veteran elementary school teacher of over 20 years. She has been a member of support groups before; this is her second year in a teacher support group. Both of the teacher support groups she has participated in have been facilitated by me.

"What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?"

The short answer to this question, says Natasha, is "painful." Her anger, she says, is her "Achilles heel," and "it makes me think about leaving teaching. And it makes me feel like I'm not a good teacher. And it makes me sad." Indeed, all but one of Natasha's Emotion Diary entries – 22 stories – focuses on feelings of anger; the one exception is a very short story about getting a good night's sleep, which improved her mood and, implicitly, helped her to *forestall* anger for a day.

Natasha objected to the initial Emotion Diary template, which asked teachers to list the emotions they felt through the week and rank them for their intensity. It was not until I changed the template and asked teachers to list the emotions they felt during one emotional incident per week that Natasha began listing and rating emotions. As Table 3

shows, her focus was consistent. Her emphasis on anger was so taken for granted that, when two of her Emotion Diary entries came in with ratings but no emotions, Natasha did not even have to look at the stories to assure me that "anger" was the missing emotion.

Table 3			
Emotions and Their Rankings in Natasha's Emotion Diary			
Emotion	No. of instances	Mean score	Modal score
Anger	4	3.3	4
Hurt	1	4	4
Betrayal	1	4	4

Despite her stated focus, which Table 3 demonstrates, the stories Natasha tells are replete with emotion words. At one time or another, and in some cases repeatedly, she uses the following words (and variations thereof) in her interviews and in her Emotion Diary entries: anxiety, angry, frustrated, uncomfortable, embarrassed, exasperated, horrible, self-doubt, sad, heaviness, fear, mad, upset, disgust, annoyed, impatient, calmer, lighter, tired, enjoy, appreciative, exhausted, discouraged, unnerved, very shaken, concerned, hurt, less sure, betrayed, tricked, confused, disappointed, love, caught, no sympathy, sympathetic, pity, resent, irritated, glad, at a loss, blaming, inadequacy, excited, furious, (not) cheerful, safe, berating, pissed, rejection, hope, guilty, surprises, chicken out, startled, proud, distance, worry, pressure, unsatisfied, sensitive, trapped, stewing, apologetic, impotent, happy, responsible, sorry, hopeless, out of control – and these are the words she uses to describe *herself*. There is an equally long list of words Natasha uses to describe the other people in her stories. The diversity of labels she uses, their even distribution throughout her data, and the readiness with which she uses the labels – she always answers direct questions about her emotions immediately and with

specific emotion words – confirms the claim she makes in her final interview that she came into the teacher support group already well aware of her emotions. The nature of her emotions, mostly on the negative side, as well as the broad range of stories she tells – stories about a particular girl who "pushes her buttons" (Jenny), a boy who refuses to do homework despite his capabilities (Evan), a boy who finds Morning Meeting "uneducational," boy-girl troubles, girl-girl troubles, boy-boy troubles, conflict with her colleagues, chaos in the classroom, curricular challenges, and more – attest to the "painful" nature of Natasha's daily experience of teaching.[4]

Table 4		
Natasha's Story-Reflection Pattern in Her Interviews		
RAP 1	RAP 2	RAP 3
Story #1	Story #1	Story #1
Story #2	Reflection	Reflection
Story #3	Story #1 (continued)	Story #2
Reflection	Reflection	Reflection
Story #4	Story #2	Story #2 (continued)
Reflection	Reflection	Reflection
Story #5	Story #3	Story #3
Reflection	Reflection	Reflection
Story #6	Story #2 (continued)	Story #4
Reflection	Reflection	Reflection
Story #7		
Story #8		
Reflection		

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[4] Of course, Natasha stated in her first interview that "my specific concern is anger," so it is not surprising that almost all of her data focus on that emotion and versions of it. Her stories, then, can be seen as over-representing her negative experiences. But this skew in the data must be interpreted, in light of Natasha's claim that teaching is fundamentally "painful" for her, as capturing the central tendency of Natasha's experience of teaching.

But Natasha's experience of teaching is not just emotional. Over and over again, Natasha displays a deeply reflective side. Through these reflections, Natasha both demonstrates and works out her understanding of the emotions she experiences during teaching. In her interviews, she quickly establishes a basic rhythm of story-reflection, story-reflection, as shown in Table 4. Her Emotion Diary reflects a similar pattern, but not so regular (which is understandable, given that these entries were written and hence more labor-intensive): reflections follow Stories #2, #3, #7, #12, #14, #15, #18, #20, and #23.

What do Natasha's reflections show? At times they sketch out general, philosophical dilemmas, as when she wonders how teachers should deal with students' emotional lives:

> I think kids' emotional lives are incredibly important and we should be dealing with it. On the other hand, we can't really deal with it well. So is it better to open it up that much? Or not to, just – I mean, most kids assume that the adults in their school lives don't have any part of their emotional life. And maybe that's not a bad thing unless they can do it well….On the other hand, when kids come in crying from recess…[long pause].

Or when Natasha considers another teacher's interpretation of chaos in the classroom as "understandable" because, "given any chance, [students] are gonna break loose [when] they don't feel so hemmed in":

> Well, then, it's impossible. I mean once you see it that way then there's a lot to that. People are self-regulated about things they care about. But I think kids so much don't care about what they're doing in school. And one reason they don't care is that we *tell* them what they *have* to be doing and it *doesn't* come from *them*. So to ask them to be invested in something that I want them to do and to be responsible and mature about it is probably unreasonable. But that's my mandate.

Or when Natasha agonizes over what to do with students who do not prepare for a big event, like the school's annual Science Fair: Should she help the student? Does doing

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the project for the student count as "help"? Is allowing one student to spend a half hour

on a project that other students spent 10 hours on fair? "What lesson am I teaching him

that he can spend a half an hour, you know, give up two recesses and still come up with

an OK project? That's a continuing question *all* the time."

Or, finally, when Natasha compares her response to recalcitrant students to the

response of a local acting company that puts on a play with all of the students in her

grade every year:

> I remember when my children were young and they didn't want to do something I
> wanted them to do. When I could make a game of the task or request, things went
> much more smoothly than if I got angry or reprimanded. But when I was tired or
> super annoyed I would begin thinking that I shouldn't always have to cajole them
> into doing what they "should" do. Sometimes they should just do it. I resented the
> feeling that they would only "behave" if I could make it fun. Sometimes people
> should just do the right thing. I wanted them to take some responsibility for their
> behavior, and not feel it was my job to create the perfect situation that would
> make them want to do the task. I get caught in this dilemma with my students
> also. The acting company folks are always able to make it fun (of course they
> come for only one hour a week!). I want to be able to have their way of lightening
> up, of reframing the student's behavior as their need for expression.…

Natasha also reflects on dilemmas she faces with individual students. In reflecting

on her experience with Evan, a boy who never does his homework, skips out on

Homework Club, and, despite countless offers of help, fails to do a project for the

Science Fair until the very last minute, she examines the two responses she tends to

vacillate between:

> The whole question of my anger at him for needing my help and not taking
> advantage of my help, where that generally leads me is finally to give up on him.
> I've tried, he doesn't want to, eventually he has to take responsibility for his own
> *life* and he's not *willing* to and I can't do anything about it. But it's a very angry
> writing him off. And I'd love to think there was someplace where I – it's almost
> as though I either have to blame him or me. It's either my fault that I haven't
> reached this child and that's my job, to reach a child and help them. And,
> therefore, if he's not being helped, I've failed. Or it's that he's unhelpable, and

that's *his* problem. And those seem like two bad choices!…And how can I live with that without feeling angry at myself? Or angry at him? And I don't want to give up on him. That doesn't seem like a good choice either….So [I'm] trying to find a place, an emotional place… where I can sit emotionally that feels safe for me, safe for the kid, and just an easier place to be with that.

With Jenny, another hot spot in the classroom who is endlessly needy, whiny, manipulative, and sometimes cruel – and who regularly pushes Natasha's buttons – Natasha admits,

I don't know how to help this kid. Her needs are far beyond anything that I can understand. Obviously I could help her by giving her lots of love and understanding…and just to feel for her pain without getting engaged. I'm not helping her by letting her hook me and engage me. But I haven't figured out how not to. I mean, again, she's dying for approval, attention….[But] she's wearing me down. And my reaction is not helping her and I feel badly for that.

In all of these examples, Natasha offers differing perspectives on her encounters in the classroom. She moves regularly between the students' perspectives and her own, acknowledging the validity of one then balancing it off with the legitimacy of the other. She stands somewhere in the middle as the "dilemma manager" whose job it is to desire change and to exercise the will to make that change (Lampert, 1985), messy as that process inevitably is. And, despite the relative paucity of emotion words in most of these examples, dilemmas are powerfully emotional. As Lampert (1985) puts it, a dilemma is "an argument between opposing tendencies within oneself in which neither side can come out the winner" (Lampert, 1985, p. 182). Navigating dilemmas, Lampert (1985) insists, is not a merely rational choice between alternatives. It requires improvisation and identity management – that is, "[f]iguring out who to be in the classroom…by holding conflicting parts of myself together" (p. 183). It is a highly personal response to tension whose end goal is not resolution but, rather, "a way to live with [problems], a temporary respite"

from the unnerving possibilities of "more serious, distracting discord" (p. 185). We can hear in Natasha's reflections the difficulty she has "living with" her classroom problems and her complicated, automatic responses to them.

But Natasha's reflection also takes her beyond dilemmas into the realm of possible action. In her second and third interviews and at the very end of her Emotion Diary, she reflects on options, or alternative ways she could behave given her emotional responses. In reflecting on her angry response to Evan, for example, she concedes that "I think it's OK to let him know *some* of that [anger]" since, after all, he has inconvenienced her by putting off his Science Fair project until the last minute. But she would prefer not to "berate him" as she helps him. "If I could take the anger out of it and just…state it more calmly and then make a choice, either do it [help him] and be gracious about it or don't do it [and] don't resent" him for choosing to fail. "I wish I could find a way to blame neither the student nor myself," Natasha writes in her Emotion Diary, "and just accept it as a difficult situation which I have not been able to break through" – an appropriate response, Lampert (1985) would claim, to knotty dilemmas.

Compared to her first interview, in which options never come up, and her second interview, where she reflects on behavioral options twice, Natasha explores options three times in her third interview – a progression that implies some development in Natasha's willingness to extend her understanding of her classroom emotions. Two of these reflective episodes relate to the story she tells of a pair of girls who fight over the same costume in the Shakespeare production they both act in. Natasha's response to the fight, which took place during the actual performance, indicates that she was in the throes of a classic dilemma:

I was beside my[self]. I was so angry. I was angry that it meant so much to them and had no idea what to do. And felt totally trapped like I had to arbitrate this [and] no matter which way I arbitrated it somebody was gonna be unhappy. And I have to do it on the spur of the moment and while the play is going on and so I mean it's a bad situation but my getting angry at them doesn't help.

Her solution to the dilemma was to choose a girl to wear the coveted blue costume, leaving the other girl to wear the pink costume. In her spontaneous reflection on this spur-of-the-moment solution, Natasha says,

You know, in retrospect what I wish I had done was just to say, "I know you both feel strongly about [wearing the blue costume] [but] I don't have any way of figuring this out right now." I could have said, "Neither of you wear it" or "You guys work it out" or "Let's flip a coin" and somehow been sympathetic to whoever didn't get [their way], rather than angry, and just apologetic that this situation came up. But I couldn't do that.

In an even more minimalist move, Natasha, acknowledging that she is "not responsible for that 'why'" – that is, why the blue costume was so important to both girls – muses, "Could I have just given her a hug and said I was sorry and that's it? Presumably I could have." Then, after a 19-second pause, she adds, "But I didn't."

Natasha tells another story about girls in her class. These four girls have as their ringleader Jenny, the student who pushes Natasha's buttons, a fact that Natasha admits complicates her responses to the girls' daily dramas. In her attempt to help the girls with a hurtful conflict, she calls them together to have "a talk, and I think I really felt like I could help them solve something. Which I didn't and I couldn't," partly, she admits, because she wants to enlighten the girls to the power Jenny has over them – and, "in some terrible way...I want to hurt her." In thinking about her approach, she considers the effectiveness of stepping back and "simply acknowledging, you know, 'It looks like you girls are hurting and have been hurting each other and hurting yourselves and I feel really

badly. And as your teacher it's getting in the way of your learning and you need to find some way to try to separate so you can do your work."

All of these examples in which Natasha explores her options involve the Third. Evan, of course, precludes the co-creation of the Third when he refuses to participate in class assignments, and Natasha does her part by "berat[ing]" and "resent[ing]" him for his reluctance. When Natasha takes responsibility for solving a conflict between the two girls over who is going to wear the blue costume for curtain call, she assumes the role of "the only valid witness" to the Third (Muller, 2007, p. 224), or the space in which the girls can live out a just solution to their problem. In the example of Jenny and her friends, Natasha considers "stepping back," describing the situation as she sees it, and inviting the girls to "find a way" to get their schoolwork done – in effect clearing the way for the Third to emerge. She collapses the "potential space" in these instances not out of malice but, I suspect, out of her own anxiety. It seems that, in these frustrating moments, Natasha stops being an object for her students' use and begins using the students to alleviate her own anxiety – but only succeeds in increasing her bad feelings.

Despite Natasha's claim in her final interview that the teacher support group did not aid her in the goal of changing her classroom behaviors, it does appear that the group work influenced the thinking she does about her dilemmas. As she mentioned in her final evaluation of the group and as these three reflective episodes indicate, she has gotten to the point where she is actually practicing "being a holding vessel" for students' emotions, "sit[ting] with" her emotions instead of acting on them, and "trying to let go of the need to change my students [and] think[ing] more of supporting them in their own quests" – a succinct starting definition for the "use of self" in the classroom. Rather than acting out

her own anger, in other words, Natasha considers how she might contain the students' emotions by labeling and accepting them; how she might separate her own reactions from the students', thereby avoiding co-optation of those emotions that makes the students' problems her own; and how to relieve herself of her felt responsibility to change people, focusing instead on reflecting the students' reality back to them in hopes of illuminating their own choices. Though Natasha bemoans her failure to enact any of these options in the classroom, her growing ease with generating them on her own points to the probability that her actions will someday follow her words.

"What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?"

For years, Natasha's particular interest has been anger in the classroom, an emotion that, she says, is "under-talked about," "one of the big elephants in the room when teachers talk and think about their classrooms." Anger has been "an *issue*" for her personally and professionally, and, before she even started the teacher support group, she had already worked extensively on it. "I think I've always been very aware," she says, and she understands her anger up to a point: "I understand *that* these kids are triggering me." But the work she hoped to accomplish in the group was "understanding better what triggers my anger and how to handle it in a way that doesn't hurt students" – that is, she hoped to "find a new way of responding." The teacher support group did not help her accomplish this goal, she says. "I'm not sure whether [the teacher support group is] the right arena," she says; "I really feel like the issues really are for myself and a therapist to work on." Just before the teacher support group ended, Natasha began individual therapy with just this goal in mind.

Although Natasha does not feel that she left the group any more aware of or insightful into her emotions, she did gain from the group. In her final evaluation, she notes that the support group reminded her to "look at my own reaction as a learner as a way to help me understand my students' reactions in class" – the parallel process we attended to in several of our group sessions. It also gave her "the idea of being a holding vessel for the emotions of students in the class," "the idea of trying to just sit with my anger, annoyance, anxiety, disappointment and see where that takes me, rather than to act on it," and the idea of "trying to let go of the need to change my students but think more of supporting them in their own quests." It is always nice, she says, to discover that one is not alone in one's experience. "[I]t's still nice to hear the fact that what seems like a very personal thing for me goes on for almost everybody. And I know that on one hand but like to be reminded of that." And Natasha enjoyed the group. "I never didn't want to come," she says. "I enjoyed coming, I enjoyed the people, I enjoyed meeting the people, I enjoyed our discussions even though I'm not sure that I can say that it helped me in any specific way." Given that Natasha was able to list in her final evaluation "ideas" and strategies she had gained from the group, this last statement probably refers to her sense that the group did not help her meet her ultimate goal of changing her behaviors in the classroom.

Natasha was also pleased to be reminded of the mistakes she no longer makes. She was, after all, the senior teacher in the group, and the role she took in group meetings reflected that status. As she put it, "It's easier for me to sit and listen to others and give them some sage advice than to be vulnerable myself. And since this [issue of anger] is pretty old for me, there wasn't that urgency? And other people seemed more urgent. So it

was easy for me." Here Natasha delineates four elements of her experience in the teacher support group – her experience and wisdom, her reluctance to be vulnerable, the lack of urgency she felt about her anger "issue," and her willingness to help others – that might have conspired to make the group experience "easy," and therefore not particularly helpful, for her. She also admits that she probably "would have gotten more out of it" if she had followed up on the conversations we had in group either by taking fuller advantage of the Emotion Diary or by doing "the work outside the group that is necessary for change" – but "I'm not sure I know quite what to do to facilitate that."

It seems that, in this respect, Natasha was doing "emotional labor" of the sort that Hochschild (1983) discusses: "labor [that] requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others – in this case, the sense of being cared for in a convivial and safe place" (p. 7). The "case" to which Hochschild (1983) refers is that of the flight attendant, but the case of Natasha in group carries exactly the same purpose – with the important addition of self-protection for Natasha.[5] In fact, Natasha experienced impatience and consternation frequently in this group. As she writes in her final evaluation, "Sometimes I felt that Betsy should have been more directed….I felt that we never really figured out how to structure the group in terms of whether we did a check-in, stayed on a focus area, rotated presenters or ??" Natasha revealed her frustration with my facilitation not through overt

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[5] By introducing personal motivations as an element in emotional labor, I'm straying from Hochschild's (1983) framework, which takes a social psychological view of interaction so as to do a Marxist analysis of it.

emotional gestures but through subtle efforts to get my job done: requesting that I

monitor check-ins more closely (at the second group meeting); asking me to get the group

back on track and deferring to me as the "expert" (in the fifth meeting); requesting a

check-in and admitting, when I asked about her request later, that she had been feeling

"anxious" (at the ninth session); and sharing, at the eleventh session, her recent decision

to sit back and play an uncharacteristically passive role in the group.

The eleventh session was a particularly important one in the life of the group, as it

was the first meeting at which I drew our attention to the group's process in the moment.

It also offers a glimpse into the possible nature of the emotional labor Natasha did to

mask her negative feelings about my leadership. The meeting began quite late, as we

were meeting in a new venue and had to move to the kitchen due to the nature of the

snacks some of the members brought. The gathering started with friendly chitchat then

moved to a discussion of some administrative issues at one of the schools represented in

the group. As I wrote in my journal, the topic of conversation remained for some time on

the school administration, "with no emotions in sight." A segment of the process

recording from this session is illuminating:

> Betsy: I'm going to take a chance here. There's this notion of "resistance," which
> means that people work against doing something. I've been feeling a little
> impatient and anxious about this discussion. It feels as though we might be
> resisting talking about emotions. I'm wondering how people are feeling about this
> discussion, their possible resistance, and wonder how our experience might help
> us understand resistance in our classrooms.

> Taylor: Well, I thank you for saying what I was thinking. I was feeling irritated
> that we were starting so late – actually, I started out feeling angry at myself for
> being late and worrying about my wife, who's waiting to get a flight out of [a
> nearby airport] – and didn't like moving into a new room and waiting for the
> quiche to warm up, etc. etc. I knew we were supposed to be talking about
> emotions and so was trying to steer Bernadette into how the situation at [her

school] was affecting her, and I was cognizant of what Anne had said about what a hard week she'd had and hoped to bring that into the discussion.

Betsy: So you were trying to help me out by indirectly influencing the direction of the conversation.

