

**THE INNER LIFE: A CONVERSATION WITH LEADERS
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

by

JOAN MCARTHUR-BLAIR

**B.A. University of Western Ontario, 1976
M. Ed. Simon Fraser University, 1997**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION**

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**Department of Educational Studies
(Educational Leadership And Policy)**

**We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard**

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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

December 2004

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ABSTRACT

in this inquiry,

i undertook a journey,

nineteen people travelled with me,

we had a powerful conversation

a conversation about the inner life of leaders...

This inquiry is a conversation with formal leaders in post-secondary education, about the inner life of leadership. The journey and outcome of that conversation are presented as a narrative in several modes. I begin by locating this notion of the inner life and creating a container for the conversation. In exploring the literature, I offer glimpses and critical reflections into the inner life and leadership. Through telling the story of the study and the journey of the conversation, I offer insight into how I undertook this conversation with leaders and the rationale for the process of inquiry.

The inquiry data are represented and interpreted through a constructed conversation play. The play is the core of this study, and its capacity to convey an understanding of the meaning and influence of the inner life is central to this undertaking. Nineteen leaders gave of their time to assist me and their words are the power and heart of this narrative inquiry. The inner life conversation circulates around three primary themes that arose from the research, inner life as social justice, inner life as sanctuary, and

inner life as values or ethics. As three different characters in the play state: “I think for me the inner life has a social justice basis,” “it is a set of fundamental values,” “my inner life has to ground me.” It is from these central notions that the narrative exploration of the inner life expands.

There are several implications of this inquiry. These include processes for assisting new education leaders to consider the underlying tenets of their leadership; the creation of settings that encourage reflection on the inner life; and additional research on the inner life and how that inner life is at the core of leadership. Perhaps the most profound implication is that the inner life conversation is one that has energy and power to assist leaders in reflecting on who they are in the day to day of their leadership.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my partner, Jeanie Cockell, who understands the undertaking of living a full and wonderful life and shares that wonder with me everyday.

I also dedicate this work to Ioleen Mary Blair who first taught me to read and to see language with awe and joy and who embodied an understanding of possibility.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank the British Columbia education administrators who took time to be part of this inquiry. Their dedication to post-secondary education and to leadership is at the heart of this study and clearly at the heart of what they do everyday.

I want to express my profound thanks to my committee who took time, energy, and many hours with me on the journey from idea to dissertation. Shauna Butterwick, who advised, encouraged, challenged and mentored, made being a doctoral student the most rewarding and challenging experience of my life. Carl Leggo, who honoured my poetry and my work with his unique and vibrant view of language, made so much difference to how this work was structured. Tom Sork, who offered his wisdom, insight, and attention to detail to this work, contributed so much to getting this work done.

There are twelve people in the 2001 ED.D. cohort. Every one of the twelve has offered me ideas, feedback, support, and encouragement. Without the power of the Buffalo twelve, this work would not have been completed. The circle of twelve is a powerful and sustaining intellectual force in our lives and through its use we have all changed how we view leadership, education and being human.

I want to give a huge thank you to Dale and Joan who turned final eyes to the proofreading of this work and helped in the creative art of comma usage.

Finally and importantly, I want to thank my Vancouver Community College colleagues who cheered me on, teased me, encouraged me, and supported me throughout the journey. You did more than you know.

**CHAPTER ONE:
THE INNER LIFE -- STARTING THE CONVERSATION**

When I make a decision I always stop and think about what is right, keeping in mind that we are in public education. We're there to provide people with opportunities that impact their lives. (Inquiry Participant)

As I introduce the purpose and significance, define terms, set the context, and outline the structure in this first chapter, the inquiry participant's words above help preview the power of this study, the power of leaders speaking about what guides their leadership and forms the foundation for what they do every day in post-secondary

The Fiction of Leadership

Leadership is like science fiction.
Everyone has a fantasy about
what is right,
who you are,
how it should be,
who the alien is amongst us,
what planet leaders are from.
Everyone has a fantasy
about you

jmcb

education. This inquiry is about telling the story of the inner life of leaders. Stories are the linked words through which we construct our understanding, and I have played with words and stories in multiple ways to construct notions of the inner life of leaders. There are reflections on literature, reflections

on leadership, poetry and theatre all created around the stories and notions of leadership and the inner life. This inquiry evokes, portrays, challenges, and interprets at multiple levels and in multiple ways.

The Inquiry and Its Significance

The purpose of this inquiry is to record, reflect, and wonder (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) about the inner life of education leaders and the inner life's influence on their leadership. This inquiry reflects on the inner life, as defined by the participants in the study, and creates a representation of how that inner life influences their work and how the meaning and meaningfulness of leading in British Columbia colleges and university colleges (post-secondary)¹ reside within the inner life. It seeks to answer two primary questions about the inner life of leaders:

1. What is the meaning of the inner life as defined by the education leaders in the study?
2. How does the inner life influence leadership?

Waterhouse (2000) states that "part of our challenge is to work out the significance of the stories we are living" (p. 23). This inquiry is an exploration of the significance of the inner life as one storied aspect of living current post-secondary leadership. This storied aspect is "forever on its way" (Greene, 1995, p. 1) in this inquiry and the conversation here is a beginning one designed to invite the reader into the conversation about the inner life as explored by a particular group of education leaders. As I explore the meaning of the inner life in later chapters, I am constructing that meaning within the context of this particular group of leaders.

¹ I have used post-secondary in this inquiry to refer to colleges and university colleges. University leaders were not involved in the study.

This research contributes to the study of leadership in three ways. First, an inquiry of this nature contributes to the literature on leadership, moral philosophy, and spirituality by interweaving concepts of leadership, inner life, and moral undertaking. Second, this inquiry makes transparent a conversation about the inner life of leaders that is for the most part silent and by doing so offers up a new lens through which to examine the practice of leadership. Although there is relevant literature, there are very few conversations about the guiding foundations of being a formal leader in post-secondary education. I hope that this inquiry will begin a conversation about the inner life and leadership that will develop amongst post-secondary leaders and change how we speak about what we undertake every day. I would argue that the most significant contribution of this work is to the ongoing conversation about what it means to lead in post-secondary education. Third, this inquiry contributes to my own leadership as a Vice President in post-secondary education and provides an opportunity for me to reflect on my own inner life and my own leadership. As a student in the Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy (Ed.D.) program, I am encouraged to use scholarship to inform my practice. The program is designed as “advanced preparation for education practitioners with leadership and policy responsibilities in both formal and nonformal settings... The program is grounded in the belief that it is important for participants to engage in scholarly discourse about understanding, critiquing and improving practice in educational settings” (Department of Educational Studies website, UBC, 2004). In undertaking this program, I have changed as a leader, grounded my leadership more clearly in some of the notions arising from the literature, and enhanced my reflective self as a leader.

I am drawn to the exploration of the inner life by those things mentioned above, but also by a desire to understand leadership in a different way. This exploration seeks to find and interpret the very essence of leadership. This is not an exploration of the seven reasons for success or the ten tips for successful management. This research is attempting to establish a conversation amongst a group of leaders about what they believe and what inner life motivates them, guides them, and offers possibility in and for educational leadership.

Defining Two Key Concepts

Two key concepts are integral to this inquiry: leadership and the inner life. The discussion below provides a container for the conversation about the inner life by defining these two key terms for the purposes of this study.

The definition of the inner life grew and changed as the participants wrote narratives and participated in the interviews. However, as a place to begin the inquiry I defined the inner life as a belief system, an ethical practice, a religion, a spirituality and/or an inner dialogue. The term “inner life” has been used by others (Palmer, 2000; Kessler, 2000) to describe, in Palmer’s case, inner vocation work and, in Kessler’s instance, something that can be awakened by offering solo or quiet time to children. The inner life definition used in this inquiry was built out of a journey with the literature that will be explored more fully in Chapter Two. In the early days of this inquiry, I

defined the inner life as spirituality. I used some of the ideas of Palmer and Kessler as

i thought later about leadership –
the harmony of the word....
leed...err...ship.
the possibility of movement and of
change
intrinsic to the rhythm and the rhyme
of the word.
leed --- to pull forward, to push
from behind, to walk with.
say the word, let it roll off your
tongue – it urges you to do something
anything ...to lead.
the err – alone transitory
to some other place
a word that shivers against the skin
then slips away.
Lastly -- ship – the harsh clipped
syllables commending the possible
compelling the practice. jmcb

well as Briskin (1996) who write about
spirituality, soul and inner life as a place of
growth, reflection and inner growth.

However, the concept of the inner life as
moral or ethical thought as illustrated in the
ideas of Greene (1978, 1995), Bickford
(1996), and Caputo (2001) offered critical
pieces to the definition and notion of the
inner life that related to the ideas of
possibility, imagination, God and

translation of moral thought into action and listening. As I integrated the ideas of
spirituality with the philosophical literature, the concept of the inner life began to take
shape as the place from which leaders create, reflect upon, and understand their
quintessential self as leader. The interlinking notions of belief system, an ethical
practice, a religion, a spirituality and/or an inner dialogue are explored more
extensively in the review of the literature found in Chapter Two and are found at the
heart of the play in Chapter Five.

Leadership for the purposes of this inquiry is the practice of leading. Leadership as
practice is based upon the idea that leadership is not a static act, but rather a practice
that is undertaken each day, honed, refined and evolving. Palmer (2000) uses the
metaphor of the seasons to portray vocation as ever evolving. Wheatley (1999) states,

“we have come to confuse control with order” (p. 24) and “what if we stopped looking for control and began, in earnest, the search for order? Order we can find in places we never thought to look before – all around us in nature’s living, dynamic systems” (p. 25). The leadership explored in this research is a dynamic living system that changes, shifts and grows.

Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, and Smith (1999) describe leadership as “the capacity of a human community to shape its future and specifically to sustain the significant processes of change required to do so” (p. 16). Although this inquiry is not focused solely on leaders as change agents, within this definition is the idea that leadership is related to the human capacity to see a future and work toward that future. This “human capacity to shape its future” requires a sense of leadership as practice, as something that is fluid and dynamic. As Rolls (1995) states:

The leadership qualities most in demand, and the rarest, are those that result from the inner journey: integrity, vulnerability, awareness of the human spirit, courage in relationships, curiosity, predictability, breadth, comfort with ambiguity and presence. Leaders who have successfully navigated deep personal change are transformational and can create and manage organizations (p. 105).

Senge et al. (1999) in the *Dance of Change* and Bolman and Deal (1995) in *Leading with Soul* write about leading as essence. Gardner (1990) defines leadership as “the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers” (p. 1). I propose that leaders with the courage to navigate a leadership based on essence and example are in the practice of leadership, daily exercising and

training and re-training for leading. I refer to this practice as the daily exercise of pumping the iron of leadership and hold to the notion that if one does not pump the iron of leadership one loses the practice of leadership in the same way that an athlete loses muscle if not exercising.

Leadership as practice and the inner life as ethical practice, a religion, a spirituality and/or an inner dialogue are the containers that hold this conversation on the inner life of leaders. I want to end this section with Stanfield (2000) who writes on the courage to lead in the modern world. His words focus in on the place in which current leaders find themselves as they attempt to lead everyday.

Today we are all carving out new moral systems. We see clearly that moral principles are human inventions, and as such, are relative. Today, it is not just a matter of deciding right from wrong. Often as not, we have to decide between right and right, and wrong and wrong. In our times, as Camus said, we are clear that the cry for clean hands that might come from making the exactly 'right' decisions is the cry of a damned soul. There are no clean hands... Today, we ask not what is right, but what is responsible. Not what is good or bad, but what is befitting or appropriate. Not whether it is honest or pure, but whether it is necessary and responsible (p. 173).

Locating the Research

I have discussed the significance of this inquiry and defined two critical concepts for the inquiry. The next element of this introduction is to locate the research. I do this through two lenses, the context of current leadership theory and through a personal lens. To set the context for leadership I have used leadership literature from the past ten years that reflects a trend toward a conversation of the inner leader, and to set the

personal context I have used my own story, which is reflected in poetry and in narrative throughout this study.

The view of what makes a leader has shifted dramatically over the past decade (Senge et al., 1999; Bushe, 2001; Collins, 2001) and continues to change as leaders seek to find better and more innovative processes for leading. The locations from which authors view leadership and attempt to either understand it or provide lexicons for actions vary widely. Some authors focus on the capacity for leaders to bring about change in their organizations (Senge et al., 1999). Goleman (2002) writes about the power of emotional intelligence, while others are writing about soul, spirit and ethics (Covey, 1990; Bolman & Deal, 1995; Koopman & Johnson, 1995; Briskin, 1996). Some are writing about appreciative inquiry (Bushe, 2001), others on the courage to lead (Stanfield, 2000). In each of these works, there is a longing to guide leaders in the modern world toward a perceived better place of leadership. More and more, that place resides not in the strategies that one uses as a leader, but in the examination of who we are as leaders and what we believe as human beings who find ourselves in leadership roles. This inquiry seeks to linger on the question of who we are as leaders. The questions guiding this exploration are what is the inner life of leaders and how does that inner life influence their leadership? It would have been possible, as the above authors have done, to go beyond the exploration of the inner life to the promotion of a way of being as a leader. However, in this inquiry the emphasis of the research is not on teaching leaders how to be, rather, it is on prompting a conversation with leaders, those that have participated here, and others who read this work.

Several times in this inquiry, I pause to locate myself personally within the research and to reflect on my role in the research process. This personal exploration here in Chapter One and throughout the thesis is important as I play various roles within this inquiry: researcher, researched, playwright and formal leader.

I have been a Vice President of Education for three years and before that a Dean and a Department Head. Each of these roles has been a formal leadership position. I have come to formal leadership through a strong background in adult education where I played many informal leadership roles in instructor education and organizational development. The part of my history that is germane to this inquiry is the journey that brought me to begin to ask questions about the inner life. I grew up on a farm in a family that believed in God; however, any early religious training did not adhere to me, and by my teens, I was a devout agnostic.

I took this background into university where as a student in the seventies I found feminism, which felt to me then as close to home as I had ever been. At that time, it felt like everyone around me was a feminist and that the causes were easy to be part of and spoke to a longing for a world that was inclusive of its human beings. In many ways feminism is the foundation of the quest to answer questions about the inner life in that it taught me about belonging and not belonging. It taught me about perspective, power, hope, and despair. As a feminist and a lesbian, it made me aware

of both the glass ceiling and the lavender ceiling² (Wenniger & Conroy, 2001) and how these things have influenced my life and my career.

The years of teaching teachers cemented for me the power of creating learning environments that allowed learning to happen. In the study of learning and of teaching other teachers, I found that it was not the techniques of teaching that moved students; it was the power of something else, something less tangible and more profound. In this period, I began to build upon earlier experiences and began working with teachers around issues of inclusion in their classroom. I worked almost exclusively with inclusive strategies designed to assist teachers in creating classrooms that were more inclusive. Underneath the teaching strategies was the beginning of a profound understanding that as teachers, who we were was at the heart of our capacity to include in the classroom. This point in my work was the beginning of the quest to understand the inner life because I was coming to understand how strategy could be useful, but was something that did not reach the real place of teaching and leading for me.

For all the years that my primary occupation was teaching, I brought to my work a profound sense of idealism and a belief in the possibility of education to change lives.

As I moved from the role of teacher to the role of formal leader, this sense of idealism

² The lavender ceiling is a term that refers to the experience of some GLBT [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered] employees not fully enjoying career development and promotional advancement because they are, or are perceived to be, GLBT (USDA Globe, 2002). It is a concept similar to the glass ceiling.

and belief in possibility was tested. I found, rather than a continuation of teaching as I thought it would be, the world of education administration was a place of isolation from my teaching roots. I think that there are many reasons for this: the nature of leading in hierarchical organizations, the notion of leaders as the 'other' or enemy, and the very nature of leadership as a political act, which then draws political action and reaction.

I often teach or present around the issues of leadership and I find the leadership literature upon which I base my work to be interesting and often directly transferable, but rarely does it focus on post-secondary education leaders. I began to ask questions of myself and other leaders about what it was that we were doing in and for

education. I keep being drawn back to forums designed for adult educators as a place to have conversations about leadership but feel, as a Vice President, I do not really belong there. It is not that adult educators do not make me welcome. It is because, in some of the discourses, adult educators are surprised to find a Vice President wanting to take part. In others, I find the conversation not directly

Vice President

i lie awake on the deck floor
and look at the stars.
i long to go there from here,
to see the earth round and clean from far,
far away.
and yet i am here to be vice,
vice to everything,
the one that takes the place of
you and you and you and you.
leader by default, by vice-dom,
never wanting to dream in this way,
only dreaming of stars,
longing to go there.
it makes me wonder if hierarchy
is a short cut.
knife sharp cut,
blood to bone cut
between the stars and
i.

jmcb

related to my day-to-day work of leading. Consequently, I began a journey with other leaders to develop a workshop entitled *The Labyrinth and Art of Leadership* which was designed to provide a forum for conversation about leadership within a container of personal reflection. It was from these workshops that I began to work more closely with the notions of the inner life.

I have been a poet since I was young. I feel compelled to write, as others are compelled to be athletes. I apologize to those who define "poet" by the number of publications, which for me are few; however, I still define myself as such. Poetry is the way in which I use language to interpret and interrupt my world. The lens of a poet influences this work -- I include poems about leadership, represent the data as a play, and use metaphor to frame pieces of the discussion.

I will explore other influences on this research in later chapters; however, this short snapshot begins to locate me within the conversation of the inner life and begins to create the context within which the stories from the participants reside. I cannot underestimate the power of my background on my view of education leadership, nor can I underestimate the context within which I lead as an influence in this inquiry. As a formal leader, I believe that education changes the lives of those who have the privilege to experience it and, as an education leader, I have a profound responsibility to provide education that is worthy of the students who come. It is a task that I undertake each day with intention and seek to lead in a manner that honours the community that I serve.

The Structure and the Design

This inquiry is a conversation in six chapters. It is a conversation with the literature, a conversation with the method of inquiry, a conversation with me, and most importantly a conversation with nineteen other leaders in post-secondary education. In working with the literature, I sought to explore discourses that bridged across philosophy, spirituality, and leadership. In inquiring into the nature and meaning of the inner life I used narrative inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) as the basis for this work. Seeking to understand the inner life of education leaders lent itself to the telling of stories that reflected on the inner life, and the re-storying of those narratives lent itself to a dramatic representation that invited the reader into the interpretation of the data. The nature of acquiring stories, re-storying and representing those stories is integral to this inquiry and will be explored extensively in Chapter Three and Chapter Four. The creation of a constructed conversation play and the methods used to represent data in an alternative manner are discussed in Chapter Three.

As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) state, “phenomena shift depending on how we frame their contexts and our researcher position within that context” (p. 126). This research is a work that moves from researcher, researched, to self, offering ideas about the inner life of leadership. The notions of how stories were acquired and how stories were represented in a manner that allowed for verisimilitude and

trustworthiness (Willis, 2000) will be explored. Also in Chapter Three, I explore the process and design of participant selection. The leaders who participated in this research were formal³ leaders engaged in adult and/or higher education at a BC college or university college. The participants were Deans, Directors, Vice Presidents, Presidents, a Faculty member and me as a Vice President. I chose leaders in these formal positions for the inquiry because I was interested in undertaking research that related directly to my own location and practice of educational leadership. As I explored the notions of the inner life in others I could also reflect upon my own inner life and how that inner life creates possibility in my leadership.

As a collective whole, post-secondary system leaders experience changes in political ideology, funding, educational mandate and are in a loose sense, a quasi-culture with somewhat shared norms, levels of privilege and experience. This similarity provided a common location for the research across all of the participants. This allowed the outcomes of this inquiry to reside within a specific leadership context and to be used within that context.

In Chapter Four I tell the story of my own journey as I move through the experience of being an education leader, being a participant in the inquiry and being the researcher. As in every study the journey of inquiring was a powerful one and I would be remiss to not explore the impact the journey itself had on this thesis.

³ Formal leaders are defined as leaders who hold designated positions within colleges or university colleges and were in the Dean, Director, Vice President or President category. The one Faculty member had previously held formal administrative roles.

Chapter Five is the conversation with leaders, the heart of the inquiry where I share the data gathered from my research process through a constructed conversation presented as a play that represents a moment in leadership time and provides insight into the inner life of leaders at that moment in time. The play both represents the findings and presents the analysis of the findings. Its depth and power comes from the specific and particular stories that leaders shared with me as the researcher. It is hoped that as leaders read the notions of the inner life represented in this inquiry they will find them applicable to other moments in leadership or to other leadership contexts. The constructed conversation as dialogue for the play emerged from text stories written by post-secondary education leader participants and from semi-structured interviews with post-secondary education leader participants.

Chapter Six draws together the threads of the research, discusses implications, ends this conversation about the inner life, and opens the door to further conversations. I could have had many further inner life conversations with these leaders. There is scope for further exploration of the inner life and translations of that life to the organizations of which leaders are a part and I explore those future inquiry possibilities in Chapter Six.

The Conversation

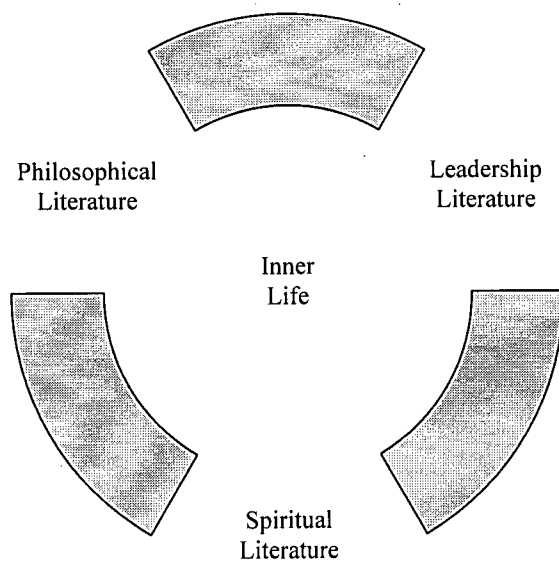
This chapter has introduced the conversation about the inner life and as you read this inquiry, you will notice that like any conversation it evolves and changes as the

inquiry moves through the literature, the process, and the researcher journey to the inner life conversation. The play about the inner life, in Chapter Five, is the heart of this inquiry and reflects on the multiplicity of ideas within the notion of an inner life and allows a glimpse into the core of education leadership by the use of participants' words. Like any good conversation, I have left this research, wanting to return to the participants and ask further questions to seek further conversations.

CHAPTER TWO: INQUIRING OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, I seek to inquire of the literature how it informs the conversation about the inner life. I have found little literature that directly engages with a conversation about the inner life and post-secondary education leadership in the way that this inquiry undertakes to do, with the exception of Palmer (1998, 2000), who touches on the notion of the inner life in his explorations on vocation, teaching and leading. There is literature on public and private (Goffman, 1956), on soul and spirit (Briskin, 1996; Bolman and Deal, 1995; Guillory, 1997; Kessler 2000), and although this literature exists and informs this inquiry, it does not fully explore the ideas that this inquiry attempts to examine. In Goffman's case, the public private conversation is about how one is represented in everyday life rather than relating the public and private to notions of the influence of an inner life on the public undertaking. In the case of Briskin and Bolman and Deal, these authors are writing on spirit and are more focused on how to include soul and spirit in the workplace or in one's personal journey, rather than an exploration of the inner life itself and how it influences leadership. There is a large body of literature in philosophy about goodness and moral and ethical undertaking, and to some extent the notion of the inner life, (although that term is rarely used), has been taken up in philosophical discussions of self, essence and subjectivity, for example in the works of Descartes (Audi, 1999). Both Bickford (1996) and Greene (1978, 1990, 1995) write about ideas related to the inner life, the ideas of seeking, listening, and possibility. In the leadership literature there are some recent works by authors like Goleman (2002) that touch on the notion of "primal

leadership” which is an idea that borders on the inner life but focuses more on the brain as the primal emotional force. Traditional organizational development authors such as Senge et al. (1999) and Covey (1990) have undertaken research that does not address directly the inner life, but does focus on values and ideas of leading and nurturing change. Simply put, there is an enormous field of related literature that informs and very little literature that engages directly with the inner life as this inquiry undertakes to do. Consequently, this leads me to draw from various genres of writing and from various forms to situate the inquiry of the inner life within the available literature. The categories of literature included here cast indirect light upon the conversation of the inner life and provide a backdrop to the stories of inner life told in this inquiry.



I explore three broad categories of literature: literature from philosophy that explores the human condition, literature from leadership and business that explores ideas related to leadership, and literature that examines the human spirit or spirituality (including spirit,

soul, heart, etc.). In working with this spectrum of literature, I am interested in creating a circle of literature that draws out how authors write about concepts related

to the inner life and how this inner life seeks to be heard. I have been both critical and selective in including literature in this review. The available literature undertakes to discuss the inner life in a tangential way rather than a direct way; consequently, the selection could have been vast. In undertaking to select literature, I sought out authors who provoked ways of thinking about the ideas that I was exploring and who forced me to analyze critically the notions that were central to this inquiry.

