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Fostering Consciousness, Insight, and Social Action
Through an Integral Perspective on Transformative Learning
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Abstract

Transformative education in adult and higher learning contexts can help learners and teachers expand their consciousness, develop insight into how they are situated in their social and cultural contexts, and encourage them to participate in social action. In this paper, rationale for incorporating transformative learning processes into adult and higher education will be presented which include the need to develop more flexible worldviews, to empower individuals and societies to address social issues, to expand the conception of consciousness, to appreciate the nonrational, and to develop a wider sense of responsibility. Emergent approaches to transformative learning, which are holistic in nature, will be surveyed and contrasted with the traditional view of transformative learning which emphasizes a rational, cognitive process. These emergent approaches are described in terms of holistic, integrative, multidimensional, or integrally informed models and encompass emotional, intuitive, physical, symbolic, imaginistic, and contemplative as well as rational ways of knowing. Implications of integral transformative learning, specifically for higher education, marginalized adult learners, the development of teacher authenticity, and teacher training programmes, will be discussed along with the identification of challenges of integrating these emergent approaches into adult and higher education.

Fostering Consciousness, Insight, and Social Action Through an Integral Perspective on Transformative Learning

The application of transformative educational processes in adult and higher education can assist learners and teachers to expand their personal consciousness, develop insight into how they are situated within their social and cultural contexts, and participate in social action in order to bring about changes in society. The purpose of this paper is to survey some of the emergent approaches to transformative education which encompass holistic dimensions of human functioning and to explore the relevancy of such approaches for adult and higher learners, marginalized student populations, the development of teacher authenticity, and the content of teacher training programmes. As background to this focus, I will begin by differentiating the terms “transformative learning” and “transformative education,” present rationale for incorporating a transformative educational perspective into the education of adults, and review the traditional rational approach as it represents the foundational view of transformative learning theory.

McWhinney and Markos (2003) note that the terms “transformative learning” and “transformative education” are often used interchangeably, but in fact, are differentiated. They explain that simple learning is characterized by a process of acquiring information and skills, such as learning languages, customs, and worldviews, but in this context, there is not a condition that one has necessarily reflected on this learning. In contrast, they state that transformative learning involves a process of reflection on how one makes choices and an identification of what frames of assumptions are involved in held beliefs. Learning, in both of these contexts, is a process rather than a programme of content. Related, but differentiated from transformative learning, is transformative education which is a course of learning that has a direction and duration, is programmatic, and is designed to produce the specific outcome of transformation. Transformation is defined as changes in the individual psyche and in the organization of society.

According to McWhinney and Markos (2003), the outcome of transformation can begin as a result of a sudden, dramatic loss or as a slow awakening of a loss of meaning in life. In both cases, a process of self-evaluation begins the transformative learning cycle whereby the individual crosses a threshold into a liminal space where one’s normal activity and expectations are changed. They suggest that the transformative passage will ultimately include processes of unlearning, research, exploration, and testing possible new roles. At some point, the individual fully or partially reintegrates into everyday life often with new assumptions, more socially responsive relationships, and a more open and flexible worldview. Cranton and Roy (2003) maintain that transformation is about becoming more open and flexible in one’s meaning perspective and not necessarily about adopting a right or new point of view.

Rationale for Transformative Learning

Transformative learning processes can be valuable to individuals and societies in a world that is rapidly changing because they can help us develop a more flexible worldview. O’Hara (2006) points out that there is a demand for a new level of consciousness that can deal with a high degree of diversity among us and a growing level of complexity in the world. Moreover, he finds that we are witnessing increased marginalization of groups caused in part by global socioeconomic policies. Accordingly, transformative learning can help empower individuals and societies to address important personal and social issues.

O'Hara (2006) recognizes that when cultures share their stories, beliefs, and views of reality, we begin to realize that our perspective, a Western one in this example, is not the only cosmology that exists. This realization can have a destabilizing effect that creates anxiety and a sense of defeat within us or it can be an opportunity for us to transform our beliefs about reality. As an example of destabilization, the World Health Organization (2001) reports a growing incidence of psychological stress and violence on a global scale and notes that this stress is manifested in individuals as anxiety and depression and within communities as marginalization, alienation, and hopelessness. Therefore, a focus on transformative learning may help to bring about a greater acceptance of different worldviews and stem the negative destabilizing effects.