Taylor: Yes.

Betsy: Which brings up the question of the power differential and the risk a student can take in allying, or aligning, with the teacher. It's easier for peers like us to do it, perhaps harder for younger people.

Taylor: Yes, I'm thinking about the kids in my class who allied with me after about six weeks of subbing, who had invested in me, and then were like, "Hey, what happened?" when I was pulled out.

Betsy: They had to divest.

Taylor: Yeah.

Betsy: Maybe a little like Marla. I don't know if you divested during the conversation, but you were silent.

Marla: Yeah, I was just waiting patiently. It felt as though Anne and Bernadette needed to talk about this, and I believed the conversation would eventually go somewhere that would be useful to all of us.

Betsy: So there's the patient waiter. What about you, Natasha?

Natasha: I thought about saying what you said, but a few weeks ago I decided I didn't need to do that sort of thing. I realized I have no agenda for this group. I just like being able to talk to colleagues and can go wherever everybody else wants to go. I don't get why we don't have a check-in; letting it happen organically doesn't make any sense to me. But I don't really care what we talk about. If you, Betsy, want to talk about emotions because of your thesis or whatever, then you can make sure that happens. That's your job.

Betsy: I'm wondering, were there any feelings of hostility when you thought those things?

Natasha: No, I don't think so.

Betsy: I'm not trying to put you on the spot, and I trust that you'd be OK being honest about any hostility, but I am struck at how beautifully you embody a stance our students can take, too. "I don't care what we talk about." "I don't have any agenda for this group/class." "It's the teacher's job to make me talk, to make

anything happen here." You might not have felt any hostility, but it's not hard to imagine that someone else might have.

Taylor: I was definitely feeling irritated.

Betsy: Anne, what about you?

Anne: Well, I felt as though we were a little off track, but I didn't know what to do about it. I also was aware that I had sort of started us on that track in the first place by bringing up the meeting.

Betsy: So you were ambivalent about your role in the conversation, wanted to say something but didn't really know how. And Bernadette?

Bernadette: Well, I was really trying to work towards check-in. I didn't really want to talk about the [administration]. What's really important to me to talk about is my [conditions of probation].

Natasha: Would you have brought up your [conditions of probation] if we had done a check-in?

Bernadette: Yeah, I've been thinking about talking about it all day. It's been making it so difficult for me to concentrate; I've really lost my confidence as a teacher. [Bernadette's eyes fill with tears.]

Betsy: So that's the bull's eye. That's the thing you needed to talk about. We have someone here in our midst who is in great need. I'm struck by how effectively we as a group collaborated to avoid this need.

The group spent the remainder of the session focusing on Bernadette and her uncharacteristically free-flowing emotions about her teaching. The degree of intensity was unprecedented.

In the following session, I asked the teachers if they had any thoughts about the previous week's meeting. While she had a very good excuse (she was at school "fighting with" her computer), Natasha was a full 20 minutes late, arriving in the middle of Taylor's testimony. When I asked if she had any thoughts about last week, her response was that she had had a bad week, that she had felt like a "rotten" teacher, and that she thought our previous meeting had been very "powerful." Taylor said, "I heard the word

'rotten,' and I'm worried about it. Do you think your feeling about your teaching this week was related to the group meeting last week?" Natasha said she didn't think so, but there could be an unconscious relationship. Later she mentioned that she had been surprised at my interpretation of her comment about sitting back in group:

> Natasha: I was actually feeling pretty proud of myself. Usually I take over groups. And I've had that urge here but decided to resist it, to hold back and let things happen. And I do believe that it's Betsy's job to run the group and keep us on track. But I was surprised when you [Betsy] suggested I might have negative feelings.
>
> Betsy: And your interpretation is just as possible as mine. You had every right to feel proud for resisting the urge to take over. But maybe the urge to take over groups is a form of hostility –
>
> Natasha: That's too strong a word.
>
> Betsy: What word would be better?
>
> Natasha: Maybe "disappointment."
>
> Betsy: OK. Maybe your disappointment in other leaders, in me, for not doing what you want us to do leads you to want to do the job better. Maybe controlling *and* withdrawing are expressions of aggression or disappointment. And, Natasha, it is so fantastic that you can even allow for this possibility. It's brave of you and – who knows? – you may not be the only one who feels disappointed in me.

Natasha nodded thoughtfully and I let it rest there. No one picked it up, and I didn't ask directly.

Natasha's various responses to her disappointment in me – her initial attempts to "take over" the group, her efforts to prod *me* to take control of the group in a recognizable way, and her final decision not to care about the direction of the group – feel very much like Sutton's (2004) "emotional regulation" and Hochschild's (1983) emotional labor. Natasha had strong feelings but could not risk showing them directly; she might have lost my respect as well as her position in the group. And, of course,

displaying anger in the group would have felt inappropriate; it was not in the job

description of "support group participant." Emotional regulation was, understandably,

called for. In Hochschild's (1983) terms, Natasha had to "manage" her negative emotions

in order to mask them or to make them fit better into the context of the teacher support

group. The danger of this form of emotional labor, Hochschild (1983) warns, is that it can

lead to self-estrangement and alienation, depending on how essential denial is to creating

the proper external impression. In either case, the work of managing emotions takes

effort and, in both cases, the effort is essential if social interaction is to proceed smoothly.

Both Sutton's (2004) and Hochschild's (1983) versions of emotional labor

contrast with my definition of emotional labor as "working through" emotions. Of course,

it is not advisable to follow my definition of emotional labor in everyday social

exchange; the bedrock upon which social interaction rests would be unnervingly

disrupted. But it is appropriate to work through emotions in support groups or in

individual therapy. And, as it turns out, Natasha did this type of emotional labor in her

last two interviews.

As Natasha says in her final interview, "I've gotten more out of our individual

sessions than the group sessions." Indeed, Natasha's RAP interviews become more

therapy-like as time goes on. The best example of emotional labor arises in the second

interview, when Natasha tells the story of Evan, who resisted doing any work for the

school's Science Fair until the very last minute, when he spent two recesses throwing

together a project at school. "It's a cute idea," Natasha concedes, but "it's falling apart

[and] it doesn't really work too well." The key to this experience, for Natasha, is how

"furious" she felt at Evan for repeatedly refusing her help, for failing to work at home, for

lying about all of this, and for putting her in the untenable position of either feeling

complicit in his failure or taking responsibility for his success.

Early in the interview, Natasha sketches out the dilemma:

We have our Science Fair, and [Evan] says, "Yes yes yes, somebody's helping me at home." I follow up every day. I offer – well, first on the homework I offer, I have a Homework Club. Doesn't come to the Homework Club. I offer to help with the Science Fair. "I don't need any help." So we get to the day *of*, and there's no project. And I'm furious. And then there's the dilemma, part of me wants to have him fulfill the natural consequences, which are not to have a project. But I also feel badly. Here's a kid who has no support at home and a lot of other kids have the support and what lesson is it gonna teach him if he stands there all day miserable and feeling…worthless. So then I decide to help him but I resent it the whole time. So I don't help him in a very cheerful way. But he gets something done. And in fact at the Science Fair he's so proud and he's, it's just wonderful and his face is beaming and it feels like that had been the right choice.

As we have seen, Natasha reflects spontaneously throughout this interview on her

various emotional responses to Evan and the Science Fair situation. This reflection is its

own type of emotional labor, as it involves acknowledging feelings and examining their

relationships to actions and impulses. The nature of this interview shifts toward the

therapeutic when I pick up on an "aha" Natasha had that very morning: rather than swing

between extremes of blaming herself and blaming Evan for their difficulties, "I thought,

'There's gotta be something in between.'"

"I wonder," I ask, "if you wanted to spend some time trying to figure out what

that [in-between] might look like." Natasha's response is immediate: "I think it looks like

acknowledging it without the heat. You know. To continue to just say, 'I'm there when

you get to the point if you ever want to take advantage of that. But I realize that you may

not want to do that now?' and not feel angry at him for *not* doing it. Just, I can feel sad."

But, as if considering why she cannot *just* feel sad, Natasha adds,

But there is a Calvinistic part of me that also does get played in here. It's like, I mean, "You've got to take some responsibility for yourself and your future and your actions and, even as a nine-year-old, if you know you don't have that help at home, find it somewhere else. If somebody's offering it, take it." I struggle a little with feeling that maybe there should be some punishment involved for not taking responsibility.

What about natural consequences? I prod. Natasha admits, "It occurs to me and then I chicken out of it always at the last moment." By "chicken out," she means that she chooses the path that feels emotionally "easier," which is "to have him do it and feel *good*." Her objection to letting natural consequences run their course, she says, is that people "don't usually learn through shame."

Why would Evan's response to experiencing natural consequences necessarily be shame? I ask. After a nine-second pause, Natasha says, "Well it seems so self-evident that I don't even understand the question. What's another option?" I suggest two words she has used, "sadness" or "disappointment." "For him or for me?" Natasha asks – a telling question, one that suggests that Natasha might be merging with Evan on this matter. I backpedal and ask, "Are you saying that he would feel shame or you would feel shame?" "He would," Natasha clarifies. At this point, I offer an interpretation: "You're clearly trying to protect him *and* you. You're trying to protect him from what you *know* is gonna be a shameful experience for him, and you're lessening your anxiety by not letting him fall there. So I guess I'm pushing a little bit on, well, wait a minute, maybe there's another way of thinking about his experience."

After a 21-second pause, Natasha expands on her Calvinistic urges:

It's interesting. To think if he didn't – part of what I want him to do is "bang!" is hammer the shame into him. In a sense that's, even while I was helping him, I wanted him to realize, I wanted him to be ashamed that he had taken no responsibility, that he was taking advantage of things, that the project wouldn't be

as good as it could because he left it to the last moment. I'm invested in it. So could I let the natural consequences happen without hammering in the shame? [10-second pause] Hm! I don't know. And I guess there's part of me that wants him to care enough to feel ashamed? Because I could see a scenario where, "Well! Didn't do my project. Too bad!" and not be upset. And that would upset me!

Picking up on Natasha's crucial statement in the middle of this reflection – "I'm invested in it" – I wonder what it would be like for Natasha to "reformulate the investment.

Your investment is in supporting him maybe in being who he is and having him experience the natural consequences of being who he is, whatever those consequences might be. But is that educational for him? And could it be that it's your job to support him in noticing, all along the way, the choices he's making? No judgment. Just "Live with it; if you want to talk about it, I'm here" kinda thing. But it's your complicity that really, to me, seems like it's muddying the waters for you. And of course you're gonna get angry because this is about you; it's not about him.

This intervention is, of course, a striking departure from the original interview protocol, but it felt appropriate, given Natasha's courageous willingness to reflect and her obvious commitment to deepening her emotional understanding. The issue for Natasha, it seems, is separating herself from Evan, distancing herself from him enough to be able to notice and manage her own feelings without projecting them onto him, and then helping him to notice his feelings without blame or judgment – that is, allowing Evan to use her in the ways he is capable of. As Natasha notes in her final interview, talking about this "reformulation of her investment" (as I put it) does not amount to the behavioral change she hoped for at the beginning of the support group. But it is, as she writes in her evaluation of the group, something she gained from the group, and it does qualify as emotional labor. In fact, the work Natasha does in this interview mirrors her definition of the "in-between" place she wondered about that very morning: She acknowledges a lot of

difficult feelings in herself "without the heat" and begins to distinguish her feelings from Evan's without "feel[ing] angry at him." In the realm of emotional labor and personal change, this appears to be a very good beginning.

Conclusion

As the above analysis shows, developing emotional awareness and understanding and translating those skills into changed behavior are elusive achievements. There is no question that Natasha is exceptionally aware of her emotions and, through frequent reflection, which she initiates on her own, cultivates her understanding of her classroom experiences. But there is evidence in Natasha's interviews that she hasn't just learned about "the idea of being a holding vessel for the emotions of students in the class," "the idea of trying to just sit with my anger, annoyance, anxiety, disappointment and see where that takes me, rather than to act on it," and the idea of "trying to let go of the need to change my students but think more of supporting them in their own quests." She is clearly applying these ideas, by the end of this study, to classroom situations spontaneously. This, it seems to me, is what emotional labor is all about. How these "ideas" translate into future action is, of course, a crucial question. But her impressive ability to explore these ideas, to visualize new outcomes, combined with her relentless search for new opportunities to do so, imply that Natasha might be on her way to achieving her ultimate goal.

Taylor Waldren

Taylor recently changed careers (after 30 years in business) to teaching. He taught full-time last year and spent this year as a substitute teacher. For most of the duration of the teacher support group, he was a long-term substitute for a teacher who was out on

maternity leave. This was Taylor's second teacher support group (both groups were facilitated by me).

"What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?"

Taylor's answer to the first part of this question was about group dynamics and related directly to the teacher support group: "I think I'm more able to put myself into the situation of the students and into the students' emotion because we were able to recognize that group is group and that the dynamics of a group are the dynamics of a group and that our emotions within our support group were not different than the emotions that might be within the classroom." In short, for Taylor, "the support group is the classroom." Taylor is, of course, referring to the parallel process that we discussed in the teacher support group meetings, where we considered how our reactions in classrooms and in the support group itself might inform us about students' experiences.

Taylor's answer to the second part of this question has to do with his growing ability to reflect-*in*-action (Rodgers, 2002). He states that he thinks teaching with greater understanding of his emotions is "calmer. It makes for a calmer person in me to be able to sort of step back. Maybe it gives me more time, more of a reflection period…that occurs more quickly." As Rodgers (2002) points out, reflection-*on*-action is a skill that support groups can help to cultivate and that "becomes practice for reflection-*in*-action," which is the far more difficult ability to, as Taylor says, "step back" and pay attention "more quickly" to the multitude of forces at work in any given classroom moment. The point of any reflection, whether *on-* or *in*-action, is to enact experiments informed by sharpened awareness "that, once carried out, become the next experience and fodder for the next round of reflection" (Rodgers, 2002, p. 234).

There is evidence that Taylor's awareness of group dynamics and his ability to reflect-in-action both pre-dated and accompanied his participation in this teacher support group, though it is impossible to discern from these data how consciously he applied them. Interestingly, the stories that provide this evidence all reflect the very same theme, that of Taylor's allying with students against authority figures. The evidence appears in every interview as well as in two Emotion Diary entries.

In the first interview, Taylor tells of a request that was made of him that very day to cover for a science teacher at the school where Taylor was substitute teaching. In order to comply, Taylor had to give up his preparation period, a sacrifice that frustrated him, though he apparently felt he had no choice, as he considered himself "the low man on the totem pole" at that school. The task was to teach a class of seven seniors some "low-level science." "And they had virtually no interest in learning this particular science lesson let alone learn it from a sub," Taylor says. After showing a 10-minute film "of a very poor lecture," Taylor attempted to coax the students through "some packets of science material." "Finally," he says, "I gave up." He had noticed some bottle tops "sail[ing] through the air like little Frisbees," and he caught one and threw it back to a student. "And we ended up [for] the rest of the class with four or five bottle tops just flying around and [chuckling] enjoying each other's company. Felt pretty comfortable, actually!"

While there is no evidence of any conscious reflecting-in-action during this episode, the spontaneous act of flinging a bottle cap back to a student marks at least an unconscious grasp of the classroom situation. As Taylor puts it, "There wasn't much else I was going to be able to do except really irritate these people. It's almost like trying to

teach a pig how to sing. It's a waste of your time and it irritates the pig kind of thing."

Taylor was frustrated; the students were irritated; their common emotional experience

converged in Taylor's bottle cap fling: a communal expression of shared emotion.

Taylor's sense of the students' resistance – their collective dynamic – combined with his

own frustration at being asked to engage them during his only prep period resulted in a

move that released everyone in the room, Taylor included, from an onerous obligation.

And, for Taylor at least, it was "really relaxing."

A story in his second interview once again illustrates Taylor's classroom instincts.

He tells of a student, Nate, who can be disruptive in class and whom Taylor finds to be

"prickly." Taylor describes a visualization exercise he undertook with this class for five

days in which he asked students to choose "a person with whom they have great

difficulty" and "to write down those things that you would envision would make that

person feel really good." Taylor chose Nate for this exercise, "surround[ing] that student

with a grandfather and grandmother sitting on a couch and hugging him." The image is

complicated, he says, because

> he's so unhuggable? I don't mean physically unhuggable; I just mean mentally
> unhuggable. [And] in fact if you were tempted to do that and to sit with him on a
> couch? He would find a way of saying how "gay" that was or something like that.
> Almost as if he's not worthy of any of that. So it's almost as if you'd just have to
> grab him and hold until he stopped kicking. And know that that's good for him
> and that somehow – and good for you.

The image is informed by Taylor's identification with Nate. "To a certain extent," Taylor

says, "I see some of my youth in this young boy." While Taylor got attention by being a

stellar student, Nate gets attention by being difficult.

Taylor attended a meeting about this very student on the day of the second interview. The purpose of the meeting, Taylor discovered once he got there, was to allow teachers to rearrange their classrooms around Nate to minimize the amount of disruption he could cause. Much to his surprise, Taylor "found [him]self de*fend*ing the student." Because he knew that Nate had just begun taking medication, he suggested that the teachers wait and give the student a chance to settle down.

I ask, during the interview, whether Taylor drew any connection between the story of his surprising defense of Nate and the visualization exercise he had done with that student in mind. He had not. But Taylor had introduced the exercise to his students as a means of freeing up energy that is "tied up" by negative feelings and had encouraged students to "observe" what happens to them as a result of this energy release. "'Ohhh, yes. I didn't expect the grade that I got. I got an 'A' and didn't expect that 'A.' I got a gift in the mail or…I had my favorite food and I didn't expect to get that," he suggests as possibilities. "Those things [are important] to observe," he tells his students, "because that energy that you've been investing in that toxic relationship is now available to you." Subconsciously, the energy that Taylor had been investing in a negative relationship with Nate seems to have been freed up enough that he could defend his "prickly" student to other teachers. Taylor did not consciously perceive this effect, but he told these two stories – the one about the teacher meeting and the one about the visualization exercise – back-to-back. At some level, his empathic understanding of the student and his sense of group dynamics at the energetic level conspired to help him experience the impact of his exercise in the classroom and to tell these stories in a way that facilitated his own recognition of this impact.

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An example of Taylor's understanding of parallel process appears in one of his later Emotion Diary entries. He had returned to the school where he had just completed a long-term substitute teaching job under, for Taylor, insulting circumstances. There he encountered a "numbing assignment" and wondered if "this is what a student feels when transferred from one school to another." The intense emotion Taylor felt about having been prematurely released from the long-term sub assignment comes through in the next line: "The silence inside at unscreamed anger and now you must teach me." While the emotional comparison in this entry serves less to attune Taylor to the feelings of a particular student than to express his own feelings at being "transferred from one school to another" as a sub, it does indicate the new perspective Taylor claims he gained from participation in the teacher support group. It also serves as an interesting example of how Taylor expressed his emotion in his interviews, a subject I will take up in the next section.

Taylor returns to the theme of alliance against authority – a role he characterizes as "defense lawyer" and "public defender" – in his second-to-last Emotion Diary entry. In this entry he describes a two-day substituting job in which he taught science to seventh graders. He was warned by an aide ahead of time which students would be most problematic in each class. His attention was drawn in the most difficult class to Kendra, who "instigates." When he called on her, Kendra requested that Taylor call her "K." He did, and he attended closely to her at the expense of another needy student, Mike. Both days that Taylor subbed in this class, he had to send Mike to the office for rudeness and disruption, but "K" cooperated beautifully, even alluding to the alliance she and Taylor had forged when she told him, after class on the second day that Mike had to be sent out,

that "she couldn't control everyone." Taylor conveys his sense of the dynamic at work, and the role he played in it, when he writes, "I was keyed into 'K' by the aide who described her as an instigator. Clearly there is a power struggle between her and Mike which my attention tipped in her favor." What Taylor took away from this experience, he writes, is that "I am now looking for the key student more diligently."