From the philosophical literature, I have drawn on the ideas of moral possibility.

From the organizational development literature, I have reflected on the current notions of leadership theory. From literature on spirit, I have drawn upon discussions that attempt to understand spirit and leadership in new ways and include spirit in the process of leading.

Philosophy and Possibility

I start the discourse with the first third of the literature circle by examining the philosophy of Greene (1978, 1988, 1990, 1995). Her ideas have been for me the most alluring in that the notions of possibility and moral wide-awakeness are at the core of this inquiry into the inner life. "It is only when persons experience themselves as taking risks, embarking on new beginnings, that the predictable gives way to the possible" (Greene, 1990, p. 3). This idea of "possible" is at the core of this inquiry; in fact to seek knowledge of the inner life is to wonder about "possibility." This idea of "the possible" is thematic in the writing of Greene and is related to her ideas of quest

(Greene, 1995) and being “morally wide-awake” (Greene, 1978). Greene (1990), in building this idea of possibility, houses her philosophy or “doing philosophy,” (Ayers, 1998, p. 4) as she calls it, within the realm of teaching and pedagogy. Her ideas are situated in the connections amongst freedom, imagination, philosophy, and education (Ayers, 1998; Kohli, 1998). Kohli (1998) locates Greene’s notion of freedom in the ideology of “justice, community, democracy, and imagination” (p. 17). So what is this “possibility”? Greene writes and speaks about this concept in a number of ways. She equates it with the idea of imagination in her work *Releasing the Imagination* (1995). In her speech, *the Passion of the Possible* (1990), she builds on the idea of a passion built out of conversation, teaching, learning, and moral debate. In *Variations on a Blue Guitar* (2001) she sums up this idea of possibility:

I have quoted Emily Dickinson before, writing that “The Possible’s slow fuse is lit / By the Imagination” All we need to do is summon up the cognitive capacity called imagination to remind ourselves that experience always holds more than can be predicted (p. 143).

Greene’s concept of being “morally wide-awake” relates to the notion of possibility. For the possible to occur, one must be present enough to conceive of the idea of some act that might be different from the norm or without precedent.

In Landscapes of Learning (1978), Greene examines this idea of “moral wide-awakeness” in opposition to the notion that most people live within the normalcy of convention and do not question the world around them and whether they use their life and their freedom. Greene posits that people in modern society feel both dominated and powerless in their worlds. However, Greene suggests that feeling powerless can be overcome through endeavouring to be wide-awake, and to have a curiosity into

what forces influence their action. Perhaps the most interesting part of Greene's "moral awakeness" is the concept that without being morally wide-awake we cease to question our lives; rather, we interpret our lives in standard ways that are acquired over time and lack insight and moral questioning. Greene pushes human beings to stay morally wide-awake through questing in our lives.

In Response to Maxine Greene

You talk about modern society or modern to you circa 1978.
Our feeling of being lost...dominated you say, powerless...
The great indifference of the lost, the sleeping.

You apologize for embracing the Plague. Camus' Plague.
You center on choice as if we all had it...even the most oppressed
Can choose...to fight, to die, to do nothing.

Wide-awake, wide-awake, wide-awake.
I hear you. Down the halls to teachers, wake, wake, wake up....
Try on your principles, dust off the moral life.

You would have me share this life I hold tight inside
My moral life. My principles. My private plague.
You ask me to show up to "be present."

Yet, I have four staff meetings, a discipline hearing, two complaints
And all those people standing by my door.
And as I turn to fix, to nurture, to plan, I hear you
Whisper Camus' words "the first thing is not to despair."

jmc

[The ideas for this poem were taken from Maxine Greene, *Landscapes of Learning*.]

For Greene (1990) the quest places humanity in a condition, not of certainty or structure, but in a place of unknowing, of never arriving. This is very different from the classical notions of viewing life within the logical and the structured. For Greene it is the moving away from the logical structured life that creates the possible conditions required to be awake and questing.

Each of us must enact a course of understanding in the recognition that the same person is engaging in behaviour that might be called observable and objective and, at once, experiencing herself/himself in an open ended quest, whose end can never be guaranteed.... If there is some abstract totality, some generalized certainty, or even some concept like humanity, it exists on the horizon, forever on the horizon, to be sought en route, on the way...it is passion that personalizes them, as it is passion that is evoked by the thought of what is not yet, of what might be, of (we must hope) what ought to be (p. 70).

Greene's ideas are idealistic and could be criticized as unobtainable, in that they seek what might or ought to be. However, this idea of leadership as possibility brings into focus the backdrop of leadership where the quest, the seeking of the possible, and the search for the moral place are all part of the modern leader. I would suggest that much of Greene's work could be understood as a call to justice and rights. Without this call, leaders would only manage or lead from a place of personal gain, never striving to be different, to re-create the world or to make a difference in education. Greene does not focus clearly in her work on the required conditions that would drive people to pull forth into everyday leadership this 'quest' for possibility. Ayer (1998) touches on this with Greene's idea of imagination and the use of imagination as the agent to propel individuals to "quest."

This inquiry builds upon some of Greene's ideas and in the words of the leaders in Chapter Five, one can see their quest for the possible and the quest to be morally wide-awake as an education leader. I want to leave for a minute the notions of possibility, quest, and moral wide-awakeness and examine one theorist that focuses on the conditions required for moral interaction. Bickford (1996), basing much of her discussion on Hannah Arendt, focuses on democracy in the political sense. However,

I would argue that the same conditions are required to exercise leadership, because my sense of leadership is that it is a form of democratic action that must be daily started anew. As Arendt (1958) states:

The life span of man running toward death would inevitably carry everything human to ruin and destruction if it were not for the faculty of interrupting it and becoming something new, a faculty that is present in action like an ever present reminder that men [sic], though they must die, are not born in order to die but in order to begin (p. 246).

For Bickford (1996), this required condition resides in moving beyond the theories of Arendt (1958) and Habermas (1990) to a forum where a different type of political democracy might reside. Bickford builds on the ideas of Arendt and Habermas by introducing the idea of listening. I would propose that her notion of listening is similar to Greene's idea of being "wide-awake" enough to allow for possibility. Bickford's analysis of Habermas is that his communicative action as an ideal can lead to undemocratic outcomes because of its underlying idealized sense of communication. She moves away from Habermas and builds on a model of moral interaction that "...depends not on the possibility of consensus but on the presence of listening" (p. 18). She also makes the argument that Arendt's idea of presence is closely linked to her idea of listening and she builds on Arendt's ideas that democracy is conducted in a pluralistic world, not by the ordered rules of Aristotle. She uses the metaphor of the theatre and the inter-relationships between actor, spectator, and actors on the stage to examine the notions of understanding, perspective, listening and action. For Bickford the idea of listening presupposes the condition of a willingness to change ones ideas, direction, and beliefs. This listening is placed within the contradictions of social and political difference.

Recognizing this social and political difference Bickford (1996) builds on the work of Arendt to discuss the idea of voice, identity, and presence. She uses the example of a class of students wanting to respond to the questionable death of one of the members and discussing whether to use “Black English” and whether the message would be heard. In Bickford’s example, the students do use “Black English” and she locates this discussion within the larger discussion of voice, representation, and equality.

...that appearing in the world through speech and action is a central human experience, and that the quality of attention paid is central to that appearance...a particular kind of listening can serve to break up linguistic conventions and create a public realm where a plurality of voices, faces and language can be heard in some sort of authentic pristine clarity... (Bickford, 1996, p. 129).

As Bickford (1996) states “courage is necessary for citizenship” (p. 149) and, I would argue necessary for leadership. Bickford views the agency required to act as a type of urgency or need that something be done. The class needing to respond to the death of one of its members is an example of this. For Bickford this agency is brought about by acts of oppression that create the need to do something in response. Her work, although providing a context for what might be possible in the everyday of democracy (listening), does not address why people might act in the everyday. What would motivate one to undertake to listen? What inner conditions need to exist for individuals to undertake this form of democratic action? Bickford leaves us with some important challenges that are germane to leadership. The first is if “we listen and truly listen we might be forced to change because of what we hear” (p. 149). The second is that there is not an end to the conversation “...in other words, the

conception of citizenship that I have developed here is characterized by a tension between openness and commitment, a tension that is never fully resolved” (p. 186). This last notion of the openness of ongoing democracy is an important notion for leadership in that the possibility of listening and re-listening are central to everyday leadership.

Caputo (2001) moves in a different and yet related direction from Greene and Bickford in his work *On Religion*. In this work, he attempts to find an answer to a single question: “what do I love when I love my God” (p. 1). He is clear that he is not the first to ask such a question; the question resides originally with St. Augustine. In attempting to answer this question, he engages the reader on a journey, not through religion, but through romanticism, modernism, and post-modernism. However, before he addresses any of these ideas he provides the most interesting definition of the inner life that I have come across in the literature. He asks the reader what she/he believes when they become “unhinged” (p. 12). He is not evoking the reader to seek within traditional religion for the answer; rather, he is arguing that religion exists in what we hope for and what we love with an unending passion. He calls it religion for the unreligious: “to have a religious sense of life is to long with a restless heart for a reality beyond reality, to tremble with the possibility of the impossible” (p. 15).

That is the possible, the impossible, which is why we love it all the more. So the unhinged life of love and hope and faith is saltier and more passionate and more worth living than that of Aristotle’s well-hinged *phronimoi* who swing back and forth effortlessly and make it all look easy. Religion, I say at the risk of being misquoted, is for the unhinged (p. 13).

The entire book is a conversation in text on this matter of what we love when we love our God and why now, why are we wanting to love that God now. Caputo (2001) locates his argument in the notion that in a cyber world we know and live the impossible every day, and that because of this it is beginning to make sense that there is a new rise of religion in the world. He includes in his definition of religion everything from Christianity to Buddhism to New Ageism and on. He proposes that in this world of virtual reality it is only a small step to believe in the impossible because we are everyday impossible in the way that we live. In the end Caputo argues that it is love that is God after all. "Then the love of God means to learn how to dance or swim, to learn how to join in the cosmic play, to move with its rhythms, and to understand that we are each of no special import other than to play our part...in the translatability of the love of God it is we who are translated, transformed, and carried over into action, carried off by the movements of love, carried away by the transcendence that his name means and commands" (p. 141).

Caputo (2001) writes about God and love, Greene (1978, 1995, 1990) writes about possibility, Bickford (1996) about democracy. Are they all asking; "What do I love when I love my God?" Is Bickford saying that in listening and dialogue, and Greene in possibility they have already found out what or who their God is? If so, where does their God reside? Does it reside in the inner life?

Leadership

Many of the current influences on leadership in education are arising out of the literature of business leadership. The influence of this literature on how leaders are seen and see themselves cannot be underestimated. A simple example of this is illustrated by the number of close colleagues who have recently undertaken to read Collins (2002) *Good to Great*, a work on publicly traded companies. An examination of the leadership literature forms the second piece of the circle.

As discussed in Chapter One, Gardner (1990) defines leadership as “the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers” (p. 1). Although one can find many definitions of leadership, this particular definition fits well with the conditions of formalized leadership in post-secondary education. It is not common in the modern institution to be either hero or super motivator. It is as Gardner suggests much more common to be the persuader of common purpose.

Schon (1987) creates for teachers a process for interacting with their practice which promotes reflection. His work is useful in the examination of leadership because the “reflection in action” notion aligns itself with the idea of an examination of the inner life. His idea of “reflection in action” allows the practitioner to create multiple levels of knowing. As Schon states, when practitioners reflect on their work they “...remake part of their practice world and thereby reveal the unusually tacit processes of world

making that underlie their practice” (p. 36). It is interesting to posit the idea that the reflective practitioner could be seen to be training her/his inner life for the service of his/her outer practice.

Change literature builds on this reflective conversation by attempting to provide a roadmap for leading change and, in some cases, managing change, not just for practitioners but also for whole organizations. Senge et al (1999) in the *Dance of Change* presents the idea of the leader as gardener of change, tending, urging, and nudging change forward. Kanter (2002) states that leadership is, “that which leaves the world a better place, that is you lead people in new directions, to solve problems and make new things happen” (p. 59). It is interesting to note that by definition Kanter is stating that leadership “leaves the world a better place.” It is an important idea -- this notion that leadership that does otherwise is not leadership. It is not clear that Kanter is actually intending to put forward this idea, but it is implicit in her definition. It is more likely that she is positing a notion similar to Palmer (2000), “a good leader is intensely aware of the interplay of inner shadow and light, lest the act of leadership do more harm than good” (p. 78). This change conversation can also be found in the edited work by Chawla and Renesch (1995) on learning organizations. It focuses on the conditions required to change organizations so that they become learning organizations. In this work Rolls (1995) writes about a new kind of leader required for the learning organization, “the new leader supports an intimacy that believes in disclosing true selves in an environment of nurturance and acceptance” (p.107). This notion of “true self” as leader is linked to the ability to reside in a place

that allows change to happen. What is missing from the change literature is the why. Why is it that leaders bother to attempt the change at all? What is the intrinsic motivation for being a change leader?

Badaracco (2002) argues that in the everyday leaders “recognize the full complexity and uncertainty that governs so much of life and work” (p. 19) and that “quiet leaders,” as he calls them, change the world through their everyday small acts. He does not go so far as to posit that a quest for leading is not required, but clearly sets forth the idea that leaders are not necessarily out to change the world, rather they are out to do the “small things right ... In short, quiet leadership is what moves and changes the world” (p. 21).

Collins (2001) touches on three ideas that are germane to this inquiry in his research on great companies. Collins’ research in *Good to Great* (2001) attempts to answer the questions of why some good companies become great companies. He uses an economic performance model for the measurement of great and, consequently, his work could easily be discarded as not having any applicability to academic environments. However, there are some points that he makes about leadership and the type of leadership that it takes to create a great organization that are relevant to the conversation of the inner life. The first is his description of “level five” leadership, which focuses on specific traits of leadership that existed in all eleven of his “good to great” companies. The level five traits are:

leaders embody a paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will
leaders set up their successors for success

leaders are compellingly modest, self-effacing and understated
leaders are fanatically driven
leaders attribute success to others and failures to themselves (p. 39).

These traits are not the ones usually associated with CEO's and they display a side of corporate leadership more closely aligned with Schon's (1987) reflective practice.

The second idea put forth by Collins (2001) that is useful here is his discussion of the "Stockdale Paradox" (p. 85) which is a story about Admiral Stockdale and his drive to survive being a POW and help others survive the experience. Collins states that the Stockdale Paradox is "...retain[ing] faith that you will prevail in the end, regardless of difficulties [and that you will] confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, what ever they might be" (p. 87). In this example, Stockdale is in fact defining his inner life of leadership as one of faith and truth. Although Collins is describing circumstances where leadership is defined by a company's ability to a make profit, he is also finding in his research that the ability to do so is based on who leaders are and what they believe about leading.

The third concept from Collins (2001) is the idea that companies that become great are led by people who have passion and understand their own passion for doing what they do. The companies' leaders in the study looked at passion in an interesting way. They did not try to motivate people to be passionate; rather they asked their company to "only do those things that we can get passionate about" (p.109) or as Goleman (2002) articulates, "the challenge for every leader lies in reaching inside to the source of hope" (p. 126).

In the reading of current literature on leadership, one sees glimpses of the inner life. It is there in the level five leader (Collins, 2002); it is there in the notion of leader as gardener (Senge et al. 1999). Wheatley (1999) offers a list of new metaphors that describe a new and emerging leadership language, “gardeners, midwives, stewards, servants, missionaries, facilitators, conveners” (p. 165). However, I would argue that this current literature does not delve far enough into the examination of what makes the leader practice the undertaking of leadership. It does not ask leaders why they follow a business model or a spiritual model or a change model. The literature discussed here begins from the place that leading is a moral imperative in and of itself. For example, in the beginning of the *Dance of Change*, Senge et al. (1999) write about wanting the book to enable “...all of us who care deeply about building new types of organizations...” (p. 5) but the authors do not delve into the motivation or imagination required to “care.” In this exploration of the inner life, I strive to complete some of the questions not addressed by this literature.

Spirit

This inquiry into the inner life is a search for meaning. It asks the questions, what is the inner life of leaders, and what does that inner life mean to them. Above I have located this inquiry in two thirds of the circle of literature. The notions of philosophy and the idea of leadership both strongly reflect upon concepts of the inner life of leaders. This last link in the circle is an examination of literature that deals with spirit,

spirituality, and soul. It can be argued that the notion of the inner life is built out of people's ideas and concepts of God, spirit, belief, ethic, and moral understanding.

These concepts are the archetypes upon which the inner life rests.

Solomon (2002) brings together philosophy and spirituality and argues that these are not separate concepts but intrinsically interwoven.

...philosophy becomes spirituality when it learns to listen... It is to ask and attempt to answer for ourselves the most perennial philosophical questions about the meaning of life, the inevitability of death, and the place each and all of us [sic] in an increasingly (perhaps tragically) human world... Philosophy, as Plato clearly saw, is a spiritual practice (p. 27).

He goes on to talk about spirituality as passion and proposes that the spiritual passions are "...love, reverence and trust" (p. 29). It is interesting to note that these same notions arise from the participants in this inquiry. Like Caputo (2001) and his notion of "what do I love when I love my God," Solomon is pushing the boundary of what is considered a philosophical undertaking. He sees no separation between philosophical inquiry and spiritual inquiry.

hooks (1993) writes about her experience as a black feminist in graduate school and the contradictions she found between academic endeavour and spirituality.

Graduate school was difficult. I found most of my classes to be without passion or joy. And the rich intellectual life I had dreamed of seemed more and more to be fantasy. The academy as I experienced it was essentially such a dishonest, disheartening place that I felt myself torn, pulled between the longing to walk a spiritual path that I often hoped would lead to a monastic life. In my search for self-understanding, I came to rely more and more on spiritual teachers and their writing and felt less engaged with critical theory. Still, I wanted there to be a place in my life for theory and politics as well as spiritual practice. My quest was to find that place (p. 102).

And yet, in her journey she did not give up. She pushed past those experiences, built upon them, and attempted to create a place to “transgress.” In the final chapter of *Teaching to Transgress* (1994) she states: “In a field of possibility we have the opportunity to labour for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways beyond boundaries, to transgress” (p. 207). Again, there arises here the notion of questing, of seeking the possible, and wondering if there is something beyond what exists in this condition and at this moment in time.

As is often the case in literature on spirit, Palmer (2000), and Bolman and Deal (1995) offer highly personalized stories. In Palmer’s case, he is writing autobiographically about finding vocation in life. In the case of Bolman and Deal, they are telling the story of one executive’s quest for meaning. Palmer tells a deeply personal story of his own struggle, which is often dark, with what his vocation might be and how his journey reflects light upon the possibility of other leadership journeys.

The power for authentic leadership, Havel tells us, is found not in external arrangements but in the human heart. Authentic leaders in every setting – from families to nation states – aim at liberating the heart, their own and others’, so that its powers can liberate the world (p. 76).

Bolman and Deal (1995) capture the idea of leadership by describing its essence. “The essence of leadership is not giving things or even providing visions. It is offering oneself and one’s spirit” (p. 102). These authors are questing in their literature to examine a concept that is very elusive and one could argue, ill-defined, and yet they are contesting the idea that leadership is a thing external to leaders and

challenging leaders to seek leadership within their own spirit. Jardine (1998) perhaps puts it best when he states: “self-understanding and self-reflection are required from which no theory will exempt me” (p. 7). He is discussing teaching with children in a classroom setting but his ideas reflect upon some of the same struggles that leaders have in being present with those they work with.

Thompson (2004) promotes the idea of leaders developing a spiritual centre for their work: “developing a spiritual approach to education leadership is not likely to eliminate all stress or prevent political storms. But, it can be the anchor that helps leaders stay grounded and tightly focused on the high goal of improving education for all students” (p. 64). Fry (2003) views this call to include spirit in the practice and the study of leadership as a response to the perceived need for a more holistic approach.

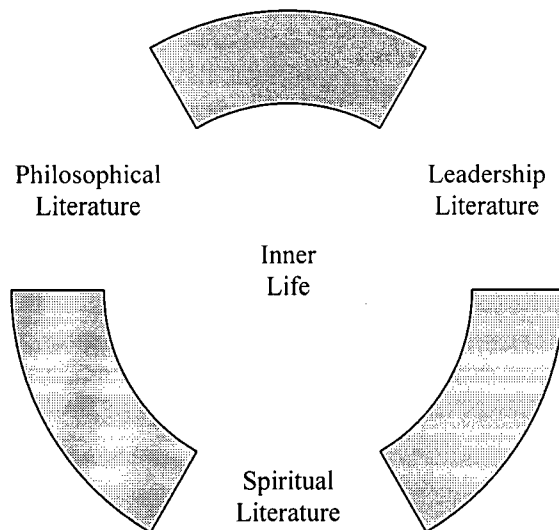
There is complexity in reviewing the literature of spirit and soul for the purposes of this study. In the literature of spirit and leadership there is a broad and varied number of definitions of what spirituality or soul is, consequently it is difficult to create a clear focus on the discourse. Solomon (2002) offers “...if spirituality means anything it means thoughtfulness” (p. 5). Briskin (1996), comments “to approach soul means to go deeper, down into a place in which past and future blur, where what we strive for and what drives us can be glimpsed” (p. 11). Bolman and Deal (1995) view spirit and soul as distinct. They see “soul as personal and unique... spirit is transcendent and all embracing” (p. 9). Within each work, the authors have taken care to define the notion within which they are working; however, there is not yet a common language that

allows for adequate comparisons between the theories being put forward. This is a very similar struggle to my own in seeking a clear definition for the inner life as a place to start the conversation in this inquiry. As Klenke (2003) states: "if spirituality were to become the next frontier in leadership thinking, elucidating the emotional, cognitive, and motivational underpinnings of spirituality would do a great service" (p. 59).

I want to end this section on spirit with a short discussion on *Calling the Circle* (Baldwin, 1998). This book details how to create space for possible dialogue, and I propose that discussion of spirit and leadership can not happen without creating such conditions. The circle, as used by Baldwin, is designed to create a space within which one can listen and speak and be heard. The notion that Baldwin puts forward is relatively simple, but takes a considerable amount of tending and caring. The stages of a circle are simple. The first stage is telling the intention of the circle that allows those present to understand why they are sitting in a circle and what they can expect from the process. The next stage is the setting or re-setting of agreements for the conversation that is about to take place in the circle. Conducting the circle, which follows upon the agreements, takes the form of each person speaking without interruption and without follow-up conversation. When all participants have spoken, then conversation can happen depending on the agreements. The last two stages are feedback to the circle and closing the circle.

What is most powerful in this designing of a place where dialogue can occur is that we are seeking to understand and to listen as Bickford (1996) would have us do. The circle, as proposed by Baldwin, grows and changes as participants begin to care about the ideas of others and about those others' lives. In her book, Baldwin sets out a possible plan to undertake a circle and experience a different way of communicating. Baldwin provides many examples of using circles for conversation and for social change. "If we look at the world as citizens of the circle – a birthright that precedes all current political, social and spiritual divisions – we begin to ask: What piece of the world's condition can I respond to? Be in relationship with? Dialogue about?" (p. 192). The concept of the circle is that the leadership becomes hidden and is shared and that every voice has equal authority. Baldwin (1998) in *Calling the Circle* invites us not to be "ashamed to hope" (p. 205) and it is in this final notion of hope for leadership that I end this section.

Summary



In the literature explored, there has been a call. It is a call to the possible, to understand what happens when one is unhinged, to listen, and to believe. This literature is powerful in its calling to the inner life of

leadership and to the soul of humanity to be better, to change, to consider, and to reach for Greene's "possibility." I want to argue that the discussion of philosophical literature, the discussion of leadership literature, and the discussion of literature of the spirit, interlock to form the discussion of the inner life. By grounding the conversation of the inner life in the literature of philosophy there was opportunity to engage with the ideas of possibility and hope. By working with the leadership literature, it was possible to strengthen the location of this conversation in the discussion of leadership and leading. The spirit literature offered into the conversation the ideas of working with spirit as a leader and the desire and quest for more holistic leadership. Each one of these areas of literature offers into the conversation a critical link to the understanding and the conceptualization of the inner life and, as illustrated above, they create a discourse that interlinks to create a circle of literature.

CHAPTER THREE: MODE OF INQUIRY

if you were to choose one story
what would it be.
would it be yours, or another's...
a fiction or a fact.

how,
how would I know,
who would tell me,
and what would it matter.

it is yours
your reality, this day's truth.
a story offered up
just for me.
me, the inquirer seeking your
inner life to be coded
translated, projected and probed.

seen through my eyes,
eyes that have danced down all the
years and known my own story
best.

if you were to choose one story
what would it be?
tell me, tell me your truth.

jmc

Josselson and Lieblich (2003) state, "...we have dropped the term methodology which carries deep connotations of the traditional research paradigm, and prefer to speak in terms of modes of inquiry" (p. 261). This term, "mode of inquiry," works well for this research study because, although structured, it did not attempt to impose a strict methodology; rather it attempted to follow a path of exploration using a series of conversations through text and interview. In this chapter, I discuss the notion of a

narrative conversation, detail the inquiry method, discuss the participant profile, provide the inquirer perspective, and illustrate the construction and representation of the inquiry.