To what extent, then, does the Western educational system promote transformative learning? According to O'Hara (2006), the Western educational system still rests on the Enlightenment dream and remains resistant to change as it continues to focus on science and engineering. For example, higher education is not preparing individuals with adequate levels of mental capacities, such as, critical thinking, imagination, and social skills. Whereas in the West the educational focus continues to be on rational and objective thought, Singapore, in the East, has made a commitment that a far more expanded conception of consciousness should guide the mental formation of its young which includes the abilities to problem-solve, be creative, flexible, literate, and self-motivated, according to the Singapore Ministry of Education (cited in O'Hara, 2006). As a complement to the rational then, O'Hara maintains that an appreciation for the nonrational needs to be cultivated and that if education is to reach this goal, it must rethink a "new mission, new curriculum content, new pedagogy, and new modes of inquiry" (p. 112).

Saywell (2000) characterizes this new educational mission as moving toward a wider sense of responsibility for self, society, and the planet and not simply continuing to prepare workers for a global economy. In so doing, pedagogy must shift from a focus on content knowledge to a focus on how to learn, how to harvest information, and how to critically appraise knowledge, and must include inner work that leads to psychological maturity in order to support contradictions and complexity. O'Hara (2006) maintains that high levels of social competence are needed to collaborate with others who are different and that modes of inquiry must include more qualitative, holistic, and contemplative methods to deal with the complexity.

An aspect of the growing complexity in the world, according to Boron and Torres (1996), is the intensification of the process of globalization which is resulting in mass poverty particularly in the Third World. Caragata (2003) explains that the prevailing neoliberal ideology which favours a free market strategy encourages harmonization of social benefits between countries who are key trading partners which in turn diminishes social, political, and economic sovereignty of states and the ability of individual countries to provide necessary and adequate social services to their citizens. Martin (2001) attributes this phenomenon of globalization to a technical-rational discourse that focuses on marketability at the expense of social justice.

Caragata (2003) contends that globalization is adversely affecting the social equity of Canadian women. For example, women hold most and multiple part-time jobs, do a higher share of housework and child care, and earn 20 percent less than men. These social and labour-market factors contribute to women's social and economic marginalization. Job training, according to Caragata, tends to be based on the principle of the "shortest route to work," therefore; the existing status as a marginal worker is maintained under these conditions. In terms of self-employment, many women are turning to home-based businesses, where they are not protected by employment

standards or a union. Within these home-based businesses Menzies (1998) points out that the majority of women make less than C\$20,000 a year.

Stromquist (2006) recognizes that, even though there is improved access to schooling for women, there have been few efforts to change the curriculum and the training of teachers to include more gender-sensitive education, such as, addressing oppression and issues of inequality. Improving access to education is not enough; the education itself needs to be transformative in order to help women, that is, it needs to lead to knowledge about one's subordination and to build the political skills to implement social change. Stromquist defines empowerment as becoming an agent of your own transformation, acknowledges that it involves economic, psychological, cognitive, and political awareness, and asserts that women need transformative education to acquire this awareness. Mayo (2003) emphasizes the political nature of education and urges us to be concerned about an emancipatory vision in education because social programmes worldwide are being dismantled, the earth is being degraded, and there remain persistent structures of oppression which are marginalizing groups.

In conclusion, transformative learning is a process that is important to individuals and societies in order to: (a) understand and deal more effectively with different worldviews; (b) recognize and address social justice issues; (c) expand our critical consciousness; (d) encompass nonrational ways of knowing; (e) broaden our sense of responsibility; and (f) improve our social competence.