Taylor tells a very similar story in his third interview and expands on the emotions underlying his impulse to "look for the key student," or "root for the underdog." In this story, Taylor was extremely irritated at the secretary who booked him and the teacher he was substituting for because no lesson plans had been left for him. On top of being forced to enter eighth grade math classrooms without a clue as to what the students were supposed to be doing, Taylor had been warned by a teacher about a student in one class who was "just *mean*, *mean*." Yet, Taylor recalls, that student, Carlos, was "the *only one*" with whom he was able to accomplish much work. Carlos was surprisingly quiet when Taylor called roll and was receptive to the help Taylor offered on the quiz he was instructed to administer to the class. Says Taylor, "I was very, very *pleased* with that."

How does Taylor explain his success with Carlos? "It may have been that challenge," Taylor says. "Whenever I'm told something by another teacher about a student I sort of think, 'Well, they haven't met *me* yet.'" Part of this challenge, for Taylor, involves "proving something to somebody" – presumably proving something about his own capabilities to the people who find the students difficult – but he realizes, as he talks about it, that the challenge also involves working against injustice on the student's behalf. As he puts it, "You go in and you sit down and say, 'Look, we've got to make a case here. And the jury is stacked. How we gonna do it?'" In a sense, Taylor and Carlos are in

similar positions: each is a kind of underdog to the layer of power above him, but each

has his own power to wield; each has an opportunity to prove something to somebody;

and each is a victim of injustice (in Taylor's view) at this particular school. It is likely, in

other words, that, consciously or unconsciously, Taylor's own emotional experience

influenced his understanding of Carlos's and made him willing to engage with a student

others had given up on.

Taylor's success also involves an awareness of group dynamics. In this story,

Taylor likens the classroom to a pack of dogs. "Dogs by their nature are pack animals and

they have a pack leader. If that pack leader isn't you, [the students are] gonna make it

them. So my sense [in this class] was 'Sit down, OK, present a sort of neutral pack leader

kind of stance.' And [Carlos] was the pack leader supposedly." By taking a "neutral pack

leader kind of stance" and helping Carlos with his math, Taylor allied himself with the

actual pack leader, thereby gaining authority by association. This, Taylor points out, is

exactly what he did with "K" as well. And the outcome was "very rewarding. I felt that I

had really accomplished something. And there was a mutual respect that I hadn't

expected."

As if considering the possibilities of extending to larger groups his successful

technique of allying with individuals, Taylor wonders a couple times in the third

interview why he didn't approach Carlos's entire class as a "challenge."

> Maybe if [the administration] had said to me at the very beginning of the day,
> "We're gonna give you the toughest classes we've got. And here is a bunch, here
> is a stack of stuff. If you want to send [the students] out, send them out in a
> heartbeat, any of the kids, because they're all very difficult kids. None of them
> [is] respectful, none of them [does] this, none of them [does] that." Maybe if that
> challenge had been thrown down at the beginning of the day for every single one

of those kids I would have been a different person. I'd have said, "Yeah, OK, well let's see what happens."

We see in the above examples evidence of Taylor's assumption, explicit in some cases, that his feelings inform him about his students' feelings. He joined with the "low-level science" students in his irritation with the lesson he was to deliver and played with them rather than "pull teeth." Identifying with "prickly" Nate in his great need for love and attention, Taylor unconsciously, it seems, transformed negative energy into positive energy, which he used to advocate for the student. In a poignant moment of empathy for uprooted students, Taylor expressed his own rage at feeling disowned by and disconnected from a school. And in two examples of successful alliance with "pack leaders," he reveals his sense of commonality with "underdogs" and the satisfaction he feels in the "mutual respect" they can experience that raises all of them up. We also see evidence of Taylor's sensitivity to group dynamics in these examples of alliance, as each shows both his awareness of how connecting with students can affect classrooms as well as his faith that his deliberate participation with students will influence how they experience learning.

The question of how consciously Taylor applied these perspectives must remain unanswered. But, from an enactivist standpoint, such inconclusiveness is neither problematic nor unexpected. True, if Taylor's stories had reflected more conscious reflection-*in*-action or more direct evidence of parallel process as the interviews went on, we could suspect that the teacher support group helped him to cultivate these awarenesses. But, if action is cognition, as enactivists claim, then Taylor's stories of what he *did* are all the evidence we need of his claims about what it is like to teach with greater

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awareness and understanding of his emotions (though not of the role the teacher support group played). Indeed, one might argue that, while reflection-*on*-action clearly involves a time lag of some sort as well as the use of language, the nature of reflection-*in*-action quickly becomes blurry. That is, how much time elapses before reflection moves from "*in*-action" to "*on*-action"? What exactly are the roles of language and thought when a teacher is "in action"? Do teachers' spontaneous moves in a classroom necessarily involve thought, or internalized language? Enactivists would claim that they do not, as "structural coupling," or finding a "fit" with other people in an interaction, can happen at a phenomenological level different from, and orthogonal to, that of language (Burris, 2005b) – that is, structural coupling happens at the level of action. To be fair, Taylor's answer to the question of how understanding emotions affects his teaching implies that having time to "step back" and reflect is important to him. But his stories indicate that time does not always play the role he assumes it does – that is, his reflecting seems to manifest in the actions he reports, and the actions themselves seem to be a means he uses of working out what he instinctively knows.

"What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?"

Taylor's answer to this question is related to his answers to the first question in that it exemplifies the types of awareness he feels he has developed as a teacher: awareness of his own emotions and how they can parallel others' emotions and awareness of group dynamics. In this teacher support group, he says,

> there were certain times that I was aware of my emotion and also aware that there was something else going on and that I wanted that something else to go on and to happen. And that there were moments when other members of the support group

were ready for something or seemed ready for something and so [I chose to] either facilitate or allow that process to go on and to happen.

Taylor muses on the ability of students to make the choice to stand back and let someone else have the class focus for a while – "I think it's pretty sophisticated to expect of students." But he himself values the caring give-and-take that he experienced in this group, "that sense of 'yes, we are a group and…this is how you grow' and that sense that everybody's getting it [the opportunity to grow]. Everybody's getting it here. [That sense] was really good."

Importantly, for Taylor the group was "safe." He states in his post-group evaluation that "the level of trust which I felt early on allowed me to feel much safer in expressing myself." Taylor likens the group to a "laboratory" where he could practice the skills of stepping back and observing before taking action:

It becomes a laboratory in a way for…allowing yourself that time of observation and process. It really is like a lab where nobody is keeping notes, if you will. It's not your classroom being observed by your administrator [who is]ostensibly gonna try to help you out but, you know, [the teacher support group] is just a safer place to be. And I was really pleased with the spectrum of emotion and the sense that everybody there could reveal their own inadequacies or sense of inadequacy, frustrations, and so on.

As Taylor states in his final interview, the teacher support group "becomes a safe environment. It's not [safe] when it starts out but it becomes a safe environment." Taylor's interviews offer some insight into how Taylor works his way toward feeling safe, how he uses the group and the study interviews as a "laboratory" for his own

growth. By looking closely at this process, we get yet another view of emotional labor in its many facets.

Taylor's Emotion Diaries demonstrate that Taylor is aware of his emotions. As Table 5 indicates, he experiences a range of feelings at varying degrees of intensity.

And, yet, Taylor uses relatively few emotion words in his interviews. He uses 20 emotion words to describe himself in his first interview, 19 in his second, and 16 in his third. Both the range of emotions captured and the words he uses to label them are narrow in scope: vulnerable (4), guilty, frustration (5), sensitive, at a loss, really good, uplifting, bored, enjoying (2), comfortable (4), relaxing, angry, irritated (9), not magnanimous/altruistic (2), generosity, insane, didn't bother me, bothered, fun, Schadenfreude[6], surprised (5), weak, pleased, hate, apologize, really up, rewarding, accomplished, mutual respect. Other words suggest emotions, but from a distance; in fact, many of these words connote stances, orientations in space, even roles: on the defensive (2), disadvantage, defensive posture, under pressure, sense of belonging, sense of place, sense of why I was doing what I was doing, contribution, fitting in, take revenge, the guard is not up, struggling, alert, and déjà vu. Taylor does mention specific roles he feels he plays as a teacher at different times: the roles of father figure, adult, grandparent, champion, policeman, defense lawyer, public defender, pack leader, and (specifically) grandfather. Each of these roles carries with it a set of stereotypical emotions that Taylor does not have to specify but definitely implies, as every role he mentions is recognizably charged in one way or another.

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[6] A German word meaning "taking pleasure in others' pain or misfortune."

Table 5			
Emotions and Their Rankings in Taylor's Emotion Diary			
Emotion	No. of instances	Mean score	Modal score
Frustration	6	4.2	4
Anger	3	3.3	4
Disappointment[7]	3	*	*
Irritation	2	4	4
Happiness	2	*	*
Sadness	2	3	3
Admonition/ Self-Admonition	2	3	3
Self-Value	1	4	4
Embarrassment	1	4	4
Satisfaction	1	4	4
Pleasure	1	4	4
Ennui	1	4	4
Wonder	1	4	4
Betrayal	1	3	3
Acceptance	1	3	3
Anxiety	1	2	2
Distrust	1	2	2

This technique of suggesting – even inducing – emotions rather than labeling them is best demonstrated by Taylor's use of dialogue in his interviews. More than any other emotional index, dialogue stands out as Taylor's expressive mode of preference. He uses dialogue to tell his stories, as when he describes a time when an administrator at a particular school "admonished" him to enforce the rule of one student in the bathroom at a time:

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[7] Asterisks appear under Mean Score and Modal Score for both "disappointment" and "happiness" because Taylor didn't rank all occurrences of these emotions, so data is missing. This lapse occurs in Marla's data, Table 6, as well.

[The administrator] said, "There are too many people using the restroom at the same time." And I think he was referring to the female students. And within ten minutes after that three of the female students left the room and went and I said, "Wait, wait" – I tried to stop them as they were on their way to the restroom….I went to the restroom and knocked on the door and there was nothing and then I knocked on the door again and I opened the door probably an inch and said, "You've got to come out of there. There's only one person allowed in the restroom."

Dialogue here brings the narrative alive and lends drama to it.

Taylor uses dialogue to mark his thought process, as when he notices that many students are turning in homework with correct answers on the odd-numbered math problems:

My first thought was "Well, the students must be working together. And they must be getting [the answers] from each other." And I thought, "Well, that's not a bad thing if they understand." But then what happens is you do give a test and some elements just don't, [the students] just don't understand some elements. And you wonder, "Oh wait a minute. How does that fit with the homework?"

(The answer, he discovers, is that the answers to the odd-numbered problems are in the back of the students' textbooks.) Taylor's use of dialogue here narrows our vision, focusing us on his own discovery process, starting, in this case, with trusting ignorance.

Taylor can also use dialogue for dramatic impact, such as when "one of the male students who had been particularly difficult throughout the year said [at a closing classroom ceremony], 'I want to thank you for being my father figure.'" Using the first-person pronoun brings the moment right into the room and invites the listener to feel the thrill that Taylor himself felt when he heard these words from his student.

Taylor uses dialogue to capture teaching moments, as when he recreates the work he did with Carlos on a math quiz Taylor was told to administer to Carlos's class:

You know something started it and I just sat down, I pulled up a chair and sat down at his desk with him and sort of worked through it. And I said, "This stuff's

easy. This first page is really easy. All it is is matching and the only thing I can tell ya is the top half is only to do with the top half, so you gotta match the ones that are on the half with these over here on the top half, that works and there are no extras so every single one of these is gonna match. So which one, I mean you can figure out pretty much which one of these is the heaviest weight, OK, and it says, ahhh, the weight of a car, OK, well so if you got 2,000 of something over here regardless of what it is, isn't that likely gonna be, especially since it's ah, you now what's the weight of a dog, 70 pounds? Pick easy obvious ones, OK, we've done that. They're done. So you've eliminated that, we're down to six matches, so we're good."

By launching into dialogue at this spot, Taylor conveys just how competent and confident he was with Carlos, feelings that he does not state explicitly but that come through strongly despite the fact that the details of what he and Carlos were working on are utterly obscure to his listener.

Taylor uses these techniques throughout his interviews, but by far the most common use he makes of dialogue is to convey emotions. There are 26 instances of emotion-expressing dialogue in his first interview, 41 in the second interview, and 14 in the third interview (there are even three instances in Taylor's Emotion Diary). In general, the emotions that these dialogues carry are negative ones, such as disappointment ("Wow. If this is the way school is –"), frustration ("Hohhh, five minutes left to go in the school day and I have to do this!"), shame ("Oh, I've committed some sort of crime"), sarcasm ("Oh, OK, well this is very helpful"), self-righteousness ("Hey! Look at the situation!"), humility ("OK, am I the last, low man on the totem pole here…"), distrust ("OK, here goes. Now he's gonna start using the medication as excuses"), anger ("You didn't grade a whole page of mine!"), intense disappointment and sadness ("I believed what I was doing was OK. You never said (or I never heard) otherwise until it was too late and decisions had been made"), disgust ("Just don't call me [to substitute teach] any

more"), and indignation ("Who's defending this kid?"). But some dialogues convey positive feelings: confidence ("Well they haven't met me yet"), respect ("Well, good, I've got somebody who has been around for a while; maybe he can handle the eighth grade"), devil-may-care enthusiasm ("No, let's take this plan, throw it out the window. This is what we're gonna do. We're gonna have a good time and we're gonna learn something at the same time"), and undeterred hope ("Hey, come on. You're better than this. We know each other enough to know that this is the way a young man acts"). Taylor's comfort with expressing emotion through dialogue implies that addressing emotion directly, through labels and sustained internal focus, might be difficult for him. This hypothesis seems to be confirmed in his second interview, where Taylor explores an extremely troubling emotion, the desire to "take revenge."

The very first thing Taylor says in his second interview is "I'm beginning to come to some sort of understanding of an element that sort of wants to take revenge by seeing students who don't do well in their grades? I don't know whether this is something that has universal application to other teachers? But it certainly…." This opening accomplishes at least two purposes: It unequivocally labels the emotion – "revenge" – at the same time that it captures Taylor's ambivalence about discussing it. His ambivalence is evident in the way he introduces the emotion: as an "element that…wants to take revenge." Technically, the "element" is the vengeful agent, not Taylor. And this "element" is itself ambivalent, as it only "sort of" desires revenge. In addition, Taylor's rising intonations, as denoted by the question marks in the transcript, suggest uncertainty. In the first instance – "…by seeing students who don't do well in their grades?" – the question mark seems to indicate an ellipsis, a refusal to fill in the blank – which might

sound something like "and wanting to punish them for being lazy" – and a hope that the listener will automatically understand Taylor's intent and neglect to ask him to fill in that blank. Though the structure of the next sentence is not in the interrogative form, the question mark does indeed suggest a query whose answer Taylor implies with "But it certainly." "But" serves to contradict "I don't know," and "certainly" seems to contradict the tentativeness implied by the rising intonation. All in all, the message that Taylor's introduction of a taboo emotion seems to send is that, though he is determinedly honest, he is not feeling very safe.

My immediate response to this introduction is to ask Taylor "What do you mean?" His answer contains all of the markers of ambivalence discussed above – with the important addition of dialogue:

> In other words, when I see that a particular student flunks a test, there's an element that says, "Serves ya right. You weren't paying attention in class, you fooled around, you distracted others, you distracted me." And I've begun trying to examine that. Because I would guess that there is an element of that in – when you get angry with a student? or irritated with a student? there are limited ways? that one has? to get rid of that? on the object? that is the student? rather than internalize it? I don't know where that comes from. I mean, obviously there's something that that triggers. It's as if to say, "Well? OK, you've made your bed. Lie in it. This is what you're doing." When, in reality, I should be looking for the encouragement in that. I'd say, "Well you did these first five perfect." And I think even to a certain extent, I would say, "Well you did these first five perfect, you must have been looking on somebody else's paper." You know. Which isn't very magnanimous.

Unlike the distancing techniques of attributing emotions to an impersonal "element" and expressing uncertainty through rising intonation, the dialogue in this excerpt brings us directly into the emotions Taylor is feeling. "Serves ya right." "You've made your bed. Lie in it." We can clearly hear the vengefulness in these words, but we can also hear other emotions: anger, disappointment, hopelessness, bitterness. At the

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same time that Taylor avoids attributing all of these emotions to himself, he conjures

them. He distances himself from his emotions but invites his listener right into the middle

of them. He seeks safety by creating a common experience while avoiding the distressing

vulnerability of owning his feelings alone.

Vulnerability, it turns out, is another difficult emotion for Taylor to discuss – and

it might correlate in some instances with his desire for revenge. Taylor's story about his

discovery that he had been assigning math problems whose answers were provided in the

textbook illustrates the work he sometimes has to do to reveal a difficult feeling. The

twists and turns Taylor takes are evident in the following transcript segment:

> BB: When your student said, "The answers are in the back of the book," did you have an emotional reaction to that?
>
> TW: I think my first reaction, my emotional reaction, would have been "Oops! Gotta cover this one." Like, "Oh! Of course I knew that." You know. And in a way my emotional reaction was so connected to the other students' reaction at that individual. And I thought, "Well, I should have known, I *should* have known that." That was my reaction. It was "I guess I should have known that." But it didn't – that fact alone didn't bother me. I think it was the reaction of the other students, that somehow they might have thought that this was something they could continue to get away with, or, or.
>
> BB: And so what was your reaction to their reaction?
>
> TW: To *their* reaction was [16 second pause] I don't think "betrayal" comes in, it's more *fun* than betrayal. You know it's almost like, "Got me on this one." You know. Sort of "Ah you put one over on me." Or something like that.
>
> BB: So there was, there wasn't really a negative reaction.
>
> TW: No! No.
>
> BB: So you di—so you felt like you had to cover yourself and pretend you knew.
>
> TW: Yeah.
>
> BB: What was *that* about?

TW: I don't know. Well, that's about needing to know everything. You know I am the teacher after all, right? So of course there's nothing that eludes me. I'm being facetious.

BB: I know! I know. But I'm glad you said that just for the tape's purposes. So knowing that you're the teacher who's supposed to know it all *and* something did elude you, was there any kind of response on that level? Even though you felt playful with the students ultimately. Was there anything on the level of – you know, to cover up implies there was some sort of a risk or some danger or something that you might have perceived that if you – or do you feel as though you revealed to them that you didn't know?

TW: Yeah I think that's something that I need to be looking at more is the vulnerability? and being vulnerable in front of the students? I've had moments when I've said, "You know I just got this one wrong." And I've tried to do that a little bit more often. The atmosphere has to be right for *me*, to do that. So on any given day? I could choose to say, "Yeah I got this one wrong." But on another day I could say, "I'm glad you picked that up. That's one I put out there." You know.

BB: So what's the atmosphere, when is the atmosphere right?

TW: When the kids aren't acting up. When they're settled. And I guess it would have to do with one or two students being present or not present? Because there is one student in [a couple of Taylor's classes] who, if that student is not present, it's a much more trusting atmosphere.