Narrative Conversation

This study of the inner life of leaders as a conversation in various forms is informed by qualitative research as "...a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It [qualitative research] consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3). This use of qualitative research as the mode in this study provided an opportunity to both create and co-create with the participants meaning around the notions of an inner life. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) write about this as studying things/people in the setting that is natural to them, and from that interaction attempting to create meaning that builds out of the understanding participants have of their worlds.

The use of the word conversation in the title of this thesis was intentional. The word conversation has its roots in Latin and initially was used to mean "living, or mode of living" and then later as "frequent use" (Onions, 1966, p.211). Using the word conversation in the study combined both the archaic meaning of a place where the inner life resides and is accessed frequently and the modern meaning of the "oral exchange of sentiments, observations, opinions, or ideas" (Woolf, 1973, p. 248). Clinchy (2003) does not use the word conversation in writing about her work of teaching others the process of narrative research; however, as she writes about

undertaking her own research, she reflects on coming to an understanding that her work of interpreting data was becoming more empathic and personal rather than detached. In this inquiry, I borrowed her concept of interpreting data with an empathic eye and through a personal lens while honouring the participant data.

The stories or narratives of the inner life of leaders are at the heart of this research. It is through the stories of leaders that I have caught a glimpse of this notion of the inner life. I gathered these stories through two narrative processes using a staged inquiry that will be explored further later in this chapter. The first stage involved a form of narrative story writing and the second involved narratives collected through interviews. When I invited participants to write a story or to participate in the interviews, I was asking them to reflect on an idea that was not often talked about and to go deeper into the conversation of leadership. Through using the participants' stories and then the writing, re-writing and the re-telling of those stories I found places of the inner life that both surprised, dislocated, and changed how I viewed leadership. As Casey (1995) in quoting Greene states, "I want to see through as many eyes and from as many angles as possible" (p. 112). I was seeking, by the use of narrative inquiry, multiple eyes and multiple lenses. Clinchy (2003) describes this idea of seeing and viewing through many lenses as connected knowing which she describes as ... "to understand and be understood" (p. 37). I used narrative inquiry in this study to create a place from which the stories of the inner life of leaders were told, re-told, and re-storied.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) pose the question, “what does narrative inquiry help us learn about our phenomenon that other theories do not?” (p. 123). Later in this chapter I will focus more specifically on the stages of the inquiry and the creation of the play as narrative representation. Here, however, it is useful to answer the above question because I selected this form of inquiry specifically because of what the form could offer to this research. I was seeking a process that would allow the stories of the individual leaders to come to the fore because their stories of the inner life were intrinsic to the study. Conle (2000) likens narrative inquiry to a quest and, in the case of this study, the narrative process was a quest. It was a quest to represent the concept of the inner life as told by the participants and a quest to understand that inner life.

In this inquiry quest, narrative offered three interlinked critical factors that, for me, needed to be part of a conversation on the inner life. The first was the ability to situate the inquiry with the leaders that were part of the inquiry. As will be explored in later chapters, the notions of the inner life belong to those that participated in this study. It was part of their inner landscape (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). The second was the ability to inter-weave my own leadership narrative into the inquiry. Narrative inquiry allowed me to be the researcher, the researched, and the represented.

Narrative inquiry is the study of experience, and experience, as John Dewey taught, is a matter of people in relation contextually and temporally. Participants are in relation, and we as researchers are in relation to the participants. Narrative inquiry is an experience of the experience. It is people in relation studying people in relation (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 189).

The third was the ability to present the inquiry through an expressive representation that honoured the insights of the participants. Willis (2000), in reference to expressive

approaches, notes that such inquiry forms allow the researcher to take the position of receiving data for consideration rather than the more proactive stance of seeking to answer a firmly structured research question.

This inquiry worked with leaders in multiple narrative processes to locate their stories of the inner life within their practice of leadership and within my practice of leadership. The conversation about the inner life of leadership sought to understand, to hear and to listen to the inner life as described by leaders.

The Inquiry Method

I conducted this inquiry in three stages and involved 19 formal leaders from the post-secondary system in British Columbia. The following sections outline the stages involved in the inquiry, the selection of the inquiry participants, and some reflections on the perspective of the researcher as inquirer and participant.

Inquiry -- Stage One:

I conducted Stage One of the inquiry in the spring and early summer of 2003. During Stage One, I asked four leaders to write an inner life story that reflected upon their lives as leaders. As the researcher, I also wrote an inner life story. The participants were given inner life prompts to assist in their writing but were not required to use them (Appendix E). I met with each participant before the writing of the inner life story to talk about the research and the idea of the inner life and leadership.

After writing his or her story, each participant posted his or her story to me via email. I removed any identifiers and reposted all the stories, including my own, to the four Stage One participants. The email (Appendix F) included instructions requesting the participants to add to the inner life stories, make comments or to re-tell their inner life story and/or write a different story. The idea of telling and re-telling the stories was to gain depth in the research, prompt reflection, and generate new reflections. After the iterative storytelling process was completed I extracted themes from the stories about the inner life of leaders and used those themes to create the interview protocol for stage two (Appendix G). In addition, these themes were used in the creation of the conversation play in Chapter Five.

Using inner life stories from other leaders as the basis for the interview protocol proved to be very powerful in that the interview questions became ours, not just mine. Inasmuch as the participants became both readers and writers, they began to collaborate on the research and on the next stage of interviewing leaders. Although I was the person drawing out the themes and moving the stories to the Stage Two interviews, the participants played an important role in the construction of meaning in this quasi-collaborative process (Bray, Lee, & Smith, 2000). As researcher, I was including my participants in meaning making and yet clearly directing the process of thematic analysis. Bentz and Shapiro (1998) talk about this notion as “surrender and catch.”

In surrender and catch, one abandons one's self to something that one is studying... Through surrendering in this way and catching in this way, one

becomes different from what one was at the start...one may need to surrender one's self in order to encounter that which leads to knowledge (p. 164).

In the creation of the Stage Two interview process this semi-collaboration allowed for aspects within the interview protocol that would not have otherwise been there. It allowed for the creation of a list of concepts/metaphors used by others to describe the inner life that would not otherwise have been available as a starting place for the interviews. It allowed me, the researcher, to use language such as "others have said," "when leaders wrote me stories they touched on" and "I have noticed in the stories that." It also led me to ask questions that I would not have created as sole researcher. For example, I would not have created the question about upbringing/background (e.g. how does a privileged, or underprivileged, background play into your inner life?). When I created the staged study, it was my assumption that the Stage One leaders would go deeper into the notion of an inner life than the Stage Two interviewees. I assumed it would be the most powerful data because I allowed participants to reflect in their own time on the questions asked; the response was text based rather than interview based; the stories were exchanged with the participants as a group; then the participants were asked for more input. What became apparent was that although the stories were powerful, the real richness from Stage One was in how useful the stories became as a basis for the second stage interview protocol. Through the creation of stories, these leaders would co-create an interview protocol that had richness and depth that I could never have achieved without that collaboration. Using the themes to develop the protocol opened up new territories of the inner life to explore that I, as a single researcher, would not have included. It was just the first of

many times as I conducted the research that I felt that it was research that was emerging out of the process of the inquiry.

Inquiry -- Stage Two

In the fall of 2003, I interviewed fourteen leaders and asked another student in the ED.D. program to interview me. Above I have introduced the use of Stage One data for development of the interview protocol (Appendix G). I will discuss the analysis and development of the interview questions more fully later in the Construction and Representation section of this chapter. The Stage Two interviews were semi-structured and areas were probed based on the responses given by the participant. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) point out, as the researcher working in this environment, I was creating an "interpretive and contextualized text" (p. 94) as I worked with the interviewees. My objective, as I conducted the interviews, was not to create a repeating interview protocol. I wanted an interview tool that would allow me to listen deeply to what the leaders had to say and to build on their ideas by asking probing questions. I was conscious of the ways in which this structure shaped the research, allowing both researcher and participant to interpret what was important and useful in the interview. Willis (2000) views this as an expressive orientation to research where the researcher is seeking through phenomenological questions to represent the research in an empathic and/or metaphoric way. Atkinson (1998) writes about creating, through interview, a life story and, in parallel, I was creating a leadership inner life story through the interviews. This affected the questions asked or not asked in each case. Each leader was asked questions one through eight (Appendix

G) and, depending on the path of the answers, I probed further in some cases and/or moved on to other questions in the protocol. I followed the path that leaders wanted to take in terms of speaking about their inner life. The interviews were audio taped, later transcribed, and then housed on compact disk for analysis. I discuss the analysis process later in this chapter. Each participant received a copy of his/her interview transcript with sections that I thought would identify her/him highlighted and or changed (Appendix H). Participants were asked to read the transcript and provide any changes and/or edits. In cases where stories might identify the participant and I wanted to use the story in the study because it was powerful, I re-confirmed with the participant that I had their permission to do so.

Inquiry -- Stage Three

In the spring of 2004, I conducted Stage Three of the inquiry (Appendix J). Stage Three involved providing to the Stage Three participants (same five participants as Stage One) primary themes from the interviews and a short inner life story from the interviews that reflected that theme. They were invited to choose one of the themes and its corresponding story and write a short piece on what the theme and story meant to them as a leader. This process was an emergent design, which differed from the original inquiry design. The original inquiry plan was to meet with each of the participants for one hour, discuss the themes that I had found in the interviews, and then ask the participants to write another inner life story. During the process of working with the original five inner life stories and the interview data, I became immersed in the narratives and the power of those narratives to provoke ideas about

the inner life and leadership. Consequently, I decided to share short pieces from the interviews with the Stage Three participants rather than meeting with them and sharing themes only. I hoped that by proceeding in this richer way, I would provoke further interesting narratives about the inner life and leadership. Stage Three participants were provided with the following themes and stories from the interviews. The process of acquiring these themes from the interview data will be discussed later in this chapter.

Theme One: the inner life as a place of social justice

Story: I remember walking home with a friend who was Protestant, I was Roman Catholic and we lived next to each other and were very good friends and I remember thinking after I dropped her off, well why wouldn't she be able to go to heaven also. It didn't make any sense to me that she would not go to heaven. It was what I was taught and it didn't make sense to me because she was equal to me and my friend was really good. My friend should be able, when she dies, to go the same place I am going....

Theme Two: the inner life as a place of values or moral understanding

Story: In fact, I have had some real struggles with religion – going back to my childhood, but I do consider myself spiritual. The thing that keeps me going is making sure all my decisions and my intentions with people sit within my value system, which is hard to define. It is a system that I believe has to do with morals, whether it is truth telling or promise keeping, or treating everybody consistently, or being responsible and accountable. It is a set of values that I have that, I think, are morally and socially responsible and that guide me as a leader. It has a lot to do with ethical behaviour, truth telling and promise keeping.

Theme Three: the inner life as sanctuary

Story: ...immediately the word grounding comes to me. It is the place that you go back to be grounded, and have a point of reference. When you said what kind of metaphor and I am thinking images. I think it was the movie *Terminator* when he is immersed into that boiling pot of destructive whatever it was and all you could see on the screen was a line that started moving towards the middle, then there was the one dot, and it just ended with the dot. I guess it is the reconciliation of who you are externally and then the place that you live inside yourself, which is that point of reference. There can be all

sorts of people outside and all sorts of factors can temper you, but you are who you are and that little kernel inside you is you.

Inquiry Participants

The participants for this research were formal leaders in the post-secondary system at the college and university college level in British Columbia. "Formal" means that they hold a position within the system that formally recognizes them as leaders. The reason for selecting from this group was that within the context of the post-secondary education system they have similar types of experiences, stresses, and political encounters. Formal leaders from universities were not included in the study because the context in which they lead differs in profile, in relationship through governance to their community, in funding and in relationship to the Ministry of Advanced Education. There are twenty-two colleges, university colleges, and institutes in the province of BC. Each of these institutions is lead by an administrative team made up of a President as CEO, and some combination of Vice President(s), Dean(s) and Directors. Post-secondary system leaders experience changes in political ideology, funding, and educational mandate as a collective whole and are in a loose sense a quasi-culture with similar norms, levels of privilege and experience. This similar experience provided a context for the research that was approximately common across all the participants. This allowed the outcomes of this inquiry to reside within a specific leadership context and will allow the outcomes of this research to be relevant within that context. There are other aspects of context that impact leaders everyday in their work, the government of the day, funding issues, issues of student access etc... That said I have chosen not to explicate these issues further because this inquiry is a

conversation with leaders about their individual inner lives and each one of the participants had an individually constructed context within which they were telling their inner life story.

There were 19 participants in the inquiry, including me, as researcher, who participated in all stages⁴. In Stage One and Three the five leaders were in the leadership categories of Dean, Director and Vice President [me]. The fourteen Stage Two leaders were in the categories of Presidents, Vice Presidents [including me], Deans, Directors, and one Faculty member who had been an administrator previously. Each stage had a mix of male and female leaders. There is very little visible ethnic diversity in senior post-secondary leadership in BC at this time and this was reflected in the participant pool. All participants in the research had been in senior management positions for more than three years.

I chose the Stage One and Three participants for the research based upon my knowledge of them as post-secondary leaders. I did this because I was asking for a considerable number of hours from these leaders and because I was starting out on a journey that was exploring a relatively unexamined notion. I wanted to begin the journey with colleagues that I knew. Choosing colleagues that I knew well had a positive impact on Stage One because of the positive personal engagement between

⁴ There were five participants in stage one including myself. There were 15 participants in Stage Two including myself. I have only counted myself as one participant in the inquiry, rather than counting myself twice. Consequently, the number of participants in the inquiry is 19 rather than 20. To protect anonymity I have not indicated numbers of participants in each category except to note that there was only one faculty member.

the researched and the researcher. I considered the following criteria in choosing the Stage One participants. Primarily, I was seeking leaders who would be willing to engage in the conversation about the inner life and had an interest in the subject. I was seeking leaders that I knew and respected for their work in the post-secondary system. Due to the nature of the conversation, I sought out leaders who had knowledge of my work and me. I needed leaders who felt that they could commit to writing a story for the research and remain in the research through Stage Three, a task that might consume as much as fifteen hours. I sought out a mix of male and female leaders because I was interested in whether there might be some gender-based differences in viewpoint. A college and university college mix was also important. To find the participants I contacted seven post-secondary leaders in April 2003 by letter (Appendix A). After initial contact, I asked to meet with each potential participant to describe the inquiry and from those meetings all seven leaders agreed to be part of Stage One and Stage Three and signed the letter of consent (Appendix C). Subsequently, one participant withdrew and one participant wrote a story that identified her so fully that for reasons of confidentiality, I decided to withdraw her input from the inquiry. This left five (including myself) participants in Stage One and Three.

The Stage Two participants were chosen based on the following criteria. I sought a geographical distribution across the province to improve the ability to keep the participants' identity confidential. Distribution across Presidencies, Vice Presidencies, and Deans was important to reflect the notion of the inner life in formal

leadership rather than a specific subset such as Presidents. Again, I sought to balance the male and female gender mix. I chose leaders that had been in formal positions for more than three years to provide for as much of a common experience as possible amongst the leaders. Lastly, I chose leaders who had expressed interest in being part of the study. I included one faculty member in this group who had expressed an interest in being part of the study and had formerly been an administrator. To find the participants I contacted sixteen post-secondary leaders in September 2003 using the contact letter found in Appendix B. From those sixteen contacts, fourteen consented (Appendix D) to be part of the inquiry and remained in the research. In addition, I was also interviewed, by an ED.D. student, in Stage Two, bringing the number of participants in Stage Two to 15.

Perspective of the Inquirer

I want to pause and reflect upon myself as the inquirer before I move on to the process of making meaning from the stories that I collected. In Chapter Four I will more fully explore my personal journey as inquirer; however, it is useful to touch upon how who I am influenced the methodological approaches in this inquiry. I am a researcher who is a formal leader in the British Columbia post-secondary system, a feminist (I will explore this in Chapter Four) and a person who loves words, poetry, and literature. Each of these has influenced the “how” of this inquiry. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) touch on this influence as they write about the interpretive bricoleur.

The interpretive bricoleur understands that research is an interactive process shaped by his or her personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity and by those of the people in the setting... The product of the interpretive bricoleur’s labor is a complex, quilt like bricolage, a reflexive

collage or montage – a set of fluid, interconnected images and representations. This interpretive structure is like a quilt, a performance text, a sequence of representations connecting the parts of the whole (p. 6).

As a leader in post-secondary education, I came to this research with a particular lens.

I was interested in exploring who we are as leaders and how we reside within ourselves as leaders. As an insider, I bring the perspective that the work of public education leadership is of value and contributes to the lives of students. I also bring the perspective that this work is difficult, demanding, and highly political. It is very difficult to estimate exactly how the leadership insider lens affected my inquiry method. However, I am very aware that as an insider there are things that I do not ask and do not see because I am an insider. There may have been moments, concepts and ideas that I did not explore more deeply because I assumed there was a shared understanding and/or it was an area that might be uncomfortable for a colleague.

Ahh...poetry and words.... as inquirer, I bring to this process a love of words and literature and poetry. I think it is this love of words and their evocative nature that is at the heart of everything that I do. This does not mean that I am a master writer. It has, however, drawn me toward expressing the inner life using words, poetry and theatre to evoke the notions of the inner life.

Construction and Representation

Having outlined the stages of the inquiry, in the next section I will examine in more detail the process of analysis used to develop the interview protocol, the process of

analysis used to undertake the creation of the constructed conversation play, and the rationale for an expressive representation of the inner life conversation.

Development of Interview Protocol

Stage One data served two purposes in the research. First, the themes from the Stage One stories were used to develop the interview protocol and, second, the stories themselves became part of the constructed conversation of the inner life, presented in Chapter Five. I have described the Stage One inquiry process earlier and the influence using this data had on the development of the interview protocol. Here I will focus on the process of analysing the data from Stage One. Each participant in Stage One produced a first inner life story of approximately 500 to 750 words and then responded to other participant stories with approximately 150 to 300 words. The stories were analysed using a simple three part thematic coding method. First, the stories were analyzed for themes that indicated how the writers understood or gave meaning to the notion of the inner life. Second, stories were analysed for questions that the writers were asking in their narrative and/or statements that immediately prompted a question; and third, for sections of text that indicated events, times, places in a leader's history that influenced her/his inner life.

In seeking out themes that indicated understanding of the inner life, I looked for metaphors that participants used to describe their inner life. I used these metaphors to develop question one of the interview protocol (Appendix G). The parts of the stories that involved the participants asking questions about the inner life or stories that

prompted questions for me, the researcher, were developed in questions such as: “Is your inner life the servant or the master of your leadership?” Doing time and place analysis was not foreseen as I started into the research; however, four of the five Stage One participants in either the original story or in the response to the grouped stories, commented on their earlier careers or childhoods and connected those experiences to their inner life. One participant told a story of an incident from 35 years ago, one used a metaphor from her childhood, one spoke about attributes inherited from their parents, and one told a more recent story. This reference to a specific time and place led to important questions for the Stage Two interviews about the origins of one’s inner life.

It is important to note that in this stage, my analysis focus was on using the Stage One stories to create questions for the interview protocol and that Stage One would be re-analysed for the larger constructed conversation.

In addition, as researcher I added several questions to the protocol that were of specific interest to me, that did not arise directly from the Stage One participant stories. These additional questions were extensions of the themes. For example, one participant in Stage One wrote about prayer, while the others did not. In the interviews, I asked questions about whether the leader engaged in a spiritual practice.

The following questions formed the initial interview protocol. I clustered the questions around similar concepts as seen below. During the interview the

participants might be asked some or all of the questions in a cluster depending on how the interview flowed and their or my interest in exploring a topic further.

Cluster One:

1. Others have described the inner life as ...
 - a. code of ethics
 - b. a place where I feel "real"
 - c. a place where justice and fairness reside
 - d. the heart of leadership
 - e. a place of meaning
 - f. emotions and feelings
 - g. a place of prayer
 - h. an inner dialogue
 - i. a place of leadership strength
 - j. a place of patient listening
 - k. self talk
 - l. guiding principles
 - m. a fictitious judge that helps and guides
 - n. my upbringing
 - o. a deeply spiritual place
 - p. a place of universal values

What words/metaphors/concepts would you use to describe your inner life?

Cluster Two:

2. How did this inner life form?
3. When you think about your inner life, what period in your life do you go to?

Cluster Three:

4. How does your inner life influence how you lead?
5. How does your inner life influence you every day?
6. How does your inner life influence leadership in everyday leadership situations?

Cluster Four:

7. How do you articulate your inner life with your colleagues and/or the academy?
8. Are you afraid to articulate your inner life to the academy? What causes this fear?

Cluster Five:

9. Does your inner life sustain you? How?
10. What sustains you in your leadership?
11. What gives your leadership meaning? Is this meaning found in your inner life?

Cluster Six:

12. When do you feel 'real' as a leader?
13. Who/What, nurtures your inner life?
14. What role does humility play in your inner life?
15. Is your inner life the servant or the master of your leadership?
16. Describe the heart or spirit of your leadership.

Cluster Seven:

17. How does a privileged or underprivileged background play into your inner life?

Cluster Eight:

18. Do you pray?
19. Do you believe in a universal good and if so, how do you decide what is good?
20. Who is your inner judge?

Cluster Nine:

21. How does your inner life grow or mature?

Cluster Ten:

22. Demographic information (age, gender, time in position)

After the third interview, I added two additional clusters. These questions were added because the participants were speaking about the issues of gender and alignment and I decided to follow up on these ideas. Again, this was an instance of the participants in the inquiry informing the inquiry process.

Cluster Eleven:

23. As I have been doing this study, I have been noticing some gender differences in how female and male leaders describe the inner life. Can you make a comment on this?

Cluster Twelve:

24. Tell me a story about a time that your inner life and your leadership aligned.

25. Tell me a story about a time that your inner life and your leadership didn't align.

The Constructed Conversation Play

The constructed conversation in Chapter Five is a representation and interpretation of the data from all three stages of the inquiry. Several issues became primary for me in analyzing the stories that had been offered to me by leaders. Representing the data in a fashion that respected my colleagues who had contributed to the study was very important to me. The journey of working with participants in the study who were also my colleagues influenced my view of the data and how I wanted to structure the representation of that data. Making meaning and addressing issues of authenticity, trustworthiness and representation were also primary (Clandinin and Connelly 2000). I was seeking a mode of representation that would be emotive and that might evoke further conversation on the possibility of the inner life. As Heywood (2000) states:

The artist can legitimately appeal to the emotions, while academia demands of writers that they studiously avoid doing thus. However, these strictures are being challenged. Academics exploring the complexities of lived experience are stretching the boundaries. (p. 355)

I wanted in this research to take up this challenge of representation and meaning making through a process that would both evoke and represent. I knew that the representation needed to be expressive and evocative. I knew that I wanted to use poetry as part of the process of this inquiry to reflect my own notions of the inner life. I also was seeking another expressive form for representation of the data from the inquiry stages. As Heywood (2000) reflects, "...for this I sought something more pliable, manipulable, delicate, resilient..." (p. 357). I found this form in the notion of a constructed conversation presented as a play (see Chapter Five). The idea of an

inner life is an evocative idea and, in representing the findings of this inquiry as a constructed conversation amongst a group of leaders, I wanted to evoke and provoke ideas that “join the writer and reader” (Heywood, 2000, p. 364) in the process of meaning making.

The text based stories about the inner life and the semi-structured interviews had both produced narratives of participants’ views of the inner life. The narratives in some instances were stories from participant’s lives and in other cases narratives that expressed a viewpoint on a particular question. Widdershoven (1993) notes that, “...from a hermeneutic point of view, stories are based on life, and life is expressed, articulated, manifested and modified in stories...thus stories are interpretations of life in which the meaning of life is spelled out...” (p. 9). Based on these ideas I began to view the stories told as interpretations of the inner life. Widdershoven (1993) touches on the idea that interpretation – the researcher making meaning in this case – is a dialogue in that the reader and the text are coming together to create an understanding.

In this research, I would propose that there were three interlinked negotiated processes of meaning making or creation of understanding. First, there was my role as researcher creating the inner life prompts (Appendix E) which both provided an opportunity in Stage One for participants to understand the process of writing an inner life story and limited, in a way, that story through the use of prompts. The second negotiated construction of meaning occurred when, as researcher, I took the

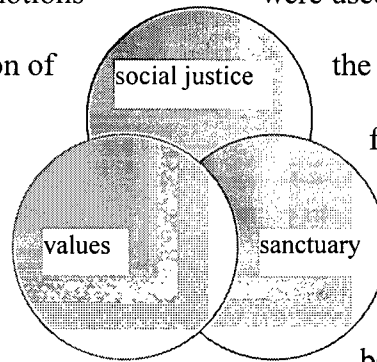
text and created an interview protocol from the inner life stories. By taking the stories from Stage One and creating an interview protocol from them, I constructed meaning by shifting the context within which the stories were residing (Widdershoven, 1993). By doing so I was exerting my power as researcher to construct the notion of the inner life of leaders. The third negotiated construction of meaning occurred when I created the constructed conversation play using data from all three stages.