Rational Model of Transformative Learning

The traditional view of transformative learning is described by Dirks, Mezirow, and Cranton (2006) as a metacognitive activity involving critical thinking which transforms an acquired frame of reference. The process involves recognizing an alternative way of understanding, critically reflecting on the epistemic assumptions of the belief, discussing a new belief to gain validation, and taking action on the new belief. Mezirow and Associates (2000) note that the assumptions of this learning theory are that we strive to make meaning out of the events in our lives and that the process of meaning making is a complex one that draws on our biological, historical, and cultural contexts. Accordingly, they claim that over our lifetimes, we build meaning perspectives or frames of reference that serve as filters for new information or opposing points of view. They go on to suggest that our learning is limited when we unreflectively take in information that fits our frames of reference and reject other information that may be in opposition to them. The problem is that this process is largely an unconscious one that requires active reflective thinking in order to make our meaning perspectives more open.

Critical reflection implies a deliberate cognitive activity. According to Merriam (2004), the key factor is not the experience itself, but the active reflection on the experience that brings about learning or a change in perspective. She makes the distinction between reflecting on content or process as opposed to reflecting on premises or, in other words, assumptions about ourselves, others, or our culture and that the latter are what results in transformation. Merriam suggests also that critical reflection demands an "ability to examine alternative perspectives, withhold premature judgment, and basically to think dialectically" (p. 61). In essence, transformative learning necessarily requires a person to have highly developed metacognitive skills. This is why transformative learning is not associated with children, but with adults who may have reached a level beyond the formal operational stage that is associated with an ability to think abstractly (Merriam, 2004).

As can be gleaned from the foregoing, critical reflection is primarily a cognitive approach to transforming meaning perspectives. However, many believe that one's perspective can be changed through other types of experiences that may be of an emotional, intuitive, or imaginative nature or that may transcend our traditional view of consciousness, such as those of meditation or the perception of images from our unconscious. In the literature, there appears to be a broadening of perspectives on transformative learning from that which is a strictly a cognitive process to a more inclusive, integrative, holistic, or integral perspective. Cranton and Roy (2003) state that "the central process of transformative learning may be rational, affective, extrarational, experiential, or any combination of these depending on the characteristics of the individual and the context in which the transformation takes place" (p. 90).

Integral Models of Transformative Learning

Emergent views of transformative learning expand on the traditional model that emphasizes rational processes by including multiple ways of knowing. These models are characterized as holistic, integrative, multidimensional, or integrally informed. The following explores some of the emergent integral models of transformative learning.

Dirks et al. (2006) agree that much learning takes place outside of conscious awareness and may include modes of learning that are "emotional, intuitive, symbolic, imaginistic, and/or contemplative" (p. 124). Hockley (2001) claims that individuals can come to understand their inner world through art, poetry, music, theatre, and film. Jung (1965) purports that a powerful source of creativity can be expressed symbolically in dreams and fantasies. Dirks et al. contend that by improving our sensitivity and responsiveness to our feelings and images, we become clearer about the forces in our lives and, consequently by deepening an understanding of ourselves, we enter more fully into relationships with others.

Gunnlaughson (2005) states that an integrally informed theory should be inclusive and honour both the unique and universal human experiences; integrate structural, psychosocial, and evolutionary developmental frameworks; expand the concept of rationality to go beyond the level of reason to the higher level of vision-logic; and weave together individual and social domains within a cosmological context. One such integrally informed theory is posited by Wilber (2001) as the AQAL (All Quadrants, All Lines) metatheory. Wilber (2003) represents the AQAL metatheory in terms of a model that consists of four quadrants of human dimensions (i.e., subjective, intersubjective, objective, and interobjective). These relate respectively to the intentional, behavioural, cultural, and social dimensions of human experience. Within each quadrant, three levels of development are represented as pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. Spanning these levels of development are lines of development which represent various intelligences. Accordingly, the AQAL metatheory can be used as a map to recognize a broad range of perspectives for education.

Ferrer, Romero, and Albareda (2005) also assert that there is a need for a multidimensional (or integral) approach to education which incorporates the dimensions of the body, vital, heart, and mind. They purport that pedagogy typically involves content, training, and inquiry. Whereas content refers to working with ideas, theories, and models, and whereas training is the acquisition of skills, inquiry focuses on questions or problems using mental approaches alone or multidimensional approaches which include physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental dimensions. The challenge for multidimensional education, according to Ferrer et al. is the integration of these multiple ways of knowing. For example, Ferrer et al. explain that in an

eclectic approach, experience is incorporated into a mind-centred curriculum, but because the intellect is not necessarily working in collaboration with other ways of knowing, it is not integrated and, therefore, the learning process remains cognicentric. However, in a participatory approach, all dimensions are considered equal partners in the educational process that includes curriculum, inquiry processes, and assessment of outcomes.