In her book *Learning from Experience: A Guidebook for Clinicians*, Marilyn

Charles (2004) explores how "lying" manifests in therapy. Drawing on Bion's work, she

shares one of his central concerns: "whether we are moving in the direction of evasion or

growth" (Charles, 2004, p. 62). It is often difficult to tell which direction we are facing,

she admits, because "we are inevitably caught by our ambivalence; the part of us that

would like to know more versus the part that is afraid of what we might encounter

beneath the veil" (p. 62). This ambivalence can appear in the form of lies, which are

conscious attempts to avoid the truth that we know (as opposed to falsity, which is sheer

ignorance of the truth). The work that Taylor is doing in this excerpt appears to be the

work of lying, that is, the work of avoiding a painful truth – in this case, the experience of vulnerability.[8]

Taylor might be closest to the truth in his initial answer to my question. His first emotional reaction, he tells me, is "'Oops! Gotta cover this one.' Like 'Oh! Of course I knew that.'" In other words, his first impulse is to lie. He does not want the students to know what is true. But what is the truth that the lie "covers"? One answer is that it covers Taylor's fallibility, the fact that he "should have known" about the answer key at the back of the textbook since he is "the teacher after all, right?" This is the vulnerability Taylor feels, to which he returns later. But another possible answer has to do with the students' reaction "that somehow they might have thought that this was something they could continue to get away with." I hope to get clarity on what Taylor means by this when I ask, "So what was your reaction to their reaction?" but his answer only muddies the waters. "'Got me on this one,'" he tells me. "'Ah you put one over on me'" – a reaction that is "more fun than betrayal." In fact, Taylor goes on to deny that he had had any negative reaction to the students – a possibility that his initial answer in the transcript blatantly contradicts. It is not until I suggest that "to cover up implies there was some sort of a risk or some danger or something that you might have perceived" that Taylor brings up vulnerability.

Taylor's feeling of vulnerability depends on the "atmosphere," which "has to be right for me" – and what is "right" for him depends on the students. So, depending on the

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[8] "Lying" is here used not as a moral judgment but as a label for an important type of emotional labor.

"atmosphere," or whether or not his "guard" is up, Taylor's actions when he is vulnerable can vacillate between honesty – "Yeah I got this one wrong" – and lying – "I'm glad you picked that one up. That's one I put out there," a lie that pretends Taylor made his mistake purposely. But there is another response path that Taylor reports he frequently takes, and that is the path of revenge.

The story Taylor tells when I ask him for a concrete example of this feeling of "punitiveness" is about a student named Naomi who "can be quite vicious?" and "can be very mean?" and "also talks a great deal in class, not necessarily on the subject." Naomi recently demanded, in front of the entire class, that Taylor re-grade a test he had just handed back to her.

> She said to me, "You didn't grade a whole page of mine!" And I actually realized that she had not done the entire test so I thought out of fairness to her I would only grade her on what she had done….So she said, "You didn't even grade a whole page of mine." And I said, "OK! Let me take a look." And I said, "This is probably not gonna do you any good" in the back of my head. And [I] sat down and she'd gotten one out of four on that page. And I said, "So I'm adding one to the number that you got correct, but I'm gonna divide by this new number, which is actually not gonna improve your grade." So there was the thought: "Yeah, you wanted to raise your hand and raise all sorts of cain about this particular fact that Mr. Waldren forgot to grade that page."

Taylor offers other examples of the feelings he had toward Naomi at this point (using, of course, dialogue): "Well, OK, you've raised the issue. Now you're gonna live with the consequence of this." "If you want to talk to me about something then find the time to talk to me about something. Don't raise the whole issue in the middle of a classroom." The fact that Taylor stopped class and looked over Naomi's paper in front of all the other students points to the power of his desire to punish her. He entertained the possibility that he was inspired by a desire to be a "champion" for "the people who get picked on by

her," as "they would have appreciated that in the class." But he thinks better of this interpretation, confessing that "it [the feeling of vengefulness] doesn't come from that. It comes from me and my sense of irritation" and, it seems, an expectation that, by humiliating Naomi in public (by showing her that his mistake made no difference to her grade), she would learn a lesson. As Taylor put it, "Well she was gonna kick me in the butt in front of the class so I was gonna kick her back."

As with the question of Taylor's reaction to his discovery of the answer key, there is some confusion in this story as to whether or not Taylor actually did make a mistake in grading Naomi's paper. The confusion arises, as with the previous example, after an acknowledgment on Taylor's part of a feeling of vulnerability (weakness) that Naomi's accusation raised in him.

BB: What do you hear her saying, the subtext?

TW: The subtext is, um, ahhh, that I'm not thorough, that I ah, I [4 second pause] I failed at grading her paper correctly or, or ah, weak.

BB: And adding that element of generosity? That you had purposely skipped over that page, right? When you were grading the paper.

TW: I hadn't.

BB: Oh so it wasn't –

TW: It was a miss.

BB: Oh! OK. All right. OK. Well –

TW: It was a miss. I had graded her paper, based upon what she had done, and I would've graded that too but I just, I was flipping very quickly and I –

BB: And you didn't see that she had not –

TW: Yep she had written "not finished" on here and I said, "You know, I'm not gonna penalize her because she put 'not finished' even though she probably could

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have finished had she dedicated herself to working on that for the entire period."
So generosity said, "I'm going to grade her on what she had done."

BB: So there was an element of generosity that you –

TW: Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah. She wasn't the only one. I had four students who didn't finish the test. "Well come on but finish" you know, they always wanna come up and finish the test at lunch or finish the test tomorrow or take it home and finish the test. "It's not a test you're gonna take home and finish, I'm sorry thank you very much. But I'll tell you what. I will grade you on what you've done."

It is difficult to make sense of the two very different tales Taylor tells here. On the

one hand, he claims that he had indeed made a mistake and overlooked one of the pages

of Naomi's test. On the other, he states that he had made a conscious decision – and

informed his students about it ahead of time – not to count problems students did not

have time to answer. Remarkably, Taylor here seems to vacillate between the two

positions he takes with students when he feels vulnerable. The "honest" position seems to

be that he did not make a mistake when he overlooked a page of Naomi's test. The

"lying" position seems to be that "it was a miss." Perhaps the truth matters less here than

does the vacillation, an indication that Taylor might not have been feeling safe in his

vulnerability – in his confession of weakness – with me at this moment in our interview.

Taylor seems to have escaped this discomfort by turning to another aspect of the

story, his decision to give Naomi's test back before he had finished going through the

exam problems with the class. As he explains it,

The kids were saying, "Are you going to give our tests back?" And I said, "Yes I am. But I'm going to go through one example from each of the sections first before I do that." And hers was the first paper where I went through and lo and behold she had gotten this particular one right, and so I said, "And because Naomi got it correct, I'm giving her her paper." Right?…So she got her paper back. And so…in a way of proving that if I gave you your paper you weren't gonna pay attention to what I was saying, flips through, yes this is part of the deal, flips

through, finds the page that I hadn't graded with her, and then interrupts the class with that.

In a reprise of this part of the story that, through dialogue, expresses the emotional content, Taylor says,

> Maybe I was responding out of a sense of "OK I'm gonna throw a little bone in your direction. Here's the way I'm gonna do it. OK? Naomi got that one absolutely correct, I've noticed that not a lot of – 'Ah! Naomi got it right!' So here you go. You get your – here's your reward. You know? You get your test back." And then "Thank you, no" sort of. You know. "It was really nice, thanks, ah, nah."

It seems that Taylor was feeling both generous and powerful here. What a surprise, then, to have this charitable gesture rejected! Naomi's unabashed (if predictable) disrespect for Taylor's curricular plan (to go over the problems with the entire class), her unexpected appropriation of Taylor's attention mid-class, and her activation in Taylor of a shameful sense of weakness seem to have triggered a desire for revenge in Taylor. In Winnicottian terms, Taylor seems here to have shifted his "use of self." The interaction with Naomi increased his emotional "strain," put him on the defensive, and made it difficult for him to "maintain the professional attitude" (Winnicott, 1965, p. 160) that would have permitted him to stay present to Naomi as an object for her use. The need to protect himself arose without Taylor's bidding and was enacted automatically, evidence of both the presence and power of emotions in his teaching.

Much to his surprise, though, his public act of humiliation appeased Naomi, as "things got calm" after that, Taylor says. Apparently, he says, Naomi "got what she needed," which was, I suggest, "an explanation" and, Taylor adds, "some additional attention." When I ask Taylor if he thought Naomi interpreted his act as vengeful, he replies, "I doubt it." Thinking of his professed desire to "kick her back," I say, "Even

though you felt it was vengeful." In a symmetrical return to his opening to our interview, Taylor says, "That's an element that I'm examining," but he backs away from the very emotion that this story is meant to illustrate with "yeah, vengeful seems so harsh." "Well," I offer, "kind of punitive." "Kind of punitive," Taylor allows. "Kind of, yeah, maybe. I'll let that go."

Conclusion

The stories Taylor tells and the emotions that he expresses through dialogue and through his vacillations between "lying" and truth-telling suggest that the safety Taylor requires, both in the classroom and in our interviews (and, possibly, in the teacher support group), is hard-won. As Charles (2004) points out, sitting with the truth, whether as a patient, a therapist, or a teacher, can be "too intolerable to bear" (p. 68). Being vulnerable in front of a class (and, possibly, in front of me) seems to be one of these realities for Taylor. Indeed, Real (1997) states in his book *I Don't Want to Talk about It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression*, "Men are not supposed to be vulnerable. Pain is something we are to rise above. He who has been brought down by it will most likely see himself as shameful and so, too, may his family and friends, even the mental health profession" (p. 22). Taylor captures this overwhelming danger when he reflects on a student who indirectly accused him of sexual harassment (when he opened the girls' bathroom door and told the three girls inside to come out). The feeling of vulnerability this episode raised in him "affected my sense of self-worth," he says, "that a teenage student could take a person who had been in business for 30 years and put them in that sort of vulnerable situation. And so it recalled a lot of whatever I failed at in life."

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Some feelings are life-threatening. Transforming dangerous emotions into action that is not retaliatory or obfuscating requires emotional labor of the sort Taylor embraces both on his own and in the safe context of the teacher support group. Indeed, Taylor takes the time in his first interview to express his belief in the importance of the emotional labor the teacher support group facilitates:

> It's that baggage. It's that situation where you don't know what the baggage is, but your reactions to that baggage can trigger a whole chain of things which may not necessarily be very good. Or you may be feeding in to whatever baggage that is. So the buttons are pushed, and then the reaction just further reinforces that issue. I think that this is something that I would like to have worked on before? And I wish there were a way for teachers to be trained in things like that? And that there would be some creative interaction seminars where you say, "OK, here's what's happening, OK, here's what I feel. OK. Here's the baggage that you're bringing to this situation." And how do you get rid of that? Or how do you subvert it and say, "We've got to deal with this situation that's occurring right now. We can't bring all of this baggage in because if we do then it's gonna be huge"? It's gonna be huge because the baggage is there. You can't expect the student to be the adult here, you know, and say, "OK, I'm gonna put this aside." So it's not an easy job from that standpoint.

Teaching is not an easy job from the standpoint of "being an adult," which, Taylor implies, means being able to see the truth and to take appropriate action (noting one's emotional "baggage" and "put[ting] [it] aside"). Taking the honest position entails its own type of emotional labor, as we have seen in the way Taylor approaches and avoids the truth in some of the stories he tells. But "lying" is a form of emotional labor, too, as Hochschild (1983) describes. In fact, "lying" might be seen as a synonym for Hochschild's (1983) version of emotional labor. Either way, Taylor has to work hard to manage the feelings of vulnerability that emerge during teaching. Fortunately, Taylor's intention is not to evade and avoid but, as he says in his final interview, to grow.

Marla Mead

Marla is a pre-service teacher whose practicum consisted of a year-long internship in one classroom. Her placement was with a colleague of Natasha's, so Marla and Natasha worked across the hall from each other for the duration of the teacher support group. This is the first such group in which Marla has participated.

"What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?"

It seems that Marla entered the teacher support group with a high degree of emotional awareness and understanding. As she states in her pre-group questionnaire, "My emotions as a teacher are already a topic of my daily reflections so why not do it officially with a group?" Still, she claims in her final interview that she developed greater awareness and greater understanding of her emotions in the teacher support group, and that has made teaching "more satisfying." Rather than feel "hopeless" at the end of a day, she says, she has

> strategies to reflect back and try and pick out "OK, what is that person really saying to me?" In that kind of way it makes you more hopeful and excited to experience more teaching experiences because you're better, you feel more prepared for those kinds of situations and more equipped to deal with them in a kind of healthy way.

According to her post-group evaluation, these strategies include "reflecting more and being able to quickly identify my core emotions as I'm interacting with students"; "try[ing] to put myself in other people's shoes more to better understand our interactions"; and "trying to have the students reflect on their own emotions and actions, informing them about how their presence is making me and others feel."

In fact, there is little evidence in Marla's interviews and Emotion Diary entries that her awareness and understanding of emotions changed all that significantly over the course of

the teacher support group. Her emotional vocabulary, as Table 6 demonstrates, is rich, and she is consistently and immediately able to access her emotions when asked during interviews. There is evidence of growth across time, but that growth appears to be more broadly developmental than specifically emotional – but her emotions and those of the people with whom she works play starring roles in the stories she tells.

Marla lays out the issues that will primarily occupy her throughout the teacher support group in her very first interview. Specifically, she returns to her relationship with a particular student, Sarah, throughout her data. She also exposes repeatedly the tension she feels with her Master Teacher, Diane. Her awareness of her emotions, her ability to reflect on them, and the influence that reflection has on her actions in the classroom are all evident even before the teacher support group has begun. Her sensitivity to group dynamics is also clear in her first interview and onward, as we will see.

The very first story Marla relates is about Sarah, "a special needs student who has kind of a rough home life and gives a lot of attitude when she's asked to do stuff." A few weeks into her student teaching, Marla was asked by her Master Teacher, Diane, to retrieve Sarah from the playground at recess so Sarah could do the homework she had not completed the night before. "The rule is," Marla explains to me, "if you don't do your homework, you have to stay in for recess and finish." So Marla went out to the playground.

> When I approached [Sarah] on the playground and I asked her about, "So, it looks like you didn't finish your homework. Did you?" and she said, "No" and started going on and on and on about all these excuses on why she didn't do it, I could tell she was getting angry. So I just told her, "This isn't up for debate. You need to follow me inside and complete your homework with the rest of the kids who are upstairs. Cuz it's not fair." And she just refused.

Table 6			
Emotions and Their Rankings in Marla's Emotion Diary			
Emotion	No. of instances	Mean score	Modal score
Frustration	6	4.2	4
Pride	5	3.6	4
Uncertainty	4	3	3
Happiness	3	3.7	4
Fear	3	4	N/A
Embarrassment	3	3	3
Annoyance	3	3.7	4
Disappointment	2	3	3
Sympathy	2	2.5	N/A
Excitement	2	4	4
Success	2	4	4
Surprise	2	3.5	N/A
Sadness	2	3.8	N/A
Discomfort	2	4	4
Nervousness	2	3.5	N/A
Anger	1	4	4
Anxiety	1	3	3
Betrayal	1	3	3
Conflicted	1	4	4
Helplessness	1	3	3
Relaxation	1	4	4
Playfulness	1	2	2
Motivation	1	4	4
Mental exhaustion	1	4	4
Touched	1	4	4
Relief	1	4	4
Amusement	1	4	4
Power	1	2	2
Targeted/bullied	1	3	3
Silliness	1	*	*
Confidence	1	*	*
Peaceful	1	3	3
Honored	1	4	4
Concern	1	4	4
Jealousy	1	2	2

At this point, Marla was feeling some emotion. "My initial reaction was just to…grab her," but that would have been inappropriate, of course. "I could tell that anger was building up inside of me? and I was kind of getting scared because I had never, I mean [there are] very few times that I have felt that way in a situation with a child." So Marla decided to walk away. "'All right, this is your decision,'" Marla told Sarah. "'There will be consequences, but I'm leaving the situation and I'm going to let you know your responsibilities.'"

Unbeknownst to Marla, Sarah decided to return to the classroom on her own and in fact got there before Marla did. The front office had seen Sarah enter the school and had called up to Diane in the classroom, wondering "why was the child trying to get in the school by herself?" When Marla found Sarah back in the classroom, she was surprised and explained the situation to Diane. Sarah, however, accused Marla of leaving her, which made Marla even more angry. Diane and Marla asked Sarah to write about what had happened in her "Reflection Book," a notebook for self-reflection that each student kept for him- or herself. Seeing that Marla was also angry, Diane "asked me if I would like to write down what happened and I did and I was just going going going so I think it was a good thing to get me settled down and just get out my thoughts."

We see how Marla's awareness of her emotions manifests in her actions in this segment of her story. Knowing that she is growing angry at Sarah – and feeling some healthy fear at that realization – Marla withdraws from the situation. She executes her responsibility by reminding Sarah of the homework rule, warning her of consequences, and leaving the decision to Sarah – an acknowledgment of personal boundaries as well as the limits of her own power over Sarah. When her anger escalates back in the classroom,

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Marla gratefully takes Diane's suggestion and uses her own Reflection Book to "settle down." "I think it gave me time to clear my thoughts about the situation and what actually happened. And it also gave me time to step away from it as well and not be surrounded by it. And then it also gave me more time to relax and try and see it from [Sarah's] point of view and try and have more understanding of that, which I think is good."

Marla's focused self-reflection paid off, as "that day ended really well," she says. Diane "tried to take over the situation a little bit" but "wasn't getting anywhere" with Sarah and told her, "'All right. Just sit. I'm not dealing with you, you'll just have to sit alone until you can talk with respect.'" Diane continued working with the class, with Marla "sitting at my desk doing writing and [Sarah] sitting at *her* desk doing nothing."

> And I told [Sarah] earlier outside that I would help her with her homework because she said she didn't understand the concepts. So I said, "I'm here to help you." And so she stormed over to me and threw down her homework on my desk and just looked at me and said, "I don't get it." And I said, "I can't help you when you're treating me like that. You have to, I have to see that you genuinely want me to help and…show respect and we can do it together." So she went and sat down again, and then five minutes later she came back and she said, "Can you help me with my homework? I don't understand this. I need your help da da da." So we worked on that together and she warmed up a little more to me and I was fine.

Sarah "warmed up" so much, in fact, that she began telling Marla about her home life. Marla had explained to Sarah that she and Diane enforced the homework rule not to "gang up on her" – which is how Marla intuited Sarah perceived the playground confrontation earlier in the day – but to help her.

> I told her, because I knew her background beforehand, I said, "If you say you're going to have a bad day in the morning because of things at home, you don't have to talk about it but you can just give me and Diane a really quick heads up, like 'I think I might have a hard day, you might have to help me throughout the day' and

check in." So she seemed to like that idea and she said something about how she couldn't sleep and that was affecting her. And I just let her talk cuz she was going and going and she said, she kept on dreaming about her grandmother and then she started crying and – apparently her grandmother died. So she started crying and I was comforting her….And then ended the conversation [by] reemphasizing that we're here to help her and there's a team and if she's gonna have a bad day just let us know. So it ended on a positive note, I thought.

Marla informed Diane later in the day of her conversation with Sarah. Diane had her own conversation with Sarah in which she reiterated Marla's message. "I think all in all it was a good thing," Marla says. "It just started out with this big 'boom!'"

Marla's emotions and perspective shifted notably over the course of this story. At first, she says, she saw Sarah "more as a number, maybe?" "At the beginning I was just like, you know, 'This is what we do.' I did listen to her? side? with her excuses of why she didn't do it, but I mean the bottom line was that she had to be up there doing it." Once she realized that Sarah had experienced her reminder about the homework rule as a "personal attack," though, Marla "started to treat her more as an individual person who has issues and that's why she couldn't conform to the stated rule." The feelings Marla was then able to have for Sarah included "sympathy," "compassion," and "wanting to make her *feel* better." Marla also began feeling "a little bit nervous" about the connection she was creating with Sarah. At the same time that she "want[ed] to make her *feel* better," Marla also knew she couldn't give Sarah any "special privileges," and she "didn't know really how to balance that." As the power differential decreased and intimacy increased, it seems, Marla's handle on interpersonal boundaries became less reliable to her, a theme that plagued her as time went on.