In creating the constructed conversation play, I worked with the data from Stage One, Two and Three, collecting clusters of themes, seeking out repeating ideas, reading, rereading for the repeating themes and patterns. In the beginning of this inquiry I very much wanted to have a conversation with leaders about the inner life, and in representing the data through the process outlined below, I attempted to bring to life a conversation about the inner life and leadership. Chapter Five is a constructed conversation play. I have used the term a constructed conversation play because it is a conversation constructed directly from the words of the participants in this inquiry staged as a play. The play revolves around a conversation by five leaders who are part of one of the character's (Joan) research. This conversation is overheard by the character Joan [myself, the researcher] and she fulfills the function of an "interpretive bricoleur" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 6), providing a monologue on what she is hearing. As "interpretive bricoleur" I must as researcher and actor expose and engage with the how of meaning making, the bias of meaning making and the notions that are underlying the conversation.

The rationale for using a constructed conversation play as the representation of the findings in this inquiry was fourfold. First, I wanted to use a representation of the findings that would honour the gift of data offered to me by education leaders. In using their own words to construct a play, I was seeking to honour their input. Second, the storied nature of the text from Stages One and Three and the interviews from Stage Two held the evocative power of the notion of the inner life and leadership, and I wanted to hold on to this narrative power in the representation. Third, many of the stories told by leaders were very personal and by taking the data from 19 leaders and re-storying it as dialogue for five characters in a play ensured a level of confidentiality and anonymity to the participants. The characters in the play were created as composite characters who speak re-storied data from across all stages in the inquiry and across all participants. Fourth, plays, even in their written form, undertake to assist the audience to experience ideas. In the honouring of a conversation about the inner life I did not want to write about the conversation, rather I wanted the reader to experience the conversation and be part of it. Simply put, I wanted to be part of the conversation, I wanted the reader to be part of the conversation, and I wanted to allow for interpretation by both the reader and myself.

The constructed conversation play represents the findings in this inquiry and the creation of the play took a series of carefully planned out steps.

Step One. I sought out overarching notions of the inner life in the data. I found that there were three key notions of the inner life for education leaders that were repeating in the data: the inner life as a place of social justice; the inner life as a place of values, ethics, or moral understanding; and the inner life as peace, balance, or sanctuary. I noted earlier that these key notions were used in Stage Three of the data collection. In the construction of the play, these notions became the meta-organizational tool for the nature of the five characters. I have represented the meta-themes in a Venn diagram that shows the overlap and intersection of the ideas because the themes were not exclusive within a single participant's story. Participants that spoke about social justice also might have spoken about moral and ethical thought. However, within the data there was a stronger theme of social justice than ethics or sanctuary. Therefore, as described below I created three characters for the inner life theme of social justice; one character for the inner life theme as a place of values, ethics or moral understanding; and one character for the theme of the inner life as peace, balance or sanctuary.



Step Two. I created and named the characters in the play as the next step. I created three female characters and two male characters, which reflected the slightly greater number of females in the inquiry. For reasons of confidentiality, I do not disclose the number of men or the number of women in the inquiry. Harry, Sally, and Joanne were the characters that held the meta-concept of social justice and the inner life. Martha

was the character who held the inner life as sanctuary and Kevin was the character that embodied the notions of ethics, morals, and values. The names of the characters were fictional and do not represent any administrator in post-secondary education.

Step Three. I then began the process of reading and re-reading for specific themes. I extracted these themes from the data and organized them into dialogue for the five characters. I extracted exact wording from the data, and as will be seen in Chapter Five, used that exact wording as dialogue in the play. The process I used to analyze and construct the dialogue took several attempts. I finally resorted to a simple technique of literally cutting up the data and sorting it into thematic dialogue for the characters. I did this by taking over the dining room table for several weeks. I selected five figurines from around the house and gave each the name of one of the characters. I then began the process of sorting the dialogue. I first sorted for themes using the three meta-themes of social justice as inner life, inner life as ethics, values, and morals, and inner life as sanctuary. Then I sorted those themes by character. Next, I sorted for scenes of dialogue. Then I sorted for dramatic progression through a conversation amongst five people. Finally, I re-sorted using the lens of my primary purpose, which was to have a conversation with leaders about the inner life and meaning of that inner life in their work. I spent several weeks with the characters living on my dining room table as I worked and re-worked the ideas.

It is interesting to note that after completing the play I had unused dialogue. This unused dialogue was very much like the scenes that are edited out of films. Connelly

and Clandinin (1990) write about the notion of re-storying and it is this idea that I built upon in working with the data. The notion of re-storying fits the undertaking of an examination of the inner life because from the beginning of the research I have been taking an idea and “re-storying” it to lead into the next examination and/or to lead into the representation and meaning making of the data. “The spoken or written word has always a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions and how carefully we report or code the answers” (Fontana & Frey, 2000), and it is within this ambiguity that I attempted to re-story and honour the intended meaning of the data that I had collected. The analysis borrowed the hermeneutic idea of attempting to re-dialogue with the stories and the interviews, to ask what meaning it held for who wrote [or spoke] it (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998).

Step Four. Having analysed for themes, sorted, and selected dialogue, I moved to creating the constructed conversation play itself. I created a setting for the play that would allow a dialogue to take place. I chose an island where the leaders had been grounded by a storm as a fictional setting because it allowed the administrators to be isolated enough to have a conversation. It is common for senior administrative leaders to be in a helicopter together en route to a meeting or other event. I next undertook to write the play itself. Each piece of dialogue was utilized to create a progressive conversation about the inner life. This progressive conversation was clustered into the following acts and scenes:

- i. Act One, Scene One: Inner Life Defined
- ii. Act One, Scene Two: Good, Intention and Power

- iii. Act One, Scene Three: Telling the Inner Life
- iv. Act Two, Scene One: Origins and Maturing
- v. Act Two, Scene Two: Work: Loving and Hating It
- vi. Act Three, Scene One: Making a Difference
- vii. Act Three, Scene Two: Inner Life Revisited
- viii. Act Three, Scene Three: Gender Matters
- ix. Act Three, Scene Four: The Quest and the Pain

Having created the shell of the play I then worked on the character Joan's monologues, which I describe further in Chapter Four. Each monologue reflected upon the words of the leaders and provided further analysis. The last step was to create bridges and scene prompts that provided movement in the play. I used fictional scene prompts when I needed an action to create momentum or tension in the play. In creating the scene prompts, I took great care to honour the meaning intended by the original participant. In the transcripts, I ensured that every pause, every laugh, etc. was transcribed and I returned to the transcriptions to lift out some of the scene prompts. However, some fictional scene prompts were required to create action in the play and allow the characters to acknowledge each other's dialogue.

In representing the findings of this inquiry as a constructed conversation play, I sought to offer levels of interpretation. I was seeking to present the words of leaders as they wrote and spoke about their inner life. I was seeking to meet the original inquiry purpose of seeking to record, reflect and wonder (Clandinin & Connelly,

2000) about the inner life of education leaders and the inner life's influence on their leadership. And, I was seeking to evoke a conversation about the inner life of leadership.

Reflections on Trustworthiness

This research is a conversation with a specific group of British Columbia post-secondary education leaders at a specific moment in time. To borrow from Greene (1995) this research is "forever on its way" (p. 1) in that it touches into a conversation that is changing, multiple and dynamic. What an education leader would say about her/his inner life on any given day is profoundly impacted by that particular day in education, the political influences of the day, funding issues, issues of hope for education, and by personal dreams about what education should be. In fact, I had one participant who was having a very bad leadership day when we did the interview and there was no question that her day influenced her answers. Consequently, this inquiry is more about a beginning of a conversation than a final or transferable statement on the inner life of leaders.

This inquiry should be judged in relation to trustworthiness (Smith, 2000) and possibility (Greene 1990). Smith lays out four elements in his concept of trustworthiness: "reflexivity, transparency, moral reasoning, and persuasiveness" (p. 143). Transparency, as defined by Smith, is an accounting of how one arrives at the understandings one is presenting and reflexivity is an accounting of the inter-

relationships between the context, the researcher, and the data. In this research this transparency and reflexivity are addressed through the presentation of the theoretical and literature framework within which the inquiry resides, the attention paid to the mode of inquiry, a discussion of the care that has been taken in building the data representation, and the reflections of the inquirer.

In building the theoretical framework I drew from literature aligned with the ideas of hope, possibility, quest and seeking because that literature lent itself to a discussion of the inner life as a place that held particular qualities and influenced leadership in particular ways. The mode of inquiry was written in a way that helped the reader to understand the progression of the inquiry. In doing this I was establishing both a transparency and reflexivity into the discussion that allowed the reader to understand how the research had been undertaken and the position I held as researcher.

In Chapter Four, *The Journey*, I have written a reflective piece on the experience of conducting the research to more clearly locate myself within the research and to make transparent my biases, views, and experiences as researcher. In the representation of the data, I undertook to honour those that had participated in the study. In this honouring, I undertook to represent the data in a format that allowed for multiple meanings of the narratives and illustrated my interpretative stance. What is important here is that the reader can both see the stance of the researcher and experience a representation of a conversation, one with many possible interpretations. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) state “it is wakefulness that in our view most needs to characterize the living out of our narrative inquiries...” (p. 185).

Moral reasoning and persuasiveness are the second set of criteria Smith (2000) lays out; however, for the purposes of this inquiry it is more useful to use related concepts from Willis (2000). Willis discusses arts-based research and as this inquiry uses an arts-based representation of the data (a constructed conversation play) his ideas are useful to this undertaking:

Verisimilitude, last on the list but perhaps key to a quality test of this kind of inquiry, refers to what has been called the ‘phenomenological aha’ – the moment of ‘that’s it’; ‘yes that is what it is really like’ (p. 45).

In this study, the stories are re-presented through a constructed conversation play. Britzman (1995) writes about narration not being done to capture truths, but rather it is about constructing particular versions of truth through the process. I have undertaken, as discussed above, to honour the narratives and stories of the participants, but also to create a conversation that “provokes a recognizable representation of the real world” (Willis, 2000, p. 45) or, in this case, the inner life. The process from Stage One to the constructed conversation play required attention and rigour. In particular, because I was using the exact words of the leaders, rigour was an essential requirement to every step in this inquiry. As noted earlier I had returned the transcripts to the participants for their input and during the data analysis stage and early drafting of the play, I paused to both thank the participants and bring to their attention that I would be using the data to construct a play (Appendix I). The last component that Willis outlines is “utility” (p. 45). I argue that the “utility” of this research is in advancing a conversation about the inner life of leadership and the prompting of the reader to reflect on her/his inner life and leadership work.

This chapter has outlined the mode of inquiry used in this study. I want to close this chapter with a final comment on the iterative nature of this inquiry. At each stage of this inquiry, I found the words of the participants in this inquiry leading me to modify my inquiry, to broaden my thinking and to include more ideas. I think the design of the inquiry allowed for that process to take place and the inquiry is richer for it.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE JOURNEY

We travel, not knowing the way
Pretending,
the map detailed in our laps.
We do not know what is coming
nor where we go

i do not want to travel laden
i crave to travel light and quick

i pack for conversation, make room for
laughter, hope, and attempt to squeeze
out despair

i pack your gifts
tissue wrapped and gentled

I know I am unknowing
and yet,
I hold my map tight
close in to my heart
hoping to read in the dark

jmcb

In this chapter, I chatter about the journey of creating this inquiry. I use the word chatter intentionally because in this chapter I allow a place for myself in this thesis through reflecting on being an inquirer, my own story, the experience of undertaking this inquiry and my experience of leadership. For me, the journey of this inquiry was an important part of understanding my own inner life. Who I am as leader, what my own inner life tells me about leadership and how that influenced the how, why and outcome are all critical pieces of this conversation. There is a wonderful poem by Mary Oliver (2001) entitled the "Journey" which in part states:

One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice....
....
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do ---
determined to save
the only life that you could save. (p. 10)

For me, this poem represents the beginning of this research journey. As doctoral students we are encouraged to study our practice and, for me, my practice could have been any one of the many things I do. It could have been policy, governance, management styles, or strategic planning. The list was endless. However, I wanted to inquire into something else. I was drawn to have a conversation with leaders about who we are as leaders, what the leaderly⁵ possibility is in what we do everyday. This drive to have the inner life conversation is based on my own personal views of leadership and from the beginning of the ED.D. program, it was apparent to me that I could not undertake another form of inquiry. It was as if this inquiry was calling me, telling me to undertake the journey and that no other journey was possible for me as a leader.

⁵ Leaderly is not a proper English word. It has been created for this inquiry because in playing with the word lead, leader, leading the word leaderly evoked for me meaning that the other words did not quite capture.

As ED.D. students, we undertake research directly related to our practices and, therefore, must be in practice to be part of the program. The program's intention is to bridge theory and practice. This inquiry into the inner life of leaders fits perfectly into this notion of bridging theory and practice through having a focused conversation with leaders about their inner life and wrapping around those conversations theoretical notions that focus on the concept of the inner life of leadership. The ED.D. program was a wonderful journey for me in that it melded together practice and theory in ways that were, in my experience, unusual. In this chapter, I have a conversation about my own practice of post-secondary leadership because it is this practice that I bring to the ED.D. educational undertaking. I also have a conversation about the journey of this inquiry and include excerpts from my own interview on the inner life and my own inner life story (in italics).

My journey to public leadership has been more accidental than planned and yet at the core of the journey has been the vocation of teaching and learning. Like Palmer (2000), at the core of everything I do as a leader, is teaching. I love the vocation of teaching, the magic (Cockell, 2004) that can occur within an environment that is designed for learning. Before becoming an administrator, I taught in faculty development, and the power of working with teachers who wanted to change the lives of their students was amazing. I take this possibility of teaching into leadership with me every day and desire that leadership and leading could be a place of teaching and learning. Leading in education has become my vocation and, as such, it has a

powerful hold on me and I can neither turn away nor can I be different than I am as a leader. Palmer writes about vocation:

Vocation at its deepest level is, "This is something I can't not do, for reasons I'm unable to explain to anyone else and don't fully understand myself but are nonetheless compelling" (p. 25).

For me, leading is like this, it is something I find myself compelled to do, without adequate words to describe why. Leading is my vocation and, at times, it is hard. In my own interview on the inner life, I talked about having a desire "*to work at a workplace where people felt like they could be honest and felt like what they did was respected and cared for.*" I am not so naive to believe that this is possible in a world of competing values and concerns but, as a core to my leadership, it is something that I work toward and practice. This word practice is an important one for me in leadership because it reflects what is at the core of the leaderly undertaking. As I say in my interview:

I talk about leadership being a practice not a thing, and the notion of practice is that you practice everyday at being a leader and you practice at some place of leadership. It is a practice, it requires training, and honing your skills and it requires a sense of your inner life and your leadership. And, so leadership and practice this is an unfinished canvas.

For me, in leadership many external influences shape my role as an education leader. There are the political forces of the day and the integration of political ideology into the leading of education. The provincial government in power has influence on the post-secondary education system and its priority areas. This has an impact on policy development and consequently on leadership. There are always issues of funding in public education and issues of how the taxpayer views the costs of education versus the social good of education. There is the internal climate of an organization and how

organizationally flexible and nimble it is in terms of its ability to adapt to changing times. All of these things are present every day in the environment in which I lead. What interests me is how leaders view and work with these things. What internal leadership views allow leaders to work across these issues with integrity and hope?

Hope carries with it its opposite despair, although for me the moments of despair as a leader are not so much despair, as moments where learning and leadership collide: moments where I am forced to seek harder the place of leadership and look for the path that can help an organization. Hope and despair are an integral part of my leadership and an integral part of being the kind of leader I hope to be. Maxine Greene (1990) writes about the idea of possibility and for me it is in this place leadership hope resides. Senge et al. (1999) write about the kind of leadership and processes that might bring about positive change in organizations. For me the cultural shift that needs to happen for change to be fostered can lead to despair. Caputo (2001), in his work *On Religion*, focuses on what we believe in when we become unhinged or when all that we believe in seems to be off kilter. Wheatley (2003), in her article *Finding Hope in Hopelessness*, talks about the idea of hopelessness as the foundation for both patience and not giving up hope. These concepts of hope and despair are becoming more and more important to me as I work in education and my belief builds that social good is at the heart of education and that public education serves that social good. It would be easy to despair for the future of education and I think that I draw some of my courage from walking the edge of despair and being able to look both directions, to despair and to hope. If I did not understand the

concepts of despair and hope, I would not be able to offer leadership something of value.

I reside in the place of dilemma created from hope and despair and I argue that this is a good place. My willingness to be in this place comes from how I exercise my leadership and the underpinnings of that leadership. Leading for me is not only the exercise of my position at the college. It also includes the work that I do either to enhance the leadership of others and/or to grow in my own capacity as a leader. If I can experience both despair and hope, as noted above, and continue to lead, this is evidence that I reside and work in dilemma.

However, it is not enough to reside there; I need to have the capacity to make decisions in that place that are of use to the institution, my classes, and/or the students that I serve. Greene (1978) examines the idea of being morally wide-awake, I think that in order for me to be a leader in this place, and at this time, I must struggle constantly to be awake. I can only struggle to be awake and sometimes obtain a moment of being truly morally wide-awake. One of the reasons that I have co-created the workshop series Labyrinth and Leadership (a workshop combining reflection on leadership and labyrinth walking) is an opportunity to reflect, along with other leaders, on the work that we do. I have undertaken to study the inner life of leaders and I am proposing that it is in this place of the inner life that concepts such as "moral awareness" and "possibility" reside. I think that this inquiry that I have undertaken is also a critical study of my own leadership and the hopes of that leadership. Kanter

(2002) states leadership is “that which leaves the world a better place, that is you lead people in new directions, to solve problems and make new things happen” (p. 59) and this is a constant desire in my leadership.

My ideas of leadership are framed in a background of feminism and the issues of diversity. I worked and taught in the areas of gender and diversity for some years and try to understand how my own feminist notions influence the way in which I lead. Being a feminist leader is challenging and falls again into a management of dilemma. For some feminists I am perceived as too conservative, and for some conservatives I am perceived as too feminist. Yet for me I am only a person who believes that each person in the community that I serve has rights and obligations regardless of race, creed, gender or religion. Palmer (1998) writes about courage. He is writing about courage to teach and talk about teaching, but his ideas translate to leading, in that courage is a very important part of defining the kind of feminist I will be, and what kind of role model in leadership I present.

I can now open a book on research and find entire sections on feminist notions of research. Finding these ideas in print is like coming home at last. For me, feminist thought was not located in the academy in the seventies; rather it was located in living rooms, in writings by early feminists, in attempting to assist women in accessing non-traditional careers, and in fighting for my own rights as a woman and as a lesbian.

The journey that I have traveled in leadership has always been one constructed from a feminist philosophy. Feminist philosophy is defined as: “a discussion of philosophical

concerns that refuse to identify the human experience with the male experience” (Audi, 1999 p. 305). The feminism, which grounds my work and life, has grown out of my lived experience. This lived experience has led me to a strong ethic of justice, rights, and inclusion – tenets of my own inner life. The experience of living as a woman in the 20th and 21st centuries has also brought a keen awareness of the differences and, often, inequalities of access in relation to how men and women have accessed higher education and accessed leadership positions in higher education. My identity as a feminist shapes who I am and how I practice leadership and is an essential piece of the bricolage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) that I bring as an inquirer to this study.

Being a feminist informs my practice as well as my view of research. It makes me aware of issues of inclusion and access and power. It also makes me aware of my inner and outer self as a leader. At times, I expose my feminist self and at others, I do not. I make the public/private choice based on the situation. I have made a conscious choice to be publicly “out” as a lesbian because I hope that in doing so, the power of my position allows others who are different to be safer within the institution. In my public/private choices, I take great care to be true to the notions of belonging and inclusion and recognize that it is not just my belonging that is important but the belonging of all members of the community. In choosing to expose either my feminist or lesbian self, I am making a conscious leadership choice with all the accompanying political ramifications.

I have talked about hope and despair, about dilemma and about underpinnings. Now I want to talk about practicing leadership. I go to work every day and I know that I have one purpose and that is, as an educational leader, to preserve what is good in what we do and to foster positive educational change. This is not easy work because what is good and what should be changed are different for people across the institution, depending on their perspectives. I seek to understand and listen to these differences and, as in the practice of leadership, there are days when I succeed and days that I fail. It would be easier to disregard the perspectives of others, to stop listening and stop seeking, but I refuse to do so. I do not think that in my lifetime I will have the opportunity to lead in a “morally wide-awake” (Greene, 1978) community; however, in the meantime I will continue to quest for this in myself, my team and my institution.

I administer the day-to-day world of education and do it well, but in the realm of leadership I quest, and in that questing, I try to understand both my own leadership and the leadership I see around me. In this questing to be “morally wide-awake” and to “listen,” I understand that my leadership makes a positive difference for some and a negative difference for others. In so being, my leadership is no less morally sound or less democratic, it is merely my leadership, my dilemma. I would argue that to administer in the modern world of leadership is the easy part. It is a world of policies and procedures and one can often see the choices as right or wrong. In leading, I would argue that the opposite is true. Although as leaders we receive a great deal of feedback on our leadership, it is a place that is filled with multiple perspectives,

multiple agendas, and multiple moral principles. Consequently it is much harder to measure the outcome of leadership. In my own work, I have a great desire to administer with excellence (the easy part) and lead with possibility (the hard part).

The journey of the conversation with leaders about their inner life was located in my own notions of leadership and my own concepts of what leadership might be. As I moved from the idea of a conversation with leaders to undertaking the conversation, it was a journey of constant reflection on what I was doing and what I was hoping to do. The first stage in the journey was to seek out four colleagues who would work with me in Stage One of the inquiry. I have written in the previous chapter about the practical aspects of selecting participants for the study. Here I want to write about the less tangible aspects of working with this first group. When I first set out to select the participants for Stage One my reaction was one of high anxiety. The entire inquiry was based upon the idea of an inner life of leaders that I did not know existed in others. It was quite possible in this first phase that I would find out that leaders could not write about their inner life nor would they be able to identify with the idea of how an inner life might influence their leadership.

I struggled with what this thing that I wanted to explore was, what I would do with the data when it was returned and if my colleagues would think me daft in wanting to explore something so philosophical when there was so much work to be done in policy, funding and other kinds of work. All of these things were swirling in my head as I approached the first participants. It brought the issues of “why this research?” to a

focal point for me. I began to understand that in my view, the issues of governance, policy, funding, etc. sprang from a core of leadership and it was this core I wanted to explore.

I also began to struggle with form and function at this point. I knew that some form of alternative representation would be required for the data to have any meaning and began the exploration of narrative inquiry as a form for the research. As I understood more and more about narrative as a form of inquiry I began to understand that the “process and product” (Conle, 2000, p. 201) were inter-linked and that I was not collecting data about other leaders. Rather, I was co-exploring with other leaders the idea of the inner life and that my view of myself as leader was central to the inquiry. This idea of an autobiographical piece, the journey, was both fascinating and frightening because it required that I write about my own inner life and own that as my belief about leadership. I found myself in that place of wondering what my own voice could and should be in this research. What would remain silent and what would find its way onto the page along with the findings of the research? I was interested in being a participant/researcher (Ellis & Bochner, 2000) that would allow for who I was and my leadership being part of the context, but the conversation with other leaders being the primary focus of the inquiry.

With all this in mind, I created the inner life writing prompts for Stage One and went out to my colleagues to ask for inner life stories. I also wrote my own story using the same process. When the stories came back I knew for the first time that I had

something worth exploring. There were words and themes in the stories that resonated with my own, and yet each description was rich, unique and powerful.

Building the interview protocol from Stage One was an interesting experience because I was not alone; it was as if I had a group of collaborators sitting on my shoulder co-creating the questions. I attempted to create the questions in such a way that would get at the concepts of the inner life without asking for levels of participant disclosure that might make them uncomfortable. These participants were my colleagues and I wanted to approach them with respect and yet ask questions that would explore the concepts of an inner life. I started the interviews with the person I knew best of all my participants. This was more accidental than by design, but in doing so it allowed me to explore with this person more fully the questions, the intended meaning of the questions and to revise some of the questions as I moved to interview two. Again, there was this aspect of collaboration between researcher and participant that seemed to be shifting and moving the research. It was also this first participant that started the conversation about gender that led me to add in the gender question after a couple of interviews. As I moved through the interviews and through Stage Three there was a primary emotion that kept re-surfacing, that of awe and respect for the people in this inquiry. As I listened to them speak about the inner life, about leadership and about their work, I was humbled by each person's profound desire to make a difference in education.

As I was moving into the data analysis stage, I met with my supervisor one day and she commented on my use of the word “data.” She stated that its origin was “gift.” I looked it up and its root is from the Latin “to give” (Onions, 1966). As often in undertaking this inquiry, there occurred at that moment an “aha” about the inquiry and the notion of gift; a true gift is considered, chosen wisely and offered freely. I look back on the narratives and the interviews and that is, in fact, what the leaders in the inquiry were doing. They were offering gifts of their inner life.