These holistic ways of knowing are gradually being recognized in adult and higher education. A study by Duerr, Zajonc, and Dana (2003) documents universities in North America which incorporate intuitive, imaginative, spiritual, and contemplative dimensions of education. One finding from this study suggests that although there is a growing interest in bringing transformational elements into higher education, these elements are currently reflected in individual faculties rather than in an institutional strategy. The following four case studies, reported on by Duerr et al. (2002), demonstrate the use of various holistic approaches to transformative learning in a higher education context. In the first case study, Professor O'Sullivan, of the Transformative Learning Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, explains how he uses film to critically examine global concerns and differing worldviews. In a second case study, education professor Crowell of California State University, describes the use of the arts to increase students' sense of intuition and meaning. He adds that students also engage in their choice of spiritual practice during the course as he finds that contemplative approaches connect students with questions of mystery, imagination, and awe. In a third case study, Professor Wegner, of Bowdoin College, has students study texts and then meditate, write journals, think, ponder, or draw. She found that these practices bring students closer to the instructor and instill a willingness to experiment with different forms of teaching and learning. In a final case study, music professor Sarath, of the University of Michigan, has students meditate before a musical performance and before and during a class. The reported outcome from students is a feeling of less anxiety about their lives and about their studies as well as an increase in meaning about their learning. Moreover, the students are reported to sense greater interconnectedness between topics. Duerr et al. (2003) summarize that of the higher education institutions that use holistic approaches to transformative learning, participating faculties included the arts, humanities, education, social sciences, and some professional schools. Some focused on the spiritual dimensions whereas others emphasized the social and community elements of learning. However, they warned that an explicit focus on the spiritual element alone would create a loss of significance for the curriculum.

Yorks and Kasl (2006) suggest that educators intuitively think that expressive ways of knowing that are perceived through images, body sensation, and imagination, are useful, but they are not clear on how these activities are linked to learning. These ways of knowing are usually contrasted alongside didactic models of learning and are not thought of as rigorous. In a nursing internship programme—a case study reported upon by Yorks and Kasl—a member of a nutrition education team at a university improved her interns' reflective capabilities by having them engage in guided visualizations and visual art activities including drawing, making collages, and using clay. In conclusion, the interns gained new insight which helped them to act in new ways.

A model that delineates various ways of knowing is Heron's (1992) *Conceptualization of Modes of Psyche and Ways of Knowing*. The essence of the model is a hierarchy of four ways of knowing (i.e., experiential, presentational, propositional, and practical) which is aligned with a hierarchy of four modes of the psyche (i.e., affective, imaginal, conceptual, and practical). Yorks and Kasl (2006) contend that within people, presentational (expressive) ways of knowing provide

a bridge between experiential (affective) knowing, wherein emotion and feeling are perceived, and propositional (conceptual) knowing, in which critical reflection is used to bring into consciousness our taken-for-granted assumptions. They clarify that presentational (expressive) knowing relates to an intuitive grasping of pattern in perceptual elements and not to the act of presenting.

Two key findings of Yorks and Kasl (2006) are that educators working holistically with learners need to work on their own holistic development and have a firm grounding in their own emotional lives and that special attention should be placed on creating a learning environment that would foster expressive ways of knowing. An example from Yorks and Kasl, of fostering an expressive learning environment, is to provide activities, such as, a guided visualization at the beginning of a learning session which helps students transition from their outside world to an emotionally safe place. This will allow them to be open to learning. In other examples, in order to foster communication across cultural boundaries, storytelling about one's own experiences can help to develop an empathic field and, in order to evoke intuitions and understandings, art and music can be used.