This story illustrates Marla's grasp of interpersonal dynamics. To show how the dynamics unfolded, I've divided this first story Marla tells into four sub-stories with varying numbers of events comprising them (see Table 7).

Table 7	
Sub-stories within One of Marla's Stories	
Sub-story #1: Marla gets angry at Sarah.	
	a. Diane tells Marla to go get Sarah.
	b. Sarah defies Marla (Sarah feels personally attacked).
	c. Marla sets boundaries within the interaction.
	d. Sarah decides to return to the classroom on her own.
	e. Sarah accuses Marla of abandoning her.
	f. Marla is angry at Sarah; both Sarah and Marla write in their Reflection Books (at Diane's suggestion).
Sub-story #2: Marla helps Sarah with her homework.	
	a. Diane and Sarah cannot get along in class.
	b. Marla offers to help Sarah with her homework.
	c. Sarah responds to Marla's offer of help with surliness.
	d. Marla sets boundaries within the interaction.
	e. Sarah accepts Marla's offer of help.
Sub-story #3: Marla and Sarah talk.	
	a. Marla explains her behavior on the playground.
	b. Marla and Sarah make a deal that Sarah will alert her teachers when she is having a bad day.
	c. Sarah confides in Marla about her home life.
Sub-story #4: Marla tells Diane about her conversation with Sarah and Diane reinforces Marla's message with Sarah.	

Of course, this story is striking because of the extremes Marla experiences with the same student in one day. But Marla's self-awareness, the emotional labor she does with the aid of her Reflection Book, and her ability to return to Sarah with compassion and understanding allow her, it seems, to provide Sarah with a "holding" environment (Winnicott, 1965) in which Sarah feels remarkably safe. Just as Winnicott (1965) suggests, the "facilitative environment" that Marla provides involves boundaries that

mark Marla as "other" from Sarah but also assures Sarah that, no matter how hard she

tries to "destroy" Marla (by defying her on the playground, by accusing her of

abandonment, and by being surly in class), Marla survives with her compassion intact.

Just as this type of facilitative environment is essential for infants, who are in the stage of

"absolute dependence," and toddlers, who are experimenting with "relative dependence,"

children moving "towards independence," like Sarah, require environments in which their

sometimes overwhelming emotions can be contained and metabolized cooperatively. As

Winnicott (1965) acknowledges, "[l]atency is the period of school playing a role as a

substitute for home" (p. 92). Marla seems to grasp this fact naturally and begins to teach

Sarah how this "substitute home" works.

This theme of the holding environment characterizes much of Marla's work as a

teacher. It also appears as a theme in her own development as a student teacher. In this

first story, Diane, Marla's Master Teacher, helps to create a facilitative environment for

Marla by noticing Marla's anger at Sarah and suggesting she write in her own Reflection

Book as a means of cooling down and gaining some perspective. Diane also endorses the

deal Marla strikes with Sarah about "checking in" on "hard days" and, through her own

talk with Sarah, strengthens the container in which Sarah can "go-on-being" (Winnicott,

1965). But, just as a "good-enough" parent can frustrate her children, so can Diane

frustrate Marla – and usually at the expense of the students.

Marla tells a story about such frustration at the end of the first interview.

Interestingly, she introduces this story with "[t]here's a little girl who is definitely playing

the divorced parents with me and Diane?" – an unintentional allusion to the parallel

between the holding environments of home and school. What the girl does is "try and

play me for what I don't really know. And that she knows that Diane would definitely

give her a 'no' [on]. So she goes to me for a 'yes.'" "It's not good," Marla says, "It

makes me feel awkward a lot and I know that Diane doesn't like it either." In this case,

the girl asked Marla if she could use the phone in the classroom. Marla, having seen "the

students use the phone all the time," consented.

> And so she goes to the phone and then Diane sees her using the phone and she's like "Why are you using the phone? You're not allowed to use the phone." And I was like, "Oh, I didn't know, I've seen lots of students use the phone before." And she's like, "Yeah, sometimes I let them but you can't do that."…And then I felt bad because I should have [investigated] why she was using the phone or [should have] been more on top of knowing that they couldn't.

The overriding feeling for Marla after this incident was "shame," not because she

actually believed she did something wrong – "I honestly didn't know" – but because of

what she suspected Diane felt about her and the situation. Marla's shame affects her

teaching, she says, in that she becomes "cautious" around Diane and "sort of standoffish

with the children." Complicating matters is the occasional comment from students that

they "like Marla better" or the sense that the students are "enjoying my presence more

than Diane's and I can feel that Diane doesn't like that." The two authority figures in the

classroom – one who is responsible for both the student teacher and the children and one

who is both "relatively dependent" on Diane and testing her independence with the

children – make for complex dynamics.

Marla tells two stories – one in her Emotion Diary and the other in her third

interview – that echo aspects of the story from her first interview but that have quite

different outcomes. In the first story of her Emotion Diary, Marla describes a sense of

"betrayal" she suffered at Diane's hands. An "overall good student with a good heart"

was making a habit of disrupting Marla's lessons by acting "silly." Marla asked him to leave the group or switch seats, and she talked with him one-on-one about his behavior, which eventually improved. "I felt like I had finally gotten through to him and that we had both reached a level of trust for each other," Marla writes. She informed Diane of her actions and the results, and Diane praised Marla for having done "the right thing." But the next day, Marla

> left early and then received an email from [Diane] saying she had a talk with this student about his behavior in group and that he "cried but looked as if he got the message." I felt confused as to why she would involve herself in the issue when I felt like I had things under control and gained his trust (esp. since the day before she said I did the right thing). I felt like I was then at risk of losing his trust and also sensed a distance from him the next day. I, therefore, felt betrayed by my Master Teacher.

The very intervention that had felt supportive with Sarah was a betrayal with this student. The important difference is that Diane spoke with Sarah to affirm her solidarity with Marla, while Diane's talk with this boy was both unnecessary, given that Marla had already handled the problem, and deeply distressing to the boy. It also amounts to co-optation of Marla's authority, which suggests that Diane might have her own feelings to deal with as a Master Teacher. As with her shame response, Marla reports that she became "more quiet and careful about dealing with behavior issues" and "refrained from bringing [them] up with my Master Teacher in fear that she would involve herself again." It could be said that Marla experienced Diane's interaction with the boy as an "impingement," a disturbance that required a "reaction" that Winnicott (1965) calls "merely a new degree and quality in the hiding of the central self" (p. 47). This "organization of a false self" is "the best defence," Winnicott (1965) claims (p. 47), but it comes with the strong negative emotions that naturally accompany failures in holding.

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In her third interview, Marla tells a story that sounds almost exactly like the one she told in her first interview three and a half months earlier about a student's request to use the classroom phone. In this story, Sarah asked Marla if she could put some food in the classroom refrigerator "and so I told her she could without thinking much about it because the fridge is really big and it's never full." But Diane intercepted Sarah and told her she could not use the refrigerator after all.

> And then Sarah started talking back. So then it turned into this really big issue about her talking back and my Master Teacher was mad at her and kind of yelling at her and I felt a little guilty for kind of starting this by telling her she could put her food in the fridge. And then my Master Teacher made a comment about how she's not sure if [Sarah] is ever gonna get out of this thing that she has, this talking back to people and not being accepting of authority and that kind of thing.

The feelings Marla reports after this incident are more differentiated than in the story she told about the phone, given the close relationship she has forged with Sarah over time. On the one hand, she feels "helpless" to aid Sarah in "being accepted as a successful student in this school system." While Marla feels "really confident that [Sarah] is a good person and that she's gonna grow up and be OK," she has very little confidence that others in the school see "that side of her." And Marla herself can be "disappointed" on Sarah's "down days when she's not wanting to cooperate," when "she was doing so well, we were getting things accomplished and it seemed like things were going good in her home life, and then it'll go down and I'll feel worried about her and disappointed." On the other hand, Marla feels "disappointed and angry" that people, including her Master Teacher, talk about Sarah as if she is "never gonna succeed." Marla recognizes the "endless cycle" Sarah can help enact with adults in her life – as when she opposes her guardian, suffers consequences, and becomes "even more defiant" – but she also

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recognizes that development of the sort Sarah is attempting under Marla's tutelage takes time, "that there's a gradual process probably for this kind of stuff and that it's fine." The holding environment Marla is providing for Sarah seems to be working for Sarah at some level, but the strain on Marla is prodigious, especially given the larger systems within which this dyad functions.

It is true that Sarah seems to have alienated – or at least bewildered – most of the adults in her life, including, according to Marla, her guardian and the elementary school music teacher. Interestingly, Marla's success at "holding" Sarah has not gone unnoticed: both of these people at separate times have pressured Marla to do with Sarah what they themselves cannot: in the case of the guardian, to get Sarah to do her homework, and, in the music teacher's case, to get Sarah to attend orchestra practice. When Marla finds herself caught between Sarah and the adults she opposes, she despairs, worrying that she is making Sarah "too dependent" by helping her with her homework but fearing what Sarah will do if left to her own devices, as when Marla finds Sarah "banging her wrist on the wall…'trying to hurt myself so I don't have to go to orchestra.'" The "panicky" state Marla attains when Sarah acts out in self-destructive ways might very well mirror the feelings Sarah herself is having, one of the blessings and perils of being in intimate relationship. Marla's response, which involves both self-censure for "failing" her student but also renewed commitment to helping her change for the good, carries a touch of grandiosity in it, similar, perhaps, to the omnipotence Sarah is having such difficulty relinquishing in the face of "frustrating" adults.

It is understandably difficult for Marla to perceive the dynamics at work when she is caught up in Sarah's dramas, but Marla is finely attuned to the dynamics between her

and Diane, primarily because, as Marla puts it, "I'm lucky in that, as a student teacher? I can kind of sit back a little bit more? so I notice these things?" (Of course, the power differential between Diane and Marla makes acute vigilance adaptive for Marla – as it does for Sarah.) When asked for more detail about her emotional responses during the refrigerator incident, Marla reluctantly reveals her anger at her Master Teacher:

> I mean pretty much immediately when I heard [Diane] behind me ask Sarah pretty abruptly, "Where are you going?" an alarm immediately went off in my head, like "Oh, *great*." I guess I had mixed feelings of being, of feeling guilty and also being angry? because Diane has told me in the past, I mean Diane has actually really encouraged me to just take on stuff like that myself.

> Marla tells another story of a similar incident that happened recently in which she

allowed a boy to go to the restroom to see how his costume looked before he went on stage to act in a school play. "As soon as I let him go [Diane] just looked at me and was like, 'Is that a smart idea?' And I was like, "Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't know.'" Rather than risk Diane's disapprobation again, Marla decided to ask Diane before giving students such permission in the future and told her so. "'No. No, no, no. That's not necessary. Don't ask me,'" was Diane's response. "'It just seems obvious to me but I guess it's not.'" For Marla, this is

> just really frustrating because I feel like a lot of times I'm made out to be, sometimes I look like the bad guy in the kids' eyes because I'll let them do something but then they'll get punished for it. And Diane never really lets them blame me. She always puts it on them. You know, "Why would you ask that in the first place?" that kind of thing. And I think…they're confused about it because honestly I feel like them sometimes. I cannot, I don't see things the same way as another person does so it's not obvious to me and I think they feel similar ways.

> It is not always clear to Marla what role she plays in the classroom system. When

she takes on adult status, she can feel undermined by her Master Teacher and quickly

"feel like them [the students] sometimes." When she attempts to codify her subordinate

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position, Diane will not let her. This role confusion makes sense given Marla's admittedly in-between state of student and authority figure and is undoubtedly familiar to many student teachers. But it is extremely uncomfortable for Marla.

The classroom situation is especially uncomfortable when Sarah is involved. As we have seen, by the time of her third interview, Marla has established a "tight bond" with Sarah. She has also practiced "caution" with Diane so as to reduce the number of impingements that call for self-protection. Yet Marla cannot prevent the "ugly cycle" between Sarah and Diane from happening over and over again. A guaranteed initiator of the cycle is Sarah's nearly chronic desire to get out of class.

> It's like a daily routine. She'll say, "My ankle hurts" and we don't let her usually leave now because it's so often. Diane will be like, "Oh, I'm sorry, you'll have to stay in for math. I'm not gonna explain this again and you're not going to get it if you leave." So then the situation becomes she's pouting during math class, doesn't learn it because she's pouting and starts slamming her pencil down on purpose and that just ticks off Diane and so they go at it again and she ends up having to write in her Reflection Book about having an attitude and talking back. It's like this ugly cycle and it's frustrating because I can see it happening and so it's just really frustrating because I know what the outcome is going to be and it happens.

At the same time that Marla has adopted Diane's policy of refusing to let Sarah go to the nurse, Marla also clearly wants to protect Sarah from the inevitable. Marla's thought when Sarah opens her mouth to ask to leave class is "Oh, gosh, you shouldn't – just don't ask to go to the nurse 50 billion times because you know what the response is, you're gonna get in trouble." Marla understands that someone needs to change and somehow recognizes that neither Sarah nor Diane will. This impasse greatly frustrates Marla.

And she herself does not perpetuate it. When I ask Marla how she would intervene in the "ugly cycle" if she could, she responds, "I definitely wouldn't get in a

head-to-head argument with [Sarah] cuz that doesn't go anywhere." One strategy that

both Marla and Diane have used is to be caring by offering to make Sarah a cup of tea.

"And that worked at first and now she's over that, she just wants to go and leave." A

second approach Marla uses is to point out the pattern to Sarah: "I try and make her see

that, I just tell her, 'You've been doing this lately, it makes me feel like you wanna just

get out of class. What's going on?" Sarah will then admit that "'I don't like this' or 'It's

boring' and other times she'll be like, 'No, no, my ankle really hurts.'" A third strategy is

to put off the visit to the nurse until it conflicts with another desire of Sarah's, like going

to recess. Sarah "usually just kind of '[sighs] Oh, OK' and drags on and mopes to her

desk. But she doesn't start banging things. She just kind of moseys on to her desk and

she'll do it." Another, less desirable strategy, is when Marla reacts unthinkingly out of

"anger towards [Sarah] and frustration and fear that I'm not going to be able to carry out

this mission of the lesson and annoyance" and "snaps" at Sarah. When this happens,

Sarah "won't be happy."

Marla's preferred approach to Sarah's bids for negative attention incorporates her

natural sense of group dynamics. "I would try and make [Sarah] feel as though, if she

leaves us, we'll be missing out on something and so will she." Marla did this one day

when Sarah asked to leave right before the class moved into the geography lesson. As

Marla explains, "I'm leading a unit in geography and I've tried to make it a democratic

process where the kids have a lot of control as to what we learn that day and what kind of

projects we're gonna do." So, on this particular day,

> As soon as they got back from lunch [Sarah] came up to me and she said her head
> hurt and that she wanted to go to the nurse and I said to her, "Oh, well, we're
> gonna do geography, so you don't think you can just stick it out and hang

around?" And she was like, "Oh, we're doing geography? OK, never mind." And she just sat back down.

A final strategy Marla uses to distract Sarah from her desire to leave class, then, is to "give [students] some kind of ownership of their curriculum," an approach that requires astute awareness of how students interact with each other, with their teacher, with academic content, and with activities – group dynamics at its most complex. It also allows for the emergence of the Third, the "potential space" in which teacher and students can be creative together.

Marla is firm in her belief that the social curriculum is more important than the academic curriculum for elementary school students. "Those kinds of emotional and social qualities are always going to be around us no matter what context we're in, if we're in school or not. Whereas, you know, learning what the square root of whatever is just doesn't transfer over to many different contexts." While Marla is clearly alert to the dynamics in which her Master Teacher is involved and pays close attention to the dynamics swirling around Sarah, she is often perplexed by the power of children's private lives and finds herself at a loss as to what to do with those emotions in the classroom.

> As a teacher I feel confused as to how far you can get into those kind of outside classroom matters. Especially because it does affect [students'] behavior, like "OK, well, she's being grouchy because she's in a fight with So-and-So." But should I, you know. It's hard to get small children to push those kind of feelings aside and focus on, you know, "You have to be a responsible student, get your work in on time and" you know. They just carry everything with them. It is really amazing, I love it a lot of times because they're so open with everything. But then it gets in the way of getting work done sometimes. So those kind of things just really leave me in another feeling of helplessness and confusion because it's such a big thing and I guess there's not really one way to address it and just get it over with. It's ["the whole social dynamic between your students and their relationships inside and out of the classroom"] gonna be a gradual type thing, I think.

Marla calls "the whole social dynamic" a "big cobweb" and confesses that working within it has been "one of the biggest challenges that I've learned about [as] a student teacher." I suggest that there are "horizontal tensions" that she has to navigate as a teacher, which are the tensions among the students, as well as "vertical tensions" between the various "layers of the system." These vertical tensions include the curricular mandates that teachers must enact with often reluctant or even oppositional students. "Yeah!" Marla says. "That's exactly it. Cuz you're on such a time schedule. 'OK! Everyone has to get the concept of partial product multiplication by the time your special hits at 10:30.'" Time, it turns out, is particularly bothersome to Marla. She shares her frustration when students interrupt a lesson to remind her that it is time to go to a "special." "That really gets me," Marla says. On the one hand, she feels "disrespected," as though the students are "not taking me seriously." On the other hand, "it's kind of sad," she says, because students have no choice but to "view everything as just ongoing motion. It's not really about the content….It's about time and 'Oh, you have to move on to the next thing' and then the next thing." There are times when Marla can flow with the students' perpetual motion; those times are when "I'm feeling more confident and relaxed." But, when she's feeling "a little thrown off balance" and her internal self-critique makes her "more nervous and anxious," the students' eagerness to "move on to the next thing" can cause her to "snap."

This "snap" at times takes on the flavor of punitiveness. When students raise their hands and say, for example, "Oh, it's music time! It's music time!" Marla can feel herself "speeding up" and getting

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kind of defensive? And sort of wanting those who are saying that to me to have some kind of consequence? I think? And so I'll say something like "Well, you know, no one's going to music until I see that they have this problem down on their paper." And then they're like "What?!?" And then they'll do it and I guess in a way I feel like "OK, I still have something over them!" Which is probably not, well, it's just an honest [description]. That's how I feel sometimes when that happens, in the heat of the moment.

Horizontal and vertical tensions abound in classrooms. Teachers sometimes try to collapse the boundaries that help to create these tensions, as Marla does in her geography unit or when she mediates between two feuding friends, and teachers sometimes fight to maintain them. Marla's experience of teaching seems to be enriched by her awareness and understanding of her emotions and those of others – by her alertness to interpersonal dynamics, including the benefits of good-enough holding and the frustrations of holding failures – but she is still caught in the "cobweb," for better or for worse, that all teachers – and students – must manage.

"What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?"

The teacher support group helped Marla develop her awareness and understanding of her emotions, she says. Despite the temptation to make perfunctory entries in her Emotion Diary, she admits that writing about her feelings regularly "really did help." "Even though [thinking about feelings in teaching] seems so basic, we don't do that. It gets covered up by a lot of stuff." The teacher support group in general "helped me to brush off all the stuff on top of those base feelings" and allowed her to "leave feeling as though I was getting somewhere with all this thinking."

Marla was usually silent in the teacher support groups. In her final interview, she refers to the "outsider" stance she often took in the group (similar, it seems, to the stance

she felt "lucky" to take as a student teacher in the classroom) that allowed her to watch the group's dynamics unfold. She enjoyed watching the teachers "play off of each other and…when I would hear them talk I could be on the outside and be able to recognize their emotions faster than I could if that were me actually telling the story. So that really helped." Put another way, she enjoyed watching the group members "work their way towards the core emotions behind" their detailed stories. Marla's astute and intuitive observations sometimes put her ahead of the rest of us; she often knew before anyone else did when a group member was upset. For her, "it was nice to have a place to talk about emotions because people don't do it in the lunchroom or wherever."