I took these gifts and began to seek out a form of representation that would honour the gifts and provide understanding of what was being said in this inquiry. I played with using some kind of found poem format. I struggled with using the participants’ words to attempt to create a series of narratives about the inner life. I returned to more traditional thematic analysis approaches. Having struggled with all of these ideas I returned to the notion of a conversation with leaders. The essence of this inquiry had always been to have a conversation about the inner life and leadership. Consequently I began to play with the ideas of what such a conversation might look like. At first I thought I would create a conversation with all nineteen leaders as if they were at a cocktail party. Then I struggled with the idea of using the form of the labyrinth as a conversational container. My first realization was that nineteen characters were too many to work with and still bring the conversation to life. My second realization was that the participants had provided me with some very profound comments about the inner life and leadership and I had a responsibility to the issue of confidentiality. I

began to work with the notion of a play. This was the representation that had energy for me as the inquirer.

The process of writing the play was wonderful and difficult. I wanted the play to be true to the expressive form and yet fulfill the inquiry requirement of representation and meaning making. This was the place that my two halves as writer and leader came together for me for the first time in my life. I have always kept my writer in the closet, as it were, and people who knew me as a Vice President rarely knew me as a writer. Bringing these two halves together in this inquiry felt like a very high risk activity and yet the honouring of a conversation kept bringing me back to doing just that.

In writing the play I created five leaders, a researcher and a pilot. The responsibility of these five fictional leader characters was to honour the words of the participants in a valid way. They did this as described in Chapter Three; however, like fictional characters they also took on a life of their own. For example, as I worked with the dialogue, having sorted and re-sorted it by themes, I would be writing and suddenly I would find myself saying, "Sally would never say that; that is Martha's line." I knew when this happened that the inquiry was in fact honouring the participants' contribution. It was as if the characters began to protect the data from being misrepresented. In an academic undertaking it is scary to write this last sentence. It is very common for fiction writers to have the experience of characters beginning to take on the plot, but I have a voice in my head that tells me this is not supposed to be

the way in academic writing. However, I would argue that in this inquiry the way that I have used the words of the participants to create five characters also allowed for the characters to push against what the character was willing to take on as dialogue and to push against misusing the data. It is as if the words of the participants became embodied in these five leader characters.

The leader characters provided the representation of the data, but for the inquiry to work, I also needed to ask the question what do these words mean? I created a character that fulfilled the role of meaning maker. At first I made this character a male pilot who would appear on stage, speak in the third person and tell the audience what the characters had meant in their dialogue. This approach had a few problems: one, it was boring; two, it was arrogant; and three, it jarred in a theatrical sense. Next I made this character the cottage owner. It worked slightly better, but still did not fit. Next, I made the character the "researcher." This worked reasonably well as the character had a softer, more inclusive way of making meaning through a series of monologues. After my supervisor read the play she made a simple suggestion, "why not call this meaning maker character Joan?" I knew when she said it that it was the right suggestion and I hated it. It, for me, was a level of exposure that I did not want. And yet, as soon as I began to re-work the monologues spoken by the new character, "Joan," the issues of voice and finding the right tone for meaning making began to go away. As I re-worked the play several times more and more of me entered into the character, I allowed poetry, humor and my voice to find their place.

Chapter Five is the representation of the conversation about the inner life and leadership in theatrical form. Writing it was the hardest part of the thesis and yet recently, when I experimented with the play being read aloud, it sounded authentic. After the reading a member of the group who was an administrator (not in the inquiry) said to me “that is exactly how it is – leadership is like that.”

I want to end this telling of the journey with two things, first, my own inner life story and, second, a final comment on post-secondary leadership.

Inner Life Story

An inner life implies an outer one,
protected and armoured against the world.

And,

then the inner life a place of refuge and desire and hope and
longing.

A place where leadership

is worked and worked

like a favourite pebble against the

thumb of meaning.

Meaning is such an interesting word, the origin of which both contains the idea from middle English of meanness and the meaning a common understanding. For me it is interesting to start at this place of meaning, because it is creating a place of meaning that gives substance to my inner life. I seek within me the meaning of my leadership, the things, ideas and potential that make leading a value-based experience for me.

When I reflect on my leadership, I seek this meaning and long for my work to have at

its core much more than the tips and tricks of management. Rather I long for it to be based on this place within that sustains and works and re-works the leaderly actions of my day. As I write, I think that it sounds as if my inner life is simply a worrier going over actions again and again. That is not what I mean by working and re-working; rather I am talking about plunging my actions during the day into the vat of my inner life and holding them up against a few things that I hold as core to my being a leader.

This core has developed over the years and been added to as I have grown and changed. It would be a little too simplistic to call this place a set of values or my upbringing. I think it is something else. I think, for me, it is actually an inner dialogue with my leader self about what might be, and it gets me up in the morning believing in a workplace of respect and communication and valued humans. I grew up on a farm, and I remember kneeling in the field with my father and examining the small shoots of grain poking up through the earth and feeling the hope of a good crop. Not all the storms, rain, and bad crops could ever take away that hope that was there every spring. My leadership is like this cycle. The hope of spring and then the despair of standing in the pelting rain watching the grain go down to the earth and knowing that I can not save it and wondering why I plant at all and then it is spring again and I am kneeling in the morning sun urging the little shoots to grow.

All that said, I know that my inner dialogue about leadership and the things that I care about are influenced by being a lesbian, a feminist and being privileged. My

inner dialogue has rights that others do not and, as such, can find the morning sun easier than others do. I never doubt that these things make a difference to my leadership and how I undertake my work everyday.

Anyway, on with the inner dialogue: it is not as if I talk to myself every time I do something at work, although as I move into menopause I do find myself talking to myself now and again. The inner dialogue is a spiritual place for me although I do not hold to any religion. It is a place where my leadership soul can find wisdom, solace, and comfort. It teaches me that redemption is possible both for me and others. It teaches me that no one is right and that relativity can kill an organization. It teaches me that although I am an administrator every day, some days I lead and others I do not. It teaches me that what I know today is probably not what I will need for tomorrow, and that all I can do is forgive, others and myself. It gives me a longing to lead that gets me up every morning willing to stand up against the pelting rain of public leadership.

Writing the inner life story was powerful for me and it brought into perspective many of my notions about leading and leadership. I started this inquiry because I had a fascination with the idea of the inner life in whatever form or description it appeared. As I moved through the inquiry and read or heard the stories, I became interested in how we represent our inner lives to the outer world through metaphor and an almost fable-like story telling. The words and the construction of meaning fascinated me.

Nineteen people gave of their time and energy for this inquiry and it is their words that create the play in Chapter Five. As I conclude this inquiry, I take with me the capacity of these participants who profoundly care about education, about students and about doing leadership that is worthwhile. This inquiry has engaged in a conversation that for the most part is unheard in administration and I want to end this chapter with a poem that addresses that issue.

Talking Leadership, Talking Dirty

what if leadership talk was like sex talk

forbidden and secret

can you hear the conversation

the innuendo

slipping into someone's office

asking in whispered tones

“did you do it”

“was it good”

“was it good for them”

“are you going to see them again”

“you know i read about that position”

“what will your boss say if he/she finds out”

makes me want to talk leadership, you?

jmcb

CHAPTER FIVE: THE INNER LIFE -- A CONVERSATION WITH EDUCATION LEADERS IN THREE ACTS

Characters: **Harry**, education administrator, dressed in business attire.
Sally, education administrator, dressed in business attire.
Martha, education administrator, dressed in business attire.
Joanne, education administrator, dressed in business attire.
Kevin, education administrator, dressed in business attire.
Joan: dressed in jeans and sweatshirt.
Pilot: dressed in pilot uniform.

Notes to the Characters: Each of the characters above is a compilation of senior education administrators. The word administrator has been used as opposed to President, Vice President, etc. to both honour the fact that each compilation has been made up of several levels of senior administration and to ensure confidentiality. Each character is part President, part Vice President, Part Dean or Director and each has a little bit of the one faculty member who was part of the study.

Notes to the Dialogue: The dialogues of the characters are for the most part exact quotes from the research. Fictional bridges were created in some cases and serve the purpose of keeping the play moving and/or transitioning the dialogue. For the most part, each time a character speaks, his/her words are a discrete excerpt from either a participant narrative or interview. Great care was taken to ensure that the integrity of the ideas or their meaning was not compromised in the rare cases where excerpts from the interviews or stories of more than one participant were combined in a single dialogue. Minor grammar modifications appear where necessary, but were used sparingly and related for the most part to tense modifications.

Fonts: Exact quotes from the participant narratives and interviews are in Times Roman, 12 pt.

Fictional bridges are in Times Roman, 12 pt, italic

Stage cues are in Times Roman, 12 pt. italic, bold

Stage Cues: The stage cues are fictional and created for the purpose of bringing life to the drama of reading the dialogue. Care was taken to honour the integrity of the interview and narrative excerpts and the meaning intended by the participants. Consequently, there are not dramatic scenes that evoke high levels of emotion as one might find in a more typical theatrical production. In some cases, the stage cues were derived from the transcripts. For example, if a participant paused to say something with emotion, that was recreated into a stage cue.

Act One Scene One: Inner Life Defined

Five senior administrators enter a small cottage shaking off rain from their overcoats. All are dressed in business attire. A helicopter, high wind, and rain can be heard in the background. The interior of the building is very spartan, clearly a summer cottage. The furniture is old and well used but clean. There are two couches of different eras, an old recliner, and a rocking chair. At one end of the room is a pot-bellied stove. Across the room is the kitchen, also old but clean, with pots and pans hanging from the ceiling. Doors to the bedroom, bathroom, and French doors to the outside deck can be seen. The only unique character to the cottage is a wall of books amongst which are Maxine Greene, Parker Palmer, John Caputo, and a whole series on the latest leadership theories. Beside the bookshelf is a desk at which a woman sits typing on a portable computer. She types throughout the play and only ceases typing when she interacts with the audience. She is invisible to all the other characters and only interacts directly with the audience. A recent copy of the Educational Leadership Journal and Jim Collins' Good to Great are sitting on the coffee table. Also on the coffee table is a palm-sized stone.

HARRY: (moving into the main room, voice a little shaky, to no one in particular)

That was wild, I could almost kiss the ground. What island is this anyway?

SALLY: (following Harry, voice shaky) I don't know where we are, I'm just glad to

be on the ground, I thought we weren't going to make it down.

Everyone just stands for a minute, taking off coats, shaking off the rain. There is a sense of real tension and fear in the body stances and yet everyone is attempting to be calm.

SALLY: I don't know about anyone else, but my heart is still pounding. Where is the

pilot, still out at the helicopter? Wow, he is good. (Sally moves into the room

and perches on the edge of the rocking chair, then immediately stands up

and moves over to the stove)

KEVIN: I'm going to be late for my meeting with the minister.

The other four look at Kevin startled, then laugh. Kevin moves over and sits on one of the couches, pulls out his phone only to find there is no signal. The helicopter noise in the background stops. Joanne and Martha move over to the other couch and sit down.

SALLY: (picks up the stone from the coffee table)

HARRY: (moving closer to Sally) What?

SALLY: That was hairy. I have flown this trip a thousand times and never run into

weather like this... My heart is just pounding.

HARRY: Mine too. (pauses, then continues) Anyway, I guess we are stuck here for a

while. (both pause and look around)

HARRY: I don't mind being stuck here as much as I minded being in that helicopter.

Being tossed around like a toothpick made me think about life: the old life

flashing before your eyes (laughs). It has been a crazy time, work is

demanding more and more all of the time. It sure makes you think about things...(drifts off) Hey, are you one of Joan's subjects for her doctorate?

SALLY: Yes, I am, are you?

Harry: Yes

Kevin: (overhearing) You mean that thing she is doing on the inner life and leadership? I'm part of that too.

Martha and Joanne: (in unison) So am I. (they all laugh).

HARRY: I found the interview interesting: it really forced me to go into my self and ask where it all starts. I think that for me the inner life has a social justice basis, doing something that makes a difference for people and for education. I think many of us feel that way. (Harry sits in the recliner, Sally sits in the rocking chair)

SALLY: For me the inner life is social justice as well and it is something more. It is a link, a conversation with self, a belief in an inner value system, a moral link. It can't be all inside of us; if we are going to have an inner life at all we need to have an outer one that feeds and nourishes what goes on inside us, that self talk that helps define who we are and what we do as leaders.

KEVIN: (sitting legs crossed, still playing with his phone, delivered with humour)

When I think about an inner life, the first words that come to mind are "uuuh," "well" and "hmmm." (more seriously) For me it is not using words like "inner life;" it is a set of fundamental values from which I work that aren't likely to switch too much: honesty, integrity, dedication, a strong set of

values. I think people want to know where your sense of priorities is; you need to be responsible and accountable for your behaviour.

HARRY: *(directly to Kevin)* I am not like you: I don't proclaim a list of ethics.

SALLY: My inner life has to ground me. *(Martha interrupts, leans forward)*

MARTHA: I think of my inner life as being the self-talk and guiding principles that influence my behaviour at work. I think of it as my emotions, feelings and the conversations I have with myself...who you are, that little kernel that is inside of you. *(delivered with humour)* I think it was the movie terminator when he is immersed into that boiling pot of destructive whatever it was and all you could see on the screen was a line that started moving towards the middle, then there was the one dot, and it just ended with the dot. I guess the inner life is the reconciliation of who you are externally and then the place you live inside yourself, which is that point of reference. *(Joanne gets up, moves into the kitchen, and begins to look in cupboards)*

SALLY: *I have a colleague in the system that seeks understanding in prayer.* She says that prayer and religion move her to a place of acceptance as opposed to tolerance. That it gives her a true sense of the other and so much of her leadership work is about where people have been put in categories of the other. She says that prayer really makes her pay attention to who she is *and what she does.*

KEVIN: I don't consider myself a religious person. In fact I have had some real struggles with religion, although *(laughs)* I have tried out the odd "touchy feely" new age activity – they don't come very naturally to me. I rely on a

code of ethics and standards of practice, which have become a way of how I think and act. *(Joanne turns toward the group: but remains in the kitchen with one hand on a cupboard door)*

JOANNE: I would describe the inner life as a set of principles related to social justice, equity and fairness...*(interrupts herself)*...do you think the owner would mind if we made some coffee.

HARRY: *I can't imagine that they would mind. We will need to contact them somehow and let them know that we ended up here, (humorously) if we are here for hours we may be needing more than coffee.*

JOANNE: *(continues as if she hadn't interrupted herself)* In order to make my daily existence feel worthwhile I need to feel that I am engaging in some process of action, social action, social justice, that I, in some way, make a difference. That's what drives me, my whole life has been guided by social justice. *(Sally and Harry nod. Joanne begins to make coffee, find cups, etc.)*

HARRY: *(directly to Sally)* It is difficult in the academy to talk about your inner life. When I articulate my inner life to colleagues, within the academy, it takes the form of value statements, ideas, concepts, or a strategy. As colleagues I believe we have difficulty facing our differences that are not connected to the business of the academy...perhaps it feels safer than talking about what guides your inner life.

SALLY: *(directly back to Harry)* Well I think it is a kind of fear – not rooted in people judging me against my favourite list of ethics. I think the fear is more about... *(drifts off and then addresses the whole group)* It's like a painting, I

think the fear is about the critics arriving to look at the canvas before it is finished and saying “oh well that’s the painting then isn’t it” and you want to say “no” it is just a work in progress. So, I don’t think it is fear as much as how could you ever help people understand that your inner life was a work in progress and that what you see today is not the understanding I will have tomorrow. You know every once in awhile you run up against somebody who teaches you something and teaches you something profoundly and then it shifts your inner life. I have had that experience sometimes with students, you know, I listen to them and sometimes they teach me something profound about leading an organization that has as its work teaching.

HARRY: *(nods)* For me it is not about someone nit-picking about whether I am following my list. It is more around, particularly recently, I have learned, that the way I perceive myself as a leader and the way the people around me perceive me as a leader is a significant gap, and I have to keep reminding myself that people will pay attention to what I have said just because I am *an administrator*.

MARTHA: *For me it is not really about that.* The inner life is the reconciliation of who you are externally and then the place that you live inside yourself. The inner life is my stream of consciousness, always there, always present, never apart, it guides me, counsels me: a place of guiding principles, a place of peacefulness. *(the group pauses for a few seconds then Sally takes up the conversation)*

SALLY: When I am faced with an ethical dilemma at work, I find I have a fictitious “judge” in mind when I consider what the correct decision is. I seem to play out the problem imagining how I would justify my decision at a later point. Years ago, I used to be fearful of being judged by others, to the point that it blocked me from taking action. I would be more tentative and possibly freeze up to some extent. Today, I don’t fear being judged so much; instead I use the fictitious judge in a more constructive way as a metaphor -- a way to evaluate my reasoning while making tough decisions. I believe I am usually playing the role of judge, as opposed to being judged by others. I believe strongly that others can only judge me if I choose to let them, and if I believe they have the skills and knowledge for which they are judging me. I think this belief limits the anguish I could feel from being criticized or judged by others. *(Joanne moves back toward the couches, carrying coffee and mugs, Sally gets up to help her)*

JOANNE: *Coffee?*

EVERYONE: *Sure...*

JOAN: *(Stops typing, looks at the administrators and then speaks directly to the audience. The administrators are silent with their heads bowed and do not acknowledge Joan, nor do they appear to be listening to her words. Joan delivers her monologues in a tone that is in turn musing, humorous and sincere)* Well, welcome to my five characters, distilled, as you will remember from nineteen participants’ data *(picks up a huge stack of paper and shows it to the audience)*. In a thesis, you are supposed to undertake to make meaning

of what you have explored and that is my part in this play, to make meaning from the conversations that I have had. I would consider my role in this endeavour to both entertain you and prompt you to think about these five *(points back toward the group)* and the conversation they are having about the inner life. *(more seriously)* This is just the first scene; consequently, I don't want to tell you everything that I discovered right up front, but there are a few things I want you to notice. This is the beginning, the conversation about defining the inner life, about exploring whether there are common ideas about the what and how of the inner life. As I worked to create these characters from the pooled data, I was intrigued by how the defining of an inner life orbited around three central themes: social justice, values and ethics, and/or a place of peace, sanctuary, or sense of self. *(humorously, as an aside)* I love that terminator story as a metaphor for the core of our being, don't you? *(more seriously)* These three ideas are core to the conversations that I had with leaders. The notion of social justice as intrinsic to the inner life was a predominant theme; you will hear it again later. Other leaders talked about the notions of ethics and morals and a sense of inner self or balance in defining the inner life. *(looking directly at the five characters)* I also was struck by how very human each one of these leaders was. The humanity of their voices is powerful, human because they cared about what they did, not for themselves but for some larger educational good. *(pauses, looks down then back up at the audience)* In talking to the leaders in this inquiry, it became apparent very quickly to me that the inner life was individually defined and

that, although the three themes mentioned were present, it really was a conversation that I was having with each individual leader about her/his personal view of their inner life and how that inner life guided them as a leader. The idea that leadership, although common in intention, is a very personal endeavour and that this personal endeavour is not easily generalized into a few themes, a matrix, or a model became apparent early on in working with the stories and interviews. For example, when Sally states (*gets up and walks over to Sally*): “The inner life is a link, a conversation with self, a belief in an inner value system, a moral link,” it is not the same as Kevin’s (*points to Kevin*) idea of “I rely on a code of ethics and standards of practice, which have become a way of how I think and act.” Sally’s description is about a system that appears to be self-defined internally and Kevin’s comments led me to think about an inner world defined externally through standards of practice and ethical frameworks. Martha’s (*moves back to her chair*) idea of the inner life as a place of “peace” or an intrinsic sense of self was not as predominant a notion amongst the participants. However, for those that did speak about this as an aspect of the inner life it was a central notion of what the inner life meant to them. (*puzzled and musing*) For some participants the locus for an inner life appeared to be external, for others internal and for others they made no separation between and inner and outer life and, argued that no such separation could exist. I leave the research questioning whether there was an internal-external locus for the inner life or merely an inability of language to convey the idea of the meaning of the inner life. The conversation

about leadership is personal, a conversation about individual notions of leading rather than leadership as a transferable notion. As leaders defined the inner life, I began to understand how little language we have as leaders to talk about what we care about and what we believe in. The language the leaders chose to describe their inner life spread out along a continuum of language from secular to spiritual. However, each leader was seeking, regardless of the language they chose, to understand why they were doing what they were doing and how what they were doing made a difference. *(frowns and leans forward)* Notice the words around judgement of self and the judgement of self by others. This is a little bit of foreshadowing here, but this idea of the difficulty in communicating the inner life and communicating leadership within an organization is important to note and we will be returning to it in later scenes. *(quietly, almost to herself)* It is not the description of their inner life that draws me most in this scene; it is the heart with which they describe it. Bolman and Deal (1995) – *(aside, humorously)* I have to tell you the year because this is a thesis – *(continues)* state: “Perhaps we lost our way when we forgot that the heart of leadership lies in the hearts of leaders” (p. 6). I would add to that the heart of the inner life of leadership also resides in translating the inner life to, as Harry states, “...doing something that makes a difference for people and for education”.

Act One Scene Two: Good, Intention and Power

Joan begins typing again. The others reanimate, begin to drink their coffee, except for Kevin who gets up and begins opening cupboard doors looking for sugar.

KEVIN: *Anyone else need sugar? (speaks, as he moves with the sugar back to his chair)* You have to have integrity in the things you do, certain predictability. You should be expected to behave in certain ways – people should be able to anticipate what you might suggest or do so that you are not surprising them – so there is consistency that they can come to count on all the time, but integrity is an important part. The only thing you have any real power with is your integrity, which you will have had to earn. You don't get it with the job. You don't get any power or authority, you do but it is useless unless you have integrity to supersede that and it is your integrity that allows you to be a leader, not your power or your authority or your position. That's a hard thing to attain particularly when you are in our environment because we are dealing with such great diversity, and so people think you're listening to them and not to me, you know, your integrity is in question. You have to put integrity in a broad context so people can see and that is one of the problems we have. That is why I am trying to create a shared vision so that people will sign on and we can work towards that.

HARRY: *(turning and speaking directly to Kevin in response)* The only thing that you learn from history is that intentions are usually quite a long way off from consequences and a lot of consequences are unintended but if there isn't that

attempt to try and get there in the first place then even those less than ideal results will not be achieved. I think that my view of the world is generally that...I continue to believe...people can make a difference and they make a difference largely through effort and persuasion and ultimately through leadership.

SALLY: There are many different goods – it is in the eye of the beholder – I mean, one person’s good is the other person’s bad. (*Joanne nods*) As an individual, there are things that I hold to be true, good, worthwhile, and worthy but I know that many of those things are not the same for others. I view things in a very physical way, this is not the way a lot of people view things. My husband is a perfect example; I mean we are opposite to a point in many of the ways in which we view things, but I don’t think that my good is any better than his good. In my mind there is no one universal good; there are things that are better than others but I certainly recognize that other people are every bit as worthy in the way that they view things as well. But, at the same time, I guess if I look at what I consider to be good things about internal leadership, I have to believe that I have confidence in the way that I do things and for the most part that I do things based on what I consider to be good.

Joanne and Martha both start talking at once

MARTHA: *I think I have an...*

JOANNE: *I talk about leadership as...sorry go ahead...*

MARTHA: I think I have an enormous quest both to be seen to be ethical and to

(emphasis) be ethical in the work that I do. *(others nod)* I think I have great

desire to work at a workplace where people feel like they can be honest and feel like what they do is respected and cared for. I think that can only happen in a place where they can actually see somebody else's ethics and so I think my inner life influences me in a huge way in terms of what it is that I want to attempt to do in leadership. *(Sally leans forward as if to interrupt)* I want to be part of something that is based upon ethical pursuit that actually has an understanding of its own ethics.

SALLY: For me the right is looking at the outcomes, what are some of the goals and how are we achieving those. I think one of the hardest things about being in the leadership position is you end up having to make decisions, despite the thought process you go through, that are going to be hurtful to some people, whether financially hurtful or emotionally hurtful. I mean, I struggle with that all the time *(others nod)* and I also find that by virtue of being in a position, a leadership position, in having power, when you do hurt somebody it's very hard to address that because the power you have gets in the way of two people having a conversation that may begin to heal.

KEVIN: *(interrupting)* It is a rollercoaster...my inner life the rollercoaster...

SALLY: *(smiles and nods at Kevin)* So I find, that I am constantly trying to find a way – is there a way – I can get past who I am organizationally and actually really be able to talk to someone at heart, and I don't -- that's probably one of the things I find a real barrier and I'll get my positional power thrown up at me and that's very hard....

JOANNE: The ability to take both my spiritual life and my social action and live it...

SALLY: (*interrupting and said with some emotion*) I do consider myself spiritual and the thing that keeps me going... (pauses) umm...is making sure that all my decisions and my interactions with people sit within my value system. It is a system –hard to define – it is a system that I believe in that has to do with morals: whether it is truth telling or promise keeping or treating everybody consistently or being accountable for your behaviour.