Narrative learning (story-telling), for the purpose of transformation, has traditionally focused on that of the individual or the individual in relationship with another (Ziegler, Paulus, and Woodside, 2006). Applied in a peer group situation, story-telling can be a powerful way for individuals to make meaning of their life experiences. Stahl (2003) posits that knowledge is created while in communication with others. In particular, computer-mediated communication, in the form of on-line conversations, provides an opportunity for dialogue to be visible while it occurs and to be retained for further study (Ziegler et al.).

Ziegler et al. (2006) analyzed a subject-oriented on-line dialogue among four graduate students and found that participants engaged in typical speech acts that were characterized as noticing, reinterpreting, theorizing, and questioning assumptions. What occurred in the study was meaning-making that was accomplished through the use of these speech acts. Ziegler et al. recognized that although group members critically reflected on their own assumptions, they did not ask critical questions of one another's assumptions. The rationale for this was thought to be what Smith (2005) refers to as entering into an unsafe learning space.

Dirkx (2000) refers to a particular perspective of transformative learning, derived from the field of depth psychology, as mytho-poetic which focuses on imaginative engagement with the world and allows us to express what is not known or knowable through words alone. These images represent deep-seated emotional or spiritual issues and manifest themselves through "dreams, fantasies, myth, legends, fairy tales, stories, rituals, poetry, and performing arts, such as dance" (p. 3). Therefore, educators fostering this way of knowing, according to Dirkx, will use within their subject areas "story, myths, poetry, music, drawing, art, journaling, dance, rituals, or performance" (p. 4).

Cranton and Roy (2003) focus on the individual in a social context. They argue that through a process of individuation, a concept also from the field of depth psychology, we become conscious of our psychological makeup and how we are different from others. Individuation is defined by Jung (1971) as "the process by which individual beings are formed and differentiated . . . having for its goal the development of the individual personality" (p. 448). The process of individuation, described by Cranton and Roy, involves developing a dialogue with our unconscious, coming to understand the repressed parts of our personality in our shadow, becoming aware of our feminine and masculine aspects of being, identifying the archetypes that influence the

self, and realizing how we project aspects of ourselves onto others. In so doing, we come to see how our frames of reference often represent those which are held collectively and to see an opportunity to break away from the collective by critically questioning our unconscious habits of mind. Cranton and Roy suggest that the view of the rational perspective of transformative learning and the depth psychology view of individuation can be brought together by realizing that they are similar journeys, but those which use different terminology.

Few teachers have integrated contemplative approaches into their instruction, according to Hart (2004). He acknowledges that a prime focus of education is typically on what we know; however, how we know is fundamental. One element that is missing is a consideration of how contemplative knowing can contribute to student performance, character, and depth of education. Hart suggests that the rationale for incorporating the contemplative into education, without the imposition of religious doctrine, is to cultivate a capacity for greater awareness, concentration, and insight. Contemplation helps us to detach our consciousness from our thoughts and feelings and allows us to use self-observation to expose and deconstruct positions of role, belief, and culture. Hart reminds us that, historically, wisdom traditions have included Buddhist meditation, Hindu Yoga, Christian prayer, Plato's self-inquiry, and Sufi metaphysical reflection. Through these practices, one's worldview, sense of self, and relationships can be transformed. Duerr et al. (2003) acknowledge there is a growing interest in contemplation within higher education. Some of the contemplative techniques in use, according to Hart, are (a) pondering, which can bring insight to big and radical questions; (b) guided imagery or visualization, which focuses on the use of symbol or metaphor to promote insight; (c) body focusing, which is a form of knowing that is situated in the body; (d) concentrated language, such as writing poetry or stories, which helps one to practise intrinsic awareness; and (e) free-form writing, such as, journal writing, which helps one to explore the inner world and to build confidence in one's ideas. In conclusion, Hart suggests that contemplative practices add balance to the analytic approach.