Every now and then, I would ask Marla for her perspective , and she willingly contributed. At the group's last session, Marla mentioned that this "cold-calling" helped her. "I could think all day" without speaking, she told us, so she welcomed occasional invitations to put those thoughts into words. Bernadette, in particular, appreciated Marla's contributions; as we have seen, Bernadette referred often to an approach to students that Marla shared early on in the group.

In her final interview, though, Marla admits that joining the teacher support group was "at first a bit scary because I didn't know anybody and I'd never been a member of this kind of group before. And I felt a little questionable about being there because I was young and wasn't really a teacher and wasn't sure how other people would think about that." With time, however, "as the group bonded more and formed a unit it felt like I was part of a team who was trying to figure out kind of like a big secret." Contrary to Natasha's concern that participation in the teacher support group might have made Marla regret having chosen teaching as a career, Marla writes in her post-group evaluation, "I

usually always walked away feeling inspired in some way or another and feeling proud of being a teacher."

Marla's position in the teacher support group was peculiarly charged, actually. At the group's organizational meeting in December, we discovered that Marla's Master Teacher, Diane, was connected in some surprising ways to four of the five participating teachers (including Marla). I often wondered how Diane's implicit presence affected the group and how it affected Marla's comfort with sharing her feelings in particular. Interestingly, at the second teacher support group meeting, Marla mentioned how difficult it was to teach with another "authority figure" in the classroom and how "great" she felt teaching when her Master Teacher was absent. The group chose to focus on Marla's experience and her question, "How can I carry this confident feeling over into next week, when my Master Teacher is back?" The conversation seemed to help Marla; at the very least, it might have served to break the ice that could have formed over Diane's tacit existence in the group.

It appears that the teacher support group might have provided a reliable "holding environment" for Marla as she struggled to develop within the more capricious (and, perhaps, realistic) context of her placement classroom. Natasha, who worked across the hall from Marla, might have served as a support group extension for Marla. As Marla mentions in her final interview, "It was cool to have Natasha at school with me cuz we would sometimes say things to each other like 'Man, my emotions are really heated today!'" Somehow, the group became "a safe environment" for Marla, and the group participants became, for her, "a new set of friends who share the same concerns about education as I do."

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Conclusion

It is interesting how students – and children – can sometimes have the clearest view of what is going on around them. Marla, as a student teacher, absorbed much about her students, her Master Teacher, and her fellow teacher support group members by sitting back and watching them. And she experienced interpersonal dynamics from the inside as well in her relationships with Sarah, her Master Teacher, and the other students in her class. But it is difficult to find evidence in Marla's data of actual growth or change over the course of the teacher support group, and I suspect there are at least two reasons. One is that Marla seems inclined to perceive the world dynamically on her own, and the awareness and understanding such an orientation entails predated, I suspect, her involvement in the teacher support group. Another possible reason is that Marla, as a student teacher, was on the slope of a fairly steep learning curve and had to pick, consciously or unconsciously, the skills she was going to develop in assessable ways. For most student teachers, those skills tend to cluster around daily survival in the placement classroom and completion of academic assignments made by the credentialing institution. While there is no doubt that Marla progressed developmentally through her student teaching year, it makes sense that she would have *relied on* her intuitive emotional awareness and understanding during this difficult year rather than actively cultivating them at the expense of other, less developed, skills. It also makes sense that she might have relished the relative safety of the holding environment the teacher support group offered, enjoying the company of kindred spirits "in a place that wasn't part of the real world where we can talk about things and then exit and use what we've learned after we leave."

This is not to say that Marla does not value the experiential realm that the teacher support group asked her to consider. Far from it. As Marla puts it, "Whenever you have people together, whether it's in a house or classroom or outside on the street, there are going to be emotions no matter what and you just can't deny it and try and pretend like [they're] not there." It is very important to Marla that work on classroom emotions be "integrated with whatever mission you're on, whether it's academic or whatnot." But, because "people don't even really know how they feel," part of the job of a teacher is to help her students figure out "what's going on" emotionally. One way of doing that involves "stepping back for a moment or two to settle down and realize 'OK, what kind of emotions are going on here?'" "I'm sure it can't hurt [students]" to be in the presence of a teacher who attends to her emotional life, Marla says. Indeed, Marla promises to be the sort of teacher who helps students learn how to think as well as how to live well, a "good model" for the "little people" who are "watching that and studying you all the time" in the classroom.

Anne Gilley

Anne Gilley has been teaching fitness for 2.5 years. She has been in a therapeutic group before but never in a teacher support group.

"What is it like to teach with greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions?"

While Anne feels sure that she has developed awareness and understanding of her emotions over the course of the teacher support group, she also recognizes a certain disconnect between these skills and her experience of teaching. She credits the teacher support group for helping her to be able to identify for herself that she is angry in class – it helped her to hear other teachers acknowledge that emotion and work on it in group –

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and for providing "validation" of her experience in the classroom. But Anne feels that she still needs "to figure out a way to get rid of that anger so I can give the product to the kids that I want to give to them." That is why she is "looking into going to a therapist," she tells me at our last interview.

The group has also helped Anne to see the various puzzle pieces that comprise teaching – "it helped me to see that there *was* a puzzle." One of the pieces she has identified is the students' responses to her class. Anne feels that last year, which was the first year of fitness at her school, the students were open to whatever curriculum she brought to them, whether it was games to play or demonstrations of how to use a backpack properly. "And now it's kinda like, 'Yeah, we expect fitness and what are we doin' today?'" Students are less "psyched," she feels, to explore the world of fitness as she knows it, a world that includes kayaking, skiing, rock climbing, hiking, and enjoying the flora and fauna on a walk in addition to playing Capture the Flag and Trench Ball. The students' attitude affects her emotions, which is another piece of the puzzle that is teaching, and which will be discussed in more detail below. Yet another puzzle piece that the support group helped her to see is the structure of the school in which she teaches, a fairly new experimental school that attracts students who do not fare well in more mainstream settings. As one of Anne's administrators put it, "'We are flying a 737 and we're trying to build it at the same time. We can't take the wings off because that's not gonna work. We're flying.'" Given the inherently unusual nature of fitness education – the fact, for example, that it is experiential rather than purely academic – and the fluid circumstances in which Anne teaches, this puzzle piece has a huge impact on her teaching life.

Despite her grasp of these essential puzzle pieces, though, Anne still feels a disconnect between her understanding and her actual teaching. While "the understanding is sort of an overall umbrella?" she says, "my teaching is more going under the umbrella, through the woods, kind of dodging bullets every day." In other words, the global understanding she has developed has very little to do with the "daily thing" of teaching. In fact, Anne confesses in her final interview, "right now I still feel like I'm – I was in a hurry to get over here, my day just ended – and I'm still in the woods." She needs more time to "take [information] in and digest it" and suspects that, after three months or so, when her "brain is working without [her] knowing," she will "all of a sudden come to [a] realization" that will signal her successful internalization of what she has learned.

Anne's stories confirm her claim that she is "dodging bullets every day." But they also show marked changes in her behavior and attitude over time. While Anne's emotions are strong and sometimes relentless in a teaching day, other elements of her experience emerge from her data as equally salient – specifically, her beliefs and expectations and the changes she makes and experiences, whether consciously or unconsciously, as a teacher.

Anne handed in seven Emotion Diary entries, all before the second interview. She admits that the task of writing down a day's events was often more than she could manage. "I'm not a verbal person," she tells me in the final interview. "I'm more of a visual person." So "if it [were] just taking a picture that would capture everything" she could have easily shown me how her days went. Still, as Table 8 indicates, Anne's emotional language is varied – that is, she uses many different words to convey her fundamentally negative experience of teaching. Her emotional palette in the interviews

does not vary much from that depicted in Table 8 – her emotions tend to be either very negative (anger, frustration, etc.) or very positive (feeling good, "psyched," etc.), and the students' emotions tend to revolve around "disrespect." But the interviews capture an aspect of Anne that the Emotion Diary does not, and that is her ability to conjure images that convey, through metaphor and what I call "reverie," the "snapshot" she wishes she could take of her daily experience.

Table 8			
Emotions and Their Rankings in Anne's Emotion Diary			
Emotion	No. of instances	Mean score	Modal score
Anger	6	4.7	5
Anxiety/stress	3	3	N/A
Disappointment	2	4	4
Insecurity	1	4	4
Frustration	1	5	5
Feeling good	1	5	5
Happiness	1	4	4
Overwhelmed	1	5	5
Defeated	1	5	5
Fear	1	4	4

We have already seen some of the metaphors Anne uses to describe teaching. Understanding teaching is putting together many "puzzle pieces," and teaching itself is, for her, making her way through the woods, dodging bullets as she goes, while all the time functioning under an "umbrella" that is the big picture (an umbrella that she is aware of if she thinks about it but that does not make any difference at this point in her daily experience). She twice compares teaching to riding a horse, once when she speculates that the students can sense her anxiety and a second time when she describes her experience of adjusting to different classes whose behavior needs to be "corrected." Teaching is also like being the coach of an apathetic team where "you're like, 'All right,

guys! Let's go!' and they're like, 'Nah, we're not listenin' to you. We're gonna go do

something else.'" When it comes to controlling her anger, Anne says, "it's really hard to

back away from it. You almost feel like you're in a supermarket showcase in the freezer

section and you're pressed up against the glass and the glass is the kids and their attitudes

and there's pressure on you" because the students are "pressing your buttons." On a

particularly difficult day, Anne feels like "a really tightly wound spring." While she

believes she looks fine from the outside, "on the inside you're ready to pop. I think of

jewel weed, you know jewel weed? If you touch it, it springs open." These metaphors do

not contain emotion words, but they vividly convey the emotional and physical tension

Anne can feel while teaching.

Anne's "reveries," as I call them, achieve the opposite effect. While "reliving" her

negative classroom experiences can make her "exhausted," her occasional reveries in the

interviews seem to create for Anne the respite she needs from the very act of retelling. A

prototypical reverie (I noted six in her interviews) comes after she introduces yet another

type of difficulty she encounters at her school, which is when she discovers that the

paraprofessional she relies on in some classes is absent:

> A lot of times I get emotional because I'm all set to do something with the kids
> and we're gonna go outside and I've got 'em all ramped up, ready to go, we're
> gonna walk to the field, and I find out that my paraprofessional isn't there. "Oh,
> she's not here today," and nobody's told me. So I would get upset, like "OK, I've
> gotta regroup, change, tell these guys we're not going to the field" –

(here the reverie begins)

> which is a really nice cool place to go in the summer. There are trees, we get a
> peaceful walk down a path – well, fairly peaceful – and we drop down into some
> woods where we follow another path. And I just think it's so calming and good to
> get the kids, even if they don't wanna go and they're afraid of ticks – we talk
> about ticks – to go down through that path and see that there's a little brook and

some – I'm really into nature. I like to take them sometimes along the brook and we see little trout in there? And then we'll play a game. It's Capture the Flag. So I really like to go to the field –

(here we return to the story)

-- and, if we can't, we have to play in the parking lot, which is bumpy, kids fall, they scrape their knees, they hit their heads.

Anne's talk throughout her interviews reveals the quality of her lived experience: she embodies it fully, both the good and the bad. In order to survive her negative experiences, she must get out into nature, to hike, to kayak, to ski. In order to survive telling about her negative experiences, it seems, she must get out into nature in her imagination, in her reveries.

Anne's stories, which capture in image, intonation, and detail[9] her fully embodied experience of teaching, also suggests a possible source of her difficulties. As a woman who grew up in the small New England town in which she now teaches, never had children, has always interacted with adults, Anne doesn't "know that much about kids." Working with children every day, then, "is a whole new ball o' wax for me," she says. "Trying to pull into this whole world of these different kids, it's not me. It's a big learning curve. But I think I'm learning a lot! Oho!" What Anne relies on in her interactions with these twenty-first-century children is her memories of "when *I* was a kid. And when I was a kid I sat there and listened to the teacher and tried not to watch the squirrel on the tree and tried to listen. [I] can't believe that these kids are so

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[9] Anne's three RAP interviews total 36 pages, longer by six pages than any of the other teachers'.

disrespectful!" Anne, then, brings a number of beliefs and expectations to her teaching that appear to influence her emotional experience of her job.

These beliefs and expectations become clear in the stories Anne tells. A good example is the very first story Anne relates in her first interview. This story is about a 10th grade class that Anne finds particularly difficult, in part because it contains a group of African American boys from a nearby "urban" area "that hang around together." On this particular day, the class was held inside. Anne's plan was to have the students play "Trench Ball," a game "like dodgeball [where] you throw the balls at the other team and if they get hit they have to come over to your trench." The boys love this game, Anne says, but she "can get the feeling" that the girls "don't like having the balls thrown at them. They get a little scared." So Anne changed the game to "Silent Ball," a version that was more palatable to the girls, and three of the African American boys said, "'We're not playin' that.'"

> So they would not come over [and play the game]. And I said, "You guys are getting demerits for being off-task," or something like that. And they were ignoring me. And they ignore teachers. Because I went upstairs afterwards and said **I felt bad that they ignored me**….So they weren't coming and they weren't coming and I'm like, "OK you guys! I'm gonna write you up with detentions." And Cody…kinda flies off the handle, just took a cardboard box that was sitting there that the janitor had and threw it down on the floor and said, "Jesus Christ, I'm sicka this fucking treatment! I'm not puttin' up with this shit. You're not giving me any detention!" And I'm like, **how can we discipline people if, when we say the word "detention," the kids fly off the handle?** So I got really upset. I said – the whole class is over there watching me. Like all the 11th graders, the other teacher, the paraprofessionals. And…**it's kinda me against them**. And I said, "I'm not putting up with this. And I'm going to get Mr. Edison, our dean." So in the meantime Cody had thrown that thing down, he was going upstairs, he's like "I'm goin' upstairs to talk to somebody!" – he's showcasing. So I was walking up right next to him going, "I don't really care where you're going. I'm gonna go up and get Marcus Edison to come down and talk to you guys cuz I'm done with this." So I flew off the handle. And I know that **you're not supposed to do that**. I didn't really fly off the handle, but **I got emotional about it**.

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The fact that Anne feels "bad" about being ignored by students implies, to me, that she believes that "students should not ignore teachers." In her world, students make special efforts "not to watch the squirrel on the tree" so they can "listen to the teacher." Anne obviously feels justified in threatening to award Cody a detention, but his violent rejection of her punishment – her effort to "correct" him – "upset[s]" her, as it violates her expectations, another of which seems to be that "students should take discipline quietly." This belief is echoed later, in a story about another African American boy whom Anne sees as a "ringleader" and who "seems to act like he's in charge." In fact, "he *is* in charge," she says. "He's almost like a gang leader in that class with some people." And Anne just does not "understand why he doesn't act like a kid," a statement I take as evidence that Anne believes, or expects, that "kids will act like kids and let the adults be in charge," even when it comes to something as distasteful as disciplinary action.

Anne is explicit in this story about her belief that "It's me against them," a belief that appears nine times in her interviews and which, one can imagine, leads to and accompanies many negative feelings. As I discuss later, this oppositional, "dyadic" stance can kill any possibility for creativity in the classroom not just because of the undermining emotions it entails but also because of the "potential space" (Winnicott, 1971) that it effectively closes off.

Finally, we see in this story Anne's belief that teachers are "not supposed to…get emotional." This expectation is the basis, in fact, of one of her goals coming into the teacher support group: to be "less emotional" in the classroom. If this goal means that Anne wants to channel her emotions more effectively – by, say, using her anger to better understand Cody's anger – it is valuable. But if, as her second Emotion Diary entry

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states, the goal means that she wants to "remain unemotional," she is aiming to deprive herself of some of the most important sources of information she can gather, as Hochschild (1983) asserts when she points out the essential "signal function" of emotions (p. 29). Anne hints at this very function when she says, "But you wonder by the end of the day if you're acting, if the way you treat the kids is a result of things that were done to you during the day. It's hard to hold that place where you were in the morning as being a fair person all the way 'til the end of the day." Emotions let us know when something has gone wrong, when we have been mistreated, and they do make it "hard to hold that place" of fairness and compassion, and rightly so. If it is true that yet another expectation is that "I am supposed to be fair and even-keeled all day," Anne is not just setting herself up for failure but she is fundamentally handicapping herself.

Anne's beliefs and expectations also emerge from the metaphors she uses to describe her experience of teaching. Her belief that "it's me against them" is evident when she characterizes teaching as "dodging bullets." Despite expectations, based on her own childhood, that "students will cooperate," "students want to play," and "students should not ignore teachers," she reveals throughout her interviews the assumption that at least some students enter fitness class with the intention of disrupting it. "'Ah, this is fitness,'" she imagines her students thinking. "'Let's goof around and bug the teacher a little bit.'" Or "They were all being, you know, 'Well, what can we do to press her buttons?'" Or "It's like a game, like 'Oh, I can get a couple words out. I'm gonna really bug 'er.'" Or "'What can we do to get her offline?'" Fortunately, Anne does not feel this way about all of her classes, but she feels this way often.

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Anne recognizes the value of building relationships with students; she refers to

that belief, or the expectation that "students will cooperate if I build relationships with

them," three times in her interviews. The school where she teaches also holds this

expectation. But there are at least three blocks Anne must overcome to build those

relationships: one is her fear of certain students; another is her inability to relate to some

of them; and the third is the vast range of students with whom to build relationships – 140

all together, representing "this huge gamut of personalities and developmental stages."

In another of her metaphors – one of the horse metaphors – Anne admits that she

is afraid of her most oppositional class, a group she calls "Period Four." When asked if

her students might not pick up on the restlessness she can feel when they're all stuck

indoors, Anne suggests instead that they "might sense that I'm afraid of them. Like a

horse might sense [or feel] nervous and jittery because this person's jittery and, you

know, 'They're not talking to me in a calm voice like I'm used to be[ing] talked to.'"

Later Anne changes "fear" to "anxiety," or the concern that, when "they've all gone

squirrely on me…I can't really get them together." Anne confesses that this anxiety

affects her teaching before and after contact with Period Four. Beforehand, she has to

remind herself to relax: "I have to say, '[You] don't have them [Period Four] until third

period. So you're OK for these two classes.'" Afterward, she feels "*totally drained*" and

realizes that, no matter what her next class does, she's "mad at them! Already!" Anne is

wisely "starting to deal with each kid" in Period Four, but the anxiety she feels in the face

of the collective is at times debilitating for her.

Another belief, or expectation, Anne seems to hold is that "A good relationship

means you have things in common." For example, Anne describes the basis of her

relationship with the dean at her school, Mr. Edison. "Mr. Edison and I – Marcus – have a good relationship. I think we both like the same things. We both like the ocean, we both like to drink beer. You know. He trains dogs, I train dogs." But Anne does not share such experiences with many of her students. For example,

> I've got one kid who is a cutter, she wants to be a pole dancer, I mean 7th grade? Whoever heard of that in 7th grade? It blows my mind. So that's really hard for me to take as a person who grew up in [this little town] and then went to college and I don't know….I just, I can't understand, I mean obviously she's been through a lot in her life and I feel I can't relate to her at all. I can relate to the boys and the girls who want to go out and play a game. [But] I don't know how to relate to this girl – and I'm trying to.

Some of Anne's most difficult students are "urban," she says, and "I'm not very street smart." She is not sure how to talk about her African American students, worrying that she is being "prejudiced." She is often shocked and angry when these students lose their temper in class – as Cody did – but notices instances of cooperation, even enthusiastic affection, as when one Black student helped her solve a problem and another gave her a "big hug" after a stage performance he was in. She mentions that she would like to go to "one of their [basketball] games," just to be able to show them that "'Look, I've got an interest in you other than school.'" But "it just takes so long to build this relationship with all these kids," she says – if she can find some common ground on which to even begin construction.