HARRY: (*shaking his head*) ...the one and only good...that's almost the realm of theology. Is there only one God and is my God the only God and is everyone else mistaken about their God. The word I would use is dialogue with myself, internal dialogue. I use the word *right* more than I use the word *good* and I don't mean correct necessarily because sometimes I think things can be correct but not right. So, right probably is more akin to the meaning that is embedded in righteous. I am uncomfortable with a good or a universal good. If I didn't believe that the construct of values that produced a platform of good was the compelling good, then how could I consider the decisions I was making were right decisions?

JOANNE: (*directly to Harry*) I am acutely aware of my own limitations in interpreting what is good.

HARRY: I have talked to other people, they've also used the word "good" or "just." Those are powerful words. I think that when I was younger I believed in a universal good. I believed that you could actually tell what was good and what was right and what was just. As I have matured and as my inner life has matured I don't think I do believe in a universal good.

JOANNE (*interrupting with emphasis*) *How do you decide then what is good or right?*

HARRY: I decide based on the situation. One of the big maturities in my inner life was coming to an understanding of unintended consequence and so you can do good in the world and create unintended bad consequences and you can still be just and right and create bad consequences.

JOAN: (*Stops typing, looks at the administrators and then speaks directly to the audience. The administrators are silent with their heads bowed and do not acknowledge Joan nor do they appear to be listening to her words.*) Three small words *good, intention, and power*; they are such powerful words. They are the words of sleepless nights. (*Joan gets up and moves to the front of the stage*) To undertake what is good for education is the impossible task of educational leadership: impossible not because of a lack of willingness to undertake the “good” but because the goods compete with one another. What is good for the institution as a whole may not be good for some of its constituents and what might be good for them might be bad for the institution. Doing “good,” education for social justice, these are ideas that are critical to what the participants in this inquiry had to say. As a leader, the intention of the action may be clear but the control of the outcome is not possible: as Harry states: “one of the maturities of my inner life was coming to an understanding of unintended consequences.” (*Quietly and powerfully*) The words swirl together when you link them: good, action, undertaking, integrity,

perspective, truth telling and unintended outcome. The interrelationship between leading from a place of integrity, while knowing that outcome cannot be controlled, and that a leader's good is not everyone's good is a powerful notion of the complexity of daily leadership. The ambiguity or perhaps more strongly the impossibility of leadership is a powerful voice in their (*points back at the group*) dialogue. By ambiguity and impossibility, I do not mean doubt. I mean awareness in recognizing that there are not necessarily common notions of good, intention, or power and that the understanding or outcomes of these are not prescribed in some leadership text but prescribed within a leader, within a leader's inner life. (*pauses, clearly pondering*) I want to tell you what I think -- I think this place within a leader is a place of struggle. Struggle not because it is difficult but because it is a place from which leaders consciously bring their ethical actions to life. In bringing their ethical actions to life they are distributing meanings for these words into an organization for the organization to interpret, reframe, and dispute. For example, when Sally states, "there are many different goods" or Kevin states, "The only thing you have any real power with is your integrity, which you will have had to earn. You don't get it with the job. You don't get any power or authority, you do but it is useless unless you have integrity to supersede that and it is your integrity that allows you to be a leader not your power or your authority or your position," they are expressing meaning that is based on their individual and internal translation of these words. When Sally states that interactions must "sit within my value system... whether it is truth telling or promise

keeping or treating everybody consistently or being accountable for your behaviour” you can catch a glimpse of how she is translating the words to actions. *(walks over to the table and pours a coffee)* Power, now that is an amazing word, isn't it? Like Joanne, I think the consciousness of the power that we exert on the organizations of which we are a part is a critical part of how we are as leaders. Harry mentioned this as well in the first scene. Power, having it, earning it and deciding what to do with it *(laughs)* on many days it makes me want to reconsider this leadership thing...*(shakes her head and returns to her desk)*

Act One Scene Three: Telling the Inner Life

Joan returns to typing. The other characters reanimate. Kevin pours himself more coffee.

MARTHA: *(stands up and wanders over to the stove and then turns back and speaks to the others)* I think that inner life is essential. It is not what we learn from the leadership gurus about the technical aspects of how to build teams or some shared decision-making or whatever. It is how we demonstrate those skills to others and carry them out with others that I think matters most in leadership. It's the ability to feel confident enough in who you are and the strengths of your values, that you are human, open to others. Having others feel that you're a real person that they can talk to...

HARRY: *(leaning forward and interrupting as Martha pauses for a second)* And, it often means that you've got to do something that may not be very popular so

you've got to be prepared to take some criticisms, some heat, and I don't think you can do that unless you feel inside a certain strength, a certain conviction and so I'd say in those sorts of situations that kind of inner place is... (*Joanne interrupts*).

JOANNE: I talk about a set of values and I check out with people if they are their sets of values.

SALLY: I am a person who puts their values and feelings (*pauses*)... I wear them on my sleeve probably to a greater extent than a lot of people. I have conversations with people and talk to people about the fact that it is a difficult job, decisions impact people and they hurt people, they cause pain, and despite that, there are obvious decisions we have to make. I think I demonstrate my inner life by sharing with people.

MARTHA: (*moves over closer to Sally but remains standing*) If we don't enjoy what we're doing and there have been lots of times in the last couple of years that have been very trying. Still, that aspect of who I am and where I came from and where I want to go is based on a set of values, I think are essential for working with others to do this wonderful work that we have to do. It is so integral, *to who I am*, it is hard to pick apart...

HARRY: (*nods and picks up as Martha pauses*) I won't pretend that I am always able to live up to the values. I mean there are times when you are tired, where you say, "okay I'll do this," but there is still that Jimmy Cricket voice of conscience that tells you no that actually wasn't the right thing to do. It was the easy thing to do, but it wasn't the right thing to do. I think you need to

keep sight of that because my experience is that people will take a lead from you even if it's going somewhere that they don't particularly want to go if they feel that you have or are informing that decision with some kind of value.

JOANNE: *I agree.* It really forces you to go into yourself and say where it all starts because for me that is what the inner life is – the point that you take off from and you have to go home to. It's like the crows going back to roost every night, but you know, if you can't go back there and feel comfortable, I don't know how you would... *(drifts off, all the characters become silent for a moment, Martha returns to sit down)*

KEVIN: I don't seem to reflect upon or evaluate my inner life, nor do I discuss my inner life and leadership qualities with others. In this respect, I find the role of leader to be a solitary role. I work with others who are providing leadership, but I don't often discuss with them what truly guides behaviour and motivates us.

SALLY: Yeah, it's hard to articulate *the inner life* because it exposes you. You need a huge safety zone around yourself. It comes back to trust and the feeling of – ability to be understood because our language isn't always...*(drifts off)* It doesn't really portray sometimes the feelings that you hold so deeply inside yourself. So, you can't just pop them out on a table somewhere *(laughs)* and let them run around. People confuse them and they play them back to you in a way that you might have to be defensive and who wants to be defensive about the essence of who the hell they are *(laughing)*. *(Harry and Kevin both laugh with Sally)*

JOAN: (*stops typing, the other characters freeze, speaks directly to the audience*) “It

is how we demonstrate those skills to others” – these are Martha’s words.

Articulation of the inner life through action: I find this interesting juxtaposed with the knowledge that good and outcome are not controllable in the leadership environment and yet these leaders (*gestures to the group*) are willing to risk action anyway. It did not surprise me that they moved quickly to the strength it takes to undertake leadership action in that environment, and in some cases, the risk of articulating the inner life to the academy. It was one of the questions that I asked leaders: How do you articulate the inner life to your colleagues or the academy? Some told me that they articulated their inner lives in overt ways and others did not. The themes that predominated were around action as value, the idea being that it was what you did that was important. Sally’s dialogue brings together the thoughts around attempting to communicate the inner life. Sally states: “people confuse them and play them back in a way that you might have to be defensive.” Kevin talks about “the role of leadership as a solitary one” and of not talking about “what truly guides and motivates us.” It is interesting to follow the path of these ideas for a minute. I have talked with you about what the inner life is: social justice, values/ethics, and a place of peace or balance. I have puzzled with you over good, intention, and power. Here in this dialogue they are talking about the embodiment and representation of the inner life. And, we hear that while it is one thing to embody the inner life, it is another to represent it to the institution. As Harry says, you have to be prepared to “take some heat, some

criticism;” the work of leaders is political and as a consequence draws to it political action, reaction and heat.

Act Two Scene One: Origins and Maturing

Characters reanimate and Joan returns to typing

MARTHA: *(in the kitchen opening and closing cupboard doors.) I feel guilty raiding a stranger's house but I need something to eat...hey this place has all kinds of stuff...(Joanne gets up and moves over to Martha, they both open and close cupboard doors)*

JOANNE: My first criterion in my work is examining the social impact of what I do. *Cookies, soda anyone? (Martha and Joanne return to sitting, each with a bag of cookies)*

SALLY: *(with power directly to Joanne) I agree, one's existence has to mean something and meaning for me is that others are helped. There is no meaning otherwise. There is no meaning to an individual life otherwise, and so, that is the golden rule. You behave so that you contribute to the welfare of others. (reaches for a cookie)*

KEVIN: First and foremost it is being honest with yourself, being able to say, this is the right thing to do, being honest with people that you are working with. I look at honesty; I come at it from the opposite side what is being dishonest, or what is being untruthful.

JOANNE: I am always looking for ways, through my work, to improve the lives of those who are disadvantaged, marginalized, or less fortunate.

SALLY: (*leans forward and with emotion in her voice*) I can remember being in Grade Three and there was a family that was a really, really poor family. I went to a country school. I remember the way people treated those kids. I remember this young girl – now I was in Grade Three and she probably should have been in Grade Six or Seven or even higher. I remember her standing up to walk to the front of the room and a huge wad of paper towel fell out. Obviously, she was menstruating. Everybody laughed and she was horrified. There was this way that people had of treating her differently and looking down on her. *That experience* has always stuck in my head. It was not fair; she deserved the same opportunities as others and I realized that she wasn't getting them and that others weren't getting them either. I grew up in a world of privilege and at the same time, it was instilled in us that everybody should have opportunity. I thought everyone had those opportunities. I came to realize quite quickly that people didn't and so trying to give opportunities is something I truly believe in.

JOANNE: (*with power*) I came from a family where politics and social action were key factors. I think from my very earliest times the news was an integral part of our family discussions. Both of my parents had a history of activism. I was encouraged in my own activism and I also had some of my own experiences of being marginalized. Out of that, I had both a personal experience and maybe a free radical experience of trying to engage in a different process for

change. My mother was an early feminist and so in about '67 or '68 when feminism started to emerge it was natural for me to see that as a path.

MARTHA: *It was a little different for me.* I was raised in a small rural community where it was safe, safe, safe. I mean I walked home three miles everyday, nobody was worried about anything. On Halloween we knocked on every door and nobody worried about that. I had a two parent family, siblings that I got along with, a great education. I had good teachers. Yeah, I think that there are psychopaths and other outliers that aren't wired the same way [others are] but I think people seek universal good and that it is built into us chromosomally somehow. I know people are twisted and changed or whatever but I think there is a universal good about being human, about living together and about having hope. I don't think anybody wants to be sad or worried or spend their lives not looking for good. *(passes the bag of cookies to Harry)*

HARRY: *(looks at the bag of cookies and puts it back on the table)* Me, I was brought up on a farm, you put in a good days work, and you respected and valued what you ended up with. *(shrugs)* I won't say a farm life was harsh but it was very pragmatic. *(there is a pause then Kevin picks up the conversation)*

KEVIN: I reflect back on my mom in particular. She forced me to make my own decisions and develop an early sense of responsibility.

HARRY: Almost everything I do probably arises primarily from family and upbringing in the sense that I came from a close-knit family, a fairly large family where I had a father who went to work, was the primary supporter and

a mother who committed herself to taking care of the family. So, when you are looking for a base foundation I draw most of my principles from the way in which my father worked.

KEVIN: But we mature and change

MARTHA: My inner life has matured in that I am not as naive in thinking that I can fix everything...*(laughs)*

HARRY: *Right*

SALLY: *(interrupting)* I've had conversations with myself about people that are bothering me or things I couldn't figure out or things I couldn't solve or things that I couldn't understand the motivation behind like someone issuing a death threat or taking the institution to arbitration over an insignificant issue. I have come to realize that there is a certain proportion of the population at work that I can't do anything about. They are angry, bitter, resentful people and I have to be able to let all that stuff go. I guess it is a maturity that whatever I try to do with my inner life to solve issues there is a certain letting go of things that just aren't going to work.

JOANNE: *(nods reflectively)* I think who we are, kind of the quintessential hard crystal of our being, forms in childhood and so I think I am coming to understand that all of my ethical framework resides there. My mother in particular influenced my ethical framework in terms of what is fair and right and also around the possibility that tomorrow might be different than today. I think the idea of a framework is interesting because it brings up for me the idea of a frame *(makes a framing motion with her hands)*. As I grow, mature,

and change I am first stretching a canvas on that frame and then over a lifetime beginning to paint on it this picture of my world. I think my inner life formed strongly in childhood and has matured, profoundly between 40 and 50...I have come to understand my life differently.

KEVIN: I grew up in a Christian household, I moved away from that belief system and went through a typical anti-religious existential phase, and then everything was secular. Later I began to read writers, particularly some of the Zen Buddhist writings and so forth and that made me feel that there was a much more subtle way of understanding things, and that it is really about integration. Trying to separate the material and the inner life and talk about them as if they were disconnected runs against the grain of human experience.

SALLY: (*directly to Kevin*) I am not a very religious person – although I went to Sunday School when I was a kid and the “do unto others as you would have done unto you” is something that guides me a lot usually at the subconscious level not because I practice religion but because I am motivated by that. I ask myself what I would want out of a situation if I were a follower or someone who is in trouble or someone who has come to me for help. Asking the question what would I want, someone, a mentor, or a person in authority to do, asking that [question] guides me a lot.

MARTHA: I wouldn't call myself a practicing Christian in the sense that I don't go to church. It's interesting because there have been two or three evolutions of where I am from a spiritual point of view. First Nations people have a tradition of looking at even totally inanimate objects, like rocks as having life,

or having a place in the universe and so I like that notion and I think that probably that is where I go to draw some extra spirituality or some extra strength.

SALLY: (*stands up and stretches and moves back over to the kitchen*) I truly believe that the things that absolutely form us happen in those formative years. It is that silly thing about everything I needed to know I learned in kindergarten. It is true for me. I have learned many other things, huge number of things along the way. I think in childhood you are influenced by dramatic events.

MARTHA: (*stands up and moves over to speak directly to Sally*) I mean I come from a Christian background, I don't consider myself to be a devout Christian, but I think there are certain aspects of that upbringing that were foundational for a lot of values. *Honesty is like that*, I see it as a two way street, being honest with myself and honest with others.

SALLY: (*speaking to Martha*) I think my socialization has influenced me and big socialization for me was my father who took me around to places that he worked and caused me to see some difficult situations: difficult situations in which people were living. I think a lot came from his values, always trying to help other people less fortunate than you are. He did that. ...I was always brought along as a little kid. He had a real strong involvement in community volunteer work and brought me with him. So, it seemed natural that I would get into something serving the public. I got into it because I had a strong commitment to community volunteer work.

MARTHA: (*speaks to the whole room*) *Going back for a minute...* There is an expression in Judaism that means 'repairing the world.' *My friend who is an education leader talks about how her Judaism provides a spiritual dimension to her work (others look at Martha and nod in understanding).*

KEVIN: For me, it's largely a question of experience, of learning through experience, gaining confidence as you experience different situations and being able to reflect on what you have done. It's like layers of an onion except instead of peeling them off you're building them up. You are gaining experience, you are gaining confidence and ultimately you come to a point where you say to yourself I am confident and I can do whatever I want to given the circumstances and given the resources and knowledge and so on...(*drifts off*)

SALLY: (*quietly and with emotion*) I think you can draw a lot from being a teenager because I don't think there is another part of your life where you could possibly identify more personal challenges than at that age. It is a tough time in most people's lives and you're not as a person as sure at that point in your life. I think there are times to be strong and those are sometimes really difficult times when you know you are swimming upstream and you got to decide is it worthwhile to swim upstream, and sometimes you have to so it – it's painful. (*Sally pauses walks over to the bookshelf, the whole group is looking at her waiting for her to continue*) I would suspect that [my] values were founded in my childhood but didn't express themselves in a language. Certainly most of the values that I use as a fulcrum for making decisions are consistent with my parents' values or what I would predict my parent's values

to be. Certainly, the awareness of those principles became more conscious to me in my twenties.

MARTHA: *(nods and responds to Sally)* It has to start with you as a child and the environment that you grow up in, the influences of those that are most significant, your parents, siblings, the close circle of friends. Then what gets blotted onto any moral or religious experiences that you have as a young person, your successes, your failures. These things force you to grow and be respectful of those kinds of emotions or senses that give you gratitude to be alive and interacting with other people.

JOANNE: I have struggled with organized religion my whole life. *(to entire group)* Much of my struggle has to do with interpretation of the religion and how it is applied to everyday life, as well as the control and domination of thought that at times is tied to a particular religion or faith. The underlying values of most organized religions are similar to what I subscribe to and include respect for others, caring and kindness, honesty and truthfulness, loyalty, promise keeping and fairness. These are values that I try to adhere to in my leadership practice.

SALLY: My mother was a very strong Catholic and so I think I can't deny that as being an influence. Obligation meant trying to meet the expectations of my family and was characterized by traditions and values that I continue to practice and nurture. The obligation has been evident throughout my life and been a major influence in the way I practice my leadership. *(Sally and Martha return to their chairs)*

JOAN: *(stops typing, stretches and flexes her shoulders, the other characters freeze, she speaks directly to the audience, and stays at the desk for this entire monologue)* The nineteen participants told me so much in the interviews it is really hard to leave pieces of dialogue out. I feel like some hunchbacked editor crossing out words, distilling the dialogue down to short scenes. Anyway, *(waves her hand)* you don't want to hear my playwriting woes. This scene is about origins and maturing. It is about the characters talking about how their inner lives came to be and how that inner life matured over the years. Each leader I spoke to in this inquiry talked about events, people, or experiences in their early lives that made a difference to who they were as leaders. Some spoke of religious influences, others ethical influences, others influence of hard work and work well done. The influences described were powerful ones of childhood, of parents, of events that were formative in creating a value system that became part of the inner life. The stories were around upbringings that influenced how we are as leaders. The profundity in the answers was how clear it was that early events in our lives influenced what kind of leader we would become. Witnessing difficult events, an ethic rooted in the origins of religious or spiritual practice, hard work, being marginalized and ethics of work well done were the crystallizing events that formed leaders' inner lives. As I listen again to their words I am moved by the strength of the ethic that underlies leadership work and by some of the distress that begins to pop through about how making that ethic come to life can be very hard. Perhaps Sally states it best when she uses the word "obligation."

When I asked this question about origins of the inner life to the interviewees, I expected to hear very much what I heard. What surprised me was how powerful these influences were and yet when I think about the origins of my own inner life I find many of these same words arise that indicate a progressive acquiring of the knowledge and understanding of the origins of an inner life.

Act Two Scene Two: The Work -- Loving and Hating it

Characters reanimate and Joan returns to typing. Sally moves back to her chair and on the way looks in both bags of cookies, hesitates but doesn't take one.

SALLY: *(sits down and sighs)* I have often been asked what sustains me in a job.

JOANNE: *(nods)* A thought I have had is how very alone some of us feel in our leadership role. Perhaps I pick this out of stories [I hear] because it still resonates so much for me in my own role. It also makes me reflect on what it was like to be truly alone in a leadership role. *(others nod)* A few years ago, when I was a new senior administrator, not only to the position, but in the institution and in the BC system, I was appointed to a position with little knowledge of the internal dynamics of the place and without any type of support system that involved my peers. The outcome was that I ended up making a number of fairly major decisions as a result of being put into an area of the institution that needed some immediate attention due to budget challenges. The decisions were personally painful and at times, I am still

amazed to have survived personally and professionally. Since that time, I have vowed to not place anyone else that I work with in that type of situation. I will do mentoring, give guidance, whatever it takes.

HARRY: (*laughing*) In terms of being an administrator nobody grows up wanting to become one whether, VP, Head, Dean, or President.

KEVIN: (*seriously*) Trustworthy colleagues make our work easier to do – teamwork with mutual respect and individual accountability are critical to success.

HARRY: How I perceive myself as a leader and the way the people around me perceive me as a leader is significant in its gap, and I have to keep reminding myself that people will pay attention to what I have just said because of who I am.

SALLY: It is strange how we get into these things. Many of the jobs I have taken have come down to looking around and saying “well I am not sure I would like what might happen with some other person *doing the work*.” I believe that you can make a difference. We don’t often look back, you tend to be trying to look forward so much in these jobs. I think if you do look back every now and then, I think you can spot places where you’ve made a difference. If you didn’t think you were successful in it I’m pretty sure you would get out of it. But, for me, the next day’s meeting and the next day’s issues are interesting stuff and need to be dealt with. I like the people I am surrounded with, I am able to draw on them and I think they are able to draw on me. It is hard to contemplate a job that would be better when you have that kind of interaction.

KEVIN: (*with angst*) Some days it is wonderful. I love it. I think I'm doing a really good job and other days I can't stand it and I think I am doing a terrible job. I think the public system is a little spoiled compared to the private system, so sometimes I have a fair amount of dissonance happening within me because of my view of what are equitable workload, equitable pay, and what expectations of employees should be. Sometimes, it takes so long to get anything to happen, the inner life in me just wants to scream...(*shrugs & pauses*) I expect people to rise to the challenge. I mean that's the kind of feedback I get and I think it's true. I think I do expect people to rise to the challenge and do the right thing for the right reasons.

MARTHA: (*picks up the bag of cookies only to find it empty*) I think in those days that are extraordinary, [those ones that are] very hard as a leader, my inner life simply helps me survive. It is a place that I can seek refuge. The inner life is a place to seek refuge to have strength to go another day or do another piece of work. I think it is related to a deeply spiritual place for me. Spiritual places for me are related to the notion of sanctuary, and so I think my inner life plays a huge role in terms of sanctuary for my leadership. A place where I can go that is silent, quiet, and powerfully healing. My inner life, on those tough days, plays an extraordinary role in that it allows me to have strength to do some very difficult things.

SALLY: Yeah, the inner life has to ground me, and it comes from the things that I take pleasure in whether it is just spending time in the garden or simply putting on some nice music and turning off all the lights and lying by myself

in front of the fireplace and just getting that stuff out of my brain before I go to sleep.

HARRY: *(to Sally)* My inner life gives me strength...

SALLY: A lot of it goes back to those inner conversations and working out those inner conversations. The conversations I have with people who are in conflict, with people who are in conflict with what I believe, they can stray you and push you down a path you don't think you should be going or try to take you away from your moral beliefs and your values. People say you should do this or that or are critical because you are not doing this or not doing that. So, they tug on you and I see them trying to take me away from the path that I try to lead on: there have been times that they have taken me away and I have been really disappointed in myself.

KEVIN: *(directly to Sally)* For me, my values are the thing that holds me real and helps me move on from that.

SALLY: *(sighs)* We develop value statements for the college and then when we make program cuts people are all over you saying you are not living up to your values, so saying [it] *what you believe in* haunts you. I articulate my 'moral link' through my annual goals and living up to those goals.

HARRY: *I know.* There are some things that are not necessarily shared by everyone and I accept that they don't need to be shared by everyone. I might wish them be shared by everyone in my academy while I am leading it because it is the way we are going to do some business but there are ways of being 'good' without ascribing to those values. I guess I am starting to talk about a

hierarchy of values but then there are some core ones that I think are fundamental.

JOANNE: (*forcefully*) The constructs for me center around equalness of all people. They center on justice, fairness and they center very much on non-judgemental attitudes.

SALLY: The only time that is real for me as a leader – the only time I am happy to be leader is when my inner life and my outer life are in sync and I have achieved something that I believe is a very good thing for this college and the people who work here. I believe that leaders of necessity have to be out of sync sometimes and that for me is unhappy and I've had to learn to accept that.

JOANNE: (*makes an inclusive circle gesture*) So many of the commonalities strike me. How so many of us refer to the inner life as manifesting itself as an inner voice that speaks to us or with which we talk. How many of us struggle with quasi-religious feelings but can't accept religion per se. How we all deal with periods of self-doubt – made all the more difficult, I suppose, because we feel that displays of self-doubt might undermine our leadership. How we struggle with sometimes finding we aren't completely comfortable with the direction in which we are expected to lead. How we have difficulty with the notions of judging others, knowing that we are expected to make decisions and decisions inevitably entail and reflect judgements we have made.