The foregoing section on integral models of transformative learning reviewed emerging approaches that are referred to as holistic, integrative, multidimensional, or integral. Grounded in these models are activities that allow understanding, other than through a cognitive process, to emerge and to contribute to transformation, such as, the use of art, poetry, music, theatre, and film (Hockley, 2001); the exercise of dialogue with the unconscious to understand the shadow personality, archetypes, and projection (Cranton and Roy, 2003); the application of drawing and journal writing (Duerr et al., 2002); the use of guided visualizations, artistic collages, and clay (Yorks and Kasl, 2006); and the practice of contemplation, meditation, yoga, prayer, self-inquiry, and metaphysical reflection (Hart, 2004).

Discussion

Transformative learning has implications in higher education in requiring learners to reflect on their worldview and in empowering students to foster sustainable development. Marginalized adult learners can benefit by transformative learning experiences when they use them to foster an instrumental, healing, empowering, or spiritual path. Teachers can become more authentic in their professional role by critically reflecting on their values and styles which help them bring more of their true sense of self into the instructional environment. Teacher training programmes, which include transformative education curriculum, can help teachers to become more self-reflective and guide students in their reflective practices.

Moore (2005) asserts that higher education is having to respond to a worldwide movement to address global environmental concerns in that, according to Wright (2002), “all subject disciplines must address issues related to the environment and sustainable development, and that university curricula must be reoriented towards a holistic approach to education” (p. 111). Cranton (1996) suggests that sustainable education could be incorporated into the university context through one of three models which are co-operative, collaborative, or transformative. She explains that in co-operative learning, the educator is seen as the expert and as having power wherein the focus is on the subject matter and its issues and there is a clear goal to be achieved. Alternatively, a collaborative model emphasizes the exchange of experiences, feelings, and insights. Finally, in a transformative model, the goal is to revise ways of interpreting experience through a process of critical reflection.

In keeping with the transformative model, McWhinney and Markos (2003) recommend that one of the goals of adult education should be to help students reflect on their worldview. They identify four transformative paths that students could take in adult and higher education which are (a) enhancing career opportunities—an instrumental path; (b) adjusting to changes in personal circumstances—a healing path; (c) transforming society—an emancipatory path; and (d) engaging spiritually and holistically with the natural environment—a contemplative path.

Where marginalized adult learners participate in government-funded labour-market training programmes, transformative learning has implications for helping individuals to be more successful. Illeris (2003) recognizes that sometimes learning does not occur as intended in these programmes and notes that most of his study participants had an ambivalent attitude toward their courses even though they expressed an interest in learning something that could improve their chances of success in the labour market. Learners were observed using a range of unconscious avoidance techniques so that they were not confronted with the insufficiency of their qualifications.

Illeris (2004) observes that no longer is adult education dominated by eager learners as the majority of learners have been pressed into adult education and, hence, display their ambivalence. Illeris concludes that the key to success is to understand the learners’ situation as they experience it and to support them in the emancipating and empowering potential of transformative learning.

Transformative learning has further implications in education in the development of teacher authenticity, according to Cranton and Carusetta (2004). Cranton and Roy (2003) maintain that the notion of authenticity is related to transformational learning in that if we want to communicate in an effective manner with others, we need to critically reflect on who we truly are and understand how others may be different. Similarly, Scott (1998) claims that one of the goals of transformation is authenticity. Cranton and Carusetta contend that the development of authenticity as an educator changes over time and reflects the process of individuation (becoming conscious of oneself) which is transformative in nature. Through the process of critical reflection, one becomes more authentic by becoming more conscious of self, other, relationships, and context.

Another way for educators to move toward a more authentic identity, according to Borysenko (1999), is through spirituality. Tisdell and Tolliver (2003) define spirituality as having a sense of a connection to a greater life force; being related to a religious context; and as experiencing a sense of wholeness, healing, and the interconnectedness of all things. A study conducted by Tisdell and Tolliver inquired into how adult educators understood their attempts to teach for social change through the lens of their spirituality. Findings indicated that the educator

participants gained insight into their internalized oppression, particularly those who were marginalized by race, culture, gender, religion, or sexuality; acquired a greater understanding of his/her own cultural identity and that of others; and increased their recognition of how knowledge is constructed through unconscious processes, ritual, gesture, music, and art.