The fact that she can sometimes create this common ground, however, gives Anne hope and fuels yet another expectation, that "I will overcome the urban mentality with at least a few kids." She tells of talking some 11th graders into taking a walk with her. In another example of reverie, Anne says,

I had four of them, I took them for a walk, they were 11th graders. I said, "Come on!" and they're "Oh, it's so cold." So I said, "Let's go the opposite way, we'll go up the hill first; that will warm us up." We walked through the golf course, which is beautiful in [this town], right in front of [a local mountain] and then we walked down, and I said, "I wanna walk down through the woods and see if any trillium are out down there or Dutchman's britches" and they were giving me grief and finally they said, "OK," and we kind of took a short cut and rambled through the woods and one of the kids said to me, "I don't wanna go back. I wanna keep hiking with you." And I was like "*Yeah!*" And I'm gonna take that kid and her friend with some other people hiking up [another mountain] where there are trillium right now. Just because, if at least I get that mentality to one or two of the kids and can connect with them, that's what I would like to do.

Just as Anne feels negative emotions when her expectations are dashed, she feels

buoyant feelings when they are met.

In another metaphor of teaching, which appears in the transcript below, Anne

conveys her belief that "All classes should be the same."

AG: Each class presents its own different problem….It's kind of like riding a horse, a new horse, and you know some horses wanna go this way or some horses want to stop and eat grass, or they get the trees or – each class you're on a horse that you're not sure what it's, it's the same horse but it's doing something different. You need to figure out how to correct it.

BB: Initially you say it's the same horse, which implies that you would expect the same thing from all the classes.

AG: Yeah.

BB: But what they give you doesn't necessarily meet your expectations and you're always constantly having to react.

AG: Seems that way.

The class Anne finds most trying is Period Four. But, as Anne says, "Each class presents

its own different problem," a problem that, she says, needs to be "corrected." Her

metaphor of the "same horse" that refuses to behave consistently and needs to be trained

into a particular norm suggests that Anne is challenged by the flexibility teaching calls

for. Indeed, her metaphor of feeling "pressed up against the glass" in a "supermarket

showcase in the freezer section" graphically depicts Anne's feeling of being frozen as a teacher, "pressed" by her students and, it seems, by her own beliefs and expectations. It seems that Anne's strong emotions might stem, at least in part, from this rigid commitment to expectations that her students insist she modify if she is to engage in authentic relationships with them.

The notion of the Third, as discussed in Chapter Two, might offer some perspective on Anne's experience in the classroom. Anne's frequent belief that "it is me against them" suggests that she is often engaged in a "dyadic struggle" in which she is reduced to using "brute force" to restore the illusion of her own control in her classroom. Anne's apparent beliefs that "teachers are not supposed to be emotional" and "I am supposed to be fair and even-keeled all day" actually deny the internal experience upon which the Third in part depends. Anne's claim that the "kids' world is not me" beautifully captures the wall she feels between her inner experience and the world of her students (Winnicott's "not-me" world), a wall that forecloses on the "potential space," or the Third, that allows for agency, a sense of recognition, and play.

Muller's (2007) "structural Third" invites us to look even beyond the students and the teacher to the institution in which the teacher and students are interacting. While detailed examination of the role Anne's school plays in her daily teaching experience is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is not difficult to imagine that a school that is actively building itself while continuously educating children and regularly indoctrinating new staff members is not always able to provide a stable and consistent teaching and learning environment. Though Anne's vice principal, Mr. Edison, appears to make every attempt to ask of disruptive students, as Shapiro & Carr (1991) and Muller (2007) recommend,

"'How is he or she right?'" (Shapiro & Carr, 1991, p. 80), the teacher is often squeezed out of the relationship and excluded from whatever Third might arise. Anne herself seems unwilling to ask, "'How is [the student] right?'" Instead, she sees herself more as an enforcer of the school rules (primarily so she can keep her job), often, therefore, putting herself in the position of "rigidly holding to procedure, as though staff authority were synonymous with the Third" (Muller, 2007, pp. 222-223). Here, of course, is a recipe for implosion into the "perverse state of 'twoness'" and, for Anne, a certain chronic "bewilderment" that stems from the fact, as Shapiro & Carr (1991) state, that "complex institutions seem to have moved beyond our capacity to comprehend them" (p. 2).

But Anne does have some grasp of her incomprehensible institution's role in the Third. Recognizing that successful teaching requires "consistency," she bemoans her failure to provide rules for her students. "I had outdoor rules for the kids, and in my first year of teaching, I handed those rules out to the kids, we went over them and they followed the rules. Now my computer crashed, I lost the rules…but I'm starting to think, more and more, that I should follow that idea and get those rules out." Anne obviously appreciates the holding value of rules consistently applied, as she has experienced first-hand how "follow[ing] the rules" can paradoxically pave the way for safe fun and play.

Anne is also "frustrated" by her colleagues' attitudes toward rules. For one thing, the teachers are not all "on the same page about the rules." For example, Renata, a fellow teacher, allows students to take off their school shirts when it's hot outside ("They wear shirts underneath their shirts. I don't understand that, but…."). Anne does not. This, obviously, can lead to mixed messages at best and confusion, frustration, and disciplinary ramifications at worst. For another thing, teachers do not always model the rules they

enforce. As Anne says, "I had a co-teacher that was talking on her cell phone. And the kids aren't supposed to have cell phones, so to me that's not right. She should not be on her cell phone unless it's some situation where she's talking to the school." Unfortunately, Anne says, "there's no leader," an accusation that implies the institution is not holding up its end of the structure that allows the Third to emerge.

Anne also demonstrates an intuitive understanding of the importance of the Third in her own dealings with the students. Her beliefs that "students will cooperate if I build relationships with them" and "a good relationship means you have things in common" both allude to the Third, the "potential space" where the rules that define the teacher-learner relationship can be trusted and creatively manipulated and where, through "psychological intimacy," common ground can be found. Anne's beliefs that "Students should not ignore teachers," "Students will want to play," and "Students will cooperate" make complete sense if those students feel seen – or "witnessed" – and if they can exercise the agency they require to grow into themselves. In truth, Anne, a fitness teacher who is passionate about play, is positioned perfectly to make play, or the freedom to frolic in the Third, possible for her students.

It is all the more remarkable, in light of this theoretical possibility, to consider some of the changes that Anne has made in her teaching over the course of the teacher support group. Though Anne was making changes as early as her second interview (entertaining options in retrospect, confronting students individually rather than in front of the class, controlling her anger, addressing her students with confidence, and realizing, despite her urgent desire to be told how to teach, that "there's no answer. You have to figure it out yourself"), the changes I want to focus on took place just before the third

interview. These changes are particularly significant because they represent moves Anne

makes that allow the Third to emerge with her most difficult class, Period Four.

The story begins on the Monday after winter vacation, when Anne decides to

show a film to her classes and discovers, right after her Period Four students have left,

that one of them tinkered with her computer's sound system. "I was flashpoint furious,"

she says. "I saw this kid [in Period Four] fooling around with my stuff and I just wanted

to go up there and strangle him." As her Emotion Diary shows, anger is a common

experience for Anne, but this time was different: "I was furious. I was *furious*. Like the

most furious I've been probably in school." It is not clear what Anne did about her fury,

as she fast forwards to the following day, when the dance teacher, Renata, "pulled out of

her pockets that she was gonna do yoga" with her students. "And these kids have been

with her for a semester. So they are like, 'Oh, yoga, we've done this, we know how to do

this.' And they're all doing their yoga and I'm thinking, 'Oh my God, I'm a failure. Look

at these kids and the way Renata's treating them and it's great and they're doin' the right

thing, and they're acting like students,' and then I was a wreck."

At that point Anne's supervisor, who has a reputation in the school of being

"demeaning," called Anne out of Renata's class (where Anne was acting as an aide) and

asked Anne to return some items Anne had borrowed that had great sentimental value. "I

didn't realize they meant so much to her," Anne says, and she resolved to return the items

as soon as possible. But "she was treating me like I had done something wrong," Anne

says, which means she returned to Renata's yoga class "feeling like one of the kids being

yelled at."

At 10:30, Anne had a sizeable break in teaching, so she visited the art teacher and "kind of broke down and started to cry. I said, 'I can't take this. I need help from somebody.'" The art teacher said she could not help, but Anne's partner, Tom, had recently sent her an email with a picture of herself during vacation, and that "had a big impact." When she looked at it, she thought, "'That's me. That's who I am.'"

> So what I did is I went home and I got my pictures from our trip and I started to go through them and they're all me when I'm happy, me when I'm doing my thing and I'm like 'This is who I am.' So in some ways the yoga teacher [Renata] got centered, she did her yoga, that's *her* thing. I went home and looked at my pictures and it just brought me right back up and I was like, "All right." And this was Day Two, the day after I had the bad day with Period Four.

The plan Anne had come up with for Period Four, as punishment for the day before, was to "make them sit in the room" and not go outside. Now, having "centered herself" at home, Anne "started thinking, 'We're not doing this. We're gonna be up. I'm gonna follow Renata's example, I'm going to get them in class, we're gonna say, 'Look, you guys, we're gonna start this all over again. We're gonna have a positive day.'" Rather than make the Period Four students sit quietly, Anne got them "out of their seats" with a team-building activity as soon as they entered the classroom. "They actually came up with a really creative thing," she said, a way to accomplish the team-building task in record time – by cooperating with each other. "And it was great," Anne remembers. "I tried to keep them positive. I tried to keep [the mood] up." And it worked.

Just as it is obviously futile to attempt to teach a stressed-out student, it is impossible to co-create a Third in the classroom if the teacher herself is anxious, feeling "like a really tightly wound spring." What "this whole thing has made me realize," Anne says, is "I've gotta go back to being myself." By "centering" herself and insisting on

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"being herself" in the classroom – in her renewed feelings of self-worth, in the picture of herself on her trip, and in her revamped lesson plan – Anne made room for play. Perhaps her plan to tape pictures up in her classroom "so that I can go back and look at myself, relaxed, happy, doing what I like to do, doing what I want to reflect to the kids" will help her to continue taking up her own space, non-defensively, so she can allow her students to take up theirs. And, together, they can create something new.

"What is it like to develop greater awareness and understanding of one's emotions in a formal group setting?"

Anne refers to the teacher support group ten times in her interviews: six times in her second interview and four times in her third. It appears that the group gave Anne food for thought that she applied right away – as when she informed her fast-talking new supervisor, on the recommendation of a group member, that she has "auditory processing problems" – and pondered – as she did with Bernadette's insistence that the students in Period Four are "smart." Importantly, the teacher support group gave Anne perspective on the school in which she works. "Because we talked about [the school] a little bit it did make me think, 'OK, [my school] isn't the best.' I mean it's a great school but there [are] a lot of problems with it." Far from dampening her loyalty to and enthusiasm for her school, this realization offered Anne perspective on her own anger and its complex, multi-dimensional origins.

Being in the teacher support group was, for Anne, "kind of like being in my boat." It felt to her like a "pool of calm water" or the ocean, "where I know that the ocean's gonna be cold, the ocean's gonna be wavy and this is what I can expect from it." Actually, Anne revises, "I don't even think the group was wavy." It was "calming," a

place where she could feel "here's a group of people that respect each other and they're not like the kids and I'm in the upper part of the food chain now!"

Anne did sometimes have to "row hard to try to *think* with my brain of what I could say [that] would seem to make sense." As a visual rather than a verbal thinker, Anne could feel intimidated by other group members who "can remember everything and…everything's all typed in there and [they] just access that data base and can pull it out. And I'm not like that." But, partly thanks to previous therapy, in which she was encouraged to "trust myself to be, to talk and say what I thought and that maybe other people will get it," and partly thanks to the group, Anne was able to relax. "I felt a little bit insecure," she admits, "but I felt like, 'Well, I think whatever I say is giving something to [the other group participants] and they're accepting it, so I guess it's valid.'" Other times, she says, "because there were other people there and they were talking, I could sort of think, and I didn't have to talk at all if I didn't want to." Of course, "part of me wanted to just take over the whole conversation and talk about everything that happened to me that day" – a statement that shows how necessary these spaces can be for teachers – "but you can't do that." When she did speak, Anne felt encouraged by exhortations to "keep going" and by confirmation from group members that, "'Yeah, we get that.'" This supportive feedback convinced Anne that "'OK, they haven't kicked me out yet so I guess I'm worth being in this thing.'"

Conclusion

The image of Anne in her boat is a powerful one. "This is where I'm comfortable," she says. "This is what I can do and I know I can do it and I can handle a lot of situations. I've had waves break over the top of my head in the ocean," a situation

that, even though she felt "scared to death," is "something I can deal with. I know what I need to do, I've been in boats my whole life." Teaching, on the other hand, is "a huge challenge." Not having been with children her whole life, Anne confesses that kids "can say something to me [and] I'm not sure what to say back all the time. I'm afraid I'm gonna say the *wrong* thing. I don't want to hurt them. So [with]the wave I know how to brace, I know how to deal with this stuff, but with the kids, there are eight, ten of them, say, that might say something that will pull me off and I'm not really sure what to say to them." Being frozen by uncertainty drains Anne of her sense of self and, therefore, of her ability to engage in the type of relationship that facilitates play and fun and learning – and feeds back into Anne's positive sense of self. There is much Anne can do to make herself more accessible to her students, braver about reaching out to all of them, and more protected by that overarching umbrella that contains her understanding of teaching – one thing she can do, as she realizes, is simply to stay in teaching for a few more years so her experience can build – but she took a crucial step during the teacher support group. Her obvious drive to care for herself and to share what she knows with her students, a drive that is paradoxically present in her occasional hatred of them, combines with her irrepressible passion for her work and her total commitment to her school's mission to make her a teacher whose potential for creativity is boundless.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis driving this study was that the work a teacher support group requires – emotional labor that is supported in a way that fosters a validated phenomenological perspective on embodied, enacted cognition – will influence how teachers experience their classrooms. In general, the findings confirm the hypothesis, at least for the five study participants.

As expected, the language all of the teachers used demonstrated awareness and understanding of emotions, and, for all but Marla and Anne, that language shifted over time to reflect changes in awareness and understanding. Marla's language did not markedly change because, I posit, she retained her systems perspective over the course of the study. Anne's language did not change, but her actions did, and, for Anne, actions speak louder than words.

Before I began the study, I predicted that the teachers' storytelling would contain increasingly sophisticated references to classroom psychodynamics. These references would, I thought, appear in language that tied personal emotions to student emotions and that described classroom experiences in interactional, co-constructive terms. The teachers demonstrated their levels of sophistication differently, but all of them appeared, by the end, to be thinking in psychodynamic terms. Natasha, for example, recognized in her third interview that she wanted to "hammer shame into" Evan to compensate for his apparent lack of contrition for neglecting his Science Fair project. Marla was fascinated

and frustrated by the "big cobweb," or the intricate and sensitive social network, that is every classroom. She used her understanding of the cobweb to create an important relationship with a student who desperately needed a reliable adult in her life and to navigate the fraught student teacher-Master Teacher relationship. Anne acknowledged, in her second interview, that she was "afraid" of her Period Four class and suspected they could tell. At the same time, Anne believed that her students would cooperate with her if she developed relationships with them. By her third interview, Bernadette was deliberately taking her students' point of view in order to better understand their experience of her class. Taylor shared the strategy "K" taught him for managing classrooms as a substitute teacher: to look for the "key" student and ally with him or her. This strategy dovetailed with Taylor's inclination to reject colleagues' warnings about certain students (who tended to be "key" in the classroom), instead rising to the "challenge" of joining with them and successfully teaching them.

I hoped to see increasingly developed discussions of personal emotions in the data as the support group went on, discussions that demonstrated greater access to and use of emotions in the classroom – how the emotions felt, where they came from, what they meant to the teacher, and what the teacher could do with them. This was certainly true for Bernadette, who began labeling her emotions, envisioning outcomes, and even practicing new behaviors over the course of the teacher support group. Natasha explored in her last two interviews the meanings of her feelings and actions in the classroom as well as alternative ways to channel those feelings. Taylor began considering his students' emotions in the stories he told, a perspective that Marla demonstrated from the very beginning. And Anne's access to her feelings about herself, both negative and extremely

positive, translated into a highly successful lesson with her most intimidating class. Again, in their own ways, the teachers confirmed my predictions.

I also expected that the teachers would begin to report resolutions to classroom difficulties in terms that credited the conversations they had in the teacher support group. Only two teachers gave such credit to the group, Bernadette and Anne. Natasha claimed that the teacher support group did not benefit her directly, but she did feel she gained from the RAP interviews. All of the teachers, as reported, appreciated the "safe" space the support group offered. Of course, as I emphasized in Chapter Two, my study is not about the teacher support group *per se*, nor is it designed to correlate the changes I perceive in teachers' talk with the emotional labor they did inside or outside of the teacher support group. My approach to the findings was to attempt to confirm the teachers' own claims as to whether or not they developed their awareness and understanding of emotions by looking for patterns in their data. In all cases, data patterns shed some light on how teachers' awareness and understanding of their emotions functioned in their teaching and changed in their teaching over time, but, once again, the actual influence of the teacher support group and the emotional labor it modeled and facilitated is purely anecdotal.

Still, given this *caveat*, what do these teachers teach us about emotional labor and teaching? Of course, we saw both the need and the desire for emotional regulation (Sutton, 2004) in all of the teachers: Natasha and Anne both wanted to control their anger in class; Anne went so far as to set the goal for herself of being a completely "unemotional" teacher. In order to hide her disappointment in me, Natasha had to "hold back and let things happen" in the group rather than continue to try to do my job for me.

Taylor demonstrated ways in which he "covered up" feelings of vulnerability. Bernadette suppressed her legitimate emotional reactions to insulting behavior under the guise of "respect" for students (and colleagues). And Marla behaved with "caution" around her Master Teacher. The costs of this emotional regulation were apparent in the teachers' data. Natasha was so discouraged at her failures to suppress her anger in the classroom that she was considering leaving the profession. And in choosing to funnel her disappointment in me into passivity, Natasha relinquished her right to grow in the teacher support group. Though Anne was apparently successful at maintaining her façade, she was often "ready to pop" on the inside. Managing moments of vulnerability, for Taylor, often required self-alienation insofar as "lying" requires denial of what one knows to be true. For Bernadette, doing the right thing – respecting her students' rights to express their own emotions – meant painful abandonment of her own rights. To maintain a functional positive relationship with her Master Teacher, Marla had to at times swallow her own and her students' anger and frustration. These costs are what Hochschild (1983) alludes to in her definition of emotional labor. For these teachers, at least, emotional regulation –controlling emotions – and emotional labor – suffering due to this very suppression – were ever-present in their teaching experience.

As the Findings chapter documents, the teachers in this study also engaged in the type of emotional labor I advocate – that is, attending to and working through emotions so as to alleviate suffering and to discover the meanings those emotions carry. This labor took many forms: labeling emotions and staying with the feelings despite strong urges to veer away from them (as Bernadette did); enacting new behaviors to alleviate emotional pain (as Bernadette and Anne did); discerning patterns in one's motivations and

behaviors (as Natasha and Bernadette did); "centering," or returning to one's essential sense of self (as Anne did); visualizing, or channeling emotion into a positive image (as Taylor and Anne did); reflecting, especially on dilemmas (as Natasha, Taylor, and Marla did); reframing to incorporate other perspectives (as all the teachers did). Just as it is helpful to be able to label emotions, it is important to label forms of emotional labor so such labor can be consciously supported in teachers. Not only does the label of "emotional labor" lend an important spin to practices, such as reflecting and reframing, that are already sanctioned in teaching and teacher training, but it points to the need for further research that will add concrete meaning and legitimacy to the concept.