JOAN: (*stops typing, the other characters freeze, speaks directly to the audience*)
Love and hate it and yet you can hear that they love it even when they hate it. In their words are contained the conflict of leadership and the striving of

leadership. *(gets up, clearly stiff from typing and moves to the front of the stage)* I think that leadership is hard: hard for the reasons that Sally and the others state. It is not easy to stay in sync with your inner life. It is easy to find oneself isolated and alone as a leader. It is difficult to remember that the institution views our leadership differently than we do as leaders. It is a rollercoaster as Kevin puts it so nicely in an earlier scene. There is little time to reflect. In this place of loving it and hating it, the inner life offers as Harry states, "strength." There is strength that each of the leaders draws on to handle the "rollercoaster." Sally talks about setting goals and living up to them. Joanne talks about the struggle of leadership. Harry talks about knowing that not everyone agrees, but leading anyway. It is a strength that resides in the inner life, in the understanding of leaders of their own leadership and why they lead. *(Joan walks back to her desk and picks up a journal)* I want to read you a piece from my journal on the word rollercoaster. I love that word...

(reads as a title) Journal notes on the word – Rollercoaster

I laughed when she said it in the interview.

Then loved it, it was perfect.

One of those gifts you get in research when you least expect it.

Rollercoaster, how could I ever find a better metaphor for post-secondary leadership?

Just think about it, there is that wonderful anticipation of the ride.

Buying the ticket...for some that would be education, others hard work for some of us luck and timing. We were in, we were formal education leaders.

Sitting in the chair and realizing that this was going to be hard. That sometimes we would be pulled along for the ride by everyone else who had jumped on and other times we would be out pushing the fully loaded train up the hill, seemingly by ourselves.

Then that moment at the top when everything pauses and you can see clearly. Then it is gone, far too rapidly – torn away at high speed.

Over the edge into free fall, careening down the slope, excited, a little out of breath, hoping for a wonderful coast to the finish line.

Hey, how did I get back out here, starting over pushing a fully loaded train up the hill...?

Act Three Scene One: Making a Difference

Everyone but Kevin is in the kitchen opening cupboards doors. Harry has his head in the fridge.

HARRY: *(muffled by the fridge door)* There is some cheese in here, apples, olives too...

SALLY: *(looking in a cupboard)* I have some crackers here...

JOANNE: *(looking in a cupboard)* I found a bottle of red wine and some juice...

HARRY: *(laughing, cutting up an apple, and uncorking a bottle of wine)* Now we really will have to track down the owner and repay her for the food and shelter.

KEVIN: *That is if we ever get off this island, what has it been -- four hours?*

MARTHA: *(starts cutting up cheese and putting it on a plate, puts the plate on the coffee table)* I am kind of enjoying it with no cell phone, no meetings, and just us talking: it is nice for a few hours. We don't often talk as colleagues about our work. I believe that even with all of the mundane kind of shitty stuff that we do there is a bigger purpose. I can't lose sight of the fact that we have the

power, whether we want it or not, we have the power to make a difference in people's lives.

HARRY: (*walks over to the coffee table and sits the apple, juice and the wine on the table*) I have a deep-seated belief in the importance of public education and for me the mission of the institution and my own sense of involvement in society are dead on one another.

SALLY: (*walking over the coffee table with a collection of glasses and the crackers*) My inner life led me to be a leader in public post-secondary education because for me it is one of the places in society that can influence what the future is going to look like. I need to be able to provide change, good change. The value of public education is very important to me. It is distressing to me when I see that eroding and I think it's in danger of eroding, eroding more and more all the time. I think we need to be reminded of the inner value of public education and what it should mean and that it is a basis of democratization and access of people to a better life and future.

Through the next pieces of dialogue the characters eat and drink

HARRY: When it gets tough, I say, wait a minute students come first.

JOANNE: (*with force*) I live it. Added to social justice is a kind of moral ethical righteousness. I cannot be bought, I cannot be coerced. (*the others pause and look at her, then nod*)

HARRY: (*with passion*) I believe ultimately that things are improvable, that change for the better is possible – I suppose it is a kind of reformist view in a way. I think it's hard to be in the position I am in without having something of that

because the whole time you're trying to manage a very difficult operation but with a purpose. The purpose presumably is to do something that is meaningful and worthwhile and that will make a difference and certainly, for me that is my view of the world.

KEVIN: I'm trying to find hope now because I see this schism between our biology and our intellect.... *(pauses without finishing)*

SALLY: *(with passion)* When I am listening to music that I like it is kind of reaffirming. I suppose it is reaffirming of the idea of improvement – not in a social reformist sense – but in terms of the human spirit. I think about music being produced by somebody using their creative powers and it can contain so much – uplift you or it can take you to the depths. There are a whole bunch of lessons and meaning to that; it's not text and it is not a series of precepts for living but in a way it does communicate a certain value of human life *(pause)* – I guess the best of human life itself.

HARRY: *(to Sally)* Music can be amazing...

MARTHA: *(interrupting Harry)* I have beliefs that are germane to my inner life and I think they reflect common concepts that stretch across cultures and religions. My universal beliefs include treating others as I wish to be treated, with respect, dignity, fairness, honesty, understanding. I believe in a common and universal good that respects individual rights and freedoms as long as harm is not inflicted upon others. I believe in a fair and just, civil society. I believe that good can overcome evil if goodness truly is good, not merely action exploited as such. Values that guide my inner life are also universal, not tied

to one particular culture, and include concepts of reciprocity, kindness, generosity, caring, obligation, justice, hope, peace, honesty and fidelity.

HARRY: It is the only reason for staying in a situation of leadership – being able to say to yourself at the end of the day, did you do something that was morally right, did you help someone. I don't have a definition of the good. For me it is instinctive and based largely on what I think the results will be.

KEVIN: (*dryly*) If you don't have a sense of fairness or completeness that is a bit of a problem at our level.

HARRY: The question I always ask myself is what is right, what feels balanced, what is fair and a morally right thing to do in any given situation.

KEVIN: (*to Harry*) I think being a leader is difficult and you had better have your shit together and you had better be able to withstand – especially in our sector – the barrage of assault against administration. I don't think we are alone, but I think many administrators are beaten down and many people don't want to become administrators because it is not fun. It is not fun at the top. There is no perk here. I mean it is just not fun. It used to be more fun in the classroom. That is sad, I like being a leader.

JOANNE: (*to Kevin*) On an everyday basis, I think you are in touch with the sums of yourself. Every interaction you have comes from within, from what and who you are. I think when you are stretched into leadership positions you mould some of that but you are tempered by the politics of the situation, power differentials and self-preservation.

SALLY: *Yeah and it can be harsh*

HARRY: There are some innate value systems and innate principles that I use across my life and in so doing, it gives me a sense of peacefulness in that I make decisions around constant constructs that have meaning for me.

SALLY: I leave work predominantly at work. I will do some contemplating around it but I try to focus when I'm [at the college] and then I try to focus on my life when I am not. I try to surround myself with people who have very little to do with my work because I don't need that conservation again. I need conversations about other aspects of who I am (*others nod*).

JOANNE: *This is nice wine...what is it. (leans forward and reads the label)* I think my inner life is energized through interpersonal contacts where I invest myself in the moment with individuals. I think of the personal component of the interaction as being just as important as the content and outcome. I am reminded of the term "teacher as person" where the personal qualities of the teacher have a far greater impact on the students than what is taught. What is important for my inner life is to be genuinely engaged with people, to give something of myself as a person, "leader as person" (*pauses*). Who I am as a person influences others at work in a far greater way than the tasks I accomplish.

MARTHA: (*to Joanne*) Validation for who I am and what I stand for as a leader is drawn from my inner life in a way that cannot be replicated by those who surround or nurture me.

HARRY: A part of good leadership is being predictable, that people who look at an issue have a fair sense of the way you would go on that issue because they have a fair sense of what that construct within your inner self is.

SALLY: *And how we view our inner life changes and grows.*

MARTHA: I am much more mature in an emotional way because of dealing with crises, dealing with death, with birth and the maturity of my children. I have always been interested in the inner life, the personal life of my colleagues, which are those whom I work with closely day by day. It has helped me mature, helping them through hard times and having them support me in hard times. Realizing no matter what conflicts I have had in my professional life amongst colleagues or with labour relations, people usually support one another.

SALLY: *Not always...* The thing that shocked me the most was when I had a death threat at the college that really threw me for a loop. It was a turning point for me. I thought that everybody working in an institution would be happy, you know.

Others look at Sally acknowledging that it was a shocking experience, the conversation pauses for a few seconds, then Sally continues.

SALLY: As an educational leader, I feel a great deal of responsibility to the people I work with, our students, and our communities. This feeling of responsibility comes in part from being a first-born child and grandchild. This position within my family came with responsibilities, which I believe my siblings and my cousins may not have felt. I was the caretaker of the children, the child

that my parents and grandparents had high hopes and expectations for and with that came a sense of responsibility and obligation.

HARRY: There is no perfectly black/white, right/wrong – given what you believe in, given what post-secondary education stands for, the decision is about not compromising those basic tenets that you hold strong about education.

KEVIN: A lot of it has to do with just common belief systems, ethical behaviour. You tell the truth, and you keep your promises, and you don't lie, and you don't cheat.

HARRY: When I make a decision or when I am faced with not knowing how to make a decision, I always stop and think about what is the right thing to do. We are here to provide people with opportunities that impact their lives. People laugh about it when I say wait a minute, how will this decision affect the life of our students. It is about constantly saying we are here to provide an opportunity.

JOANNE: (*looking at Sally*) One of the things that influenced the way I do things was my son's conviction. The whole process of my son being charged and convicted of murder. Looking at what happened to our family, to our family unit. We had a really strong family unit and it got stronger – there were lots of cracks but it got stronger. We were suddenly being judged by people in a very public way for what he had done. I began to think about how I do that kind of thing where I make assumptions.

Everyone looks at Joanne. Clearly Harry and Sally know the story and nod in empathy. No one says anything for a few seconds

SALLY: I remember walking home with a friend who was Protestant, I am Roman Catholic, and we lived next door to each other and were very good friends. I

remember thinking after we dropped her off – well, why wouldn't she be able to go to heaven. It didn't make any sense to me because my friend is equal to me and my friend is really good. My friend should be able when she dies to go to the same place I am going.

MARTHA: (*with sadness*) It is critical to be present with people, to be compassionate, listen and actually hear what they say. My older brother was born very premature and therefore is mentally handicapped and seeing how he was treated in the system and his lack of opportunity and at the same time knowing him as a brother and knowing he so much wanted to do so many things (*drifts off*).

Everyone is silent for a minute contemplating what they have heard.

JOANNE: (*seriously*) I constantly grapple with being awake, being aware of bias, of my own limitations, of my own struggles and challenges of being human. I am always conscious of my own power and I try very hard to be conscious and never impose power.

JOAN: (*stops typing, the other characters freeze, speaks directly to the audience, Joan leans forward with her head on her hand*) "We have the power to make a difference in people's lives." These are Martha's words. I am not sure what to tell you about questing and power and attempting to change lives as Harry states "for the better." The lives that they are talking about are students' lives and the lives of the people who work in education. "It is critical to be present with people, to be compassionate, listen and actually hear what they say," again Martha's words. I am moved by the words about making a difference. It

is such a strong force in the words of leaders. And, this quest is hard and changes and is twisted and influenced by the experience of a leader's life. Harry (*points to Harry*) talks about the "importance of public education," Sally (*points to Sally*) talks about being in a place that can "influence what the future is going to look like." This is the "obligation" of public leadership: this is the possibility and imagination that Maxine Greene (1990) writes about. This is the quest that I heard as a researcher and talked about myself as a subject. We lead in public education because we want to make a difference in people's lives. However, this is dangerous ground and not easily walked upon. Again, the notions of good and right come to the surface and the struggle to define and implement change for the good of public education is there in the leadership consciousness. (*Joan gets up and walks forward to the front of the stage*) Then there are the deeply moving comments about coming to understand the difference of profound leadership and life events that influence the psyche of leadership and represent the strength of everyday leading. (*Joan pauses as if to say more then returns to her desk and starts speaking again*) The strength of the possibility and imagination of leadership is best summed up by Martha: "validation for who and what I stand for as a leader is drawn from my inner life in a way that cannot be replicated by those that surround or nurture me." (*Joan pauses*) Wouldn't it be amazing if there was such a notion as a common and universal good?

Act Three Scene Two: Inner Life Revisited

Characters reanimate and Joan returns to typing. Some characters are still eating and drinking, others just sitting.

JOANNE: (*quizzically*) Did Joan ask all of you about the inner life being the master or servant of your inner life? I think I have a good sense of the inner life as master of my leadership but I've always felt that you get through by being the servant so I think that for me it is the servant of my leadership.

SALLY: (*firmly*) My inner life is the master of my leadership. Being a servant of my leadership would be transient or less sturdy than if I look at it as the master of my leadership. I need it to be there. I need it. I rely on my inner life as I provide leadership. I don't think I would be who I am if my values, my inner life were servant of what I had to do. For me my inner life, my values are my anchor.

KEVIN: (*stands up and wanders around throughout the rest of the scene – restless energy – picks up things puts them down*) I would say the inner life is the servant – I don't think the inner life rules my life. It guides me but doesn't rule my life and I would say that it is more servant than master.

JOANNE: The inner life is the master because when I am doing something in my leadership that doesn't feel good it means that I am out of sync with my inner life. I think the inner life is a gentle master, but I think it is the master and (*laughs*) sometimes it is not such a gentle master.

MARTHA: There is a bit of a continuum but certainly I would come down on the servant side. It has been consistent for me since I was a kid that the locus of control was more external than it was internal. Being raised Catholic had an impact on that – definitely servant, lay out the objectives and tell me how I can help. I guess the inner life is the reconciliation of who you are externally and the place you live inside yourself (*Kevin interrupts, moves toward Martha*).

KEVIN: (*quickly with emphasis*) There is one notion that comes through that I have difficulty with, the idea that the inner life is really a separate life from the outer life, something we go to get away from our outer life. Certainly, I have a private life – my passion for music, theatre and family which fortifies me and allows me to face the long hours of work and stress. But, this private life and what I think of as my inner life are very different things. The inner life is a much more integrated, albeit usually invisible, part of my life in leadership.

MARTHA: I guess [for me] it is the reconciliation of who you are externally and then the place that you live inside yourself.

HARRY: I would say that [the inner life] is almost like a reference point. I don't feel that it is some sort of specific idea that I am going around looking for opportunities to implement or realize. But, it is a way of being able to hold up something that you're looking at doing or some decision or some choice you're making and testing it against some deep-seated kinds of assumptions and values.

KEVIN: Certainly, the word values – a place of universal values – appeals to me. I think that pretty much reflects the way I look at the inner life.

MARTHA: I am a very spiritual person. I would say that my spirituality is not primarily based in religion or faith. It's mainly based on a sense of values and ethics and a sense of what is good and what's right and just – social justice more so than anything.

JOANNE: *Speaking of spiritual...* I have tried meditation. I have been a member of a church. I have studied Buddhism. I found a spiritual practice that works for me, cooking. I have a huge belief in food as a spiritual thing, a place of coming together, of healing.

SALLY: In my early forties I did a fair amount of study in Buddhist practice and although I am not a practicing meditator I think the notions of Buddhism, the notions of equanimity, the notions of forgiveness have played a huge role in shifting my inner life from place of judgement to a place of forgiveness.

MARTHA: I have firm belief that in order for this to be a good place for me to live and for other people to live the things that I do have to relate to the kinds of equality, the kinds of opportunity, the kinds of fairness and equity that need to exist in the world for it to be a place I want to live and I want my family to live.

SALLY: *(in a quiet voice)* The inner life is a profoundly spiritual place. It is a place that seeks to understand what is good and what is just: a place that seeks to understand who I am in the world. I know colleagues who believe prayer to be a powerful tool, a tool that keeps them centred, grounded, and focused. I

would view prayer as a special gift, a privilege that I won't want to exploit or become too familiar.

JOAN: *(stops typing, the other characters freeze, speaks directly to the audience)*

To tell you the long story of the design of this research will take too long but suffice it to say that this question about servant or master came from some early stories in the inquiry. I became fascinated by this notion of how the participants might view this idea of servant or master. *(leans forward)* I need to be honest with you. This question confused some of the participants because some went to the notion of servant leadership⁶ and spoke about the inner life from that perspective. That said, I think some very interesting ideas were expressed about the inner life as servant or master. For some it is the servant of our leadership, offering guidance to our work. For some it is the master, ensuring that our leadership has a solid grounding. For some the notion that it is one or the other did not make sense and they argued for a more integrated notion of the inner life. The constant, however is the power of the inner life to guide leadership in the everyday. As Sally states: "my inner life, my values are my anchor." You notice that as the dialogue transitions to a conversation about spirituality the notions of social justice and doing good again arise. Notions of seeking to understand spirit and themselves as leaders

⁶ Servant-Leadership is a practical philosophy which supports people who choose to serve first, and then lead as a way of expanding service to individuals and institutions. Servant-leaders may or may not hold formal leadership positions. Servant-leadership encourages collaboration, trust, foresight, listening, and the ethical use of power and empowerment. (Greenleaf Center, 2002)

are an integral part of the journey for these leaders. Again it is Sally that crystallizes the idea: “It [the inner life] is a place that seeks to understand what is good and what is just” and later: “the inner life is a profoundly spiritual place.”

Act Three Scene Three: Gender Matters⁷

Characters reanimate and Joan returns to typing

HARRY: *(tentatively)* I don't know where I get this but I sense that women are more in touch with their inner self than men are.

JOANNE: Perhaps women are more in touch with how their actions impact others.

HARRY: *(ignores Joanne's comment and goes on)* Inner life, I think, is a phrase that men probably don't use very much except maybe religious men. Even then, I think they're probably more likely to use spiritual life or soul or something. Maybe there is a linguistic piece there. I mean the word darling is a good example. I think it would raise most eyebrows if a man were to say...

SALLY: *(laughing)* that's a darling tie...

HARRY: Yeah, isn't that a darling tie. I think the inner life is probably on the feminine side of the page. I think in our society, in general, men do not tend to talk about their inner lives, even using different words. They tend to have

⁷ The expression “gender matters” is an expression borrowed from Professor Jane Gaskell.

more segmented ways of looking at themselves and don't look at themselves as holistically as women do. They are more likely to say I am guided by these principles, or values or this is my sense of right and wrong as if it were external to them.

SALLY: (*directly to Harry*) Men never doubt themselves and I think that is what makes women better leaders in lots of ways.

KEVIN: (*shaking his head*) Well, it makes sense in my head. I don't have any solid data on this but I think back to the nature nurture thing. I would imagine for many of the male leaders, in our generation *talking about an inner life* wasn't part of their acculturation. You don't go there, you don't talk about it, you don't label it, you don't think about it, but it's there and you draw on it nonetheless. So, does it matter if you can describe it or not? I have a daughter who is nine years old. I was balanced on the gender issues before I had a daughter but now I am almost militant on the issue. There is expertise, ability, energy and perspective that males don't have, that we don't embrace and capitalize on.

SALLY: (*to Kevin*) For me gender probably shaped and probably contested with some of those inner values because I put a lot of pressure on myself as a woman competing in what is still largely a male world.

HARRY: Women are probably more conscious of that kind of inner world – they tend to relate to people in a different way than men. I am pretty passionate about these issues. I think it is screwed up. Yet, I'll acknowledge that fact that as a male, white male, I have all kinds of advantages in getting a job and so from a

personal perspective, I'm trying to get the best job I can but at the same time, I probably have an unfair advantage.

JOAN: *(stops typing, the other characters freeze, speaks directly to the audience)*

Gender Matters. I think that we as leaders would like to think that it doesn't matter but it does. *(humorously)* In this scene, there are more generalizations than one can handle. Notions of male and female acculturation, gendered language, women as holistic leaders, men viewing themselves in a segmented way, male privilege and the idea that men don't talk about the inner life. The fact that it is so easy to drop into these generalizations, whether true or false, implies that gender does still matter and that the experiences of men and women leaders are different or seen to be different. *(starts to flip back through pages of material)* I didn't find, as Harry implies, that women were more in touch with their inner lives than men were. I did find that the participants that spoke about gender found that there were differences between men and women's experiences. Here it is *(points)*... I want to pull forward a couple of ideas. In earlier scenes the characters talked about difference and coming to understand that difference mattered. Whether you were included or excluded did matter – the story of the young protestant girl, for example. One of the characters also mentioned her own marginalization. I think what is worthy of note here in this discussion of the inner life is that these leaders are aware that gender matters and that difference matters. *(leans forward)* I would argue that this awareness influences how they lead and influences the tenets of their inner life. It is very much alive in how men and women in this study

view the notions of the inner life, alive in how men and women experience their leadership and have access to leadership, alive in our daily leadership lives. *(opens her journal and begins to read aloud)*

Gender Matters *(reads as title)*

Gender whispers in the dark to little girls and little boys.
a cruel soft voice calling gender matters, gender matters.
and even if wee ones can not sing the words,
they begin to gender into life.

Up to adulthood, they sit and wonder why
the difference will not disappear.

Then, children of their own.

And, Sometimes late at night they startle,
thinking they may have heard voices in the dark,
whispering gender matters, gender matters
close by their children's beds.

Act Three Scene Four: The Quest and the Pain

Characters reanimate and Joan returns to typing

PILOT: *(enters the cabin shaking the rain off his coat)* I have just heard from base,
*the storm is lifting and we can take off in about twenty minutes. I am really
sorry about this folks but we will have you back in the air as soon as possible.*
(exits the cabin)

JOANNE: *That's great. It has been interesting though, talking about our work. We
rarely get to do that.*

MARTHA: *Yeah, it has been good because sometimes our work is hard and we don't talk about that part every much.* It hurts some days, because you're going to take the high road which means you don't yell and scream or say get the hell out of my office.

KEVIN: There are a lot of grudges and a lot of people angry. They may be angry for a whole lot of other reasons that you can't do anything about. You don't have responsibility for that. It is important for me that I don't hold grudges even though I know lots of other people hold grudges and they hold grudges against me and there is nothing I can do about that.

JOANNE: (*with passion*) I think one of the things that really bothers me is the devaluing of the work we do in the public sector and the devaluing of the work we do as people engaged in helping functions or social work functions in the most generic sense.

HARRY: It's a question of self-respect. You feel what you are doing has integrity and has some kind of purpose and that it adds value to the people around you. It's kind of "It's a Wonderful Life" with Jimmy Stewart. (*laughs*) I won't put myself on the same plane as him but if you subtract the person from the world there is a net loss.

JOANNE: I had an experience where I had impacted, *negatively*, a group of people and I met with them and apologized, not for the decision, but for the implementation of a decision and the impact it had on them as human beings. I took whatever they wanted to say to me because they had that right to say it.

Group pauses for a few seconds, acknowledging what Joanne has said and then Martha continues

MARTHA: Asking for forgiveness, sometimes when you make mistakes and not being afraid to tell people that you are real... Regardless of how I mature through this leadership role and learn what to do and not to do, being real and sharing who I am with others is just part of who I am and I won't stop doing that.

HARRY: *We should tidy this place up before we go...*

Harry, Sally and Martha begin to tidy, wash cups and glasses, return items to cupboards etc.

SALLY: *(from the kitchen, pensively)* I think it's hard to say that what drives me is just social justice because I think that's the place I start from and then add onto it. You add to that a set of principles, how that leads you to behave in an ethical way, how that leads you to examine why you are doing different things and what difference you can make in the world.

JOANNE: I work to listen to grievances, not ever coming to an opinion before I hear all parties and listening to complaints and trying to understand the meaning something has for all parties involved, then working through what is just, equal and fair.

KEVIN: *(to Joanne)* Human behaviour is not predictable but it does have meaning to the individual expressing it.

HARRY: *(from the kitchen as he dries dishes)* I talk about leadership being a practice not a thing. It is a practice that requires training, it requires honing your skills, and it requires a sense of you inner life and what your leadership is built on. I think of a canvas, unfinished, my inner life. Where my inner life

will be when I am eighty is different from where it is now. What sustains me in leadership is that I can always stand back, look at my inner life, and say I need to grow. It is not as if you look at your inner life and find it lacking. You look at your inner life and see where it can grow.

JOAN: *(stops typing, the other characters freeze, speaks directly to the audience)*

The quest and the pain... *(sighs)*. We have talked about leading for the social good and for doing what is right but that does not mean that we do no harm or don't have harm done to us as leaders. Martha talks about asking for forgiveness; Joanne talks about apologizing; Sally talks about how it hurts. I would propose to you that questing and pain are the twins of leadership. *(Joan moves over and clears what is left of the dishes and finishes tidying as she talks)* If leaders lead for social good, they are questing to make the world better. In undertaking that quest to lead, leaders run all the risks that these characters have highlighted: unintended consequences, power differentials, harming people for the good of the organization. Those outcomes are painful and in some cases, very positive outcomes are also painful. And, at times, there is a "devaluing of the work we do in the public sector and the devaluing of the work we do as people engaged in helping functions."

Characters reanimate, Joan returns to typing

PILOT: *(steps into the cottage)* Folks we have the helicopter ready.