Educators can be encouraged to become critically reflective through methodologies used in teacher training programmes. As an example, Ramphela (2004) recognizes that Africa lacks the resources for an education system that can prepare people for the knowledge economy. Therefore, Hussein (2006) states that what is needed is education that can transform human and social conditions, hence, teachers in Africa need to be able to transform the factors that perpetuate injustice and inequality in schools and in society. This necessitates that teachers adopt critical perspectives themselves and develop the ability to teach their students to think critically; therefore, teacher education programmes must encourage transformative learning. As a teacher-educator, Hussein (2006) experienced transformation in his view of research through a critical practitioner inquiry process. From the perspective that the researcher tries to solve problems by applying educational theories and principles, he now views the researcher's role as critically reflecting on one's beliefs and assumptions in the broader sociopolitical and economic context.

Conclusion

Given the wide range of holistic, integrative, multidimensional, or integral approaches to transformative education that can be employed in adult and higher education, there are likely to be challenges in implementing the use of these approaches, particularly in an educational context where rational thought predominates. The following addresses some of these challenges.

In a context where there is currently more emphasis placed on educational outcomes that prepare individuals with skills for a knowledge economy, Brown and Lauder (2000) maintain that the challenge to transformative education is that the prevailing market ideology is geared toward preparing citizens for a highly competitive market which forces educational systems to focus on efficiency, transparency, and competitiveness.

Ferrer et al. (2005) contend that another challenge to integral education is a disposition of mental pride that favours the mind as the chief director of the process of knowledge. There is a fear that allowing room for the non-mental attributes of knowing will lower intellectual rigour. The challenge is to find a middle ground between the extremes of egocentricism and anti-intellectualism.

Cranton (1996) recognizes that the challenges of transformative education in the higher education classroom are that many students are uncomfortable with models that do not focus on subject learning and it tends to be a complex teaching method that takes a great deal of time and energy. Learners do not have experience with this type of learning system, according to Cranton (1994); therefore, do not understand it nor have the maturity of skills to be self-directed in their learning.

Ferrer et al. (2005) agree that non-discursive worlds are underdeveloped; therefore, they are met with conflicts, fears, and confusion. They recommend that we provide spaces where these human dimensions can achieve competence and provide a skilled facilitator who can help students become aware of deeply seated personal dispositions that may be distorting their beliefs. This is not a therapeutic process, such as, personal healing or group bonding, but a multidimensional inquiry and collaborative construction of knowledge.

Shifting perspectives, as would occur through transformative education, can lead to discomfort and feelings of insecurity or can result in an emotional upheaval, according to Moore (2005). This begs the question whether students are mentally and emotionally prepared for these experiences and if they have the social supports. Tisdell, Hanley, and Taylor (2000) express concern that educators are not trained to deal with the whole person in the classroom and that although they may have an intellectual understanding of the processes, they do not feel equipped on a practical level to deal with intense feelings within the classroom.

Transformation does not happen quickly. McWhinney and Markos (2003) state that when a new worldview is adopted, or when a set of new assumptions is reintegrated, it can take some time to stabilize. Some re-integrations are successful in that the person or system performs as expected with more socially responsive relationships, however, some may see an individual remain in a liminal state taking on a spiritual life or remain partly in a liminal world and partly in the everyday environment.

Structural barriers within institutions may exist which may discourage transformative education, such as, funding, time, traditional nature of schools of preparing students for the marketplace, and receptivity of administrators, faculty, and students (Duerr et al., 2003).

Despite the foregoing challenges and risks to implementing integral transformative education in adult and higher learning contexts, I believe that if teachers had a better understanding of the methodologies that can engage students in a holistic manner and a skill set that would help them deal with the sometimes emotional expressions that can be evoked through transformative education processes, then our adult, higher education, and marginalized learners would increase their self-understanding and, therefore, their authenticity. In so doing, they would become more open and flexible to others' points of views and would feel empowered to take action in their lives on personal and social issues. These should be important goals in adult education in conjunction with the current emphasis on skills training for a global economy.

In conclusion, Duerr et al. (2003) contend that more research is needed on the experience of students in a transformative/spiritual classroom and that a greater theoretical understanding of transformation and contemplation in higher education is called for.

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