Another aspect of this type of emotional labor that bears honoring is the confessional element. It is one thing to notice and work through emotions on one's own or even in the private space of a therapist's office. It is quite another thing to reveal and discuss emotions in a group. Even more exposing is to *feel* those emotions while under the group's scrutiny, as happened with Bernadette in one of our meetings (to her reported benefit). All of these layers of emotional labor require courage, trust, and emotional strength, attributes that cannot be taken for granted and must be attended to and nurtured in any support group.

This study focused specifically on emotions. The teachers labeled emotions, rated their intensity, told stories about their emotions, and, at times, examined those emotions closely, considering how they influenced and were influenced by other people and events. The study seems to affirm that, at least for these five teachers, emotions conceived of in this way play a significant role in the classroom. What this study did not ascertain, but what can be speculated about, is the role of countertransference in the classroom.

Acknowledging countertransference in the classroom raises the status and significance of emotions, I believe, by putting them in their proper context, that of interaction. Emotions, in other words, can only be indexical, as Hochschild (1983) claims they are, if they are seen to be embedded in psychic structures that drive people's conscious and unconscious understanding and interpretation of – and actions within – the world they are trying to fit into.

We often talked in the teacher support group about induced countertransference, wondering if the emotions the teachers felt in the classroom reflected the students' own feelings. But only one teacher referred to this phenomenon in the data, and that was Anne when she suspected that her Period Four students felt her fear of them. We also talked about subjective countertransference in the classroom, but the teachers did not pick up on this language. The newness of the concept coupled with the fact that the group was not set up as a forum for personal therapy means the teachers themselves did not identify moments of transference or countertransference, either in the group or in the classroom.

But there is ample evidence of countertransference throughout the data. The charged relationships between Bernadette and Lois, between Natasha and Jenny, between Taylor and Nate, between Marla and Sarah, and between Anne and the African American boys in her class suggest that transference/countertransference are alive and well in these classrooms. While analysis of these relationships as examples of transference and countertransference is beyond the scope of this study, their centrality to the teachers' experience of teaching implies more studies that focus specifically on this phenomenon in classrooms – on psychological enactments, on attachment styles and Internal Working Models – are called for. This angle, in fact, would make for an interesting follow-up to

this study: that is, conducting a teacher support group in which teachers know from the start what their attachment styles or IWMs are and watching how this self-knowledge influences the teachers' participation in the group as well as their behaviors in the classroom.

Like countertransference, the Third is also evident – and at times absent – in all of these teachers' classrooms. And countertransference plays a direct role in the existence of the Third. The felt need for control, whether out of fear, anxiety, helpfulness, or pure confusion, can result in the inflexible linearity of the "dyadic struggle" – or, as the teachers in this study called it, the "power struggle." (It is interesting to note that the teachers chose to focus on power struggles for several weeks of the support group.) A conscious release of the urge to control and a deliberate embrace of the unknown – through connection, collaboration, and asking, in one way or another, "How is the student right?" – can allow the Third to flourish.

The formulations of "good-enough parenting/teaching" and "use of self" shed interesting light on all of the teachers in this study. Again, countertransference plays a role in these teachers' ability to be used by students. All of the teachers in this study were able to accommodate students' learning needs much of the time – to be successfully used by students – but all of them felt the need to punish, or "retaliate," at other times – to use the students for their own purposes to discharge their countertransferential reactions. The causes of this urge varied for each teacher, not surprisingly, as the upsurge of vengeful feelings depends on the nature of the transference and countertransference being enacted and the strain each teacher experiences. What is important is that teachers attend to these urges, just as therapists must, in order to sustain the "professional attitude" that supports

learning. This attitude, Winnicott (1965) insists, protects patients (and students) from "the unreliable men and women we happen to be in private life" (p. 161). It puts the therapist (and teacher) "particularly under strain, because *any structuring of his ego-defences lessens his ability to meet the new situation*" that a patient (or student or group of students) brings to him (p. 160; emphasis in original). One way of addressing this strain is to engage in emotional labor.

Clearly, there are ample opportunities for emotional labor in the teaching world. An important question is what context(s) might work best for this type of work? Specifically, for the purposes of this study, what can a teacher support group accomplish for teachers? What can it not accomplish?

As I have mentioned, the teacher support group upon which this study was based was not set up for detailed exploration of countertransference experiences. Initially, I focused on content the teachers brought to the group from their classrooms (often captured in their emotion diaries); later, on the recommendation of my supervisor, I began focusing the group on the dynamic processes that arose among us. While the teachers followed me on this trajectory, the disorienting shift of focus, the intensity of the focus, and, especially, the time limit on the group made it difficult for us to work consistently with the transference and countertransference among us. I do believe the teachers in this group were able to accomplish what Jersild (1955) envisioned for teachers' "group therapy," but more work could have been done.

Natasha, for example, pointed out an important limitation of the teacher support group for her. Given her self-awareness and self-understanding – her well-developed ability to "think about it" – how could the support group actually help her to change her

behaviors in the classroom? Her suspicion is that one-on-one work with a therapist is a more appropriate setting for this goal. But she also admitted that she did not use the support group – the emotion diary and the meetings themselves – as well as she might have. A possible answer to this question, then, is that a teacher support group is only as useful as a teacher makes it for herself. A corollary answer is that a support group with built-in aids, such as an emotion diary, regular interviews, even occasional classroom observations, might be more useful than a group that simply meets. These possibilities gain credibility in light of the request from both Natasha and Taylor during the study for feedback on their emotion diaries. I did not respond formally to any emotion diary entries (though I did reassure the teachers that they were all on the right track), but the request for one-on-one evaluative interaction suggests that more individualized attention from me as group facilitator (and as an important "second-person") might have been beneficial to some.

On the other hand, teachers clearly need a safe "holding environment" in which, as Jersild (1955) says, they can just "be themselves" (p. 13). The teacher support group served this purpose for every one of the participants. Where else do teachers and student teachers and even administrators find this type of environment? As Anne said in her final interview, "At my school there is very little of this kind of talk" in part because the teachers simply do not have the time and in part because there are no pre-set structures in which to have them. Anne's suggestion was that the group function in a retreat setting, where teachers would have the time and energy to digest the experience efficiently. She also suggested the group could consist of teachers in therapy with the group facilitator, a model that Ormont (1992) uses. I have thought teachers should be trained as support

group facilitators, since they have insider status that would lend them credibility with their colleagues, an important pre-requisite for organizing such groups. The answer to this question is probably "all of the above" and then some, but, obviously, more research could be done to explore the viability of various types of "holding environments" for teachers.

What, in the end, has this study accomplished? At the very least, it has reinforced the assumptions with which it began:

- Teaching is an emotional enterprise.

- Teaching, therefore, necessarily involves "emotional labor," or the work of emotion management.

- Attending to and working through emotions (a form of emotional labor) can influence how teachers teach.

- Attending to and working through emotions in a group setting can be useful for teachers.

It has also begun to weave psychoanalytic theory into the concrete analysis of reported interactions between teachers and students. By highlighting examples of the co-creation of the Third and of the beneficial and destructive use of self, it proffers two analytical frameworks through which classroom incidents might be profitably viewed. Proposing to tie emotions to actions – that is, insisting on the central role that transference and countertransference, or emotionally-laden enactments, play in teaching and learning – at once heightens the status of emotions in the classroom and grounds their significance in observable behavior. It therefore raises the ante for future research on emotions in the

classroom by showing that an enactivist, psychodynamic/psychoanalytic, and phenomenological theoretical perspective can yield interesting and valuable discoveries.

The study also suggests that teacher support groups are worth exploring further. They certainly can act as relieving "holding environments" for beleaguered teachers, a purpose that is justification enough. The question of how teacher support groups can best facilitate transformative emotional labor remains open, though. Further research into this question would be fascinating and, I believe, extremely beneficial to both teachers and students.

What are the study's limitations? Given the fact that the teachers in the study were self-selected, there is reason to believe that they are not typical. Many of their colleagues, in other words, would be unwilling or unable to engage in the type of emotional labor these five teachers undertook. What conditions make teachers willing and/or able to do emotional labor? When does the stress of participating in a teacher support group – the time, energy, and attention it demands – outweigh the benefits? How transferable is the teacher support group model? Would it work for inner city teachers, for example? While the study points to the value of teacher support groups, then, it also suggests that alternative methods of supporting such work for different teachers in different settings must be explored.

Although the study was never intended to be generalizable, this limitation bears repeating: The study's findings do not generalize to all teachers. The extent to which the study is useful depends on the teacher who reads it. While I fully expect that many teachers will recognize at least some of the emotions and experiences the five teachers in this study describe, and while I believe the psychoanalytic concepts of

transference/countertransference, the Third, and the use of self apply in theory to all teachers, in the end it is fruitless to make definitive claims about any teacher's "life-world" (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973). Moment-to-moment experience is much too rich, and outcomes of dynamic interactions much too complex, to do anything more than sketch out lenses for looking, frames for understanding, in hopes that they will bring an otherwise blurry picture into sudden and sharp focus.

Fundamentally, I think, this study joins a few other voices in calling for a change in the way teaching and learning are conceptualized. The very act of valuing emotions in the classroom is radical enough in a culture and age when education is being viewed as singularly instrumental, as a delivery system for ever-rising test scores. To demand attention to the inescapable, ever-present forces of transference and countertransference, of the guiding structures that determine our interactions in and interpretations of the world, requires a shift in ideology and practice that feels gargantuan. Perhaps the most important accomplishment of this study, then, is also the smallest – that is, it constitutes one drop in a growing bucketful of awareness of the psychodynamic, relational roots of all knowing, learning, and teaching.

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Appendix A: Screening Form

I.   Description of the group
- a. Origins of group
- b. Purposes of group
- c. Confidentiality
    - i. Within group
    - ii. With my supervisor
- d. How the meetings will work
    - i. Expectations for attendance
    - ii. Emotion diaries
    - iii. Check-in
    - iv. Democratic selection of issues for discussion
    - v. Benefits
    - vi. Risks
    - vii. Time commitment
        1. Meetings = 1.25 hrs/wk for 3 mos.
        2. Emotion diaries = 1 hr/wk for 3 mos.
- e. Questions about the group

II.   Description of Master's thesis study
- a. Purpose of study
- b. Voluntary nature of study
    - i. Right to withdraw
    - ii. Retention of data about the group up to that point
- c. Confidentiality for participants
    - i. Dissemination of study
    - ii. Pseudonym
- d. Requirements of participants
    - i. Pre-group questionnaire
    - ii. Weekly attendance
    - iii. Weekly emotion diaries
    - iv. RAP interviews
    - v. Post-group evaluation
    - vi. Letter of consent
    - vii. Overall time commitment
        1. Meetings = 1.25 hrs/wk for 3 mos.
        2. Emotion diaries = 1 hr/wk for 3 mos.
        3. RAP interviews = 3 hrs. max. spread over 3 mos.
        4. Questionnaire and evaluation = 1 hr.
- e. Participation in the group = participation in the study
- f. Questions about the study

III.   Other Questions?

IV.   Psychiatric history (discuss its effect on group participation)

V.   Letter of consent and pre-group questionnaire (if teacher is eligible for and interested in participation) – mail or provide (if meeting in person)

VI.   Schedule (use space below)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday

VII.   Schedule first RAP interview

Appendix B: Human Subjects Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

My name is Betsy Burris. I am a student at Smith College in the School for Social Work. I am conducting research on teachers' emotions in the classroom. I will be using this study as the basis for my Master's thesis, which I will write this year and submit to Smith College in June, 2008, as well as in presentations and articles for publication.

If you decide to participate in this study, your involvement will include
- participating in a teacher support group that will meet every week for the duration of the study;
- keeping a weekly "emotion diary" for the duration of the study (which I will collect and keep);
- being interviewed on your classroom emotions four times over the course of the study;
- filling out a pre-group questionnaire and an evaluation of the teacher support group at the end of the study.

The study will take place between January 2 and March 28, 2008 and will involve the following time commitment:
- weekly meetings of 1.25 hours for three months;
- about 1 hour per week on emotion diaries;
- up to 3 hours on interviews, spread over the three months of the study;
- about 1 hour on the pre-group questionnaire and the post-group evaluation.

Criteria for inclusion in the study are, simply, that you are a teacher. The sole criterion for exclusion from the study is psychiatric history that might make participation in the group difficult for you. Your interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed by either me or a professional transcriber. If someone else transcribes, that person will sign a confidentiality pledge.

Participation in this study will involve certain risks. Honesty in a teacher support group can be anxiety-producing. Awareness of feelings one would rather suppress can also produce anxiety. Self-reflection can be stressful. And growth – changing teaching behaviors as a result of what you learn about yourself – can be difficult. Though I hope the teacher support group will prove to be a safe place in which to process the emotions you experience in the classroom, I will provide a list of resources (local therapists and clinics) in case you need additional support.

You will not be compensated monetarily for your participation in this study. However, I hope you will benefit both personally and professionally from your involvement – that is, I hope the experience of being supported in exploring the highly emotional nature of your work will allow for deepened self-understanding and an enhanced grasp of how your classroom functions. This study may inform other teachers about the benefits (and, if relevant, liabilities) of the sort of work the study asks you to do.

Confidentiality will be of crucial concern in this study. As the facilitator of the group, I will be getting regular supervision with a licensed clinician with whom I will discuss the workings of the group in order to better serve it. In these discussions, I will use pseudonyms for the group members and will not share any identifying details. In addition, the identities of all participants will be well disguised in the write-ups of the study that I do. (I will write about the study for my Master's thesis, which will be printed and stored in the Smith College library and hence will be accessible to the public. I also hope to write articles about the study for publication in educational and/or psychoanalytic journals.) I will use the participants' pseudonyms in the analysis and write-ups, and other distinguishing features will be disguised or left out of the write-ups. To best ensure your privacy, I will not refer to you by this pseudonym in any context other than write-ups and discussions of this study, where your true identity will never be divulged. The four interviews I conduct with you will be audiotaped and transcribed. All data (your pre-group questionnaire, your emotion diary entries, your four interview tapes and transcripts, your support group evaluation, and notes I take) will be kept in a secure location for a period of three years as required by Federal law. Should I need the materials beyond the three-year period, they will continue to be kept in a secure location and will be destroyed when they are no longer needed. The only person who will see the data, other than me, will be my advisor. Additional people might be asked to work with the data: a transcriber and two other Smith students (if I need validation of my interpretations of the data), all of whom will be required to sign pledges of confidentiality. In addition, many people (I hope) will read the write-ups – the thesis and any articles I publish – but the write-ups will include only samples of the data, not the entire data set, and will not include any identifying information.

Participation in this study is purely voluntary. However, once you have agreed to join the teacher support group, you are expected to attend every meeting. Should you need to withdraw for some reason, you are welcome to continue participating in the teacher support group, but all research materials pertaining to you will be promptly destroyed except for data about the group that was collected prior to your withdrawal. If you ever have questions or need to withdraw from the study, you may contact me at any of the following:
Work phone: 413.597.2353
Email: bb3@williams.edu
If you have any concerns about your rights or about any aspect of this study, please contact me or the Chair of the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee at 413.585.7974 (in Northampton, MA).

YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION AND THAT YOU HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, YOUR PARTICIPATION, AND YOUR RIGHTS AND THAT YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

Sincerely,

Betsy Burris

Signature	Printed name	Date

Appendix C: Approval Letter from the Human Subjects Review Committee

November 25, 2007

Elizabeth Burris

Dear Betsy,
Your revised materials have been reviewed and you have done a very nice job. I'm glad you chose to simplify your study as it will save you a lot of headaches. The project is complex as it is. Everything is now in order and we are glad to give final approval to this very interesting work.

Please note the following requirements:
Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

Maintaining Data: You must retain signed consent documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:
Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

Renewal: You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

Completion: You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Good luck with your project. It is challenging and most interesting to embark on research in which you are a direct participant and we wish you the best of luck. I do hope you are able to get seven or eight participants. A group of four can often be a little resource poor.

Sincerely,
Ann Hartman, D.S.W.
Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Jill Clemence, Research Advisor

Appendix D: Original Emotion Diary Template

Pseudonym_____

Week of_____

List emotions you felt this week and rate each in intensity on a scale of 1 (lowest intensity) to 5 (highest intensity). The intensity refers to the quality of the emotional feeling when you felt it; intensity does not refer to the frequency with which you experienced the emotion this week (frequency can be discussed below).

Emotion	Level of Intensity				
	Low				High
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

Choose one emotion and describe what happened to trigger it. (If you experienced this emotion frequently throughout the week, try to recapture all of the triggering events.)

How did this emotion affect your teaching?

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Appendix E: Emotion Diary Template (Revised)

Pseudonym_____

Week of_____

Please choose an emotional incident this week to focus on. List all the emotions you experienced during the incident and rate the intensity of each emotion. Then describe the emotions (giving details about the event) and consider how they affected your teaching this week. Feel free to describe more than one emotional incident per week; use a new form for each incident.

Emotion	Level of Intensity				
	Low				High
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

Please describe how the emotions arose, what they felt like to you, and how you behaved during and after the incident.

How did these emotions affect your teaching during and after the incident?

Appendix F: Relationship Anecdotes Paradigm Interview Protocol for Teachers

Interviewer: I would like to ask you to tell me stories about some of your interactions at school that involved emotions. The stories should be about specific interactions, not general occurrences or feeling states. It would be great if you could come up with three to five stories whose details you can remember fairly clearly. Can you think of any stories you want to tell?

[For each story]
Whom would you like to tell me a story about?
What happened?
When did this occur?
How did it start?
What were you feeling while all this was going on?

[Ask for relevant details and use some of the questions below *as appropriate*.]
Why did you do or say what you did?
Why do you think he/she did what he/she did?
How did it end?

[At the end of the anecdote]
How do you feel about how things came out?
How did it affect you?
How did it affect your teaching?
What did you want different?
What do you wish that you had done or said differently?
Do you have another story about something that happened with that person?

Appendix G: Pre-Group Questionnaire

Pseudonym_____   Gender_____

Email address_____   Race/Ethnicity_____

Preferred phone number(s)_____ Highest educational degree_____

Years in the teaching profession_____

Current teaching level: elementary   middle school   high school   college

1. What are you hoping to gain from this support group?

2. What effects might these gains have on your classroom experience, specifically

   on teaching and learning?

3. What appeals to you about the support group as you currently understand it?

4. What reservations (if any) do you have about the support group at this time?

Appendix H: Post-Group Evaluation

Pseudonym_____

1. What (if anything) have you gained from this support group?

2. What effects have these gains had (or might they have) on your classroom experience, specifically on teaching and learning?

3. What did you like about this support group?

4. What would you have changed (if you could) about this support group?

5. Would you consider joining a similar teacher support group in the future? Why or why not?

6. Would you consider joining a similar teacher support group in the future? Why or why not?

7. Please include any other thoughts you think I should know about.

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix I: Final Interview Questions

1. Would you say you have developed, over the course of this group, greater awareness of the emotions you experience while teaching?

2. If yes, what is it like for you to teach with greater awareness of your emotions?

3. Would you say you understand these emotions better than when you began attending the group?

4. If yes, what is it like for you to teach with greater understanding of your emotions?

5. Did the teacher support group aid you in cultivating your awareness of your emotions in the classroom?

6. If yes, what was it like to develop this awareness in the context of the teacher support group?

7. Did the teacher support group aid you in deepening your understanding of your emotions in the classroom?

8. If yes, what was it like to develop this understanding in the context of the teacher support group?