Everyone begins to gather up their briefcases etc. As each person gathers their things and leaves the stage, they walk over to Joan and speak to her directly

HARRY: My inner life gives me strength. *(Harry exits)*

JOANNE: I think my inner life is a sense of self. *(Joanne exits)*

MARTHA: Grounding, my inner life is grounding. It is doing good. *(Martha exits)*

KEVIN: I think the inner life is a place of universal values. *(Kevin exits)*

SALLY: The inner life is that place of possibility, always that place of possibility.

(Sally touches Joan on the shoulder, exits and closes the door)

JOAN: *(stops typing, stands up, picks up a chair, moves it to the front of the stage, and sits down)* They are gone, the conversation is done. I started this research wanting to have a conversation with other leaders about the inner life because I imagined and speculated that I would find in this place, the inner life, the meaning, and meaningfulness of leadership. I did find those things. I found that the leaders in this study were guided by their version of the inner life whether it was social justice, ethics and values or a more spiritual place of balance and peace. I found that these three themes cut across the study, appearing in some version in almost every story and/or interview. I found that the inner life was an individual place and that each leader constructed language to describe it. This made the inquiry interesting in that I needed to take great care not to generalize their words because words like 'good,' 'right,' 'social justice,' 'ethics,' and 'peace' are all contested words. Words constructed from each leader's understanding of her or his inner life.

(pauses) I met leaders during this inquiry who lead with passion and joy and a little despair thrown in. Their words were powerful and projected the inner life in a very real way. Kevin, for example, was a composite of interview and narrative responses that struggled with the words and ideas that I was

expressing. He represented those that saw no separation between inner and outer life: that believed it was about ethics and offered into the research a level of pragmatism that was useful and at times humorous. Harry, Sally, and Joanne were composites of interview and narrative responses that strongly expressed that the inner life was about undertaking social justice. Martha represented interview and narrative responses that looked at the inner life as a place of balance, peace, and sanctuary. *(pauses again)* I started this work seeking the meaning and the leadership influence of the inner life on nineteen leaders' work. I found leaders who were willing to undertake a conversation about what this meant to them. Each of them deeply reflected on this notion of the inner life, and in those reflections I found the meaning and meaningfulness of everyday leadership for them. I started this research with respect for these participants and now I have even more respect for the work that they undertake. Listening to their stories has made me even more convinced that it is in this place, the inner life, that leadership resides. It has left me understanding that leadership is who we are; it is our inner life in action.

(stands up and walks over to the desk, picks up a journal, and reads from it)

words *(reads as a title)*

you have given me your words,
 in the hope that i would honour them,
hone them razor sharp,
 find their deepest meaning.

inner life, your definition, my lens
 an unholy twinning of minds
calculated to birth a prodigy

full grown and clever

i look down at all the words.
discarded, drifting at my feet.
wondering if prodigy has been
aborted, terminated before meaning
could take hold

i force myself to turn away,
assume nothing there at my feet
could grow

i gaze only on my prodigy, full grown,
stitched carefully from your words
suture scars, visible only
with reading glasses which i still refuse to wear

Joan puts down the journal, walks to the front of the stage speaks directly to the audience

I hope you have enjoyed this constructed conversation play.

(humorously) You are free to go now...

CHAPTER SIX: CONVERSATION ONGOING

The amazing conversation that I have had with my colleagues about the inner life is ending, and like the termination of any marvellous journey, there is a sense of wanting to convey a few last notions before it ends. As this conversation ends, I hope that a new one will begin, about the inner life and leadership amongst education leaders. In this last chapter I return to some central notions of the inquiry, reflect on the influence of this inquiry on my leadership practice, provoke possibilities for leadership education and development, and pose ideas for further inquiry. When I started, I stated that the purpose of this inquiry was to record, reflect, and wonder (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) about the inner life of education leaders and the inner life's influence on their leadership. I wanted to answer two key questions:

1) What is the meaning of the inner life as defined by the education leaders in the study?

and

2) How does the inner life influence leadership?

I have recorded, reflected, and wondered about the inner life of leaders. I started this inquiry wondering if there was an inner life of leaders. What I found was a very powerful place that guided and held the very essence of how leaders saw themselves and I found a place that influenced how they lead in the everyday. Leaders talked about notions across the spectrum of how they viewed the inner life from justice to sanctuary. They talked about the notions of good and right, of power and of hope. They talked about how hard it can be at times to be a public education leader. The

strength of this inquiry resided in the words of the leaders spoken through the characters in Chapter Five. Their words reflect the inner life of these participant leaders and offer up understandings about leading in the everyday.

Central Notions

As I am about to leave the inquiry I am drawn back to the beginning of the discussion with Greene (1978) and Caputo (2001). In working with the meta-themes in the text and interview stories there were three notions of the inner life. These were inner life as a place of social justice; the inner life as a place of values, ethics, or moral

understanding; and the inner life as

balance, peace or sanctuary. These

three notions tie back into the

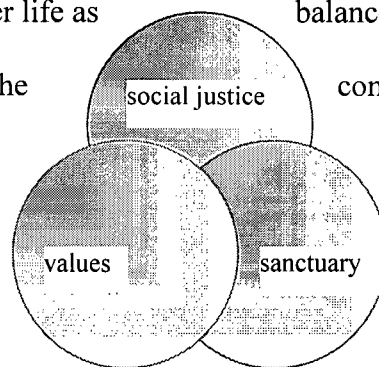
and Caputo. From Greene

which the meta-themes

notion of possibility and

being morally wide-awake. The

justice relates to Greene's idea of possibility.



concepts put forward by Greene

there are two ideas within

reside. The first is the

the second is the notion of

idea of inner life as social

The dialogue in Chapter Five reflects this quest on the part of leaders to undertake work that makes a difference in education. As Joanne states: "In order to make my daily existence feel worthwhile I need to feel that I am engaging in some process of action, social action..." or as Kevin states: "it is a set of fundamental values." These

ideas of working for good and working from a framework of moral understanding are integral to the inner life as described by the participants in the inquiry.

The meta-theme of inner life as sanctuary is found in the words of Martha “my inner life grounds me”; “the inner life is the reconciliation of who you are externally and then the place you live inside yourself.” Although, I do not think Caputo (2001) was writing about a place of inner grounding, I do think in asking what you love when you love your God, he was asking the question of what we believe at our very core. That is what this recording, reflecting, and wondering (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) about the inner life has been about. What is it that we as leaders believe our inner lives to be and how does that inner life form and inform how we lead?

As seen in Chapter Five, the individual notions of an inner life are diverse, but they orbit around the three meta-themes of social justice, moral undertaking, and sanctuary. Perhaps Joanne states it best when she says, “I live it. Added to social justice is a kind of moral ethical righteousness. I cannot be bought, I cannot be coerced.”

My Leadership

Part of ending this conversation on the inner life is reflecting upon how this inquiry has influenced my view of leadership. Perhaps the most profound influence has been the conversation itself, the opportunity to sit and talk with other leaders about the

notions of the inner life and find that there were themes that were common amongst us. As Kevin notes, "leading is lonely" and to have had an opportunity to work with the words of other leaders and to hear their hope for education dispels that loneliness. As I leave this inquiry, I am certain that this conversation is worth having and promoting in leadership contexts as a place from which to discuss the tenets of leadership. In addition, my practice of leadership has changed. As I worked with the words of leaders, I began to hear the possibility of education championed and the courage with which leaders work for that possibility. It gives me hope that in my own leadership, I can continue to work for social justice and the good of education. Have I changed doing this inquiry? Yes, and profoundly. Doing this inquiry has encouraged the work I was already doing around the creation of reflective spaces, such as the "Labyrinth and Leadership Workshop" for leaders. It has encouraged me to continue to write more about the notions of the inner life. Most of all it has encouraged me to continue in the work of public education leadership and to lead in a way that is good.

That said, as Pope John XXIII stated: "It often happens that I awake at night and begin to think about a serious problem and decide that I must tell the pope about it. Then I wake up completely and remember that I am the pope" (Kornfield & Feldman, 1996, p. 351). This humorous note is about the fact that I do wake up surprised to find myself a Vice President and in that surprise, I find myself. I find the person I wish to be as a human and as a Vice President. I go into my day attempting to take with me the notion of pumping the iron of leadership and pulling upon the foundation of my inner life.

Provoking Possibilities

This inquiry into the inner life of leaders provided a unique window through which to view leadership. I think that the conversation has implications for how education leadership is discussed and how education leaders prepare themselves for leadership. I entitled this section “Provoking Possibilities” because the more traditional notion of implications seemed harsh and analytical, given the journey of this inquiry. Below I provoke four possibilities from this inquiry.

Storytelling: This inquiry is built around the notion of storying and re-storying. I think that there are important ways in which leaders can use their own stories as leaders. Denning (2004) in his article “*Telling Tales*” does a wonderful comparison between what he considers the norm of business analysis and the power of story:

Analysis is what drives business thinking. It cuts through the fog of myth, gossip, and speculation to get to the hard facts. It goes wherever the observations and premises and conclusions take it, undistorted by the hopes or fears of the analyst. Its strength lies in its objectivity, its impersonality, its heartlessness. Yet this strength is also its weakness. Analysis might excite the mind, but it hardly offers a route to the heart. And that is where we must go if we are to motivate people not only to take action but to do so with energy and enthusiasm. (p. 123)

The power of telling the stories of education leadership within our institutions can build upon the techniques of leadership. Telling stories of our inner lives, telling stories of what we believe about education; telling stories could be a powerful force within our colleges and university colleges.

Reflective Spaces: In order to reflect upon who we are as leaders and how that influences our leadership, there needs to be creation of reflective spaces for leaders in which to examine issues in addition to the techniques of leadership. This lack of spaces led to the creation of the “Labyrinth and Leadership Workshop,” mentioned earlier. The inner life is an individual space and, as seen in the inner life themes, a shared space. There are very few specifically designed spaces to promote reflection on the “who” of leadership and promote deep levels of understanding. Specifically, extremely few places exist that provide reflective spaces for public education leaders. This inquiry created a powerful conversation worth having, and the creation of reflective spaces could keep that conversation going forward.

Educating for Leadership: In classrooms focused on management and leadership there could be a place created for the inner life conversation with leaders. I want to argue that one of the important implications from this inquiry is around how we educate leaders. One cannot underestimate the power of learning the techniques of leadership; however, techniques alone cannot house the entire notion of leadership. I want to argue that notions such as soul, spirituality, morals, ethics, and inner life need to find their way into leadership curricula in a central way rather than a tangential way. In this inquiry, the inner life was foundational to the leadership of these participants and I would argue for leadership education that enhances the conversation and brings these notions to the forefront of leadership education.

Alternative Representations of Leadership: I never thought that “*Talking Leadership, Talking Dirty*” (Chapter Four) was a good poem. In fact, it is not finished and yet people love that poem because it dislocates, surprises and challenges. I want to provoke the possibility that there is room for alternative processes of talking about leadership: poetry, art, and theatre. The power of alternative representation is that the reader/audience is party to meaning making and is invited to argue back, to be moved, to cry, to laugh, and to deeply understand.

The provoking possibilities above have within them the notion of creating pedagogical spaces to explore the inner life. In the creation of these spaces, care needs to be taken to create spaces that are as safe as possible for participants to explore some of these ideas. For example, the play could be used as a workshop tool to explore the inner life rather than having leaders tell their own inner life stories. Any space created to examine the inner life is not without risk and great care needs to be taken to allow leaders to reflect on the ‘who’ of their leadership in a way that is useful, inclusive and adds to the conversation of the inner life and does not put individuals at risk.

I encourage you, the reader, to add to this list of provoked possibilities. In the same way that you have participated in the meaning making of the constructed conversation play, there is room for other possibilities from this inquiry. Above I have offered four, but the list is not closed and, in fact, I encourage it to be left open to other provoked possibilities.

Further Inquiry

What follows are ideas for further inquiry. They arose as I worked with the data and wondered what the answers were to questions that I had not asked; arose as I wondered about language use and descriptions of the inner life; or arose from wanting to keep the conversation about the inner life and leadership moving forward.

This inquiry was a conversation with nineteen participants. It would be interesting to extend the inquiry to a larger number of participants and examine whether there are particular kinds of notions of the inner life that exist in public education leadership. For example, the notion of social justice that arose in the study; is this a theme that resides broadly in public education leadership?

The participants in this inquiry were relatively homogeneous. Some of the notions of the inner life had their basis in archetypes: the golden rule for example. It would be interesting to have a conversation with education leaders across cultures to examine how views of the inner life are culturally constructed.

Some of the concepts of the inner life had a Judaeo-Christian basis. It would be interesting to examine whether these notions are generational. What I mean by that is most of the leaders in this inquiry were of the baby boom generation. The generation coming into leadership has experienced a more secular society. Would the

generational aspect influence how the inner life was described or how it influenced leadership?

Lastly, it would be useful to extend research on alternative representation as a tool for leadership education. How do poetry, art and theatre offer richness to the educating of public education leaders?

Conversation Paused

The inquiry must end and yet I want to imagine that the conversation is only paused. I began with the words of a participant and end with the words of a participant. In this inquiry I had the privilege to record the words of leaders I respect. I had the opportunity to reflect upon the meaning of those contributions and I had the gift of wondering about the inner life. This place, the “inner life,” is the heart of leadership, and I have argued from the beginning of this inquiry that it is in this place that leadership resides. It is in this place, “the inner life” that leaders find themselves and the meaning of their work.

As an education leader, I feel a great deal of responsibility to the people that I work with, our students and our communities... The underlying values of most religions are similar to what I subscribe to and include respect for others, caring and kindness, honesty and truthfulness, loyalty, promise keeping and fairness. These are values that I adhere to in my leadership... (inquiry participant)

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APPENDIX A

[Letterhead]

[Date]

Letter of Initial Contact for Stage One & Stage Three Participants Project Title: The Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders

Dear _____

My name is Joan McArthur-Blair and I would like to invite you to become part of a research project that aims to examine the inner life of public education leaders. I am currently a graduate student at the University of British Columbia, completing requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. Also, as a Vice President in public education I am very interested in having a conversation with other leaders about the notions of an inner life and how that inner life impacts everyday leadership in public education.

The purpose of this study is to examine the inner life of public education leaders and through that examination analyze the impact and/or incorporation and/or influence of the inner life on the leaders' everyday work, beliefs and the academy. The inner life for the purposes of this study is defined as a belief system, an ethical practice, a religion, a spirituality and/or an inner dialogue.

This research on the inner life will explore and reflect upon:

- aspects of the inner life of leaders in public education
- how that inner life influences everyday leadership
- how the inner life sustains the capacity to lead
- how the inner life is translated to everyday leadership situations
- the relationships between the leadership conversations in this research and the literature in moral philosophy and leadership

APPENDIX B

September 28, 2003

Letter of Initial Contact for Stage Two Participants
Project Title: The Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders

Dear _____

My name is Joan McArthur-Blair and I would like to invite you to become part of a research project that aims to examine the inner life of public education leaders. I am currently a graduate student at the University of British Columbia, completing requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. Also, as a Vice President in public education I am very interested in having a conversation with other leaders about the notions of an inner life and how that inner life impacts everyday leadership in public education.

The purpose of this study is to examine the inner life of public education leaders and through that examination analyze the impact and/or incorporation and/or influence of the inner life on the leaders' everyday work, beliefs and the academy. The inner life for the purposes of this study is defined as a belief system, an ethical practice, a religion, a spirituality and/or an inner dialogue.

This research on the inner life will explore and reflect upon:

- aspects of the inner life of leaders in public education
- how that inner life influences everyday leadership
- how the inner life sustains the capacity to lead
- how the inner life is translated to everyday leadership situations
- the relationships between the leadership conversations in this research and the literature in moral philosophy and leadership

APPENDIX C

[Letterhead]

[Date]

Letter of Consent for Stage One and Stage Three Leaders Project Title: The Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders

Dear _____

My name is Joan McArthur-Blair. I am currently a graduate student at the University of British Columbia, completing the requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. I am conducting research that aims to examine the inner life of public education leaders.

Thank you for indicating your interest in participating in both Stage One and Stage Three of *The Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders*. The purpose of this study is to examine the inner life of public education leaders and through that examination analyze the impact and/or incorporation and/or influence of the inner life on the leaders' everyday work, beliefs and the academy. The inner life for the purposes of this study is defined as a belief system, an ethical practice, a religion, a spirituality and/or an inner dialogue.

This research will be conducted in three stages.

Stage One:

- four leaders will be invited to write a short (one to two pages) narrative (this can be a specific story from their leadership experience, a piece of poetry, a statement about their inner life, an autobiographical piece of their life) on their inner life and what it means to their leadership
- the short narrative will be exchanged among the four and the leaders will be invited to add to or recast their story

Stage Two

- from the narratives of the four leaders in stage one, interview questions will be developed on the inner life of leaders
- ten additional leaders will be interviewed about their inner life (**these interviews will be audio taped and transcribed with the consent of the participant**)

Stage Three

- the leaders in Stage One will be invited to meet (individually) with the researcher for a one hour conversation that will highlight the major findings from Stage One and Two
- after reflecting on the findings Stage One leaders will be invited to again write a short narrative on the inner life and/or provide feedback on the findings

The data from all three stages will be analyzed, themes identified and these themes will be reflected upon to form the findings regarding the inner life of leaders. The data from all stages will be held confidential. Each participant will receive a pseudonym and the transcriptions will be coded to ensure that both confidentiality and anonymity are maintained.

As a leader in Stage One I will be asking you to:

1. meet with me to discuss the research and the notions of an inner life
2. write a short story (one to two pages) about your inner life
3. allow your story (after identifiers have been removed) to be shared with the other three leaders in Stage One
4. Read the three other stories provided to you and write a new story and/or re-cast your story and/or make comments on the other stories.

As a leader in Stage Three I will be asking you to:

1. meet with me to discuss the findings of Stage One and Stage Two
2. again re-cast or re-write your story about your inner life and/or provide feedback on the findings

Participation in Stage One and Stage Three of this research will require approximately six to fifteen hours of your time over the course of one year.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Data provided by you will be kept anonymous. Each participant will receive a pseudonym and the transcriptions will be coded to ensure that both confidentiality and anonymity are maintained. You will have an opportunity to review the use of your story; provide feedback and withdraw any sections that you are not comfortable with. Also, if at anytime you wish to withdraw your contribution to the research you may do so. You do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this consent form.

APPENDIX D

[Letterhead]

[Date]

November, 2003

Letter of Consent for Stage Two Leaders
Project Title: The Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders

Dear _____

My name is Joan McArthur-Blair. I am currently a graduate student at the University of British Columbia, completing requirements for a Doctor of Education degree. I am conducting research that aims to examine the inner life of public education leaders.

Thank you for indicating your interest in participating in Stage Two of *The Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders*. The purpose of this study is to examine the inner life of public education leaders and through that examination analyze the impact and/or incorporation and/or influence of the inner life on the leaders' everyday work, beliefs and the academy. The inner life for the purposes of this study is defined as a belief system, an ethical practice, a religion, a spirituality and/or an inner dialogue. This research will be conducted in three stages.

Stage One:

- four leaders will be invited to write a short (one to two pages) narrative (this can be a specific story from their leadership experience, a piece of poetry, a statement about their inner life, an autobiographical piece) on their inner life and what it means to their leadership
- the short narrative will be exchanged among the four and the leaders will be invited to add to or recast their story

Stage Two

- from the narratives of the four leaders in Stage One, interview questions will be developed on the inner life of leaders

APPENDIX G

Stage Two of The Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders Interview Protocol

1. Others have described the inner life as
 - a. a code of ethics
 - b. a place where I feel "real"
 - c. a place where justice and fairness reside
 - d. the heart of leadership
 - e. a place of meaning
 - f. emotions and feelings
 - g. a place of prayer
 - h. an inner dialogue
 - i. a place of leadership strength
 - j. a place of patient listening
 - k. self talk
 - l. guiding principles
 - m. a fictitious judge that helps and guides
 - n. my upbringing
 - o. a deeply spiritual place
 - p. a place of universal values

What words/metaphors/concepts would you use to describe your inner life?

2. How did this inner life form?
3. When you think about your inner life, what period in your life do you go to?
4. How does your inner life influence how you lead?
5. How does your inner life influence you everyday?
6. How does your inner life influence leadership in everyday leadership situations?
7. How do you articulate your inner life with your colleagues and/or the academy?
8. Are you afraid to articulate your inner life to the academy? What causes this fear?
9. Does your inner life sustain you? How?
10. What sustains you in your leadership?
11. What gives your leadership meaning? Is this meaning found in your inner life?
12. When do you feel 'real' as a leader?
13. Who/What, nurtures your inner life?

14. What role does humility play in your inner life?
15. Is your inner life the servant or the master of your leadership?
16. Describe the heart or spirit of your leadership.
17. How does a privileged or underprivileged background play into your inner life?

18. Do you pray?
19. Do you believe in a universal good and if so how do you decide what is good?
20. Who is your inner judge?
21. How does your inner life grow or mature?

22. Demographic information (age, gender, time in position)

23. Questions added after interview three:

24. As I have been doing this study, I have been noticing some gender differences in how female and male leaders describe the inner life. Can you make a comment on this?

25. Tell me a story about a time that your inner life and your leadership aligned.

26. Tell me a story about a time that your inner life and your leadership didn't align.

APPENDIX H

January 4, 2003

RE: The Inner Life: A Conversation With Leaders

Thank you so much for assisting me in my doctoral work. I am honoured by the time, energy, and insight you have offered to my study. I look forward to sharing my results with you when I have completed my research.

I have attached the transcript of the interview we conducted in the fall. You will note changed text in colour if I think you will be identified and/or you have identified an individual or institution. Changes in blue are simple identifier changes. Changes in red are places that I have edited and/or changed a story to ensure anonymity. Please feel free to suggest additional changes to edited stories.

Please read the transcript and email or mail to me any additional changes and/or items you may wish to remove from the study. As noted in the letter of consent, if you are no longer comfortable with being part of the study you may withdraw at any time. You have selected a name in the interview and that name will appear in the study. Also, if you wish to add anything further to the discussion on the inner life, please feel free to do so.

APPENDIX I

Thank you note to Stage Two Participants

When I sent out a copy of your transcript I said thank you but I wanted to thank you again for participating in my research. As I move forward to working with the 'data,' which, as you probably know, has its origins in Latin meaning "gift," I wanted to let you know that I will be working with the themes from the data to create a quasi-play, a conversation about the inner life of leaders as if all the participants were present at the same moment in time. This play will be inserted into what is otherwise a typical academic dissertation. I hope to defend in October 2004, so there are many drafts yet to be written. Your words and stories have made an incredible difference to this research journey and I want to pause amongst the many drafts and, again, thank you.

Joan McArthur-Blair

APPENDIX J

Stage Three

Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders

I want to start by again thanking you for your stories in Stage One. In using the interview protocol developed from your stories there was a richness and power to the interviews that would not have been there without your original stories. As I have moved through this research and spent time with educational leaders, I have become engaged in the stories told and what meaning those stories have to offer to the understanding of leadership. When I first designed the inquiry, I was planning to meet with each of you for one hour, discuss the themes that I had found in the interviews, and then ask you to write another story. After having read your stories and after having worked with the stories in the interview material, I would like to honour the narrative nature of this inquiry and build upon stories offered into the research process during the interviews. Consequently, below I have outlined a slightly revised process for your engagement with Stage Three of the Inner Life: A Conversation with Leaders which removes the one hour meeting and keeps the re-storying process. Below you will find three themes that came out of the interviews and three short segments from the interviews that align with those themes. I would like to invite you to choose one of the themes and its corresponding story and write a short piece on what the theme and story mean to you as a leader. This can be in the form of comment or in the form of a story from your own leadership, which illustrates what you want to say.

Please return your response to me via email by April 6, 2004.

Theme One: the inner life as a place of social justice

Story: I remember walking home with a friend who was Protestant, I was Roman Catholic and we lived next to each other and were very good friends and I remember thinking after I dropped her off, well why wouldn't she be able to go to heaven also. It didn't make any sense to me that she would not go to heaven. It was what I was taught and it didn't make sense to me because she was equal to me and my friend was really good. My friend should be able, when she dies, go to the same place I am going....

Theme Two: the inner life as a place of values or moral understanding

Story: In fact, I have had some real struggles with religion – going back to my childhood, but I do consider myself spiritual. The thing that keeps me going is making sure all my decisions and my intentions with people sit within my value system, which is hard to define. It is a system that I believe has to do

with morals, whether it is truth telling or promise keeping, or treating everybody consistently, or being responsible and accountable. It is a set of values that I have that, I think, are morally and socially responsible and that guide me as a leader. It has a lot to do with ethical behaviour, truth telling and promise keeping.

Theme Three: the inner life as sanctuary

Story: ...immediately the word grounding comes to me. It is the place that you go back to be grounded, and have a point of reference. When you said what kind of metaphor and I am thinking images. I think it was the movie terminator when he is immersed into that boiling pot of destructive whatever it was and all you could see on the screen was a line that started moving towards the middle, then there was the one dot, and it just ended with the dot. I guess it is the reconciliation of who you are externally and then the place that you live inside yourself, which is that point of reference. There can be all sorts of people outside and all sorts of factors can temper you, but you are who you are and that little kernel inside you is you.